

**Indigenous Language Revitalization, Biliteracy, and Student Voice:
Instances from Quechua, Guarani, and Maori Bilingual Education**

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Abstract

Drawing from instances of multilingual education involving Quechua in the Andes, Guarani in Paraguay, and Maori in New Zealand, this paper uses the continua of biliteracy framework to analyse relationships between medium of instruction, student voice and biliteracy content. In each instance, multilingual language policy has arisen in a

sociohistorical and sociolinguistic context of indigenous oppression; the implementation of these policies through multilingual education brings with it consequences for indigenous children's learning and indigenous language revitalization through, as I argue here, the activation of student voice. On the one hand, the policies aim to sustain, develop, and revitalize indigenous languages in their respective national contexts; and on the other, to facilitate and promote indigenous children's academic learning. This paper explores the role of student voice in those processes. Specifically, it argues that the use of indigenous children's own language as medium of instruction mediates the dialogism, meaning-making, access to wider discourses, and taking of an active stance that are dimensions of voice, and that the voices thus activated can be a powerful force for both enhancing their own learning and promoting the maintenance and revitalization of their own languages.

Indigenous Language Revitalization, Biliteracy, and Student Voice: Instances from Quechua, Guarani, and Maori Bilingual Education*

Almost twenty years ago, I wrote the following, based on my two-year comparative ethnographic study in two highland Quechua communities of Puno, Peru and their schools, one in the midst of implementing an experimental Quechua-Spanish bilingual program and the other following the traditional Spanish-only curriculum, a study in which I had found greater oral and written pupil participation -- in absolute, linguistic, and sociolinguistic terms -- when Quechua was the medium of instruction:

It is often said that Quechua children, and indigenous children in many parts of the world, for that matter, are naturally shy and reticent, and that that is why they rarely speak in school; therefore we should not interfere with their cultural patterns by encouraging them to speak out more. In light of observations such as those outlined above, however, I think we should ask ourselves whether at least some of that reticence is due to the fact that the school language in many of these cases is a language entirely foreign to the child.

Of course, more may be involved than language. In some parts of the world, children are shy in school even though the home language and the school language are the same. Philips (1983) has shown that, for the case of the native American children at Warm Springs, at least, it is the cultural patterns themselves which are precisely the key to the children's participation. Given participation structures which are more congruent with their own cultural patterns, Warm Springs children do participate more in school. Participation structures may also be a factor in the case of Quechua children. Nevertheless, an even more fundamental issue seems to be language. Who, after all, can speak out in a language which they do not know?

For example, I had opportunity to observe one little girl in both classroom and home settings. This little seven-year-old rarely, if ever, spoke in class; yet, at home, she was something of a livewire. She talked non-stop to me (in Quechua), telling me all about the names and ages of her whole family, showing me the decorations on the wall of her home, the blankets woven by her grandmother, borrowing my hat -- all

this while she jumped on the bed, did somersaults, cared for her two baby brothers, and so on. (Hornberger 1988: 194, based on Hornberger 1985: 498-499)

Then, as now, it struck me that this little girl, whom I call Basilia, lost her voice at school and found it at home and that use of her own language in familiar surroundings was key in the activation of her voice. In the intervening twenty years, our notions of voice have developed and filled out, largely due to the influential work of Russian Mikhail Bakhtin. In what follows, I want to consider this opening quote from twenty years ago, and three more recent accounts of indigenous language education, in light of our developing understanding of voice.

The two grand questions driving me in that study twenty years ago, and in much of my work since then, have been:

(1) What educational approaches best serve (indigenous and immigrant) language minority children? and

(2) What policies, programs and circumstances encourage or contribute to (indigenous and immigrant) minority language maintenance and revitalisation?

I have argued through my empirical and theoretical work that multilingual language policies implemented through bilingual education can be a positive factor in answering both those needs, i.e. in enhancing children's learning, and in promoting language maintenance and revitalisation (Hornberger 1988, 1998, 2002b, 2003).

