



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF  
**WELLINGTON**  
TE HERENGA WAKA

Manawa ū ki te reo Māori:  
Matatini and non-Matatini survey responses

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Te Kawa a Māui

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## Executive summary

The findings of this report provide evidence in support of Te Matatini and its ability to provide environments for Māori language speakers to use te reo Māori. In order for te reo Māori to thrive, the speakers of te reo need to be given opportunities to celebrate the language. Te Matatini provides context for te reo Māori celebration and use to occur, not only during the days where events are held, but also in preparation for the biannual events. This report, and the study more broadly, demonstrates the wealth of collective cultural experiences that are foundational to national cultural events such as Te Matatini. Te reo Māori is currently in a precarious position with few national events where te reo Māori can be an assumed language of communication in public spaces. Te Matatini is one such event which provides a space where Māori language use is normalised.

The normalisation of Māori language use is one of the goals in the government's Māori language strategy, Te Maihi Karauna (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). An aim of Te Maihi Karauna is to have 85% of all New Zealanders seeing value in te reo Māori "*as a key part of national identity*", and that 1 million or more individuals will have the ability and confidence to use te reo Māori engaging in te reo with conversational levels of proficiency. An additional strategy, Te Maihi Māori focuses on the Māori language use and uptake by whānau in their aspirations to create normalised language use in homes. Secondly, the aims of Te Maihi Māori include the enhancement of local identities, community cohesion and the normalisation of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori within iwi and communities at large (Te Mātāwai, 2019).

The findings that are included in this report demonstrate that Te Matatini provides the environmental factors that are required in order to create the conditions needed to achieve the goals of Te Maihi Māori, and Te Maihi Karauna. The particular findings of this study are derived from the 'Manawa ū ki te reo Māori' research, a study of Māori language motivations commissioned by Te Mātāwai in 2019 (due for public release in September, 2020). Survey responses from this study were collected at Te Matatini in Te Whanganui-a-Tara in February, 2019. Other online responses were also collected within the same month, including responses from Māori language learners from Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, and Te Ataarangi. The authors of this report have chosen to separate the respondents of the Manawa Ū ki te reo survey into two groups in order to demonstrate the

responses of Matatini attendees, and those who completed the same survey, but were not present at Te Matatini when they completed this survey.

In this study, Matatini attendees were found to have higher levels of language proficiency and have more occasion to use te reo Māori. The elements that precede the Matatini events are likely to contribute to the increased number of environments where te reo Māori is used by those involved with Te Matatini. Of note, respondents of this study included performers, significant supporters (i.e whānau members of performers), store holders, as well as spectators. This report outlines how respondents to our survey interact with te reo Māori compared with respondents who were not tied to this event, but who were active learners of te reo Māori.

***There are five main focus areas in this report:***

1. Contexts where respondents hear te reo Māori being spoken;
2. Whānau language use (i.e., which whānau members are being spoken to in te reo Māori);
3. Motivations for learning te reo Māori;
4. Use of te reo Māori in the community (including public signage), and individual attitudes towards te reo Māori; and
5. Māori identity and te reo Māori use.

Each of these focus areas provide a snapshot of some of the difference in language exposure and use that are being reported by Matatini and non-Matatini attendees. Overall, these findings may indicate that Te Matatini is attended by individuals who hear te reo Māori in contexts that are important for sustaining language communities and language use.

***Key findings:***

1. Cultural identity is a central motivation of current and past learners of te reo Māori. Te Matatini likely contributes to the affirmation a positive Māori identity.
2. Matatini respondents were significantly more likely to report being able to use te reo Māori “Very well” or “Well”, compared with their counterparts.
3. Matatini respondents reported hearing te reo Māori spoken across all public and private domains more than their counterparts. Of note, clubs such as Kapa Haka, work, and visiting relatives were domains where Matatini respondents reported much higher rates of Māori language exposure.

4. Matatini attendees who indicated that they were either parents or grandparents were more likely than non-parents to use te reo Māori, particularly with their pre-school or primary school aged children.
5. Correlations between individuals perceiving te reo Māori being 'cool' and 'useful' were significantly higher for Matatini attendees compared with those who did not attend the event.
6. Matatini attendees experience language anxiety regarding the correct usage of te reo Māori, with incorrect language use having a greater impact on their cultural identity compared with their counterparts

***Recommendations from this report include:***

1. Government to provide adequate and equitable financial support to Te Matatini organisers to host national and regional events;
2. Government to acknowledge and remunerate the cultural and linguistic contribution that Te Matatini provides for te reo Māori revitalisation;
3. Opportunities for Māori language use are prioritised and financially supported during the lead up to events;
4. Provide further support for te reo Māori initiatives such as "Te Mitatini" during Te Matatini events; and
5. Government promotes a cross-agency approach to Māori language outcomes to further enhanced the activities associated with Te Matatini, thereby supporting the achievement of goals outlined in Te Maihi Māori and Te Maihi Karauna.

