

past. Although their children attended state schools, increasingly conformed to European behaviour, and forgot to speak Maori, still the elders of each generation continued to hold all life crises and important group events on the *marae*. In doing so, they honoured not only the main figures of the occasion, but also their heritage as Maoris. The *hui* had come to play the role of main repository for Maori culture in a world which was increasingly European, for it was one situation where Maoris were in charge, Maori was the dominant language, Maori food was served, and Maori etiquette prevailed. As an event the *hui* was and still is supremely oriented to the past. Genealogies are recited, traditions re-told, the ancestors are repeatedly invoked, and old oral skills are practised. The main actors themselves are elders, qualified by their age and esoteric knowledge to carry out the sacred forms without mistake, and although the Maori are only a small minority in New Zealand today (8% of the total population), their rituals hark back to the times when they lived in the country undisturbed.

Since World War II, the pattern of rural life has been disrupted by an increasing flow of young people to the cities, and this has had its own special effects on Maori populations. Rural kin-based Maori communities lose their young people, and in many cases the *marae* lies almost idle, with only a few of the older generation to look after it. Urban dwellers often return to the home *marae* for their life crises, but where distances are too great, attention turns to the construction of *marae* in the city. If anything, though, the *hui* and its rituals are now more important than ever as a Maori 'safety valve' from European culture, and *marae* etiquette has become the topic of school and university classes, newspaper articles, and 'grass roots' seminars held by the elders to instruct their younger tribal kinsmen.

*Hui* then, is the cover term for a whole range of ceremonial gatherings on the *marae*. They last from one to three days, and are sponsored and stage-managed by the *marae's* owner-group. There are well over a thousand *marae* in New Zealand, and at least two or three *hui* a year will be held on most *marae*, while some are in almost constant use. Each *hui* has its own *take* or cause, and these can range from marriage, death, opening a new meeting-house, or unveiling a gravestone, to celebrations of loyalty to the Maori Queen or welcomes to visiting dignitaries. For each such case, there is a central ceremony, but what really defines the *hui* as a class of occasion are its rituals of encounter.

#### *The rituals of encounter*

The Maori people are traditionally divided into non-unilineal descent groups of varying scale. The most inclusive unit in this segmentary system was the tribe, localized in a known area and numbering perhaps a thousand

## RITUALS OF ENCOUNTER AMONG THE MAORI: SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF A SCENE

ANNE SALMOND

### *Background*

The Maori people, New Zealand's Polynesian inhabitants, were first effectively contacted for the European world by Captain James Cook and his party in 1769. They immediately acquired a reputation for belligerence, because whenever the explorers tried to approach a group, 'they rose up and every man produced either a long pike, or a small weapon of polished stone' (Banks 1896:42). In fact it was standard practice for stranger groups to make such ritual displays of strength upon first encounter, but the explorers weren't to know this, and retaliated with musket fire whose effects were anything but ritual. Subsequent arrivals in New Zealand — the missionaries, traders, and whalers — were greeted more tentatively, and as they became better acquainted with Maori custom they learned that challenges, sham fights, and war dances as well as oratory and other verbal arts were an expected part of ceremonial occasions. For their part, the Maori people learned to keep their greeting forms to themselves, and it was only Europeans who had frequent cause to parlay with the chiefs and elders who ever mastered them. As increasing numbers of settlers arrived in New Zealand, the pattern became established. Maori gatherings, or *hui*, once held in the village plaza, were now staged in a *marae* complex, with its carved meeting-house and courtyard for orators fenced off and isolated from other settlement. Europeans were only rarely to be found at a *hui*, and the privacy of the *marae* was jealously preserved.

Until World War II, the Maori were predominantly a rural people, concentrated in parts of the country like the Far North, the Bay of Plenty, and the East Coast. In these areas they farmed remaining Maori lands, built their *marae*, and continued to practise the rituals of encounter on ceremonial occasions. Each *marae* was sponsored by the local core of a descent-group, perhaps 200–500 people; and its meeting-house, with carved slabs about the inner walls each depicting a famous ancestor of the group, was a potent reminder of pre-contact times and a peculiarly Maori

people or more. At present there are forty-two recognized tribes in New Zealand (Metge 1967:125). The next unit was the subtribe, with some hundreds of members each. The subtribe was a closely united group in the past, cooperating in large-scale economic tasks and warfare, and today it is the usual sponsoring group for a *marae*. In traditional times, intertribal and subtribal warfare was endemic, and encounters between groups of this scale were potentially dangerous, as an exchange of insults or some unwitting offense could spark off hostilities on the spot. There was a fierce preoccupation with *mana* or prestige, and even the most peaceful meetings were marked by intergroup rivalry. The rituals of encounter were used on all occasions when different groups met, as a finely balanced mechanism for keeping the peace and allowing competition to proceed without bloodshed. Today there is no fear of warfare, but suspicion and hot pride are still powerful underlying factors in group encounters on the *marae*, and the rituals are played out in a keenly competitive spirit. Actors on both sides exert themselves to give an impressive performance, with the fundamental principle that the more distant and unknown the other part, the more perfect and powerful must be your part in the exchange.

