Promoting a minority language to majority language speakers: television advertising about the Māori language targeting non-Māori New Zealanders

Julia de Bres

Laboratory of Luxembourgish Linguistics and Literatures, University of Luxembourg, Route de Diekirch/BP2, Walferdange L-7201, Luxembourg

(Received 9 April 2010; final version received 28 July 2010)

It has been claimed that the success of minority language policy initiatives may only be achievable if at least some degree of ‘tolerability’ of these initiatives is secured among majority language speakers. There has, however, been little consideration in the language planning literature of what practical approaches might be used to influence the attitudes of majority language speakers towards minority languages, that is to ‘plan for tolerability’. This article considers the approach taken in two recent television advertisements that address the attitudes and behaviours of non-Māori New Zealanders towards the Māori language. It begins by examining the discursive approach taken in these advertisements, the attitudinal messages they convey about the Māori language and the behaviours they propose for non-Māori New Zealanders. The article then discusses the responses of 80 non-Māori viewers of the advertisements, considering the extent to which they perceived the intended messages of the advertisements and how their responses were influenced by their existing attitudes towards the Māori language. On this basis, the article assesses the potential effectiveness of using language promotion materials as a means of planning for the tolerability of the Māori language among non-Māori New Zealanders.

Keywords: minority languages; language revitalisation; language planning; language attitudes; discourse analysis; advertising

Introduction

The attitudes and behaviours of majority language speakers can have a significant impact on minority languages. This can include contributing to a language becoming minoritised in the first place through institutional measures, reacting negatively to the use of a minority language in public, influencing the language attitudes of minority language speakers themselves and resisting minority language regeneration efforts in the present (de Bres 2008a). May (2003, 335) terms such opposition from majority language speakers towards minority languages ‘the problem of tolerability’, and claims that the long-term success of minority language policy initiatives may only be achievable if some degree of favourable opinion, or ‘tolerability’, of these initiatives is secured among majority language speakers (May 2000).

One language situation where the problem of tolerability can be identified is that of the Māori language, the language of the indigenous people of New Zealand. The
Māori language underwent rapid language shift in favour of English after the colonisation of New Zealand in the nineteenth century. Significant language regeneration activity has occurred since the 1970s, led by Māori communities and more recently supported by official government Māori language planning. Notably, status planning in this area has included the Māori Language Act 1987, which established Māori as an official language of New Zealand, the creation of the Māori Language Commission (MLC) to promote the language and the development of a government-wide strategy for the Māori language in the 1990s (MLC 1996). The government has also provided support for a number of initiatives in education (e.g. Māori medium pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education) and the media (e.g. funding for Māori medium radio stations and the establishment of a Māori television channel). Despite this activity, the Māori language remains in a precarious position. The 2006 census identified 157,110 speakers of Māori, 131,613 of whom were Māori. This amounts to 23.7% of the Māori population in New Zealand, but as Māori make up only 14.6% of the national population, the proportion of speakers countrywide is very low. Less than 1% of non-Māori New Zealanders can speak Māori and research has consistently shown that the attitudes of non-Māori towards the Māori language are considerably less positive than those of Māori (see Boyce 2005 for a review). In a context where Māori make up only a small proportion of the population and English is the dominant language of public life, the attitudes and behaviours of non-Māori New Zealanders are likely to be one factor influencing the future of the Māori language. With this in mind, the New Zealand Government has recognised the importance of the attitudes and behaviours of non-Māori New Zealanders towards the Māori language since the beginning of its development of a strategic plan for Māori language regeneration (MLC 1996). The current government Māori Language Strategy states, for example, that:

Māori language use is affected by the overall social environment in New Zealand. People who use the Māori language interact with others on a regular basis and encounter the language attitudes of the non-Māori majority through these interactions. To revitalise the language it is necessary for wider New Zealand society to value the language and support a positive linguistic environment. (Te Puni Kōkiri 2003a, 27)