In the first instance, i.e. the role of mother-tongue-based bilingual education (Alexander 2003) in enhancing language minority children's learning, my argument is supported by my own and others' work as analysed through the continua of biliteracy framework (Hornberger 1989, Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester 2000, Hornberger 2003), which in a very fundamental sense is built on the common-sense premise that we learn best based on what we already know. In the second instance, i.e. the role of mother-tongue-based bilingual education in promoting language maintenance and revitalisation given a supportive policy and societal context, my argument is further backed up by Fishman's Reversing Language Shift framework (Fishman 1991, 2000), which has as one of its key planks that children must learn to speak the heritage language if it is to survive into the next generation.

My continuing quest for a more complete understanding of the role of multilingual language education policies in indigenous language revitalisation has coincided with a dramatic increase in instances of multilingual language policy around the world, even while (and perhaps because) the English language continues its seemingly inexorable trajectory toward becoming the most global language the world has ever known. Three such cases of multilingual language policy are the cases of the Andes, Paraguay, and New Zealand. In the case of the Andes, language education policy in Peru of the 1970s opened the way for implementation of internationally-funded experimental bilingual education programs in indigenous Quechua-speaking communities in the 1980s; and in Bolivia, the National Education Reform of 1994 sought to implant bilingual education nationwide, incorporating all 30 Bolivian indigenous languages, beginning with the three largest -- Quechua, Aymara, and Guarani. In Paraguay, the demise of a multidecade dictatorship in the early 1990s ushered in a new democratic language education policy which seeks to implant instruction through the medium of Guarani alongside Spanish in all grades and in all schools of the nation, incrementally one year at a time. In Aotearoa/ New Zealand, a grassroots movement was born in the 1980s among the Maori to save their language from further decline; these were the pre-school language nests, or *kohanga reo*, where English-speaking Maori children are immersed in Maori language and culture using a total immersion approach which goes way beyond language to other media, modes, and content. That early initiative has in turn spawned the development of Maori-medium primary, secondary, and most recently tertiary level Maori-medium education as well, now overseen by the national Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office.

Here I would like to reflect on these three cases, and in particular on the nexus of indigenous language revitalisation, biliteracy, and student voice as framed by multilingual language policy and bilingual education. This paper is inspired by and draws on recent opportunities I have had to revisit the Andean Quechua case and to make first personal acquaintance with the Paraguayan Guarani case and the New Zealand Maori case for the first time.¹ I begin with a few conceptual comments, revolving around the notions of ecology of language, biliteracy, indigenous language revitalisation, and voice.

An ecological approach to indigenous language revitalisation, biliteracy and voice

The central concepts explored in this paper are indigenous language revitalisation, biliteracy, and student voice, which I will define briefly below. These concepts are in turn anchored in the ecology of language metaphor, which I introduce briefly first.

Ecology of language

Einar Haugen is generally credited with introducing the ecology of language in his 1970 paper by that title (Haugen 1972). He emphasizes the reciprocity between language and environment, noting that what is needed is not only a description of the social and psychological situation of each language, but also the effect of this situation on the language (1972: 334). Haugen invokes the tradition of research in human ecology as a metaphor for an approach which would comprise not just the science of language description, but also concern for language cultivation and preservation (1972: 326-329).

Three themes of the ecology metaphor are salient to me in writings on the ecology of language, all of them present in Haugen's original formulation and in more recent writings by Mühlhäusler 1996, Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas 1996, Kaplan & Baldauf 1997, and Ricento 2000, and all of them useful in the construction and implementation of multilingual language policies. These are: that languages, like living species, evolve, grow, change, live, and die in relation to other languages and also in relation to their environment; what we can call the *language evolution* and *language environment* themes. A third theme is the notion that some languages, like some species and environments, may be endangered and that the ecology movement is about not only studying and describing those potential losses, but also counteracting them; this I call the *language endangerment* theme.