#### THE SCENE

At this point it seems appropriate to describe one moderately ceremonious ritual of encounter. No matter what the cause of the *hui* might be, visitors attend in groups, recruited by descent and summoned to the *hui* by ties of kinship or friendship with its sponsors. They may have travelled to the *marae* by bus or private car. Upon their arrival, a *marae* policeman directs parking, then the group gradually assembles at the ceremonial entrance to the *marae*. They stand around chatting or tidying up, then move into position — the old women in front, in black dresses, black scarves, and wearing jade ornaments; younger women next; then the men, with the more notable elders at their head. The signal to enter is given by the host group, and the ritual begins. The chief elder of the visiting party calls out a protective incantation (*wazerā*) from the gateway of the *marae*, to shield his people from any hostile influences within, and an elderly local woman standing in the porch of the carved meeting-house begins a high wailing call of welcome (*karanga*). 'Enter and bring your dead, we shall weep for them together.' The caller for the visitors replies, and the two old ladies call and answer while all the women present set up a chorus of keening, sobbing, and wailing for the dead. A party of women standing in front of the meeting-house begins the action chant of welcome (*poowhiri*), metaphorically addressing the visiting group as a prized canoe which is being hauled onto the *marae*. The visitors move slowly towards the meeting-house, halting at least twice to drop their tears onto the grass of the courtyard in honour of the

dead. The old ladies continue to wail vigorously and wave sprigs of greenery to ward off hostile spirits. If the groups are strangers, the atmosphere is tense and uneasy. It is important to behave correctly, especially if the *marae* belongs to a tribe with a different etiquette; for an invisible horde of the dead hover over each group, and their meeting must be carefully handled. The visitors stop at some distance from the meeting-house, and all displays of grief are redoubled — wailing reaches a crescendo, and handkerchiefs are produced in quantity (*tangi*). This may last from ten to fifteen minutes. The old ladies of the host group are seated in the front porch of the meeting-house, their orators sit silently on a bench to the right of the house, and all other locals are either standing around as spectators or busy in the background cooking, washing dishes, or looking after children.

As the weeping subsides, the visiting men leave their women and sit on the bench for visiting orators which faces the meeting-house, and the women move to join the local ladies on the porch, pressing noses with each one in turn, or go to benches set out behind their menfolk. The space bounded by the meeting-house porch and the two orators' benches is the *marae aatea* or speaking-ground, the true 'stage' in a *hui*. Now the oratory (*whaikōrero*) begins. A local speaker, always an elder, stands with a shout (*whakaaraara*): 'Ihei mauri ora! I greet the living!' He walks onto the *marae*, and faces the visitors. He is bare-headed, wears a suit and tie (even if it is pouring, the true orator scorns hat, coat, or umbrella), and carries a carved walking-stick. He stands there and launches into a *tauparapara* or traditional chant, accompanied by vigorous actions and defiant brandishings of his stick. This display gives the orator's credentials and establishes his skill. Then he starts his oration. He strides along in front of the visitors, stops, delivers a few sentences, then turns on his heel and strides back again. His welcome to the dead, to the living, the recitation of genealogy and delivery of humorous asides are all given in these short bursts of speech. As his speech draws to a close, the orator starts up an ancient song (*waiata*), and is joined and supported by members of his group. The song finishes, and he rounds off his performance with a few last words.

In some tribes, all the local orators speak in turn until their side is finished, then all the visitors, a style known as *paaeāe*. In other areas, orators of the two sides alternate (*utuutu*). Ritual experts make it their business to be aware of such regional differences, which can be humiliating traps for the unwary. One of the host speakers now calls the visitors over to shake hands. The local people line up in front of the meeting-house, and the visitors move along the line, pressing noses and shaking hands with everyone in turn (*hongi*). In a few areas, the locals do the walking, a custom which is described by other tribes as 'the wharf coming to the steamer.' Now the

ritual of encounter for this particular group is complete. The visitors have been given honorary local status by the ceremony, and are no longer threatened by *tapu* qualities on this *marae*. The local people are still busy, however, as the ritual must be repeated in its entirety for each group of visitors; an important *hui* may attract four or five thousand visitors, arriving in groups of ten to several hundred each.

Although the ritual of encounter is repeated for each group, its composition changes by addition or deletion every time in adjustment to the *mana* of the visitors. Groups from distant tribes or those containing important visitors receive the most elaborate ceremonial of all. The arrival of the Queen, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Maori and Island Affairs, or other major officials of state or church is heralded by the ceremonial challenge (*wero*), a part of the ritual which is performed only on these occasions. A warrior wearing a flax kilt runs to the gateway of the *marae* as the official party are about to enter, leaping, grimacing, and whirling his *taiaha* (carved long-staff). This display of intimidation derives from old times, when challengers ran at a visiting party and hurled a spear into their midst, then fled with warriors of the other side hard on their heels. Today the challenger places a carved baton on the ground, which is picked up by one of the visiting party as a sign they come in peace. The challenge is rarely taken up these days, but some years ago New Zealand had a Governor-General who had long been interested in Maori custom. Shortly after he arrived in the country, a great *hui* was staged to welcome him to the North-ern area. When he arrived at the *marae* with the official party, he had a young man at his side, stripped for action. The challenger came down the *marae*, all threat and gesticulation, his weapon whirling close to the Governor's face. He knelt down, placed his baton, then started to run back to the meeting-house. About half-way he was felled by a flying tackle from behind — the Governor-General had followed the old custom, and met the challenge with a warrior of his own. The laughter and applause were tremendous, and the Governor's stocks in *mana* went sky-high. On such ceremonious occasions, the full ritual is given, and experts are especially recruited to make certain that everything is carried out correctly.

If a strong delegation of traditional rivals arrives on the *marae*, the ritual is also carried out in full, with both sides competing in the display of traditional skills. Under these circumstances a contest in oratory is likely to develop, and as many as twelve speakers from each side may stand in turn to deliver long, esoteric speeches, until finally one group runs out of qualified men. This sort of contest is most impressive in the alternating style of oratory, where each speaker strives to outdo the one before in grandiloquence and ancient knowledge.

If the visitors are a respected but friendly group, the atmosphere is

relaxed, and it would be something of an insult if they delivered a protective incantation on entry to the *marae*. For a small and rather unimportant group, the action chant of welcome will probably be left out altogether, and only a couple of speeches given on each side.