## Method

### *Participants*

A total of 980 individuals completed the survey. Of this total, 432 people completed the survey while physically present at Te Matatini, while 548 completed the survey elsewhere.

### *Age*

All survey participants were over 16 years of age and the oldest participant was over 80 years. The median age range for all respondents was 31-35 and there was no difference in average age between the two groups ( $p = .151$ )

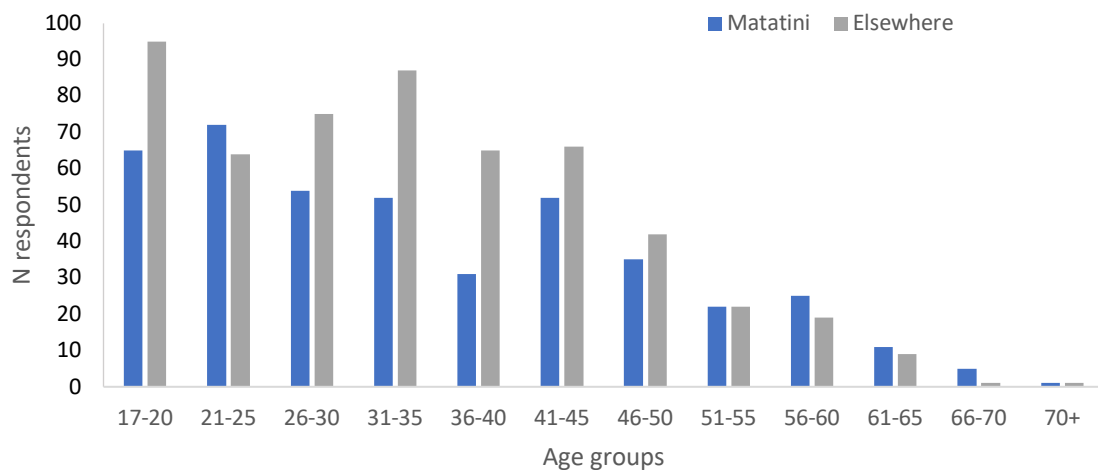


Figure 1: Number of respondents in each age band by survey location.

### *Gender*

Of those who completed the survey while physically present at Te Matatini, 122 respondents identified as male, 305 as female, and four who chose to self-identify their gender, for a total of 431 altogether. A total of 546 individuals completed the survey online or in a different location (referred to in the table below as Elsewhere), there were a large number who identified as female (444) as opposed to male (97), with five others choosing to self-identify their gender. There were also three missing responses, one from the Matatini group and two from the Elsewhere group.

Table 1: Gender differences between Matatini group and those who completed the survey elsewhere

<i>Gender</i>	<b>Matatini</b>	<b>Elsewhere</b>
<i>Male</i>	122	97
<i>Female</i>	305	444
<i>Self-identify</i>	4	5
<i>Total Valid</i>	431	546
<i>Missing</i>	1	2

### **Ethnicity**

The Matatini group comprised of 339 Māori, 106 Pākehā/New Zealand European, 44 Pasifika (specifically Samoa, Cook Islands, Tonga, and Niue), and 42 ‘other’ ethnicities. Similarly, of those who completed the survey elsewhere, there were 386 Māori, 186 Pākehā /New Zealand European, 48 Pasifika, and 36 ‘other’.