Kaplan and Baldauf's work elaborates on the *language evolution* and *language environment* themes. They emphasize that language planning activity cannot be limited to one language in isolation from all the other languages in the environment (1997: 271). Their model representing the various forces at work in a linguistic eco-system introduces the notion of "language modification constructs" (1997: 289) or "language change elements" (1997: 296) such as language death, survival, change, revival, shift and spread, amalgamation, contact, pidgin and creole development, and literacy development, all processes of what I am here calling *language evolution*. For Kaplan and Baldauf, "Language planning ... is a question of trying to manage the language

ecology of a particular language to support it within the vast cultural, educational, historical, demographic, political, social structure in which language policy formulation occurs every day" (1997: 13), i.e. within the *language environment*.

Robert Phillipson and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas highlight the *language endangerment* theme, contrasting two language policy options with regard to English worldwide: the diffusion of English paradigm characterized by a "monolingual view of modernization and internationalization" and the ecology of language paradigm which involves "building on linguistic diversity worldwide, promoting multilingualism and foreign language learning, and granting linguistic human rights to speakers of all languages" (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas 1996: 429). The juxtaposition of the linguistic imperialism of English over against multilingualism and linguistic human rights is clearly founded on a concern for the ongoing endangerment of many languages, displaced by one or a select few, and the need to counteract that endangerment and displacement. Pakir (1991) uses the term "killer languages" in reference to the displacing effect of imperial English as well as other languages such as Mandarin, Spanish, French, and Indonesian.

Ecology of language, then, recognizes that planning for any one language in a particular context necessarily entails planning for all languages impinging on that one. The power relations and dynamics among languages and their speakers cannot be ignored. This recognition sets the stage for understanding the role of student voice in contributing to indigenous children's learning and indigenous language revitalisation.

Biliteracy

Biliteracy, in my usage, refers to "any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing" (Hornberger 1990: 213); the continua model of biliteracy is a framework I have proposed as heuristic for situating educational research, policy, and practice in linguistically and culturally diverse settings around the world. The continua model of biliteracy uses the notion of intersecting and nested continua to demonstrate the multiple and complex interrelationships between bilingualism and literacy and the importance of the contexts, media, and content through which biliteracy develops.

The purpose of using the continuum as the basic building block of the model is to break down the binary oppositions so characteristic of the fields of bilingualism and literacy and instead draw attention to the continuity of experiences, skills, practices, and knowledge stretching from one end of any particular continuum to the other. Specifically, the continua model depicts the *development* of biliteracy along intersecting first language - second language, receptive-productive, and oral-written language skills continua; through the *medium* of two (or more) languages and literacies whose linguistic structures vary from similar to dissimilar, whose scripts range from convergent to divergent, and to which the developing biliterate individual's exposure varies from simultaneous to successive; in *contexts* that encompass micro to macro levels and are characterized by varying mixes along the monolingual-bilingual and oral-literate continua; and with *content* that ranges from majority to minority perspectives and experiences, literary to vernacular styles and genres, and decontextualized to contextualized language texts (Hornberger 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester 2000).

These 12 continua can be visualised as 4 nested sets of 3 intersecting continua each. The nested sets represent contexts, media, content, and development of biliteracy respectively, each set made up of a cluster of its three intersecting continua. Not only is the three-dimensionality of any one set of three intersecting continua representative of the interrelatedness of those three constituent continua, but it should be emphasized that the interrelationships extend across the four sets of continua as well; hence the nesting of the three-dimensional spaces.

The notion of continuum conveys that all points on a particular continuum are interrelated, and the intersecting and nested relationships among the continua convey that all points across the continua are also interrelated. The model suggests that the more their learning contexts and contexts of use allow learners and users to draw from across the whole of each and every continuum, the greater are the chances for their full biliterate development and expression (Hornberger 1989: 289). Implicit in that suggestion is a recognition that there has usually not been attention to all points and that movement along the continua and across the intersections may well be contested. In educational policy and practice regarding biliteracy, there tends to be an implicit privileging of one end of the continua over the other such that one end of each continuum is associated with more power than the other (e.g. written development over oral development); there is a need to contest the traditional power weighting by paying attention to,

granting agency to, and making space for actors and practices at what have traditionally been the less powerful ends of the continua (Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester 2000: 99).