Thus the ritual of encounter is extremely sensitive to social context. In a situation marked formal by the size, status, and kin-distance of the visiting group, all of its elements are triggered in sequence; but in informal situations, certain of the ritual units are optional or even obligatorily deleted.

#### *Towards a formal description*

The situational use of language is one of the recognized concerns of the ethnography of speaking. One of the major difficulties, however, is that while linguistic structure has long been studied and formal models proposed for its description, the structure of situations is much less understood. This theoretical inequality can easily produce an imbalance in description, with linguistic patterns the focus of attention, and the social context relegated to the role of background information to which the linguistic patterns respond.

One possible means of redressing this imbalance is to investigate how situations might be made to yield to structural description. Here, the Maori rituals of encounter seem to offer a promising avenue for investigation. Each ritual has a clear-cut beginning and end; and in between, each step of the ritual has a well known Maori label. Just because this particular type of situation is so highly ritualized, there are sets of rules which lay down correct sequences of activity and correct modes of procedure at any given state. The ritual rules in the Maori situation are quite overt. They are consciously formulated, and in most cases people learn only those rules which govern their particular role in the ritual, though they may have a rough idea of others. Ritual, it seems, is a thoroughly self-conscious activity, and this largely explains why the rules are made self-evident. The main roles are carried out by specialists whose esoteric knowledge gives them status, and its structure is only preserved by their expert supervision. Just because the structure of any ritual is artificial, in the sense that it is not inevitably acquired as the child matures, its elements are named for easy reference and their correct relationships are made explicit in verbal principles that can be transmitted to novices.

In Maori rituals of encounter, behaviour is clearly structured into sequential units, each with its own label. These units include not only linguistic behaviour, though this is the most important component, but also clear spatial and kinesic patterns and a structured choice of actors. Some of the units in fact include no speech at all, for example, the ritual challenge,

but they are still clearly part of the structure. It would be possible to describe others of the units purely in terms of the linguistic patterns they exhibit, but such a description would be partial and misleading. The exchange of oratory is the natural focus of the ritual, and the only units of the ritual without structured verbal patterns occur at the beginning (ritual challenge or *wero*) and the very end (shaking hands and pressing noses or *hongi*). It seems then, that if one wishes to describe the use of language in a given situation, it is the situation which provides an obvious maximal unit for analysis.

In this paper, I propose to write a situational grammar for the Maori rituals of encounter, which will include, but not exclusively focus on, linguistic patterns. The grammar will use context-sensitive categorial rules of the type familiar in generative linguistic theory, in order to produce a range of rituals appropriate to different situations. The major categories will be identified by their labels in Maori (e.g. *wero*, *hongi*, etc.), and rules for actor selection will accompany them. The grammar should anticipate for any given stage of the ritual its appropriate actors and patterns of verbal behaviour, as well as outlining the structure of the total event. This 'situational' grammar is thus an attempt to apply formal devices developed for the abstract description of language to a description of language in social context.

It should be roughly understood for now that the situational grammar has access to the resources of a linguistic grammar of Maori and a structured universe of actors, and that from these resources it may make principled selections. Its fundamental structure is, however, independent of these resources, and acts as an organizing principle upon them. This point can be illustrated readily by reference to the orations that form the focus of the ritual. Normally these are given in Maori, but a speaker who doesn't know Maori could still maintain the correct internal structure for a formal speech by following the prescribed sequence of topics in English.

### *The ritual grammar*

#### LINGUISTIC CODES

Virtually every Maori speaker in New Zealand today is bilingual in English, and there are increasing numbers of people in the younger generations, Maori by birth, who speak no Maori at all. Perhaps 10% or less of the Maori population are fluent in their native language, and the process is constantly being accelerated by the influences of urbanization. Maori is now spoken as an everyday language only in some rural areas. For more than a hundred years, English has been the compulsory language of in-

struction in New Zealand schools, and as recently as twenty-five years ago, children were still being strapped for speaking Maori on school playgrounds. In the last few years, Maori has been offered as a subject in many secondary schools, but this trend is still too recent to show any widespread effects. Given this situation, it is perhaps surprising that Maori continues to be the ritual language of the *marae*, and that ancient chants, proverbs, and songs can still be heard in most parts of the country. On the other hand, the linguistic conservatism of ritual situations is well known, and reverence for the past is a powerful theme in Maori culture. Although to all intents and purposes, Maori is becoming a ceremonial language in New Zealand, within its context it reigns supreme. There is strong feeling against the use of English in *marae* rituals, and those who can't speak Maori, even elders, rarely express themselves on a *marae* unless they have to. At one *hui* I attended, the Minister of Maori and Island Affairs, a European, was the honoured guest. Two old men, both Maori speakers, thought to make things easier for him, and delivered their orations in English. They were cried down and criticized, and soon after left the *marae*. Their use of English was regarded as an insult to the minister at worst, and a foolish mistake at best. This limitation excludes many of the younger generation from active participation in the rituals, but they are effectively excluded anyway as all the main roles are taken by elderly people. It is more serious when people reach middle or old age without learning to speak Maori, and the effects of increasing monolingualism may eventually put an end to *marae* rituals. On the other hand, the *marae* is not only a ceremonial place but also the major Maori political arena, and a surprising number of the younger generation take great pains to learn the chants and old sayings from their elders, sometimes beginning from scratch in middle age to learn the Maori language.

Maori, then, is by far the preferred language in these rituals of encounter, and in most of the ritual categories (incantations, chants and songs, etc.) it is inconceivable that any other language could be used. English or an adapted form of it ('Maori' English) is commonly heard in the background, amongst the cooks, workers, and spectators, but rarely on the speaking ground itself.

