

‘French adds to its owner’s culture and general intelligence’.  
The politics of subject languages in New Zealand schools: The  
first fifty years.

(1870s – 1920s)

Sharon Harvey

Auckland University of Technology

Presented at

University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies

“The Politics of Teaching and Learning Languages: a Conference on the Occasion of the Centenary of SSEES’s Establishment”

September 2015

# Language policy and planning

- Field of language policy is about language and its role in social life (Ricento, 2006) (and therefore education as well) and is a field of power
- 'Decisions about which languages will be planned for what purposes ultimately reflect power relations among different groups and sociopolitical and economic interests.' (Ricento, 2006, pp. 5-6)
- 'Language is the architecture of social behaviour itself' (Blommaert, 2009, p.263)
- 'And of course education planning in and out of school is a major site for language planning – what happens and what does not -McCarty - 3
- Education in and out of school is a key domain in which language policies play their role (McCarty 2011 p.3)
- Difference between evolved systems and designed systems (Halliday)

## As LPP researchers:

- 'We seek not only amelioration of people's linguistic conditions, but - with Bakhtin – we need to challenge the foundations of linguistic discrimination and inequity' – with something fundamental and comprehensive (Hymes as cited in Bell, 2014, p. 329)
- 'There is no “view from nowhere”, no gaze that is not positioned' (Irvine and Gal (2000) as cited in Bell 2014, p. 256)

# Subject languages in NZ schools

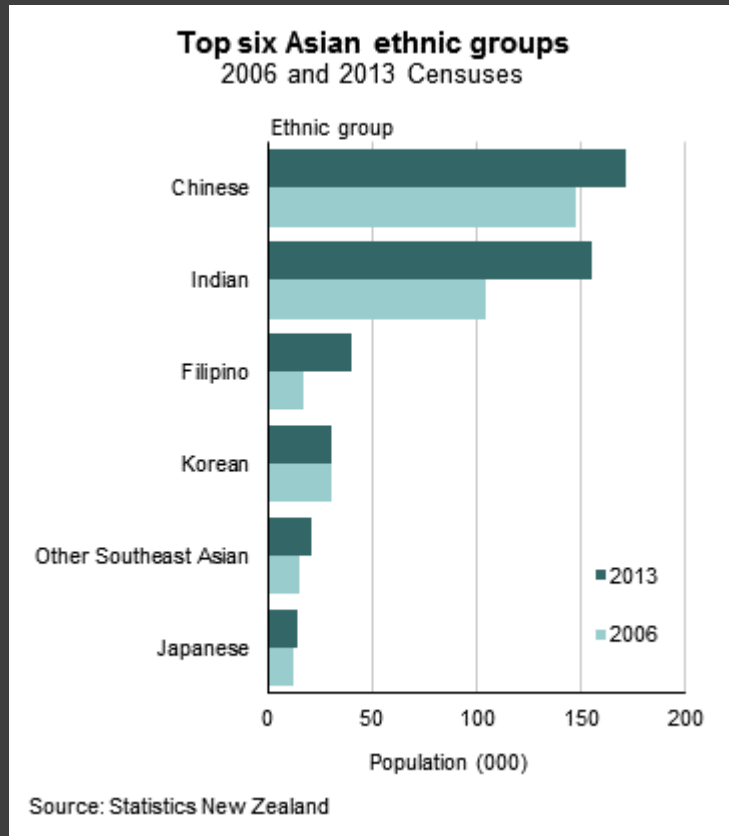
- So the questions here: How/when and where did we get our view on what languages should be taught in schools? How does it reverberate through time to produce what we do today?
- What should the factors be that bring a language into schools?
- Discourses of racism, colonialism recirculating through time and bodies???
- ‘...the traces left by colonialism run deep’ Pennycook (1998 p.2)
- ‘Monolingualism... encourages native English speakers to feel a false sense of superiority, to talk too much, to listen too little. They may even leave the impression of an arrogance, rooted in imperialist attitudes, that is only prepared to communicate on its own terms, under conditions which ensure its own superiority’ (Trim, J. as cited in Pachler, 2007, p.6)