Once the problem of tolerability has been recognised in a minority language situation, however, how can language planners address it? There has been little consideration in the literature of what language policy approaches can be used to ‘plan for tolerability’, that is, to engage in minority language planning targeting the attitudes and behaviours of majority language speakers. A recent analysis shows that such planning has, however, occurred for some time both in New Zealand and elsewhere (see de Bres 2008a). This article focuses on the main means of planning for tolerability used in the New Zealand context: language promotion campaigns. Promoting Māori as a living language and a natural means of communication was one of the core functions assigned to the MLC at its creation in 1987. The target of this promotion was intended to be the Māori population primarily and, secondarily, the New Zealand population as a whole (Chrisp 1997, 101). There have been a range of discrete Māori language promotion campaigns with a partial focus on non-Māori New Zealanders, including the annual ‘Te Wiki o te Reo Māori’ (‘Māori Language Week’), the ‘Into Te Reo’ (Into the [Māori] Language’) campaign in 2000 and the ‘NZ Reo/NZ Pride’ campaign in 2003. Until recently, such promotional activities
have been undertaken by the MLC on a sporadic basis due to funding restrictions. Since 2004, however, the MLC has been provided with funding of NZ$1 million a year for ‘Māori Language Information Programme’, with the dual intended outcome that ‘more Māori will use reo Māori and that all New Zealanders will value the Māori language’ (MLC 2004, 6). In recent years, language promotion materials with a full or partial focus on non-Māori New Zealanders produced within the above campaigns include television advertisements, a series of ‘Kōrero Māori’ (‘speak Māori’) phrase booklets and a website (http://www.koreromāori.govt.nz).

This article concentrates on two television advertisements produced by the MLC to promote the Māori language to Māori and non-Māori New Zealanders.

Using television advertising as a medium for Māori language promotion is interesting in itself, given the low presence of Māori language on mainstream television in New Zealand. In general, languages other than English are uncommonly used on New Zealand television, although an increase in Māori language use is notable on the mainstream television news, for example, Māori greetings at the beginning of news programmes and Māori pronunciation of place names during weather reports. Since 2003, viewers have also been exposed to more extensive Māori language in the form of Māori Television, a Māori-medium television channel that in fact has a higher audience among non-Māori than among Māori (e.g. Māori Television Service 2007). The analysis in this article begins by examining the discursive approach taken in the two advertisements, the attitudinal messages they convey about the Māori language and the behaviours they propose for non-Māori New Zealanders. This is complemented by consideration of the creators’ documented intentions in creating these advertisements. The article then discusses the responses of 80 non-Māori viewers of the advertisements, considering the extent to which they perceived the intended messages of the advertisements and how their responses were influenced by their existing attitudes towards the Māori language. The findings are then drawn together in order to consider the potential effectiveness of these language promotion materials as a means of planning for the tolerability of the Māori language among non-Māori New Zealanders.

**Analytical approach**

The approach taken to analysing the advertisements is based on research in the discourse of advertising, particularly Cook (2001) and Myers (1994). An important feature of this research is its consideration of extra-linguistic features of discourse. Cook (2001, 4) defines discourse as:

> Text and context together, interacting in a way which is perceived as meaningful and unified by the participants (who are both part of the context and observers of it).

In this definition, Cook uses ‘text’ to refer to ‘linguistic forms, temporarily and artificially separated from context for the purposes of analysis’, whereas ‘context’ includes the following (2001, 4): substance, the physical material which carries or relays text; paralanguage, meaningful behaviour accompanying language, such as voice quality, gestures and facial expressions (in speech), and typeface and letter sizes (in writing); situation, the properties and relations of objects and people in the vicinity of the text, as perceived by the participants; co-text, text which precedes or follows that under analysis and which participants judge as belonging to the same discourse; intertext, text which the participants perceive as belonging to other
discourse, but which they associate with the text under consideration and which affects their interpretation; *participants*, their intentions and interpretations, knowledge and beliefs, attitudes, affiliations and feelings; and *function*, what the text is intended to do by the senders or perceived to do by the receivers. According to Cook, these elements must be seen in interaction, not in isolation, so an advertisement can be seen as ‘an interaction of elements’ (2001, 5). Where appropriate, all of these elements have been taken into account in the following analysis. Cook (2001, 4–5) also emphasises that the meaning of discourse is created partly by the participants of that discourse, whom he calls the ‘sender’ and the ‘receiver’. In addition to my own analysis of the advertisements as stand-alone texts, I obtained information on the intentions of the senders through supporting material and draft scripts of the advertisements, sourced during a file search at the MLC in 2005. Later in the article, the other side of the story will be heard: the responses of a group of non-Māori participants to the advertisements.

**Analysis of Roma and Koro advertisements**

The two advertisements analysed were released by the MLC in 2000, as part of its ‘Into Te Reo’ campaign. The first is ‘Roma’, an advertisement featuring two young New Zealanders (one Māori and one non-Māori) talking in Māori in a café in Italy. The second is ‘Koro’, portraying the relationship between a non-Māori grandfather and his Māori grandchild, who attends Māori-medium schooling. The advertisements ran on four channels during Māori Language Week 2000, continued to air from 2001 to 2003 and were broadcast again during Māori Language Week 2005. The MLC has used no further television advertising since, perhaps due to the high costs involved.

**Roma advertisement**

A transcript of the Roma advertisement is shown below:

---

**Roma**

(30 seconds long)

The setting is a café in Italy. A young Māori man sits down at a table next to a young non-Māori woman.