#### ACTORS

Many of the roles in the ritual are played by specialists, and oratory in particular has reached the status of a verbal art among the Maori. The skilled orator is a master of genealogy, ancient chants, local history, and proverbs. Not only is he erudite, but a consummate actor as well. His movements are dramatic and timed to give the greatest possible effect to the statements he is making. The finest orators are well known throughout

the country, and when one of their number stands to speak on the *marae*, even the cooks leave what they are doing and come to listen. Oratory is the way for a man to win fame in Maori circles, and these men move about the country to a great many *hui* each year. On each *marae* their words are listened to with respect and their performance watched with interest. The orator is largely self-trained, though he may learn his esoteric knowledge from elders of his own family or tribe, and he acquires his skill by watching others and by experience. In most tribes only male elders can deliver speeches on the *marae*, although on the East Coast, where women have traditionally played an important role in tribal history, the rule is waived for high-born women. If such a woman should stand to speak outside her own tribal area, however, there would be violent protests from the local elders, and it is said that in the old days she would have been killed. Women in general play a supporting role in *marae* rituals. Old women give the call of welcome, wail, and sing the ancient songs. After a man completes his speech, the women stand to sing with him, and this song is said to be the *kiinaki* 'relish' for the oratory. Women also dominate the action chant of welcome, although men join in. Solo opportunities for women are mostly restricted to the *karanga* or call of welcome, and old ladies with clear strong voices and a knack for choosing the right words (sometimes referred to as 'bugles') are widely admired.

The only section of the ritual where a 'young' person (under fifty) is the main actor is the ritual challenge or *wero*. In this case a young warrior represents the strength of the tribe; but otherwise young people mostly act as workers and stagehands for the performance.

Apart from the age and sex dichotomies, the other crucial division among actors is the one between locals and visitors. The ritual is structured as a balanced exchange between local and visiting groups, a pattern which is most obvious in the calls of welcome and exchange of speeches, and this separation cross-cuts the sex and age divisions.

The universe of actors for these rituals of encounter, then, is quite simply structured. It is first divided into locals and visitors; then by age; and finally, by sex:

<i>tangata whenua</i>	[local]
<i>manuhiri</i>	[visitor]
<i>tamaiti</i>	[child]
<i>taane</i>	[mature, male]
<i>wahine</i>	[mature, female]
<i>koroua</i>	[elderly, male]
<i>kuia</i>	[elderly, female]

These features are adequate for the correct selection of categories of actors at different stages of the ritual.

#### RITUAL CATEGORIES AND RULES

The categories of the ritual of encounter are bounded and ordered in strict sequence. In a given ritual performance the behaviour exemplifying one category often overlaps with others, but the beginning and end of each category is clearly recognized, and when informants discuss the structure of the ritual, they give a common sequential pattern. This pattern is laid out in the first rule of the grammar, with those categories which are optional in certain circumstances specified as such.<sup>2</sup>

#### RULE 1

RITUAL<sup>Rx</sup> → (WAEREA<sup>R</sup>) (WERO) KARANGA<sup>R</sup> (POOWHIRI<sup>R</sup>)  
 (protective challenge) call (action chant)  
 (incantation)

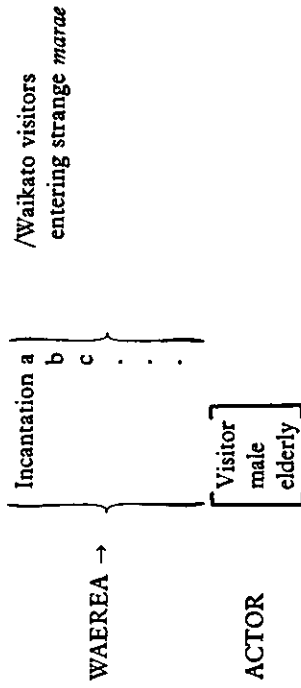
TANGI WHAIKOOERO HONGI  
 keen- oratory press-  
 ing ing noses

where  $x$  = number of visiting parties to enter the *marae*. 'Ritual is repeated for each visiting party, and comprises optional WAEREA or protective incantation, optional WERO or challenge, repeated KARANGA or call, optional repeated POOWHIRI or action chant, TANGI or weeping, WHAIKOOERO or oratory, and HONGI or ceremony of pressing noses, in that order.'

The rule specifies the most abstract categories in their correct order, and no information about actors or option choices is included.

The WAEREA or protective incantation is performed when the visiting group is about to enter a strange *marae*. Only a few remaining experts of the Waikato tribes know these chants, and very few are in active use today. The WAEREA is supposed to clear the pathway of hidden obstacles set there by local sorcerers. Its words are archaic, and in most cases they can no longer be understood. For all incantations used in the ritual of encounter, it is important that no mistake should be made in their recitation, or evil will follow. The linguistic choice of the speaker is thus nullified, so that while he can choose between different incantations if he knows more than one, within the text he has no choice at all.

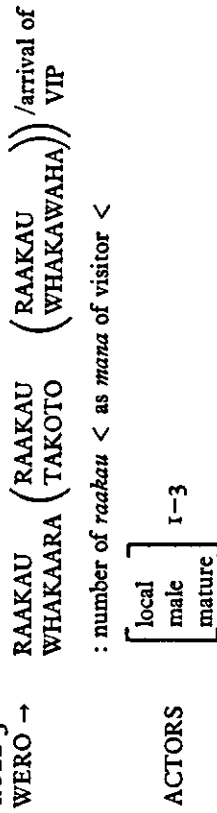
## RULE 2



'WAEREA chosen in the context: visitors from Waikato tribes entering strange marae. One of a set of incantations [later specified in a lexicon of texts] is selected. The actor is an elderly male visitor.'