# The Aotearoa / NZ language context

- New Zealand is overwhelmingly monolingual in English (about 80% of population)  
BUT
- Re-emergent partial bilingualism among Māori (only about 4% of population)
- NZ Sign became an official language – *de jure* - 2006
- Privately NZers speak more than 160 languages
- Growing multilingualism through migration and immigrant groups
- Some presence of multilingualism through education – viz French and Japanese



# Growth of ethnic diversity in New Zealand



- Ethnic diversity is increasing in New Zealand - there are more ethnicities than countries in the world in NZ – now considered superdiverse
- Five largest ethnic groups are NZ European, Māori, Chinese, Samoan, and Indian
- Biggest increases within the Asian category since the 2006 Census
  - Chinese – up 16%
  - Indian – up 48%
  - Filipino – more than 50%
- Increases in the largest Pacific ethnic groups
  - Samoan – up 10%
  - Cook Island Maori – up 7%
  - Tongan – up almost 20%

# Learning Languages

- Te Reo Māori
- NZSL
- Cook Islands Māori
- Samoan
- Tokelauan
- Tongan
- Niue
- Japanese
- Chinese
- French
- German
- Latin
- Spanish

# Changes in numbers of students learning 'additional' languages in NZ secondary schools

Ministry of Education. (2014). Time series data for trend analysis 1996-2013.

Numbers of students learning language in Years 9-13	2008	2013	Changes
			(2008-2013)
French	28,245	21,570	-6,675
Japanese	18,157	12,044	-6,113
Spanish	10,900	11,680	780
German	6,251	4,477	-1,774
Chinese	1,891	3,277	1,386
Samoan	2,311	2,391	80
Latin	2339	1,501	-838
Tongan	220	540	320
Other languages	1174	453	-721
Cook Island Māori	117	269	152
Korean	45	77	32
Niuean	80	46	-34
Tokelauan	0	24	24
Russian	0	2	2
Indonesian	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>71,730</b>	<b>58,351</b>	<b>-13,379</b>



# Young, Indian and (maybe?) Hindi speaking in NZ



रामः सीतानमुद्रां पतन्व पतन्व ब्रजानुगमन् ॥२१॥  
तामुवाच ततो रामः परुषं जनसंसदि ।  
अमृष्यमाणा सा सीता विवेश ज्वलनं सती ॥२२॥  
ततो ऽग्निवचनात्सीतां ज्ञात्वा विगतकल्मषाम्  
कर्मणा तेन महता त्रैलोक्यं सचराचरम् ॥२३॥  
सदेवर्षिगणं तुष्टं राघवस्य महात्मनः ।  
बभौ रामः संप्रहृष्टः पूजितः सर्वदैवतैः ॥२४॥  
अभिषिच्य च लङ्कायां राक्षसेन्द्रं विभीषणम् ।  
कृतकृत्यस्तदा रामो विज्वरः प्रमुमोद ह ॥२५॥





# Indian languages spoken in NZ

*Data compiled from 1996-2013 censuses*

Language	1996	2001	2006	2013
Hindi	12,879	22,749	44,589	66,309
Panjabi	2,940	5,541	10,713	19,752
Gujarati	8,757	11,145	15,870	17,502
Sinhala	2,007	3,213	3,918	5,220
Urdu	1,503	2,946	4,248	5,046
Marathi	318	864	2,565	2,904
Bengali	1,353	1,464	2,265	2,418
<b>Total speakers of Indian languages</b>	<b>29,757</b>	<b>47,922</b>	<b>84,168</b>	<b>119,151</b>



THE COMING ARTIST.

National Library of New Zealand. (n.d.). Blomfield, William, 1866-1938 :The coming artist. New Zealand Observer, 26 April 1919 [page 13]

# Foucault?

- Foucauldian theory helpful because it challenges us to think differently about the present - avoid a heroisation of the present
- To think how things could be 'other' than what they are
- One way is to trace back along the continuities and discontinuities (fractures) of history – a series of 'accidents' that could have resulted in something different from what we have today
- The archaeological dig – in this case primarily a policy history (where I have looked)

Foucault, M., & Kritzmann, L. (1988). *Politics, philosophy, culture: Interviews and other writings, 1977-1984*. New York: Routledge.