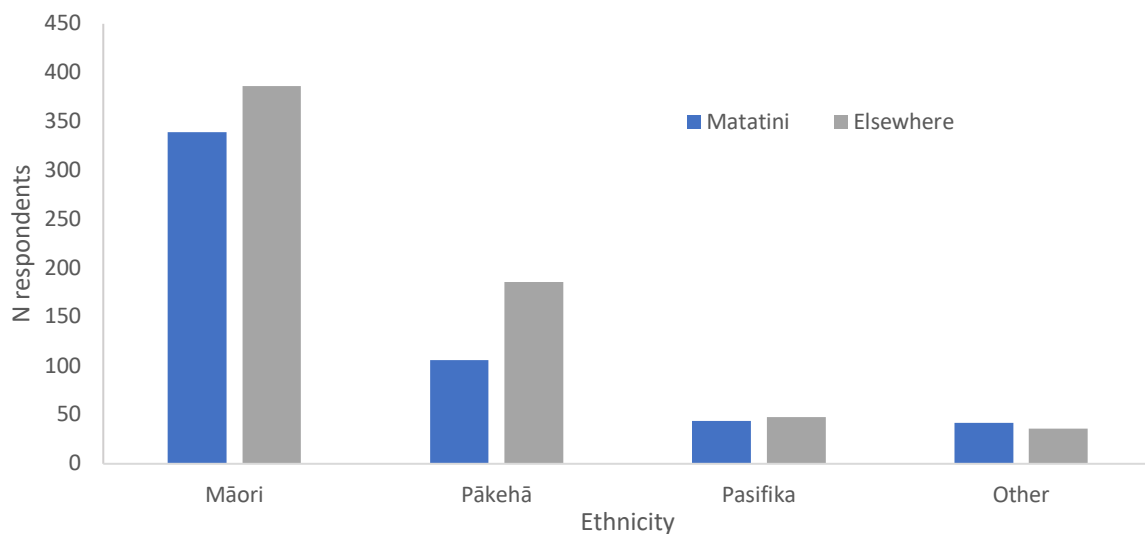


Figure 2: Ethnicity by Matatini attendees and those who completed the survey elsewhere.

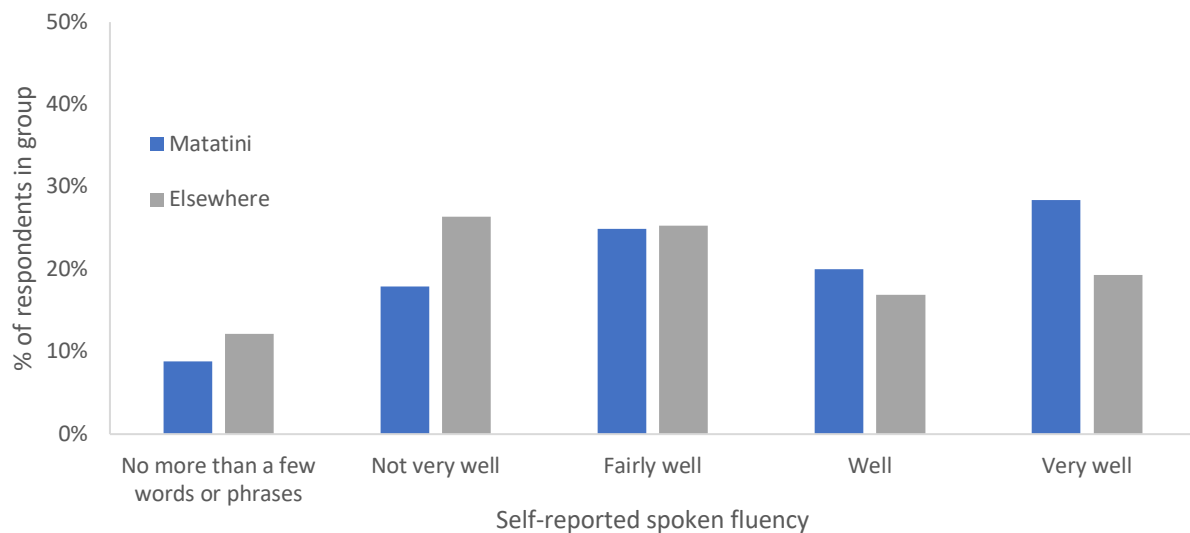
Figure 2 above also illustrates that Pākehā participants in this study were proportionately more likely than Māori participants to complete the survey outside of Te Matatini.

### **Reo Fluency**

Figure 3 provides a comparison between the Matatini group and those who completed the survey elsewhere on the proportion of respondents who reported at each level of fluency. The Matatini group had a higher proportion of individuals who reported speaking te reo ‘very well’ (28%) compared with the *Elsewhere* group (19%). Similarly, those

who completed the survey elsewhere had a higher proportion of individuals who reported speaking te reo 'not very well' (26%) compared to the Matatini group (18%).

Figure 3: Percentage of respondents and self-reported fluency for Matatini participants and those who completed the survey elsewhere



Those who completed the survey at Te Matatini had a higher self-reported spoken fluency score ( $M = 3.41, SD = 1.30$ ) compared with those who completed the survey elsewhere ( $M = 3.05, SD = 1.30$ ), and this difference was significant ( $F(1, 978) = 18.26, p < .001$ ).