The *words in italics are subtitles*.

**Man:** Kia ora

*Hello*

**Woman:** Tāku tāne... Hōhā! Kei hea kē ētahi?

*My boyfriend – he’s driving me crazy! Where are the others?*

1. **Man:** Ha! Hei aha rātou... Kei kōnei ahau.

*Who cares... I’m here*
(Man gets out Italian-Māori phrasebook)

**Man:** Espresso... He aha rānei te kupu Itariana?
**3.** ... *What's Italian for 'espresso'...*

(Woman turns to waiter)

**Woman** (in Italian): Due espresso per piacere
**4.** *Two espressos please*

**Waiter 1:** Grazie
**5.** *Thank you*

**Man:** Tō tino mōhio hoki
*You're very clever, aren't you*

**Woman:** āna
*I am.*

(Scene change to kitchen, where waiter has taken the order.)

**Waiter 2:** È una bellissima lingua
*That's a beautiful language*

**Waiter 1:** Non sai? E Māori – sono della Nuova Zelanda (Shrugs) Beh
**6.** *It's Māori – they're from New Zealand*

**Caption:** *Everyone's into te reo*

**New screen: (written text)** *Māori Language Week, proudly supported by TVNZ. Our nation. Our voice.*

*Te wiki o te reo Māori, i tino tautokohia ana e TVNZ. He tāu tangata. He reo tātaki.*

Cook (2001, 15) distinguishes between ‘reason’ and ‘tickle’ advertisements, the former suggesting motives for ‘purchase’, the latter appealing to emotion, humour and mood. An interesting aspect of the Roma advertisement is its combination of a reason and tickle approach. On the reason side, in a short space of time, it transmits several messages about the Māori language, including that (in the world of this advertisement at least), Māori is spoken by both Māori and non-Māori; Māori is spoken by young people; Māori is spoken by ‘hip’ people (the woman has a pierced eyebrow); Māori is spoken by patriotic people (the woman has ‘NZ girl’ on her T-shirt); Māori is used as an everyday means of conversation; Māori can be used for all purposes (including flirting); if you speak Māori you might also be good at speaking other languages; being bilingual is ‘clever’; Māori has sufficient status for there to be Māori–foreign language dictionaries; Māori is known internationally as a New Zealand language; it is logical that you will speak Māori if you are from New Zealand (the waiter’s unsubtitled ‘non sai?’/‘don’t you know?’ and shrug suggesting obviousness); English is not the only possible language New Zealanders can use; Māori is a beautiful language; and Māori is for everyone (caption
Everyone’s into te reo’). In transmitting these positive attitudes towards the Māori language, the advertisement also indirectly counters more negative attitudes towards the Māori language sometimes expressed in New Zealand, including that: Māori is only for Māori people; Māori is only used by elderly people; Māori is a dying language; Māori is not a fully functioning language; Māori is not ‘sexy’; Māori cannot be used in the modern world; Māori cannot be used as a means of everyday communication; only romance languages are ‘beautiful’ and admired; and English is the only language of any use internationally.

The Roma advertisement is thus rich in information, but it does not come across as didactic. How does it manage this? According to Cook, modern advertisers seldom concentrate on literal meanings, but link the ‘product’ to an unrelated user, situation or effect (any of which Cook terms ‘sphere’), thereby effecting a ‘fusion’ between the ‘characterless product’ and whatever desirable qualities the advertiser wishes to play upon, without attending to any logical link between product and sphere (Cook 2001, 108, 156). One sphere with which the Roma advertisement fuses the product (the Māori language) is flirtation. Several elements of the production create a sensual atmosphere. These include: actors, the main actors are both young and conventionally attractive; dialogue, the man compliments the woman and hints he is glad to be alone with her, although we know she has a boyfriend; tone, after the woman’s initial expressed irritation at her boyfriend, they both talk in slow and sensual tones; gaze, the man and woman gaze coyly at each other in close-up, while the Italian waiter glances benignly on; colour, the scene is filmed in warm terracotta colours; music, the soundtrack is a nostalgic Italian song; and filming, a slow, exaggerated and soap-opera style of filming is used. All these elements combine to create a romantic, flirtatious and sensual mood, with which the Māori language is associated. This is the tickle that accompanies the reason. This technique is also relevant to promoting tolerability. The advertisement encourages viewers to imagine a world where Māori is used as a means of everyday communication by all New Zealanders, implicitly suggesting this change could occur. This could be a challenging message for some non-Māori but, clothed in the guise of a romantic fantasy, its tolerability is perhaps increased.