# Taking the 'long view' of language learning and teaching

And I've found particularly people are so keen to show that their work is on the cutting edge of new developments that they are reluctant to really see to what extent and in what ways the current problems and also possible solutions are grounded in the experience of the past (John Trim in Interview with Smith and McLelland 2014)

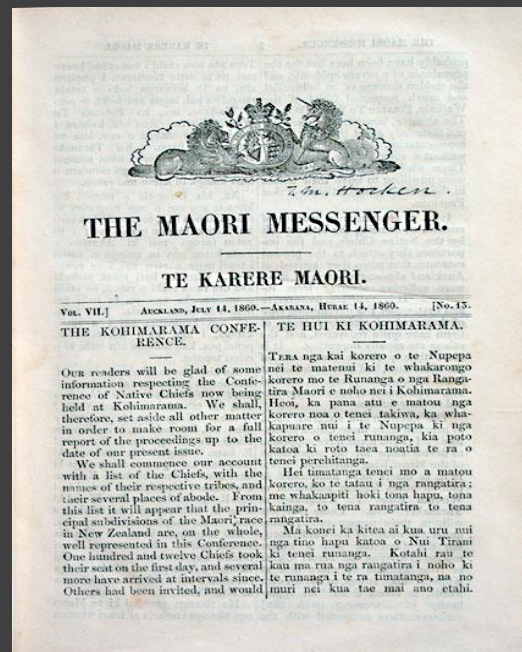
Charting the history of language teaching and learning will, in turn, make us all better informed in facing challenges and changes to policy and practice now and in the future. It is instructive in the current climate, for example, to realize that grave doubts were held about whether second foreign languages could survive alongside French in British schools in the early twentieth century (McLelland, forthcoming), or to look back at earlier attempts to establish foreign languages in primary schools (Bayley, 1989; Burstall et al., 1974; Hoy, 1977)

(McLelland and Smith 2014 p.1)

# First Education Act 1847

- In every school to be established or supported by public funds under the provisions of this Ordinance, religious education, industrial training, and instruction in the **English language** shall form a necessary part of the system to be pursued therein; No X
- English for all, including Māori - (Mackey 1967)

# Māori, language and literacy





# 1877 Education Act — establishment of free and compulsory primary education and high schools

*All the branches of a liberal education, comprising Latin and Greek classics, French and other modern languages, mathematics, and such other branches of science as the advancement of the colony and the increase of the population may from time to time require, may be taught in such school. (no 56)*



# Auckland Girls' Grammar 1906



# Esperanto

Published in: Wairarapa Daily Times, Volume LVI, Issue 8631, 13 December 1906, Page 5  
Sir Joseph Ward - Prime Minister of New Zealand (1906-1912/1928–1930)

Sir Joseph, speaking at the breaking-up of the Napier High School, to-day, took occasion to refer to the advantages of a knowledge of Esperanto, the universal language. He referred to the perfect babel at the recent International Congress, which he had attended, where interpreters had to be engaged for all kinds of languages, and those who did not understand French missed a great deal of what was being said. He considered that it was highly desirable that the teaching of Esperanto should be introduced into the curriculum of the State schools. He admitted it might take a few years to educate people up to accepting this suggestion, but it was not many years since shorthand and typewriting were looked upon as almost impossible of adoption, and now, of course, they were almost universal in commercial offices. He had at the moment a letter from a man in a high educational position in the colony impressing upon him the fact that he and many others were agreed upon the point that in addition to teaching French, Latin and German in the schools they should teach this "universal language." It could be mastered easily in six months, whereas French, Latin and German could not be mastered in less than three years even by smart linguists.

- Advantages of learning Esperanto
  - universal language, mastered in six months
- Perfect 'babel' at multilingual congress
- Those who didn't understand French missed out
- 'French Latin and German could not be mastered in less than three years even by smart linguists'

LATIN IN SCHOOLS – an absolute necessity for the professional and business man/ essential of a liberal education/provided better understanding of mother tongue

German preferable and more important for the modern world than French

‘...I would rather see German taken than French, as I think the German people are going to exercise the greatest possible influence and power in the world, for which reason a knowledge of their language and literature is likely to be more useful than a knowledge of French’

Otago Daily Times , Issue 15108, 3 April 1911, Page 2

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

AUCKLAND, April 2.