### Summary of demographics

The demographic details of the participants in our survey suggest that Matatini attendees typically came from communities that are culturally and linguistically well or wealthy. These results support the notion that Te Matatini provides a central focus and gathering place to celebrate the elements of te ao Māori, like te reo, which communities are actively striving to revitalise.

### Procedure

Participants in this research completed an anonymous survey and were recruited either physically at Te Matatini or through online channels such as social media. Participants went into a draw to win a voucher, including \$2,500 in prizes. The prize draw included \$20, \$50, \$100, and one \$500 voucher for their participation. Tablets were utilised for surveys to be completed physically at Te Matatini, whereas those who completed the survey elsewhere utilised their own digital device. The survey contained a maximum of 42 questions and took

an average time of 9 minutes and 53 seconds to complete. The total number of questions that were answered for each individual varied due to systematic branching i.e., respondents would receive different question sets depending on their response to particular items.

## Results

### 1. Contexts where respondents hear te reo Māori being spoken

Participants in our study who physically attended Te Matatini in 2019 had more exposure to te reo Māori through hearing te reo Māori being spoken in a range of contexts. Figure 4 below demonstrates that te reo Māori is heard more by Matatini attendees in four major contexts, which are: at work, with friends, with relatives and at clubs (like kapa haka). These contexts could be considered the most significant to an individual’s language environment.

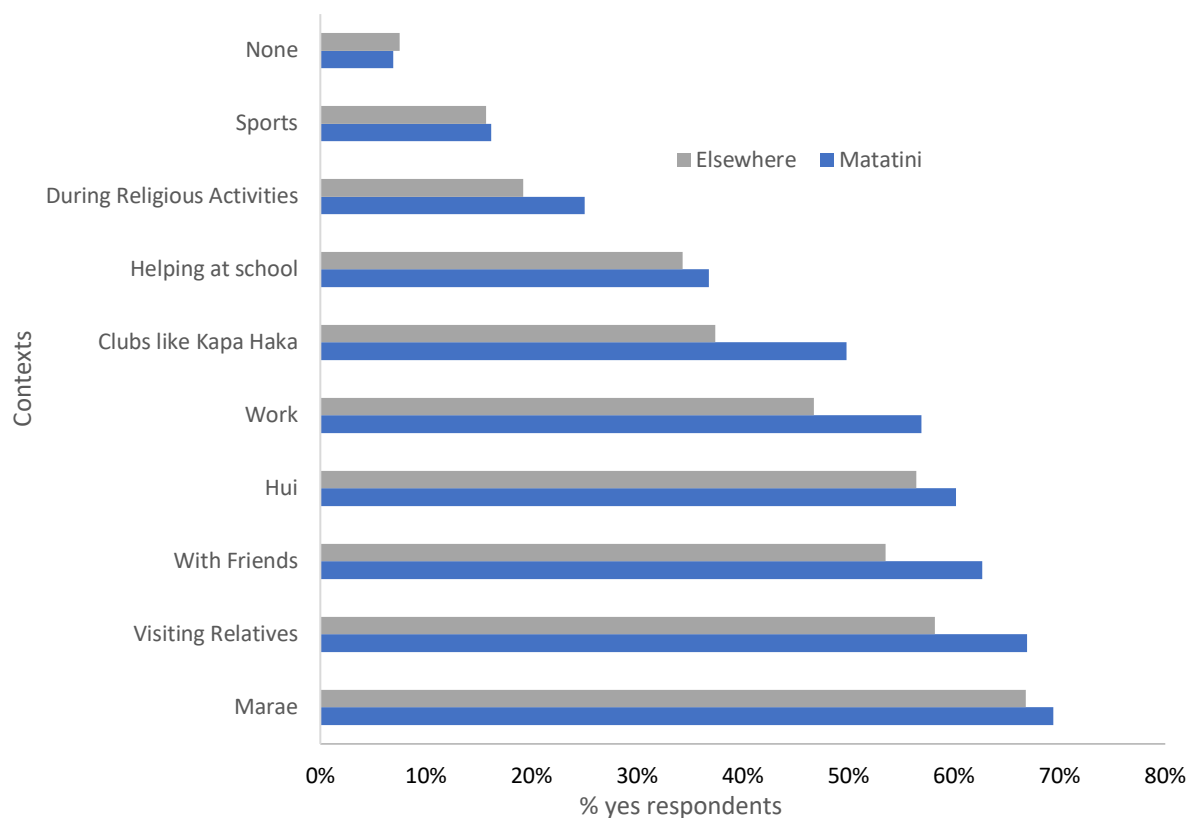


Figure 4: Percentage of respondents who reported speaking or hearing te reo Māori spoken across contexts for both Matatini and non-matatini survey respondents.