If the WERO or ritual challenge is performed, as it is when a distinguished visitor or *manuhiri tuaarangi* is entering the marae, it precedes all other activity except the incantation. It has already been noted that the challenge includes no structured verbal behaviour, although the warrior may yelp like a dog as he leaps about, to show his warlike intentions. The challenge may be repeated up to three times, depending on the prestige of the visitor, and each of the successive challenges has a special name.

## RULE 3



'Category WERO is chosen in the context: arrival of *manuhiri tuaarangi* (VIP). It includes the *raakau whakaara* (warning baton), optional *raakau takoto* (baton laid down), and optional *raakau whakawaha* ('all clear' baton) in that order. If *raakau takoto* is selected, *raakau whakawaha* may follow but not otherwise. The number of challenges increases with the mana of the visitors. Actors are 1-3 mature local males.'

The KARANGA, or exchange of calls between old women of the local and visiting parties, presents by far the most difficult problem of description. These high, chanted calls send greetings, invoke the dead, and bring an emotional atmosphere to the marae. A good caller, in the words of one of my informants, 'has a voice like a bird - high, light, and airy.' There is

no way to transcribe the sound of *karanga* except perhaps musical notation, and the words are almost as difficult. Callers improvise each call to fit the occasion, the *marae* they are on, and their status as local or visitor. One cannot predict the exact structure of any given call, although certain stock phrases recur; the best I have been able to do is to isolate topical features which occur in different types of *karanga*. The following is a fairly typical example of a *karanga* exchange.

local: *karanga* (call)  
*haere mai ra e te mana ariki e, mauria mai o*  
 Welcome, prestige of chiefs, bring our many  
*taatou tini aituua*  
 dead

*haere mai, haere mai!*  
 welcome, welcome!

Visitor: *tiwaha* (Reply)  
*Karanga ra te tupuna whare ki te kaahui pani*  
 Call, ancestral house, to those who mourn  
*ki ngaa iwi e, karanga ra!*  
 call to the tribes!

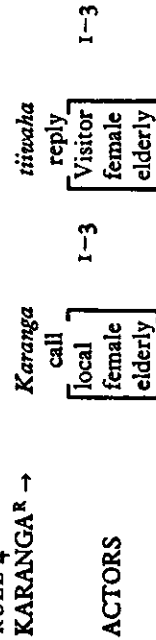
local: *karanga* (call)  
*nau mai ngaa karanga maha o te motu*  
 draw near from all corners of the island  
*mauria mai ngaa mate kua ngaro ki te poo!*  
 bring the dead who have gone into the night.

Visitor: *tiwaha* (call)  
*hoki wairua mai raa e koro e*  
 Return in spirit old man  
*ki te karanga ki te poohiri i taa koutou kaahui pani*  
 To the call and welcome of those who mourn you.

*hoki wairua mai e Paa e!*  
 Return in spirit, father!

The old women are dressed in black, and as they call, they wave sprigs of greenery and begin to weep. The rules for the KARANGA are as follows.

## RULE 4



The KARANGA category can be repeated, and consists of the *karanga* or call, from 1-3 old ladies, and the *tiwaha* or reply, from a similar number of visitors.

RULE 5  
*karanga* → welcome visitors + welcome their dead

'The *karanga* has as its topics a welcome to the visitors and their dead.'

These topical features are semantic instructions, which indicate the topics to be selected without specifying exactly how they are to be expressed.

RULE 6  
*tiwaha* → greet *marae*, locals + greet local dead

'The *tiwaha* greets the local *marae*, the people, and their dead.'

The POOWHIRI or action chant of welcome is performed by a group of local people, women in front, who stand before their meeting-house. A leader starts up the chant and acts as fogleman, the whole group give the simple rhythmic actions, slapping their thighs and shouting out the chorus. The *poowhiri* is performed for important visitors, and the more important they are, the more people join in, the more chants are given (perhaps two or three in sequence) and the more loudly they are shouted. Sometimes the cycle of chants is repeated, to give the visitors enough time to move into the *marae* in the prescribed stately halting fashion. The chants are taken from old war dances and canoe-hauling choruses, and there are about four or five in popular use. One of the most popular chants is as follows.

*Toia mai* (all) *te waka!*  
Haul the canoe

*Ki te urunga te waka!*  
To the resting place, the canoe

*Ki te moenga te waka!*  
To its bed the canoe

*Ki te takotoranga i takoto ai te waka e!*  
To its lying place to lie the canoe!

RULE 7  
/visitors have  
*mana*

chant a  
b  
c  
.  
.  
.

POOWHIRI<sup>(R2)</sup> →

: choose up to 3 of these in any order; number < as *mana* of visitors <

ACTORS

[local  
female]

'The POOWHIRI cycle may be repeated twice, and consists of up to 3 different chants selected from a repertoire and given in any order. The greater the *mana* of the visitors, the more chants are selected. Local women perform the POOWHIRI for important groups of visitors.'

The TANGI is a high keening wail. When the visitors stop in front of the meeting-house, women of both parties weep for the dead, especially those who have recently died. The wail is a long sustained vowel, breaking off into sobbing.

RULE 8

TANGI →  $\left. \begin{array}{l} i - i - i \\ e - e - e \end{array} \right\}$

ACTORS [female]

WHAIKOORERO or oratory is the main part of the ritual. Orators are generally male and elderly, although women are permitted to speak in a few tribes, and young men who have achieved high status in the European world may be treated as honorary elders. Sons of a living father and younger brothers are not supposed to speak on the *marae*, but the rule is not strictly followed in many areas. Locals and each group of visitors have their own 'side' of speakers, with the most distinguished orators speaking first and last, and it is not unknown for a group to deliberately stock up on orators before a *hui*, so that they are able to crush all opposition by sheer weight of numbers.