Another sphere associated with the Māori language in this advertisement is Italianness. The draft script highlights the creators’ intention to foreground Italian language and culture in the scene:

We hear Italian being spoken. A chalk board is on the counter with an Italian menu written on it and there is Italian music being played in the background.

A common advertising technique is to exploit ‘connotations’ of language, i.e. vague associations a word or phrase may have for individuals or groups within a speech community (Cook 2001, 108). Complex webs of connotation may be attached to a product name, phrase or even an entire language, such as Italian here. The obvious point is that such language use is intended to evoke associations with the relevant national context, but the next step is to identify which specific associations are being called upon. Myers (1994, 103) notes that ‘the associations with a language choice, which can go in many directions, can be constrained by or conflict with the visuals presented with the words’. On this basis, a particular connotation of Italianness seems relevant here: linguistic sophistication. Starks, Barkhuizen, and Knoch (2006) found that non-Māori school students of European descent showed a strong preference for European languages (particularly Italian, French, Spanish and
German) as ‘languages they would like to speak well’, whereas Māori and Pacific Island students were most likely to select Māori and Pacific languages, respectively. The Roma advertisement challenges this preference for European languages over Māori among non-Māori, suggesting that, like Italian, the Māori language can be a sophisticated, worldly, romantic and, indeed, ‘beautiful’ language. This link between Italianness and linguistic sophistication is supported by the foregrounding of language in general in the advertisement, which involves an abundance of references to languages other than English: the topic is language, only Italian and Māori are spoken, there are subtitles throughout (relatively unusual on New Zealand television), there is a shot of a dictionary, both the couple and the waiters talk about language, and the TVNZ tagline at the end is in both Māori and English, with the slogan ‘Our nation. Our voice’. This approach of fusing the Māori language with the sphere of Italianness may be a particularly appropriate technique for a non-Māori audience, who are likely to relate to the non-Māori character, be attracted to the use of Italian language and (along with Māori) be drawn to the scenario of sipping espressos in Italy, a context not usually associated with the Māori language.

**Koro advertisement**

A transcript of the Koro advertisement is shown below (note: kōhanga and kura refer to Māori medium pre-school and primary school education, respectively):

---

**Koro**

(15 seconds long)

A man in his sixties and a 10-year-old girl are on a boat in the sunshine. The man, who is in the foreground, speaks to the camera.

*The words in italics are subtitles.*

**Grandfather:** My granddaughter, kōhanga and now kura. So now I say…

Kia ora, kei te pēhea koe?

*Hello, how are you?*

(Camera pans to girl, who has come to sit next to her grandfather.)

**Girl (smiling):**

Kei te pēhea koe, koro… koe!

*How are you, Pop… you!*

**Grandfather:**

Kei te pai, moko, kei te pai!

*Fine, thanks!*

(Girl shakes head, smiling.)

**Caption:**

*Everyone’s into te reo*

**New screen:**

*TVNZ*
Reaching out to our community

TVNZ
Community Support Foundation

(Final screen is accompanied by sung slogan ‘Reach out’)

Whereas the Roma advertisement may be focused primarily on attitudes towards the Māori language, the Koro advertisement is a good example of an approach of modelling behaviours. A distinctive aspect of planning for tolerability in New Zealand is that official policy does not propose learning and using the Māori language as primary behaviours for non-Māori, one document noting that ‘New Zealanders can express their support and goodwill towards the Māori language without necessarily having to learn or use Māori’ (Te Puni Kōkiri 2003b, 11). Exactly what behaviours non-Māori might adopt to support the language is less clear from policy documents or meetings with language policy officials (see de Bres 2008b), but some such behaviours are evident in promotional materials targeting non-Māori, including this advertisement. The behaviours modelled by the non-Māori grandfather (and directed, by association, at the non-Māori audience, or at least non-Māori with Māori family connections) are to support others learning and using Māori; support Māori language regeneration initiatives such as Māori-medium education; use Māori words and phrases in conversation; and pronounce Māori well. The behaviours modelled by the Māori child (and directed, by association, at the Māori audience) are to speak Māori with non-Māori; correct their pronunciation if necessary; but be indulgent of unintentional errors. The main message appears to be that, if goodwill is shown on both sides, the Māori language can unite rather than divide Māori and non-Māori. This interpretation is supported by the warm relationship portrayed between the grandfather and granddaughter, having fun together in the sunshine.