These results demonstrate that Matatini attendees in 2019 were typically more likely than those who did not attend te Matatini to be part of social groups where te reo Māori is



normalised in its use across contexts. This finding is of interesting because it includes participants who did not complete the survey at Te Matatini, but who are current or interested learners of te reo Māori

## 2. Whānau language use

In the survey, we asked how much Māori is spoken at home and to whom. Responses were measured on a five-point scale from 1 (no Māori) to 5 (all Māori). We compared parents/grandparents to non-parents for those who completed the survey at Te Matatini, and for those who completed it elsewhere.

Figure 5 below shows that, for Matatini attendees, parents were especially likely to speak Māori to their pre-school and primary school age. These findings mirror the results of the national study 'Te Ahu o te reo Māori' (Hutchins, et al., 2017), which also found that parents were most likely to speak te reo Māori with their tamariki and that tamariki were most likely to speak te reo Māori with their parents.

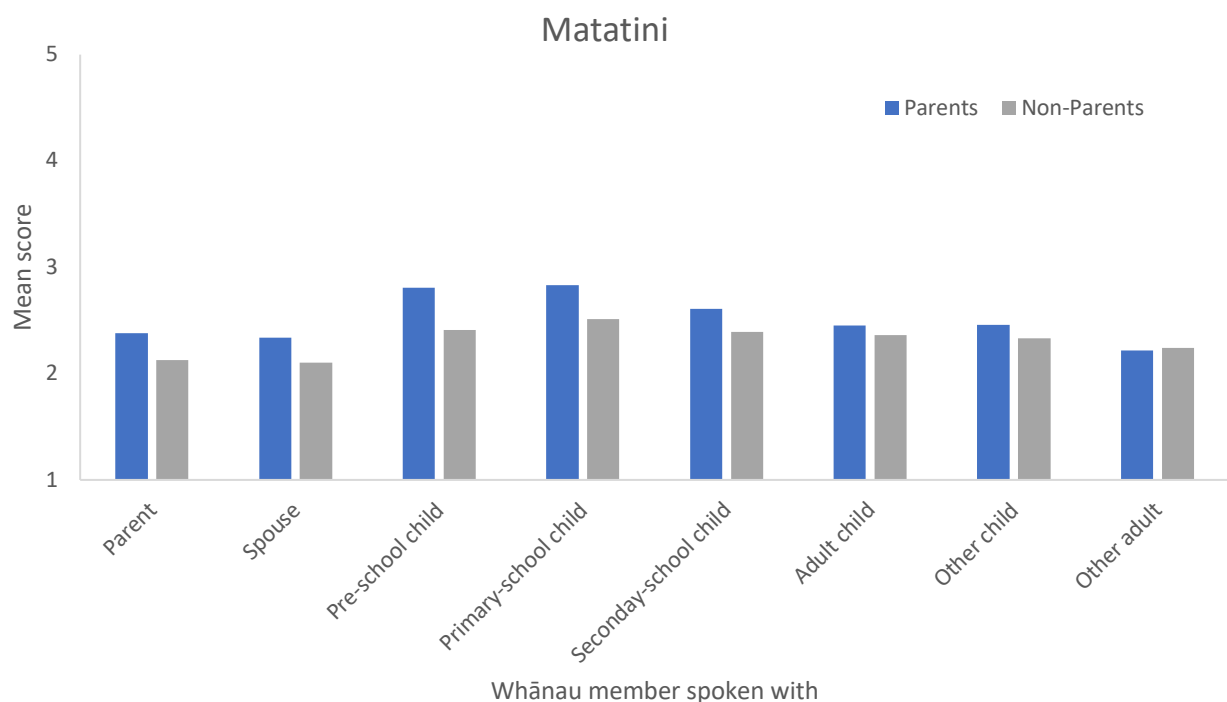


Figure 5. Matatini attendees Māori language use in the home with whānau

The results depicted in Figure 5 also highlight the differences in language use between parents and non-parents for those who completed the survey at Te Matatini. Those who indicated that they were parents (or grandparents) were more likely to use te reo Māori

with their parents ( $M_{diff} = 0.25$ ;  $F(1, 385) = 5.96$ ,  $p = .015$ ) and their pre-school children ( $M_{diff} = 0.40$ ;  $F(1, 233) = 4.67$ ,  $p = .032$ ).