Once an orator is standing on the *marae* he is virtually immune from interruption. Only if the speaker gets impossibly offensive is he stopped, and in an old custom which is still sometimes used, the old women will bend over and flip up their back skirts at him, a great insult in Maori terms.

It has already been mentioned that there are two main regional styles of oratory. In the Northern, East Coast, and Taranaki tribes, local then visiting orators speak *en bloc*; while in other tribes, they alternate. These and other regional variations make people nervous about visiting *marae* in strange areas, in case they should blunder and offend the local people.

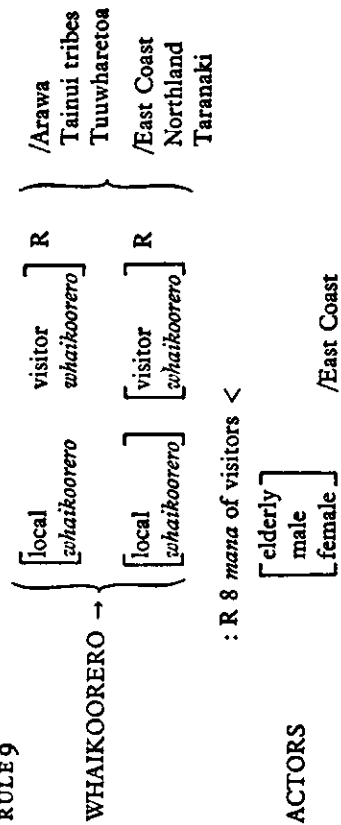
Apart from this broad structuring of the oratory, each *whaikōrero* follows a specified internal pattern. The speech begins with a warning shout or WHAKAARAARA which claims the *marae* for the speaker. Once in a while, two speakers give this shout at the same time, and in this case hosts defer to visitors and those of lower status to their superiors. On one occasion the two men were of the same tribe and about equally important. They glared at each other, neither sat down, so they turned their backs and proceeded to deliver simultaneous orations, to the great delight of the crowd. The most common warning shout is *Tihei mauri ora!* 'I sneeze, it is life!'

Following this, the orator gives a TAUPARAPARA, a type of chant which includes a wide range of incantations from earlier days, including chants for tree-felling, carving, adzing, sentry watch, and paddling canoes. Again the chant must be repeated exactly. Many of the words are so archaic as to be incomprehensible, and the chant does not convey specific semantic information so much as establish the orator's claim to esoteric knowledge. There are a great number of *tau* in use.

The orator then greets the ancestors and the dead, perhaps using a genealogy to link his own ancestors with those of the local people. Before he turns to greet the living, he may use a common bridging phrase 'the dead to the dead, we the living to the living.' During a ritual of encounter the speeches are ceremonious, intended to run through the ritual paces rather than to convey information, and if a speaker wishes to discuss some topic (*takē*), he doesn't introduce it until all the greetings are complete. Finally he starts up a WAIATA (traditional song) and is joined by others of his group. There are hundreds of *waiata*, and several collections of texts have been published and are in wide circulation.

The structure of Maori oratory then, can be formally presented as follows.

## RULE 9



## ACTORS

'WHAIKOORERO or oratory comprises alternating local and visitor speeches in the Arawa, Tuuharetoa, and Tainui tribal areas; or all local then all visiting speakers, in the East Coast, Northland and Taranaki tribal areas. Speeches are delivered by male elders in general, but female orators are permitted among the East Coast tribes. The greater the *mana* of the visitors, the more speeches are given.'

## RULE 10

*whaikōrero* → WHAKAARAARA TAUPARAPARA *hunga mate* *hunga ora*  
warning opening greet greet  
shout chant dead living

(take  
cause) WAIATA  
ancient  
song

[his  
group]

## ACTOR

[speaker]

'A *whaikōrero* comprises a shout of warnings, an opening chant, greetings to the dead then to the living, and optional *takē* (topic of discussion), given by the speaker, and an ancient song given by his group, in that order.'

Note that while the initial and final categories are selections from a range of texts, the middle categories are topical features, indicating the topics to be selected in their correct order, without specifying how they are to be expressed.

## RULE 11

WHAKARAARA →

Tihei mauri ora!	}	/tangi 'funeral'
Tihei mauri mate!		
short chants a b .		

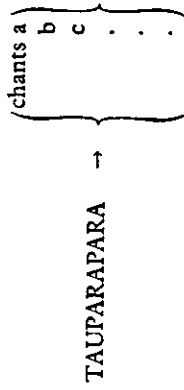
'The WHAKAARAARA or warning shout gives a choice among two phrases, one for use on general occasions, and one for a funeral on the *marae*, and a series of chants once used by sentries patrolling the terraces of fortified villages.'

An example of such a short chant is:

<i>Kia hīwa raa!</i>	<i>kia hīwa raa!</i>	<i>kia hīwa raa e teenei tuku</i>
be alert!	be watchful!	be alert on this terrace
<i>Kia hīwa raa e teera tuku!</i>	<i>kia hīwa raa!</i>	<i>kia hīwa raa!</i>
be alert on that terrace!	be watchful!	be wakeful!