The chairman of the Auckland Education Board (Mr C. J. Parr) is an advocate of Latin in schools. "I think there is no better intellectual discipline and mental training than that imparted by a full course of Latin," he said. "It is, in fact," he declared, "an absolute necessity for the well-trained professional mind. Furthermore, most business men who have received a college training will, I think, admit the value of their Latin course. I think that, notwithstanding modern developments, Latin should still be given a prominent place in any efficient grammar school curriculum. I know I shall be accused of being rather old-fashioned in my view, but I speak as one who has been through the mill, and who has children now at our secondary schools. Many educational authorities, no doubt, think that German would be a more useful thing than Latin. Mr Hogben, I believe, is of this opinion, but already in our grammar schools French is taught as a modern language, and if a change is to be made, I would rather see German taken than French, as I think the German people are going to exercise the greatest possible influence and power in the world, for which reason a knowledge of their language and literature is likely to be more useful than a knowledge of French. There is an evident tendency at the present time to substitute scientific studies—utility studies, if I may so term them—for the old classical system of study, and for the mass of the community this is advisable; but for your leaders of thought, your captains of industry, your professional men, you must keep Latin as one of the essentials of a truly liberal education. I am quite satisfied that nothing gives a man a better understanding of his mother tongue than a training in the Latin language, the language of the ancient Romans, whose tongue, though dead as a common speech, is still living in its influence on most of the languages of Western Europe," concluded Mr Parr.

# Benefit of language learning to English (until English teaching improves)

W.J. Morrell

for the Education Commission 1912 (p.235)

I believe that an equally good course may be given, ultimately, at any rate, without the inclusion of a foreign language, but at the present time I do not believe it would be so good. I think it is not an exaggeration to say that the teaching of English is more or less in an experimental stage in education generally. No doubt picked teachers are able to teach it with equal benefit to a foreign language, but I do not believe that is true, generally speaking; and if it is not true in England it is certainly less true in New Zealand. What I believe is that Latin or some foreign language is at present a necessity. I am aware that there are educational experts of name who think differently, but I have on my side the opinion of the majority of educational experts, and the authorities in England, Germany, and, I would say, the United States.



# 1914 Education Act

## New Zealand.



- An Act to make Better Provision for the Education of the People of New Zealand. *5th November, 1914*
- Included establishment of technical schools and education for differently abled (establishment of special schools)
- Technical instruction" means instruction in the principles of any specified science or art as applied to industries, accompanied by individual laboratory or workshop practice, or instruction in **modern languages**, or in such other subjects connected with industrial, commercial, agricultural, or domestic pursuits as are prescribed:



# THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

Marlborough Express, Volume LIII, Issue 49, 27 February 1919, Page 4

The University Senate is to be commended for the action it has taken in establishing a travelling scholarship for the study of the French language and literature. French is the special language of diplomaey. It is the language in which is written one of the richest and noblest of the world's literatures; it is a language a knowledge of which adds most substantially to its owner's culture and general intelligence. It is, therefore, a language the study of which is worthy of the highest encouragement by our educational authorities, and that quite apart from the new and permanent bond of national sympathy and union which has been so firmly established by the alliance of the British and French nations during the four long years of fighting for the sacred cause of liberty, truth, and justice.



A GALLIC SHRUG



Fernando  
Pereira







AND STILL THEY COME!

AGE OF DISENCHANTMENT

Neckline and D.W.

most incident it would not perhaps

1

Christel

AN EN  
OF EX

by the  
will be  
F.H.L.  
were a  
with pro-  
het had  
been ch-  
rity. A  
whether  
with pr-  
ing as I  
for a few  
education  
king to  
having  
social  
hadn't  
church  
he has  
the war  
price of  
consider  
could be  
Worship  
British  
put in the  
company  
found a  
new treat-  
ment of  
3 per cent  
of interest  
works a  
time and  
West A-  
that the  
a "anti-  
phony" is  
the real

For the

ARTHUR  
PEVER

National Library of New Zealand. (n.d.). Gilmour, Jack, 1892-1951 : And still they come! Wellington, New Zealand truth, the people's paper. 21 February 1925 (Ref: A-315-3-045)

# Trends and issues in language learning

- Continual tussle over who needs to learn Latin and to a lesser extent Greek – not necessary for commercial students?
- Modern languages and particularly French taught in commercial courses
- Primary importance of learning 'the mother tongue' – English
- French, German, Latin and Greek taught in NZ secondary schools in different amounts depending on the nature of the school. Classical languages more important for
- Political power and international profile exerts influence on people's views – German and French at different times
- Some interest in and pressure for Esperanto
- Post war - more pressure for languages (communication for peace) – not just a technical education – viz Christs College