Interestingly, there were only two of the eight possible relationships that were significantly different, suggesting that parents and non-parents who attend Te Matatini are less likely to differ in the amount of Māori language they use within their households.

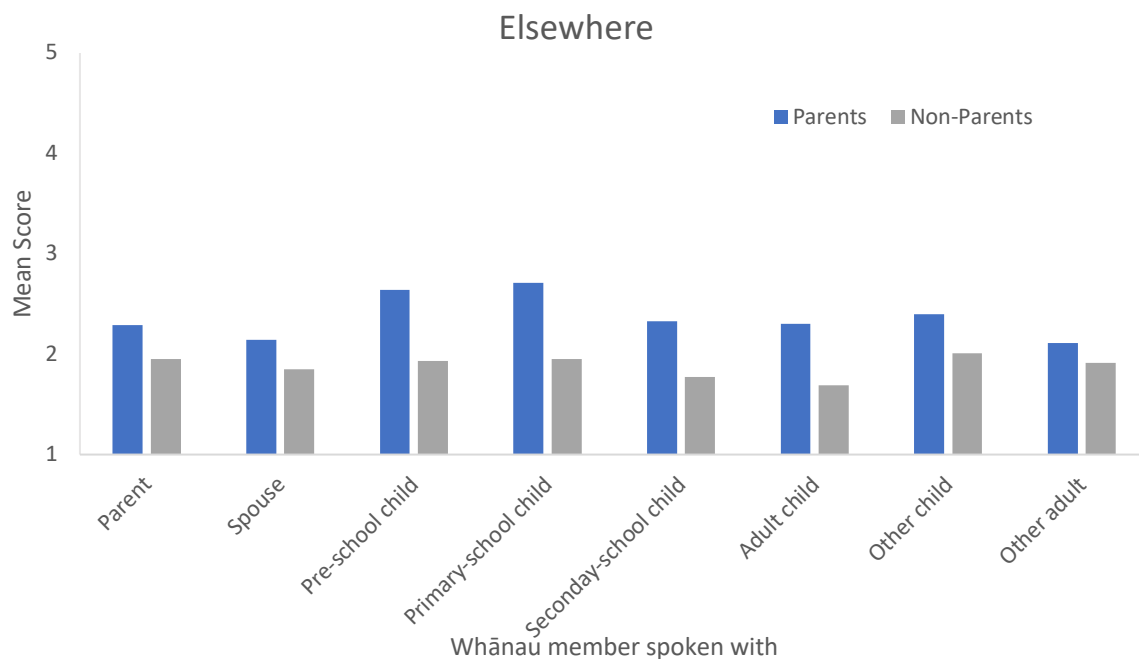


Figure 6: Amount of reo spoken to whānau members within a household for those who did **not** complete the survey at Te Matatini.

As depicted in Figure 6 above, we found that there was greater discrepancy between parents and non-parents in the amount of Māori language they use with their whānau members. This is further supported by our findings in Table 2, which show significant differences between parents and non-parents who did not complete the survey at Te Matatini, to all whānau members in their household except ‘other children.’

Table 2: Significance tests comparing parents and non-parents' language use for those who did not complete the survey at Te Matatini.

<i>Whānau member</i>	ANOVA result	Significance ( <i>p</i> )
<i>Parent</i>	F(1, 491) = 17.9	<.001
<i>Spouse</i>	F(1, 400) = 7.87	= .005
<i>Pre-school children</i>	F(1, 263) = 15.93, <i>p</i> < .001	< .001
<i>Primary-school children</i>	F(1, 277) = 18.32	< .001
<i>Secondary-school child</i>	F(1, 221) = 10.63	= .001
<i>Adult child</i>	F(1, 205) = 12.92	= .028
<i>Other child</i>	N = 322	= .067

Te Matatini attendees were less likely to vary in their propensity to use te reo Māori based on whether or not they are parents. While on the other hand, those who completed the survey elsewhere were more likely to use te reo Māori with whānau members if they themselves were parents/grandparents. These findings suggest that Te Matatini attendees might be more likely to normalise the use of te reo Māori in their homes. On the other hand, for those who completed the survey elsewhere, having children or grandchildren may provide an opportunity to develop their Māori language proficiency as their children also develop their language skills. It may then be more acceptable to make mistakes. This interpretation is supported by our earlier finding, that the Matatini group had slightly higher language proficiency compared with the 'elsewhere' group.