## RULE 12

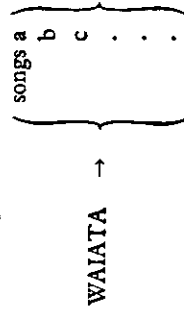


A wide range of these chants could be listed in a lexicon of texts. One example calls on all the tribes to unite, and reminds them of their common descent from the mythical homeland Hawaiki:

*Whakarongo!* *Whakarongo!*  
Listen! Listen!  
*Whakarongo ki te tangi a te manu e karange nei*  
Listen to the cry of the bird calling  
'*Tui, tui, tuituiaa!*'  
Unite, unite, be one!  
*Tuia i runga, tuia i raro, tuia i roto*  
Unite above, unite below, unite within,

*Tuia i waho, tuia i te here tangata*  
Unite without, unite together,  
*Ka rongo te poo, ka rongo te poo*  
The night hears, the night hears  
*Tuia i te kaawai 'runga i heke mai i Hawaiki nui*  
Unite the descent lines from Great Hawaiki  
*I Hawaiki roa, i Hawaiki Paamamao*  
From long Hawaiki, from Hawaiki far away  
*I hono ki te wairua, ki te whaitao, ki te ao maarama.*  
Joined to the spirit, to the daylight, to the world of light.

## RULE 13



Many of these songs are already in print, e.g., in Sir Apirana Ngata's *Nga Motiatea* (1959), and hundreds could be listed in a lexicon of texts. One example sings of an old woman's loneliness; it begins

*Engari te tiiiti e tangi haere ana, e*  
Even the tiiiti as it goes, crying

*Whai tokorua rawa rau*  
Travels in a pair

*teenaako au nei, e manu e*  
oh bird! I am like

*kei te hua kiwi i mahue i te taawai*  
The kiwi egg abandoned to the beech tree  
*ka toro te raakau kai runga e*  
the roots grow over it

*Ka hoki mai ki te pao*  
When the mother returns for the hatching.

*Ka whai uri ki ahau*  
The offspring are trapped, like me.

Ideally the grammar should include a full lexicon of texts in each category, but this would be impossibly bulky. Instead, one sample text has been given for each type by its appropriate rule in the grammar.

## COMMENTS ON THE RULES

One can conclude that it is possible to formalize the patterns to be found in Maori rituals of encounter, and by extension that it should be possible for any type of ritual situation. This is not to deny that the rules have their crudities. The instructions about actor selection are only roughly welded into the grammar, and some more sophisticated formal devices ought to be possible here; also the rules to specify for each type of text its proper mode of presentation, whether sung, chanted, or called. This failure in description stems at least in part from the difficulty of mapping ritual categories into behavioural expression, but it is nonetheless crucial.

A further comment relates to the types of linguistic choice allowed in the grammar. In many parts of the ritual, interestingly enough, no linguistic choice is allowed at all, and mistakes or changes in reciting texts are super-naturally punished. The only choice a speaker has at these points is among texts of a specified category.

At other points in the ritual, however, a different type of linguistic choice is made. In the KARANGA (call) and in speeches, the structure is essentially a specified series of topics. This type of semantic structure is not much discussed, but it may be crucial to the understanding of some types of discourse. In this case at least, an ordered series of topics is dictated to the speaker at given stages in the ritual and it is these instructions, not the smaller linguistic choices, that structure his behaviour.

Much of the verbal behaviour in these rituals is not really aimed at communicating semantic information at all, but rather at fulfilling a required set of ritual paces. It is only when a speaker breaks out of the prescribed pattern of incantations and topics that people sit up and listen, otherwise they mainly watch the way he moves and evaluate his delivery style. The messages being passed are subtle claims to esoteric knowledge and prestige, and the fact that most of the incantations are no longer understood supports this claim.

#### *Playing the rules*

This brings us to the point that the most fascinating part of the Maori rituals of encounter, both to the audience and to the ethnographer, are not the rules themselves but the games people play with them. This is the main justification for writing a grammar of such events – that only when the rules are laid down as economically as possible and all the options are made clear can an outsider appreciate the manipulations that people practise. All the considerable drama of these occasions is concentrated at those moments when one side or the other tries to play the rules to its own advantage. The audience watches each play intently, enjoying the attacks and counter-attacks, and taking note of gains or losses in prestige. These duels are usually good-humoured, but on rare occasions the game becomes serious as old rivalries are revived or new ones are created. Such moments are the highlight of any gathering, and are talked of for months afterwards.

There are three basic strategies that can be used. The first one is to manipulate options already present in the rules; the second is to force the other side to break a rule; the third and most difficult is to break a rule yourself and get away with it.

In the first strategy, prestige is achieved by a skilful handling of grammatical choices. A large number of the rules of the grammar, for example, require a matching of ritual responses to the relative prestige and social distance of the other group, with the general principle that the greater the prestige-distance of the other side, the more ritual should be given. This applies to the challenge (for VIPs only, and repeated more often as their status rises), the action chant of welcome (given only for important groups, and repeated more often as their status rises), and speeches (more are given as the status of the other side rises). All sorts of subtle claims about *mana* are passed in the way these options are handled. A visiting group might try to elicit a deferential response by arriving at the *marae* in force, with a host of speakers and callers; a local group can show deference and at the same time win prestige by the elaborate excellence of their ritual; or they might choose to insult the visitors by according them only a perfunctory welcome.

This last strategy is dangerous because it invites a direct confrontation and accusations of inhospitality. There is a proverb *ka whakaiti koe i te manuhiri, ka whakaiti koe i a koe* 'in demeaning the visitor, you lower yourself', and local people who follow this strategy could end up with serious losses in prestige. On one occasion when a visiting party was improperly welcomed, the leader of the visitors made no comment, but failed to place his donation on the *marae* at the end of the ceremony. He went off to the bank directly afterwards, and changed his group's fifty pounds into threepences. When he returned to the *marae*, he waited for a suitable moment, then announced that he wished to make his donation. Pulling out a bulging bag from under his coat, he began strewing threepences as far as he could all over the *marae*. The local people were forced to crawl on their hands and knees to collect the money, and the old man had his revenge.