A further discursive technique used in this advertisement is humour, when the grandfather pretends to misunderstand his granddaughter correcting his pronunciation of the Māori word koe (‘you’) in ‘how are you?’ by answering that he is ‘fine thanks’. This humour both lightens the tone of the advertisement (pronunciation of Māori can be a sensitive issue in New Zealand) and provides a face-saving device for the grandfather: his pronunciation is criticised, but he then uses this criticism to tease his grandchild by pretending not to get her point. The draft script reveals a further possible function of humour in this advertisement. The script underwent significant changes from draft to final version, elements of the draft later removed including explicit reference to negative attitudes towards the Māori language among non-Māori in the form of the grandfather admitting that he ‘wasn’t too sure when the boy started at kōhanga’ (in the draft the grandchild is a boy); his explicit linking of his love for the child with his acceptance of the Māori language (‘well...he loves it...and I love him...and it makes him feel good’); the grandchild pushing the grandfather away when he pronounces a Māori word incorrectly (‘correcting his koro’s diction while brushing away his koro’s hand from his head’); a description of the grandfather’s ‘reluctance’ to re-pronounce the word correctly; the grandfather repeating the word correctly; and the grandfather’s final explicit comment on intercultural contact that ‘after all, we are all Kiwis, aren’t we’. The removal of these elements has a striking
effect on the tone of the final advertisement, which is much less ideologically explicit. The message is still there, Patu Hohepa of the MLC being quoted in a press release as saying that the advertisement was (MLC 2000):

A metaphor for where we are as a nation. That grandfather has no other choice but to embrace the culture, the language and the child. Their relationship depends upon his acceptance.

This message is to be inferred, however, rather than directly expressed. The lighter tone of the final advertisement is further emphasised by the addition of the humorous ending. It is tempting to conclude that these changes were consciously made in order to improve the tolerability of the advertisement among a non-Māori audience.

Responses of non-Māori to the advertisements

I have argued that the advertisements analysed above present a variety of attitudinal messages and proposed behaviours to non-Māori, using a range of discursive approaches. The senders’ intentions and the materials themselves are just one part of the picture, however. Of much greater importance for planning for tolerability is how majority language speakers react to these materials. The rest of this article considers the responses of a non-Māori audience to the two advertisements.

Methodological approach

I collected questionnaire and interview data from 80 non-Māori New Zealanders at nine white-collar workplaces in Wellington, New Zealand, to investigate their attitudes and behaviours towards the Māori language and their responses to the government’s current approach to planning for tolerability (see de Bres 2008c). Attitude statements in the questionnaire, in the form of a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree), were used to place participants into three attitude categories. These were ‘Supporters’ (56.3%, who had positive attitudes towards the Māori language), ‘Uninterested’ (38.8%, who were largely uninterested in the Māori language) and ‘English Only’ (5%, who had negative attitudes towards the Māori language).6 These results reflect previous research on attitudes of non-Māori towards the Māori language (e.g. Te Punī Kōkiri 2006) in that they not only showed evidence of negative attitudes towards the Māori language among some participants, but also indicated a group of participants with considerably more positive attitudes towards the Māori language.

This provides an important reminder that, when talking of the attitudes of non-Māori in relation to the Māori language, we should have a diverse group of people in mind.

As part of the questionnaire, the participants were given a DVD of the Roma and Koro advertisements and asked to respond to several questions about them. The approach to eliciting responses to the materials was modelled on that of Forceville (1996), who used a questionnaire to obtain responses to verbo-pictorial metaphors in IBM billboards. Forceville asked participants open-ended questions about the billboards and allocated their responses to ‘themes’, classifying themes raised by three or more participants as ‘strong implicatures’ and themes raised by two or fewer participants as ‘weak implicatures’. As Forceville acknowledges, there are significant
limitations to this approach, including the necessity of allocating highly varied responses to limited themes, and that the varied level of detail provided in the responses influences the results. The results presented for the participants’ responses to the advertisements should be viewed with these limitations in mind. Nevertheless, I am convinced of the value of this approach in this specific context. In advertising much thought goes into creating strong messages. Despite individual variation in how others might interpret the responses of the participants, I believe that the strongest messages should still come through and that there is value in attempting to measure (quantitatively) how widely they are shared.