### 3. Motivations for language use

Participants in Figure 7 below were split into two different groups. The left side of the graph includes the responses of individuals who had *not* learned te reo Māori in the past, but who indicated that they were interested in learning te reo Māori in the future. The right side of the graph illustrates the responses from individuals who were actively learning te reo Māori, or who had learned in the past. Responses have been split again between respondents who completed the survey at te Matatini versus those who had not.

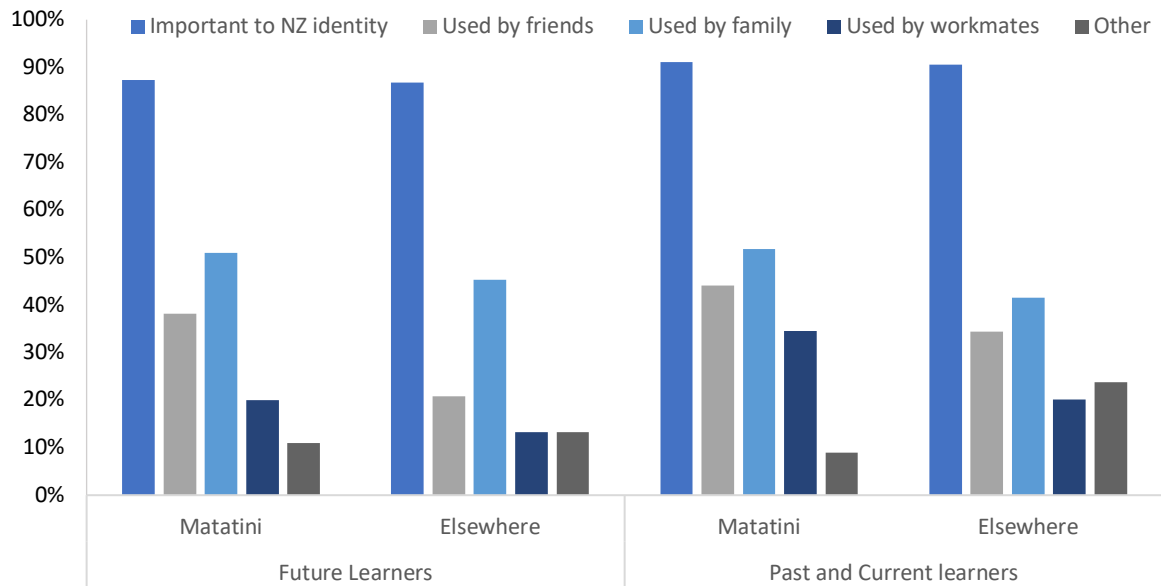


Figure 7: A graph comparing the motivations of learning te reo for current and past learners of Te Reo (right) and for those who indicated they would study in the future (left), further separated by Matatini respondents and those who completed the survey elsewhere.

The figure shows that a high proportion of respondents in both the ‘future learners’ group (87%) and the ‘past/current learners’ (91%) were motivated to learn te reo because it is important to the cultural/New Zealand identity. These results show that those who are currently learning te reo Māori, or intend to learn te reo Māori in the future already hold motivations associated with identity, which was a goal listed within Te Maihi Karauna (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019).

Furthermore, about half of participants in all groups are motivated to learn te reo because it is used by family (42%-52%). Notably, the Matatini attendees in both the ‘future learner’ group and the ‘past/current learner’ group were more likely to have whānau members who were te reo Māori users. This demonstrates that te Matatini provides an environment where those who have access to language speakers/users are coming together. Therefore, it is possible that Matatini events have the potential to foster language motivations that are related to being able to communicate with other members of their whānau using te reo Māori, which is a goal outlined in Te Maihi Māori (Te Mātāwai, 2019).

The Matatini group who were past or current learners of te reo had a higher proportion of respondents who were motivated to learn because it is used by their workmates (34%) compared to the other groups (ranging from 13%-20%). This result is possibly due to Matatini participants having jobs where te reo Māori integrated in the

workplace. Workplace related motivations are also highlighted by Ka'ai, Smith, Haar, and Ravenswood (2019) in their study of Māori language use in business spaces. Their study showed that organisations who were operating in areas where Māori populations were high (such as the Gisborne City Council with 45% of the population being Māori) were likely to incorporate te reo Māori into some elements of their formal processes. Furthermore, organisations that fostered the adoption of Māori phrases or words from the top down had a positive impact on language use. The combination of these results indicates that Te Matatini attendees who are in employment where te reo Māori is used or valued could potentially have their 'workplace based' motivations affirmed through being surrounded by likeminded individuals who attend Te Matatini.