In order to understand any particular instance of biliteracy, be it at the level of individual actor, interaction, event, practice, activity, program, site, situation, society, or world, we need to take account of all dimensions represented by the continua. At the same time, the advantage of the model is that it allows us to focus for analytical purposes on one or selected continua and their dimensions without ignoring the importance of the others; that is precisely what we will do below, in relation to Bakhtinian notions of voice.

The continua of biliteracy model, like the ecology of language metaphor, is premised on a view of multilingualism as a resource. Further, the continua of biliteracy model also incorporates the language evolution, language environment, and language endangerment themes of the ecology of language metaphor. The very notion of bi (or multi)-literacy assumes that one language and literacy is developing in relation to one or more other languages and literacies (*language evolution*); the model situates biliteracy development (whether in the individual, classroom, community, or society) in relation to the contexts, media, and content in and through which it develops (i.e. *language environment*); and it provides a heuristic for addressing the unequal balance of power across languages and literacies (i.e. for both studying and counteracting *language endangerment*).

Indigenous language revitalisation

Language revitalisation, and in particular ***indigenous language revitalisation***, has arisen as a scholarly and activist focus of concern primarily in the 1990s, in conjunction with the increasing recognition that an alarming portion of the world's languages are endangered (Krauss 1992).² Defined as “the attempt to add new linguistic forms or social functions to an embattled minority language with the aim of increasing its uses or users” (King 2001: 23), language revitalisation is closely related to earlier sociolinguistic concerns with vitality (Stewart 1968) and revival (Fellman 1974; Edwards 1993), and with more recent notions of renewal (Brandt & Ayoungman 1989:43) and reversing language shift (Fishman 1991).

Language revitalisation, renewal, or reversing language shift goes one step further than language maintenance, in that it implies recuperating and reconstructing something which is at least partially lost, rather than maintaining and strengthening what already exists. Whereas work on language maintenance (and shift) has focused as much on immigrant as on indigenous languages (or perhaps more so), language revitalisation work carries a particular emphasis on indigenous languages. Likewise, while research on language maintenance and shift has been biased toward documenting cases of shift rather than maintenance (Hyltenstam & Stroud 1996: 568), documentation on language revitalisation emphasizes the positive side of the equation, despite seemingly insurmountable odds against survival of the languages in question. Another difference between maintenance and revitalisation work is the relative emphasis placed on conscious and deliberate efforts by speakers of the language to affect language behavior, i.e. on language planning. While language maintenance has long been recognized as a language planning goal (e.g. Nahir 1977, 1984) and language revitalisation only more recently so, nevertheless it is also true that maintenance can describe a “natural” language phenomenon that does not require any deliberate planning on the part of its speakers, while revitalisation cannot. Finally, whereas language maintenance efforts have often tended to emanate from the top-down (in which someone takes benevolent initiative in “maintaining” someone else’s language), language revitalisation efforts tend to originate within the speech community itself (e.g. RLS, Fishman 1991, 2000) as counter-hegemonic social movements (Alexander 2003).

Indeed, King and I have argued that it is crucially important that the speakers of the language be involved in revitalisation, since it entails altering not only the traditional language corpus but also how it is traditionally used, both at the micro level in terms of interpersonal discourse patterns and at the macro level of societal distribution; in other words, it is not so much about bringing a language back, as bringing it forward. Who better or more qualified to guide that process than the speakers of the language, who must and will be the ones taking it into the future? (Hornberger & King 1996: 315).

Voice

Voice, as I suggested above, is what seven-year-old Basilia in my opening quote joyfully expresses through the medium of her own language in her own home, surrounded by familiar people and objects. She vividly exemplifies the individual in active dialogue with

her environment, i.e. the dialogism which, as Holland and Lave tell us, is a prominent theme of Bakhtin's work and "begins from the premise that sentient beings -- alone and in groups -- are always in a state of active existence; they are always in a state of being 'addressed' and in the process of 'answering'" (Holland & Lave 2001: 9-10). They go on to quote Holquist at some length:

"Existence is addressed to me as a riot of inchoate potential messages, which at this level of abstraction may be said to come to individual persons much as stimuli from the natural environment come to individual organisms. Some of the potential messages come to me in the form of primitive physiological stimuli, some in the form of natural language, and some in social codes or ideologies. So long as I am in existence, I am in a particular place, and must respond to all of these stimuli either by ignoring them or in a response that takes the form of making sense, of producing - - for it is a form of work -- *meaning* out of such utterances" (Holquist 1990:47, cited in Holland & Lave 2001: 10).

