

Attitudes towards the Maori Language

Source: Government www.tpk.govt.nz

Purpose: To assess non Maori and Maori attitudes towards the Maori language.

Summary: The report shows us the attitude towards the Maori language, by Maori and non-Maori over a six year period 2000 – 2006. The report also contains the revised Maori language strategy and Government action towards the goals set to achieve by 2028. The report also shows the attitudes of non- Maori and Maori towards Government action as well as Maori language. ①

Evaluation

The variables within the survey, non-Maori and Maori create an issue. It is not stated within the report what racial groups non-Maori covers. It is a very generalist term and could present possible errors of judgement as to the attitudes of non-Maori towards the Maori language. It needs to be specified what racial groups non-Maori includes for us to actually develop an understanding of non-Maori attitudes towards Maori language. We need to know who the non-Maori are before we can assess their attitudes. Another problem is within the non-Maori variable is if we think of NZ as bicultural there is a high possibility that the non-Maori sample was not representative proportion wise of the minority groups within the non-Maori groups as a whole. The measures are the percentages of replies to the questions. ②

Three surveys took place over a six year period. The survey method was to conduct 1500 telephone surveys (not specified what area these calls were made). However the response rate (percent of people who agree to take part) for the 2006 survey was 24.3% for Maori and 22.5% for non-Maori which means only 702 of the 1500 people have actually partaken in the 2006 survey. ④ ⑥

The report does not say how the 1500 people were selected or what area these calls were made to. The sampling method used to generate 1500 telephone to survey is not specified. It would have been a good idea for it to have been included in the report. That way we would have had a better understanding to whether or not the group of people sampled came from minorities or were evenly distributed throughout the country. The method chosen is also valuable information the report should have included to help us assess the possible bias within the statistics shown in the report. ③

Another important thing to note is that only two of the three surveys happened after the revised strategy was released. This could have contributed to the non-Maori respondents answer to the “well spoken Maori is a beautiful thing to listen to”, The percentage agreeing with this increased dramatically in 2006 – possibly because strategy combined with Government efforts made non-Maori more aware of the language. ⑤

The presentation of the data within the report is clear and easy to follow. However the actual data gathered is informative and difficult to draw conclusions from e.g. in the 2000 samples there is no data available for the Maori survey for three of the questions asked. It is the same in the non-Maori section. This shows us that these questions were not asked in 2003 and 2006, this is unfair because for us to draw valid conclusions we would expect the survey to be the same each of the three times it was undertaken. Even if the circumstances had changed (no Maori TV in 2000 therefore no Maori TV question in 2000). The questions should not have been varied.

The conclusion of the report is correct in indicating that there are increasingly high levels of positive attitudes towards the language amongst non-Maori for the data clearly indicates this. All statements within the conclusion are correct to the information within the report.

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The results of the three surveys of attitudes towards the Maori language have gathered insufficient results to really get a valid conclusion on the attitudes towards the Maori language by all New Zealanders. However the report is well presented and the data gives a good general idea but is not sufficient information when it comes to gauging the attitudes of Maori and non-Maori towards the language and the Governments attempts to revitalise it. For us to gain a more accurate idea of the attitudes more surveys should have been conducted with 1500 respondents not 702