Regional and historical variations in the rules also allow a certain amount of play. The Governor-General who used an ancient form of reply to the ceremonial challenge was manipulating this type of option. Regional variations in turns of talk and permitted categories of speaker give further openings for mistakes and violations. In this case, the local people have the advantage, since it is their etiquette that should properly be followed, and visitors often enter a strange *marae* intimidated in advance by their ignorance of the local ground rules.

In the second strategy, the other side is manipulated into making a mistake. The oratory contests are a clear example of this technique, where one side forces the other to break the proper sequence of speakers by running them out of qualified men. If the visitors come with ten or fifteen speakers, the chances are that the local people will not be able to match this number. In an alternating etiquette, this means that eventually the local people fall out of the sequence, so that one visiting speaker after another stands unanswered on the *marae*. Another trick is to anticipate another speaker's *tau* (opening chant) or *waiata* (song). This puts him off balance, and if he has a very limited repertoire it may force him to deliver an incomplete speech. At one state occasion in Auckland, the Governor-General mentioned earlier and several Maori elders were called upon to deliver speeches. The elders decided that the occasion was not really 'traditional,' so they gave no opening chants. When the Governor stood, however, he delivered a truly magnificent *tau* (an unprecedented performance from such a dignitary) and completely stole their thunder. The elders thought this was a great joke, and took it in good part. At the next *hui* the Governor attended, however, one of their number stood to speak, and with barely suppressed mirth proceeded to 'steal' the Governor's *tau*. No longer equipped for that occasion to astonish the populace, the Governor had to ruefully admit defeat.

If rule-breaking is accidental, people nearly always lose prestige, and

other violations may follow to their disadvantage. When a man talks too long on the *marae*, for example, people call out: *kia poto te kakau o too paipa!* 'shorten the stem of your pipe,' a form of interruption not usually permitted. If he keeps on talking, one of his female relatives may stand up, announce: *Anei too wai!* 'here is your song,' and start to sing, effectively cutting him off and short-circuiting the ritual sequence.

Deliberate rule-breaking, however, the last of the three strategies and the most perilous of all, has correspondingly great losses or gains of prestige at stake. An unsuccessful contender with the rules leaves the *marae* in utter humiliation, knowing that people will be talking about his folly for months to come. A successful contender, on the other hand, is greatly honoured, having proved himself above the constraints that bind ordinary people. All the famous orators have at one time or another broken through the rules, while yet making their actions seem morally right and inevitable. These are moments of complete self-assertion, when the individual breaks away from the group, trusting to his charisma to keep him safe. At other times an entire group can seek to assert its ascendancy by violating the rules of another tribe.

I can perhaps end the paper with a story of this sort, where ordinary life passes into legend. About fifty years ago, an old East Coast chieftainess was attending a funeral in the Arawa country. It will be remembered that high-born women are allowed to speak on the East Coast, but definitely not in Te Arawa. The hosts had opened up the oratory, and now it was the guests' turn. The East Coast men were in a dilemma, because the old lady outranked them all, and was properly their first speaker. After a pause, she stood, and launched into a chant. Seconds later the Arawa elders were on their feet yelling in outrage, cursing her and telling her to sit down. The old chieftainess serenely ignored them and continued her speech to the end; then she looked over to the local elders and addressed them with all the pride of her descent: 'You Arawa men! You tell me to sit down because I am a woman, yet none of you would be in this world if it wasn't for your mothers. This is where your learning and your grey hairs come from!' and turning her back on them, she bent over and flipped up her skirts in the supreme gesture of contempt. The Arawa men sat speechless, dumbfounded by the grandeur of the insult, and in that silence, the old woman became a legendary figure. She left the *marae* unrebuked, and East Coast people have been telling the story ever since.

## SPEAKING OF SPEAKING: TENEJAPA TZELTAL METALINGUISTICS

BRIAN STROSS

The intent of this paper is to present a picture of the ways that Tzeltal (Maya) speakers themselves categorize their world of verbal communication, the ways that they talk about speech events occurring in their own cultural matrix. Instead of outlining a tightly defined and highly structured cultural domain and analyzing it exhaustively in terms of defining components on each level of contrast, I want to let the native terms and their glosses along with some explanation speak for themselves. There are two reasons for adopting this expository stance.

The first is that the meanings of the native terms as glossed embody the attributes of communicative events that we must assume the Tzeltal speakers single out as relevant and significant in specific situations. Thus, by simple inspection we can see what kinds of events the Tzeltal have chosen to label, what components and functions of speaking are focused on (cf. Hymes 1962), and what attributes of individual speech and speaking style are considered important enough to deserve names. In other words, I have not sought a single grammatical or social frame for generating a universe of discourse and analysis because *a priori* levels of organization are unnecessary at this point for an understanding of fundamental Tzeltal conceptualizations of verbal interaction.

The second, and more important reason, is that elicitation frames and abstract analysis would be more likely to obscure than to clarify the meta-linguistic picture under consideration. The domain of speaking is not for the Tzeltal a well defined and clearly bounded one; it is not as a whole highly structured, although portions of it allow for systematic structural description. The Tzeltal domain of speaking is in fact an open system with fuzzy boundaries, flexible internal structuring of often imprecise units (at times overlapping, at times redundant), and with no cover term. As such it is highly adaptable to change in the social environment and must be seen as constantly evolving. The system's adaptability, allowed for by its openness and imprecision, is the precise explanation for our inability to contain it by means of a formal, exhaustive, and economical ethnographic description (cf. El Guindi 1972).

A substantial portion of the Tzeltal domain of speech events is referred to