It would appear that seven-year-old Basilia was perhaps ignoring the stimuli at school while responding actively to those at home; the voice that was lost at school was exuberantly found at home.

In the twenty years since Russian philosopher Bakhtin's work became widely accessible to English-speaking scholars, his notions of voice have become highly influential in literary criticism, linguistics, and anthropology. I'm suggesting here that Bakhtinian notions of voice help us to see more readily and richly how it is that language education policies which encourage the use of indigenous languages as medium of instruction in indigenous language communities contribute to both enhancing children's learning and revitalising the indigenous language. To do that, I use Holland and Lave's (2001) analysis of his work in terms of four themes, each of which I relate to one of the sets of biliteracy continua.

Dialogism is the first theme, as just discussed, which I will relate to the development continua. Self-authoring is the second -- in the making of meaning, we author the world and ourselves in it, and in doing so, draw on languages, dialects, cultural genres, and the words of others to which we have been exposed, as the media through which our senses of self and group are developed (Holland & Lave 2000: 10-12) -- this relates to the continua of biliterate content. A third theme is that "all dialogic engagements of self..

are struggles across and about differences between self and others," animated by "discourses widely circulating locally and beyond" (Holland & Lave 2000: 13) – this relates to biliterate context; while a fourth highlights the active stances persons take toward others and the dialects, languages, genres, and other cultural forms they produce (Holland & Lave 2000: 14) – this I relate to the media of biliteracy.

Contentious local practice and student voice: Indigenous language revitalization and biliteracy

Returning to the three cases of multilingual language policy – and in particular to the nexus of indigenous language revitalization, biliteracy, and student voice, I borrow from Holland and Lave's approach in their edited volume, *History in Person*, where they posit the "mutually constitutive nature of language and complex social, political, and economic struggles and the historically fashioned identities-in-practice and subjectivities that they produce" and suggest an analytic approach that starts with "local struggles" -- that is, struggles in particular times and places (2001: 109). Holland and Lave tell us that enduring struggles are crucibles for the forging of human subjects' voices and identities through contentious local practice; here I am interested in the forging of student voice in the crucible of indigenous people's enduring struggles, through contentious local practice in schools.

Borrowing from their approach, I here examine local practices around indigenous languages in schools, using the continua of biliteracy and the four Bakhtinian themes identified by Holland and Lave as analytical tools to understand the ways in which the use of indigenous languages as medium of instruction in indigenous language communities contributes to both enhancing children's learning and revitalising the indigenous language through the activation of student voice. Specifically, I am arguing that activation of student voice enables students to negotiate along and across the various continua making up the development, contexts, content, and media of biliteracy.

Biliteracy development and dialogic voices: Quechua in Peru in the 1980s

We already saw above how little Basilia's active engagement in the dialogical process of being addressed or answering/responding contributes to her lively oral interaction in Quechua at home, while her more passive engagement at school leaves her silent. In the Bakhtinian sense, her voice is activated at home, but silenced at school. In terms of

the consequences of this loss of voice for her biliteracy development, until she can use her first language (L1) in *productive* and *receptive, written* and *oral* modes at school, it will be difficult for her to develop the second language (L2) as well.

Biliteracy content, cultural genres, and self-authoring: Quechua in Bolivia in the 1990s

The second theme and set of continua as instantiated in contentious local practice are cultural genres and self-authoring, in relation to the content of biliteracy. The following vignette comes from a visit I made to a school during the second of two consulting visits to Bolivia in connection with the 1994 National Education Reform.