Attitudinal messages

The participants were first asked an open-ended question of what messages about the Māori language they thought the creators of the advertisements were trying to convey. This aimed to elicit the attitudinal messages about the Māori language present in the materials. All the messages analysed in the first half of this article were perceived by at least some participants, along with several further messages. Following Forceville (1996), I adhered to the theory that the higher the number of participants perceiving a message the stronger it was and, on this basis, distinguished strong messages as those perceived by more than 20% of the participants. Using this method, strong messages in the Roma advertisement were that Māori is beautiful (52.6%); recognised and respected overseas (35.9%); a language of internationally (32.1%); for everyone (including non-Māori) (29.5%); sexy (26.9%); and cool/sophisticated (20.5%). Strong messages in the Koro advertisement were that young people use Māori well (33.8%); Māori is an intergenerational or family phenomenon (28.6%); and you are never too old/it is never too late to learn Māori (27.3%). An interesting aspect of the responses to this advertisement was that 10 participants explicitly mentioned they thought, or were unsure whether, the grandfather in the advertisement was Māori. This perhaps explains why the message ‘Māori is for everyone (including non-Māori)’ was perceived by a smaller proportion of participants for this advertisement than for the Roma advertisement (15.6%), although this was still the fourth most common message perceived. The confusion suggests greater efforts could have been made by the creators to contextualise the scenario and thus strengthen its messages relating to tolerability. When the results were cross-tabulated with attitude category, the messages perceived by the Supporters and Uninterested participants were mostly not strikingly divergent, except in one case. The message ‘Māori is for everyone, including non-Māori’ showed the widest divergence between Supporters and Uninterested participants for the Roma advertisement (perceived by 36.4% of Supporters compared to 16.7% of Uninterested participants) and the second-widest divergence for the Koro advertisement (perceived by 20% of Supporters, compared to 10.3% of Uninterested participants). Although this was a strong message of the advertisements when the overall sample was considered, therefore, it was considerably less likely to be perceived by Uninterested participants than by Supporters. This result is likely to have been influenced by participants’ existing attitudes towards the Māori language, reflecting a noted tendency in attitude research. Fabrigar MacDonald, and Wegener (2005, 99) observe that pre-message attitudes can bias evaluation of the arguments in a message, so ‘arguments compatible with one’s pre-message attitudes are accepted, whereas arguments incompatible with one’s pre-message attitude are undermined’.

524     J. de Bres
This result may be of concern to the senders of the advertisements on two levels, therefore, suggesting both that some participants did not perceive the advertisements as being targeted at them, and that some were not open to the message that the Māori language was relevant to their lives.

**Behavioural messages**

The participants were also asked an open-ended question of what they thought the creators of the advertisements were asking them to do, if anything. This aimed to elicit behavioural messages about the Māori language present in the materials. Again all the behavioural messages analysed in the first half of this article were perceived by at least some of the participants, along with several further messages. Strong behavioural messages in the Roma advertisement were to learn Māori (56.3%); speak/use Māori (35.9%); and value/be proud of Māori (28.1%). Strong behavioural messages in the Koro advertisement were to learn Māori (32.1%); speak/use Māori (30.4%); and ‘give it a go’ (26.8%). Strikingly, the strongest behavioural messages for each of the advertisements related to learning or using the Māori language. This contrasts with the government’s stated intention of not strongly promoting Māori language learning in particular to non-Māori. On the other hand, when the behavioural messages were cross-tabulated with attitude category, the messages that diverged the most between Supporters and Uninterested participants also related to using the Māori language. For example, the message ‘speak/use Māori’ was perceived by 44.7% of Supporters and 21.7% of Uninterested participants in the Roma advertisement, and by 35% of Supporters and 20% of Uninterested participants in the Koro advertisement. This suggests Uninterested participants were less likely than Supporters to identify use of the Māori language as a behavioural message targeted at them. As with the results for the attitudinal messages, this is likely to reflect the Uninterested participants’ own attitudes towards use of the Māori language by non-Māori.

**Popularity**

The participants were then asked whether or not they liked each promotional material, the response options being ‘like’, ‘dislike’ and ‘neutral’. This question aimed to obtain general information as to the popularity of the advertisements. The results showed 63.8% of participants liked the Roma advertisement and 67.5% liked the Koro advertisement. These are reasonably high proportions of positive ratings and most of those who did not ‘like’ the materials expressed a ‘neutral’ rather than a ‘dislike’ response. There were again considerable differences between attitude categories, however. Over 80% of the Supporters liked the Roma advertisement compared to 48.4% of the Uninterested participants and none of the English Only participants; and 73.3% of the Supporters liked the Koro advertisement compared to 64.5% of the Uninterested participants and 25% of the English Only participants. The participants were also asked in an open-ended question to state what they liked or disliked about the advertisements, aiming to elicit information on which discursive techniques appealed most (and least) to the participants. The elements most commonly liked about the Roma advertisement (over 10% of participants) related to creative and aesthetic aspects, including the: comparison to Italian; cleverness/originality/creativity; international flavour; presentation of Māori in a new/
positive light; humour and coolness/sophistication/stylishness. The elements most commonly disliked related to perceived artificiality, including the scenario being hard to take seriously; unclear meaning; perceived overacting; ‘cheesiness’ or pretentiousness, style of filming; unrealistic comparison (since Māori was not ‘on a par’ with Italian) and subject of conversation. Some elements were liked by some participants and disliked by others, e.g. some found the advertisement too short, others liked the length; some thought the message was unclear, others praised it for being clear; some enjoyed the low prominence of English in the advertisement, others saw this as Māori dominating over English and so on. In general, the Roma advertisement appears to have polarised viewers. This was also reflected in the popularity figures, where the divide between attitude categories was strongest in relation to this advertisement. The elements most commonly liked about the Koro advertisement (over 10% of participants) related to the characters and tone, including the relationship between grandfather and child; humour; positive message; family setting; theme of old learning from young; everyday setting; characters; friendliness/warmth/light-heartedness; ‘cuteness’ and strong/clear message. The elements most commonly disliked were the unclear message; lack of relevance to the viewer; short length and not understanding the Māori words. This advertisement appeared less controversial than the Roma advertisement with 32 mentions of disliked aspects compared to 62 for the Roma advertisement.