The 'Elsewhere' portion of the 'future learners' group had the lowest proportion of individuals who reported being motivated by friends use of te reo (21%). It is possible that that these individuals do not have many friends who are speakers of te reo, which might help to explain why they have not yet studied, as their decision to invest in the language is not as strongly rewarded for this group of individuals compared with participants who were learning te reo Māori to communicate with their friends.

#### **4. Community language use and signage and attitudes towards te reo Māori**

In the Manawa Ū ki te reo study, we asked about participants about the use of te reo Māori within their community and their personal attitudes towards te reo. For community language attitudes, participants were asked to comment on how common it was to hear te reo Māori, how supportive they perceived their community to be of te reo, whether their community had signage in te reo Māori. Language attitudes were also measured by asking participants whether they thought te reo Māori was useful, cool, and relevant.

A correlation matrix is provided in Table 3 below for analysing the relationships between community language use and Māori language attitudes, which has been separated by Matatini attendees (M) and those who completed the survey elsewhere (E). Only two correlations were not found to be significant, which were between having Reo signs in the community and attitudes towards te reo Māori being 'cool' and 'relevant'; but only for those who completed the survey elsewhere. Interestingly, these relationships *were* significant for Matatini attendees, which suggests that, for this group, there is a weak but meaningful relationship between te reo Māori being considered cool and whether there are signs in te

reo Māori within their community. It is possible that this relationship is significant because Matatini attendees may be more likely to live in communities that normalise te reo Māori on public signage. Future research is needed to explore such observations.

Table 3: Table of the correlations between reo in the community and attitudes towards te reo.

	1		2		3		4		5	
	M	E	M	E	M	E	M	E	M	E
<b>1. Common to hear reo in the community</b>	1	1								
<b>2. Community is supportive of te reo</b>	.614**	.630**	1	1						
<b>3. Reo signs in community</b>	.506**	.514**	.447**	.401**	1	1				
<b>4. Reo is useful</b>	.262**	.155**	.253**	.277**	.111*	.096*	1	1		
<b>5. Reo is cool</b>	.266**	.105*	.268**	.205**	.119*	$\rho = .934$	.832**	.686**	1	1
<b>6. Reo is relevant</b>	.249**	.142**	.243**	.203**	.114*	$\rho = .660$	.772**	.605**	.742**	.594**

\* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

Both groups showed strong relationships between te reo being cool and useful, however, the positive relationship in the Matatini group was much stronger ( $r = .832$ ) compared with those who completed the survey elsewhere ( $r = .686$ ). Similar trends were seen between the items “reo is relevant” and reo being “useful” and “cool” (bottom row). These findings suggest that, for Te Matatini attendees, the terms ‘cool’, ‘relevant’, and ‘useful’ are synonymous with each other when describing te reo Māori. Comparatively, while those who completed the survey elsewhere showed strong relationships between the three items, there seemed to be greater variance in response patterns. For instance, participants in this group may have considered te reo Māori very cool, but only slightly relevant. Together, these findings suggest that events like Te Matatini provide an avenue to portray te reo Māori as cool, useful, and relevant.

Attitudes towards te reo Māori were found to be more strongly correlated to hearing te reo Māori in the community for the Matatini group (useful = .262; cool = .266; relevant = .249) compared with the 'elsewhere' group (useful = .155; cool = .105; relevant = .142). These findings suggest that Te Matatini attendees were more likely to both endorse positive attitudes towards te reo Māori *and* live in communities who are supportive of Māori language.

## 5. Māori identity and language use

We found that the Matatini group had a significantly higher mean score ( $M = 3.34$ ) for the statement: "If I make a mistake using te reo, I feel like it will impact on how 'Māori' others will think that I am" compared to those who completed the survey elsewhere ( $M = 3.07$ ;  $F(1, 700) = 7.51, p = .006$ ). What these findings demonstrate is that Matatini attendees may be aware of the cultural/linguistic pressures that exist between identifying as culturally Māori, and being correct in language delivery. It is possible that the environment that attendees of Te Matatini are in encompass a set of criteria about what it means to be a perceived as culturally Māori, which are perhaps not experienced to the same degree outside of the Matatini attendee group. These findings may also highlight the additional pressures that individuals who are associated with Te Matatini experience, and the additional labour that is necessary to participant in these environments.

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