Kayarani Primary School, Cochabamba, Bolivia (14 August 2000)

El Zorro, el Puma, y Los Otros

After about an hour's drive from Cochabamba in the luxury of a PROEIB jeep, chauffeur Elio and I arrive at Kayarani school at about 10:30 am and are greeted in the schoolyard by several dozen children rushing over to the car to shake our hands. We approach the low adobe building where the teachers live during the school week and are met at the door by head teacher Berta G. and Angélica who is currently substituting for the K-1st grade teacher on maternity leave. A third teacher is absent today. Berta, a native of Tarija, has been teaching here at Kayarani for three years, implementing bilingual education under the 1994 National Education Reform. She began with her class from the start of their schooling; they are now in 2nd-3rd grade.

A new school building was inaugurated last year and the rooms are nice, with tables and chairs that can be set up for group work. Berta's classroom, the only one I observed, is decorated with a lot of posters she's made in Quechua, including models of a story, a poem, a song, a recipe, a letter; as well as both the Quechua and Spanish alphabets (which she has the students recite for me later). Also on the wall is the class newspaper, *Llaqta Qapariy* (Voice of the People), featuring an article in Quechua written by student Caestino about farmers' wanting better prices for their potatoes.

A key provision of the Bolivian Education Reform is the establishment of a library in every primary classroom of the nation, each one stocked with a collection of 80 books provided by the Ministry of Education through the auspices of UNESCO. Included are 6 Big Books in Spanish, 3 of them based on oral traditions in Quechua, Aymara, and Guarani, respectively: *El Zorro, el Puma y los Otros* (The Fox, the Puma, and the Others); *La Oveja y el Zorro* (The Sheep and the Fox); *La Chiva Desobediente* (The Disobedient Goat). The Big Books are approximately 18" x 24", with large print text and colorful illustrations, such that the pictures can be seen by the whole class if the teacher holds the book up in front of the class in a reading circle. Berta's classroom, too, has a library corner housing a small collection including a couple of Big Books, and she calls on a child to come to the front of the class to read one of the Big Books aloud to his classmates. Ironically, she holds the book facing the child in such a way that none of the other children can see the illustrations. The students begin to stand up and come closer to see, but Berta admonishes them to sit down and listen. Later, after the class leaves for recess, a couple of the children notice my interest in the Big Books and come over to gleefully hold the books up for a photo.

The contentious local practice I am drawing attention to here is the use of indigenous oral tradition within the Spanish language literacy materials of the Reform -- an instance of *minority, vernacular, contextualised content* in the second language. Given that, in the Bakhtinian sense, an individual develops a sense of self through incorporating the languages, dialects, genres, and words of others to which she has been exposed, such a practice, I suggest, offers a familiar "voice" for students to incorporate in their own voices.

Biliteracy context, dialogic engagement, circulating discourses: Guarani in Paraguay in the 1990s

The third theme and set of continua as instantiated in contentious local practice are that of dialogic engagement and circulating discourses in relation to the contexts of biliteracy. The following vignette recounts an experience during another consulting trip, this one to Paraguay.

Ministry of Education - Curriculum, Asunción, Paraguay (4 October 2001)

Growing a generation of writers

I spent one morning with members of the Curriculum team at the Ministry of Education and their consultants Delicia Villagra and Nelson Aguilera, brainstorming the design for Guarani and Spanish language and literature curriculum for the secondary level. Paraguay's Bilingual Education Reform introduced Guarani as language of instruction alongside Spanish, beginning in 1st grade in 1993 and progressively adding one grade each year; 2001 would complete the primary cycle (grades 1-9) and Guarani instruction at the secondary level was to be introduced for the first time in February 2002.

The complexity of issues needing to be addressed are staggering; not only is this the first time in South America (to our knowledge) that an indigenous language with relatively little tradition of technical, scientific, or literary use will be introduced into the secondary curriculum, but there are also unresolved issues lingering from the past nine years of primary bilingual education in Paraguay, including a lack of bilingual teacher preparation, inadequate language teaching methodology, lack of consensus on which Guarani to use in the schools, and negative attitudes towards the use of Guarani in the schools from some parents and communities. Not to mention the exponentially escalating demand for and market in English language education in the schools. None of these challenges is unique to Guarani; in fact these "problems in the socio-educational legitimization of languages / varieties" (Fishman 1982:4-6) regularly attend the introduction of vernacular languages into education worldwide, historically and in the present. Nevertheless, they are very real challenges which the Curriculum Department must address in order to advance the use of Guarani in secondary education.

For the time being, as a pragmatic measure, the team has opted to require the teaching of Guarani literature through the medium of Guarani, while leaving the medium of instruction for other curricular areas at the secondary level --such as math, science, and social studies-- up to the decision of each school. As a strategy toward the promotion of Guarani, the team plans to orient the Guarani language and literature curriculum strongly toward production of texts in a variety

of genres, the goal being to create a generation of confident and prolific Guarani writers who will in turn develop and intellectualize the language, so that it can subsequently be introduced into all areas of the secondary curriculum.

The contentious local practice I am drawing attention to here is the ecological approach to use of Spanish as medium of instruction alongside Guarani, even in the midst of a reform calling for the strengthening of Guarani. In terms of the continua of biliterate context, this is a case of ceding some ground to the more powerful monolingual, literate, macro ends, while simultaneously attempting to gain ground at the multilingual, oral, micro ends. Given that dialogic selves are animated by discourses circulating locally and beyond, such a practice attempts to offer a chance for students to incorporate Spanish and Guarani discourses in their own, thereby contributing to the students' academic and biliteracy development.

Biliteracy media and the active stance: Maori in New Zealand beginning in the 1980s

The fourth theme and set of continua as instantiated in contentious local practice are those of the active stance in relation to the media of biliteracy. The following is a vignette from my first visit to a Maori school.

Kura kaupapa Maori, Hamilton (28 June 2002)

What do you think of bilingual education?

We three --my colleague Stephen May of the University of Waikato, his colleague Karaitiana Tamatea, parent and former *whanau* (extended family) leader at the school, and I-- enter the *kura kaupapa Maori* (Maori immersion school) following the traditional protocol (*powhiri*), which means that the assistant principal (in the principal's absence) greets us with a chant while we are still outside the premises, and then we slowly enter, exchanging chants with her as we do. After a continuation of this protocol inside one of the classrooms where all 80 children (grades 1-6) are gathered for our visit, we are invited to a different room for refreshments. Because of the strict prohibition on the use of English anywhere on the school premises at all times, this is the only room where I, a non-Maori

speaker, can have a conversation with teachers, staff, and leadership of the school.

I am introduced to the current whanau leader. Here, as is the case for the 58 other kura kaupapa schools in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the whanau has been indispensable in the establishment and existence of the kura kaupapa. The school exists in the first place only by initiative of the whanau; and only after two years of running the school themselves may they appeal for government recognition and support. This school was founded in 1995 and gained recognition and its own school building and grounds several years ago.

The whanau leader asks me "What do you think of bilingual education?" As I formulate my answer and engage in further dialogue with him, it suddenly dawns on me that for him, bilingual education and Maori immersion are opposites, while for me they are located on a continuum. Maori-only ideology is of such integral and foundational importance to Maori immersion that the use of two languages (English and Maori) suggested by the term bilingual is antithetical to those dedicated to Maori revitalisation.

The contentious local practice I am drawing attention to here is the absolute prohibition on English language use on the *kura kaupapa* grounds, an instance, in terms of the continua of biliteracy, of successive exposure to the media of biliteracy, strictly enforced. Given that, in Bakhtinian terms, speakers not only use the words of others, but take active stances with respect to those words, this practice, I suggest, represents an active stance taken by the *kura kaupapa* to maximise activation of indigenous student voice and indigenous language revitalisation.