Visibility
Finally, the participants were asked whether they had seen the advertisements before, the response options being ‘yes’ or ‘no’. This aimed to elicit information regarding the effectiveness of the advertisements in reaching their target audience. The Roma advertisement had been seen by 32.5% of the participants, with a 7.5% missing response, and the Koro advertisement by 27.5% of the participants, with an 8.8% missing response. These results suggest that any future television advertisements should be broadcast more widely, as not reaching a high proportion of the target audience places an immediate limit on their effectiveness.

Conclusion
This article has discussed two recent television advertisements used by the New Zealand Government to plan for the tolerability of the Māori language among non-Māori New Zealanders. The analysis shows the advertisements use a range of discursive techniques to transmit a variety of attitudinal and behavioural messages relating to the Māori language. The responses of the non-Māori participants in this research suggest the advertisements were largely effective in transmitting these messages (‘reason’) to a non-Māori audience in an appealing way (‘tickle’), although important differences between attitude categories existed. Three especially important themes were evident in the responses to the advertisements. Firstly, participants whose attitudes towards the Māori language were already positive responded more positively to the advertisements, and also perceived them as being targeted at them. Secondly, participants tended to interpret the advertisements in line with their existing attitudes towards the Māori language, perceiving different messages depending on their attitude category, so that different groups of participants actually ‘got’ different messages. Thirdly, the participants tended to think they were being
encouraged to learn Māori, despite government policy documents stating this is not necessarily the intention for a non-Māori audience.

The results raise several issues to be addressed in future attempts at planning for tolerability in New Zealand. A first issue is that if policymakers want to encourage currently uninterested non-Māori to have more positive attitudes towards the Māori language, they may need to find new ways to encourage them to feel personally targeted by the promotional materials and, accompanying this, that the Māori language is relevant to them. This relates to a broader issue of what is possible in terms of attitudinal and behavioural change for each attitude category. It seems uncontroversial that what is achievable will differ between attitude categories, and it is likely that, rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach to the very diverse target audience of non-Māori New Zealanders, segmentation of this audience will be required. A further issue is for language planners to make clearer what behaviours they intend to promote among non-Māori in relation to the Māori language, with a particular focus on the place of language learning. Notable here is that approaches to planning for tolerability in other minority language situations (e.g. Wales and Catalonia) have demonstrated a concerted focus on majority language speakers learning the minority language, rather than engaging in other non-learning related behaviours (see de Bres 2008a). The fact that participants felt Māori language learning was being asked of them anyway, in combination with minority language learning being universally promoted across ethnic groups elsewhere, suggests it is worth considering whether learning the Māori language should be more strongly promoted among non-Māori. On the other hand, if the government does wish to promote behaviours other than learning Māori among non-Māori, it will need to make these behaviours more explicit in future initiatives aimed at planning for tolerability – because the non-Māori participants in this research were getting a different message.

Finally, further evaluative research is required to link language promotion campaigns to longer term changes in the attitudes and behaviours of non-Māori New Zealanders towards the Māori language. Aside from the present research, there has been very little evaluation of policy initiatives undertaken to plan for tolerability in New Zealand. The results described here provide information on how a non-Māori audience responded in an immediate sense to some of the promotional materials released to date. Recent government attitude surveys also suggest some more general improvement in the attitudes of non-Māori towards the Māori language (see e.g. Te Puni Kōkiri 2006). Future research relating to planning for tolerability will need to link evaluation of specific policy initiatives to these findings regarding attitude change more generally. This could also assist in answering the question of whether language promotion campaigns are in fact an appropriate method of planning for tolerability. Skepticism can be expressed as to whether such campaigns can genuinely result in attitude change among non-Māori. I see no reason to believe this approach is inherently ineffective, given the available evidence of successful social marketing campaigns in relation to other issues. Advertising campaigns in relation to minority languages have also been used in other language situations, e.g. Wales and Catalonia (de Bres 2008a). Different approaches to planning for tolerability can and have been used, however (see de Bres 2008a). Only extensive, ongoing evaluative research can show if the current approach is on the right track to increasing the tolerability of the Māori language among non-Māori New Zealanders, with all that this entails for the future of the Māori language.
Acknowledgements

This article is based on PhD research at the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. I thank my supervisors Professor Janet Holmes and Dr John Macalister for their support and guidance, and Te Atawhai Kumar for transcribing the advertisements. I also thank the two anonymous reviewers for their useful comments on an earlier draft.