# Reverberations through to today

- Emphasis on the importance of English ‘the mother tongue’
- Popular disdain for ‘Babel’ of multiple languages and idea of one perfect language for communication (then Esperanto/now English)
- No LOTEs in primary school – not considered – primacy of English
- Popularity and importance of French – modern, language of our ally
- International profile and history more important than what languages already in country
- Debates over the importance of Latin and Classics, more generally

# References

- Bayley, S. (1989). 'Life is too short to learn German': Modern languages in English elementary education, 1872-1904. *History of Education: Journal of the History of Education Society*, 18(1), 57-70. doi:10.1080/0046760890180104
- Bell, A. (2014). *The guidebook to sociolinguistics*. Chichester, England: Wiley Blackwell.
- Blomfield, J. (1919). The coming artist (Vol. XXXIX, Issue 34, pp. 13): New Zealand Observer.
- Blommaert, J. (2009). Language policy and national identity. In T. Ricento (Ed.), *An introduction to language policy: Theory and method* (pp. 238-255). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Education Act 1847.
- Education Act 1877.
- Education Act 1914.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977* (C. Gordon, L. Marshall, J. Mepham, & K. Soper, Trans.). Brighton, England: Harvester Press.
- Foucault, M., & Kitzmann, L. (1988). *Politics, philosophy, culture: Interviews and other writings, 1977-1984*. New York: Routledge.
- Hymes, D. H. (1974). *Foundations in sociolinguistics: An ethnographic approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Kaplan, R. B. (1994). Language policy and planning in New Zealand. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 14, 156-176.
- Kaplan, R. B., & Baldauf, R. B., Jr. (2003). *Language and language-in-education planning in the pacific basin*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Freeman, D. (2008). Language moves: The place of "foreign" languages in classroom teaching and learning. *Review of Research in Education*, 32, 147-185. doi:10.3102/0091732X07309426
- Mackey, J. (Ed.). (1967). *The making of a state education system: The passing of the New Zealand Education Act, 1877* (1st ed.). London, England: Chapman.
- McCarty, T. (2011). Introducing ethnography and language policy. In T. McCarty (Ed.), *Ethnography and language policy* (pp. 1-21). New York, NY: Routledge.
- McHoul, A., & Grace, W. (1993). *A Foucault primer: Discourse, power and the subject*. Melbourne, Australia: Melbourne University Press.
- Ministry of Education. (2014). *Time series data for trend analysis 1996-2013*. Retrieved from [http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/schooling/july\\_school\\_roll\\_returns/6028](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/schooling/july_school_roll_returns/6028)
- National Library of New Zealand. (n.d.). *Gilmour, Jack, 1892-1951 :And still they come! Wellington, New Zealand truth, the people's paper. 21 February 1925 (Ref: A-315-3-045)*. Retrieved September, 2015, from <http://natlib.govt.nz/records/22630488>
- Pachler, N. (2007). Choices in language education: Principles and policies. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 37(1), 1-15. doi:10.1080/03057640601178782
- Pennycook, A. (1998). *English and the discourses of colonialism*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Report of the Education Commission, Appendix to the journals of the House of Representatives, 1912 Session II, 1-13. Retrieved from <http://atojs.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/atojs?a=d&d=AJHR1912-II.2.5.2.21&e=-----10--1-----2%22Papers+relating+to+the+introduction+of+salmon+ova%22-->
- Ricento, T. (2006). Language policy: Theory and practice - An introduction. In T. Ricento (Ed.), *An introduction to language policy: Theory and method* (pp. 10-24). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Smith, R., & McLelland, N. (2014). An interview with John Trim (1924-2013) on the history of modern language learning and teaching. *Language and History*, 57(1), 10-25.
- Statistics New Zealand. (2013). *2013 Census Statistics by Topic*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand. Retrieved from <http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/data-tables/total-by-topic.aspx>
- Trim, J. (2004). *A vision for the future. UK MFL capability and the learner*. presented at the meeting of the NLS Research Seminar held at the British Academy (Unpublished address).