A famous teacher of Maori children, Sylvia Ashton-Warner, understood the importance of indigenous student voice, even though, ironically, she taught through the medium of English. In the 1930s, she developed and used an approach she called organic reading and organic writing, described in her book *Teacher*. She writes: "first words must mean something to a child" and again, "first words must have intense meaning for a child. They must be part of his being" (1963:33). She continues, commenting on the writings of her Maori students:

These books they write are the most dramatic and pathetic and colourful things I've ever seen on pages. But they are private and they are confidences and we don't criticise their content. Whether we read that he hates school or that my house is to be burned down or about the brawl in the *pa* (Maori village) last night the issue is the same: it is always not what is said but the freedom to say (1963:52-54)

By extraordinary measures, she was able to activate her students' voice, even without primary use of their language. How much more often is it the case that denial of students' language also strips them of their voice?

Conclusion

Haugen argued that language itself is not a problem, but language used as a basis for discrimination *is* (1973). McCarty, considering the struggle for self-determination among Native people in the United States, concludes that while "language *can* be an instrument of cultural and linguistic oppression, [it] can also be a vehicle for advancing human rights and minority community empowerment" (2003: 160). It is, I suggest, the activation of indigenous voice that tilts use of the indigenous language away from discrimination and oppression and toward emancipation, self-determination, and empowerment.

Giroux tells us that 'Language represents a central force in the struggle for voice ... language is able to shape the way various individuals and groups encode and thereby engage the world' (Giroux 1986: 59, cited in Ruiz 1997: 320). This is as true for immigrant as for indigenous language minority students. Maxine Hong Kingston, who wrote the forward for the republication of *Teacher* in 1963, writes in her novel *Woman Warrior* about silencing and voice for Chinese children in school in America:

When I went to kindergarten and had to speak English for the first time, I became silent....My silence was thickest -- total-- during the three years that I covered my school paintings with black paint..... During the first silent year I spoke to no one at school, did not ask before going to the lavatory, and flunked kindergarten. ... I enjoyed the silence. At first it did not occur to me I was supposed to talk or to pass kindergarten. I talked at home and to one or two of the Chinese kids in class. I made motions and even made some jokes..... I liked the Negro students (Black Ghosts) best because they laughed the loudest and talked to me as if I were a daring talker too....

It was when I found out I had to talk that school became a misery, the silence became a misery. I did not speak and felt bad each time that I did not speak. ... The other Chinese girls did not talk either, so I knew the silence had to do with being a Chinese girl.

After American school, we picked up our cigar boxes, in which we had arranged books, brushes, and an inkbox neatly, and went to Chinese school, from 5:00 to 7:30 pm. There we chanted together, voices rising and falling, loud and soft, some boys shouting, everybody reading together, reciting together and not alone with one voice.... Not all of the children who were silent at American school found voice at Chinese school. (Kingston 1975: 165-168)

True enough, not all indigenous or language minority children find voice through use of their own language in school. "It's much more than language," ethnographer Freeman is told as she sets out to document Washington D.C.'s Oyster School's bilingual language plan and ends up writing about their identity plan (Freeman 1998). Ruiz, too, has warned us that:

As much as language and voice are related, it is also important to distinguish between them. I have become convinced of the need for this distinction through a consideration of instances of language planning in which the 'inclusion' of the language of a group has coincided with the exclusion of their voice... Language is general, abstract, subject to a somewhat arbitrary normalization; voice is particular and concrete. Language has a life of its own -- it exists even when it is suppressed; when voice is suppressed, it is not heard -- it does not exist. To deny people their language, as in the colonial situations described by Fanon (1967) and Macedo (1983), is, to be sure, to deny them voice; but, to allow them "their" language ... is not necessarily to allow them voice. (Ruiz 1997: 320-321)

Perhaps it is not necessarily so, but what I have tried to show here is that, though it may be that not all indigenous children find voice through use of their language, many of them do; and when they do, it is perhaps because of the ways that the use of their own language as medium of instruction mediates the dialogism, meaning-making, access to wider discourses, and taking of an active stance that are dimensions of voice. And it is that indigenous voice, or those indigenous voices, thus activated, that can be a powerful

force for both enhancing the children's own learning and promoting the maintenance and revitalisation of their own languages.

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² This and the following two paragraphs are taken from Hornberger 2002a: 366-367, with minor revisions.