Notes

1. The MLC shares responsibility for Māori language regeneration policy with Te Puni Kōkiri (the Ministry of Māori Development).
2. I could find no evidence of promotional materials directed solely at non-Māori, rather than both non-Māori and Māori.
3. An anonymous reviewer noted some further attitudinal messages about the relationship between Māori and Italian on the one hand, and English on the other, portrayed in this advertisement. They noted the value being placed on Māori, as the language of New Zealand, alongside Italian, as the language of Italy (the accommodation of the couple to the Italian waiter calling to mind the saying ‘when in Rome . . .’). The reviewer observed that in both contexts, where English would often be assumed to be the appropriate medium of intercultural interaction, English is effectively sidelined, perhaps countering the reality of the sidelining of both Māori and Italian by dominant English speakers (who might make an assumption, in this context, that the Italian waiter should speak English).
4. ‘Koe’ is pronounced in an anglicised form.
5. An anonymous reviewer suggested the possibility that this gesture may involve subtly signalling non-Māori ignorance of Māori cultural values, in this case the tapu (sacredness) of a person’s head.
6. These categories were based on those developed by Te Puni Kōkiri (2002).
7. Mostly only the results for Supporters and Uninterested participants are considered here due to the low number of English Only participants.
8. It may be more likely that those who did not tick a box had not seen the relevant material.

References

Boyce, M. 2005. Attitudes to Māori. In Languages of New Zealand, ed. A. Bell, R. Harlow, and D. Starks, 86–110. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
de Bres, J. 2008a. Planning for tolerability in New Zealand, Wales and Catalonia. Current Issues in Language Planning 9, no. 4: 464–82.
de Bres, J. 2008b. The behaviours of non-Māori New Zealanders towards the Māori language. Te Reo 52: 17–45.
de Bres, J. 2008c. Planning for tolerability: Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours towards the Māori language among non-Māori New Zealanders. PhD diss., Victoria University of Wellington.
Chrisp, S. 1997. He taonga te reo: The use of a theme year to promote a language. Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development 18, no. 2: 100–6.
Cook, G. 2001. The discourse of advertising, 2nd ed. London, New York: Routledge.
Fabrigar, L., T. MacDonald, and D. Wegener. 2005. The structure of attitudes. In The handbook of attitudes, ed. D. Albarracin, B. Johnson, and M. Zanna, 79–124. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
Forceville, C. 1996. Pictorial metaphor in advertising. London and New York: Routledge.
Māori Language Commission. 1996. Toitū te Reo: A consultation document about the Māori language. Wellington: Māori Language Commission.
Māori Language Commission. 2000. Into te Reo [Into the (Māori) language]. Press release, July 20. Wellington: Māori Language Commission.
Māori Language Commission. 2004. Māori language information programme implementation plan 2004–2005. Wellington: Māori Language Commission.
Māori Television Service. 2007. *Māori television rocks the ratings – again!* Press release, September 5. http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories//BU0709/S00061.htm (accessed 15 May 2008).

May, S. 2000. Accommodating and resisting minority language policy: The case of Wales. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 3, no. 2: 101–28.

May, S. 2003. Rearticulating the case for minority language rights. *Current Issues in Language Planning* 4, no. 2: 95–125.

Myers, G. 1994. *Words in ads.* London: E Arnold, New York: Routledge.

Starks, D., G. Barkhuizen, and U. Knoch. 2006. Language practices, preferences and policies. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 27, no. 5: 375–91.

Te Puni Kōkiri, 2002. *Survey of attitudes, values and beliefs about the Māori language.* Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri.

Te Puni Kōkiri, 2003a. *Te Rautaki Reo Māori* [The Māori language strategy]. Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri.

Te Puni Kōkiri, 2003b. *He Reo e Koerotia Ana He Reo Ka Ora* [A shared vision for the future of the Māori language]. Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri.

Te Puni Kōkiri, 2006. *Nga Waiaro atu ki te reo Māori* [Attitudes towards the Māori language]. Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri.