

Transcript: Is data taonga? English panel discussion

Video, 27:36 min

See video: He taonga te raraunga? Is data taonga? – English panel discussion, published 13 November 2018: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57nFcXAycFg>

Visual: Rhonda Paku, Stats NZ Kaihautu, speaking to camera in Te Manukanuka a Hoturoa Marae.

Audio (Rhonda): Rarangi maunga, tū te ao, tū te po. Rarangi tangata, ka mate, ka mate noa. Rarangi ngā raraunga, ka ao, ka ao, ka awatea. Kia ora mai tatou katoa.

Kia ora everybody. As we all know, today is the world of technology, the digital age. But we also know associated with that is information and the data world. Today Stats NZ has brought together some speakers to share their thoughts on tikanga Māori and the data world. Please join us, listen in, share your thoughts as well. I'm Rhonda Paku for Stats NZ.

Visual: Stats NZ logo, followed by the wording 'he taonga te raraunga? is data taonga?' overlaid onto rotating waitohu graphic. Te Arahi Maipi, speaking to camera in Te Manukanuka a Hoturoa Marae.

Audio (Te Arahi): E ōku huia kaimanawa, tēnā koutou. Rarau mai ki tēnei kaupapa, ki tēnei wananga e arohaehae ana tēnei pakirehua he taonga te rauranga.

Kia ora everybody, welcome to this Facebook show for Statistics New Zealand. Make sure to check out all the information on stats.govt.nz and also follow us on Facebook at Statistics NZ. I'm Te Arahi Maipi and it's my job to find out is 'he taonga te raraunga – is data a taonga?' So it's not about me finding out and telling you, it's about me asking these experts that question.

Visual: Te Arahi sitting to the left in Te Manukanuka a Hoturoa Marae, with Tau Henare, Ngapera Riley, and Karaitiana Taiuru sitting to the right, next to each other. Throughout the video, the visuals move from closeups of individual panellists and Te Arahi, to views of the panellists as a group.

Audio (Te Arahi): First of all our expert panel is...Karaitiana Taiuru – tēnā koe.

Audio (Karaitiana): Tēnā koe.

Audio (Te Arahi): We've got Ngapera Riley – tēnā koe.

Audio (Ngapera): Kia ora.

Audio (Te Arahi): And also Tau Henare – tēnā rawa atu koe.

Audio (Tau): Hey bro.

Audio (Te Arahi): Now these three people are going to be sharing their thoughts on a wide range of issues around data and we want you, also, to share your thoughts in all the comments. But, as we go on, I just want to get a bit of an introduction, Twitter style, not the paepae kōrero, because we've only got about 20 minutes also. So first of all, Karaitiana, just tell us a little bit about yourself and how you relate to data.

Audio (Karaitiana): Sure. I've got a background in digital and data, and how tikanga Māori can be used with digital and with data, and how that can be used to predict the future of data and technology.

Audio (Te Arahi): Wow, interesting. Ngaperera?

Audio (Ngaperera): Kia ora. I'm new to the data world – six months in as deputy CEO of Figure NZ, and we're trying to take all of New Zealand's information – public information – and make it free and accessible for people to use.

Audio (Te Arahi): Ka pai. Tau?

Audio (Tau): Ah, board member of Housing New Zealand – just finished yesterday, board member of Crown Forestry Rentals Trust, and also a member of the Independent Māori Statutory Board. The data world – it's actually social media is my bag.

Audio (Te Arahi): What I want to ask you guys first of all, before we get into the topics, is around your everyday use – just pretend, you know, it's a normal day – you wake up, you have your coffee or whatever you have in the morning; from the time you wake up until the time you go to bed, what's a typical use of data or social media, that you do every day?

Audio (Karaitiana): Sure. I mainly use social media just to promote news items that I think's of interest and to get views of people in my network, and to see what professional colleagues are up to in their professional lives.

Audio (Te Arahi): Ka pai.

Audio (Ngaperera): Yeah, Facebook's my preferred medium, I use LinkedIn as well on a professional capacity, but I love Facebook because I can connect with family, friends, business and actually doing a lot more business via Facebook and Messenger these days, yeah.

Audio (Tau): Yeah, I'm mainly on Twitter, but I'm across Facebook and LinkedIn. I use it for all sorts of things – so as soon as I get up I check the news, I check the overseas sports results, throughout the day I like to interact with people on various issues – sports, politics – mainly politics during the day, and at night-time again, it's back to the original – have a look what's being said – have a look what's been going on in the world.

Audio (Te Arahi): Yeah I'm typical – when there's a Queenslander winning, I'm across everything (Tau): that's right bro...) but when they're losing, I'm dead silent (laughter).

Audio (Tau): You're very quiet – very quiet (laughter).

Audio (Te Arahi): Yeah I've disappeared off the face of the earth.

Audio (Tau): But that doesn't happen very often.

Audio (Te Arahi): No no no no, it's been a good 10 years, but I'm pretty quiet this year. But I want to ask you – in regards to the information you share – on your Twitter, on your Facebook...do you see that data as a taonga?

Audio (Tau): Yeah, I'm not a believer that data is a taonga. Data is information and collecting that information is for, you know, how to get from A to B, how to build a house, how to blah blah blah, you know, how many apprentices do you need. In terms of taonga, taonga is something that you want to protect and you're very careful about who you share that with. Now, so what we're talking about, is a platform and something else – they aren't the same.

Audio (Ngapera): Mmm. I'd have to disagree in the sense that – if I use the analogy of reo – I do believe that data is a taonga, same way as I believe te reo Māori is a taonga. It is something that we have to protect, but if you don't use it – if you don't use data and you can't access it then it's not as useful – it's not as powerful as it could be. So yes, I do believe data is a taonga, but you have to understand how to use it – the same way with te reo – you have to understand a lot of context behind it before you can be proficient in it. And if you don't use it, you'll lose it. And, as we increasingly go into a world that is surrounded in data, I think it's really important for everyone – particularly for Māori – to understand it and not be afraid of it. Yeah.

Audio (Karaitiana): Personally I think that data is a taonga so I'm very careful what I do share. I just share common public information which is not private or is not going to hurt my family or myself. Yeah.

Audio (Tau): What a load of rubbish. (laughter).

Audio (Te Arahi): Well Tau is rowing his own waka at the moment.

Audio (Tau): Again.

Audio (Te Arahi): Again, that's the normal. But personal details, personal pictures...so that's about yourself. And then it starts getting a little bit wider with whānau kōrero...things like whakapapa. Where does that kinda draw the lines? So Tau's sitting...and I'll come to Tau in a second. But in regards to that taonga, the next word that usually comes with that is tapu, so at what point on this type of medium, social media is 'taonga' to 'that's fine, put that out there, share it with whoever', to the parts where you start getting a little bit precious, that 'ah, na na na na, I'm not sharing that with anybody'?

Audio (Karaitiana): I think for me, every time you use social media you automatically give away your intellectual property rights for everything you share. So you need to consider that before you put it on social media...I'd never put a photo of my tīpuna on social media. When you consider it goes through the pipes, it goes under people's wharepakus, through anywhere, through radio waves, you know, going through people eating kai, throughout people's bodies, I draw the line on things like that. That's why I do think, yup, that stuff is tapu. I'm a firm believer that if you take a photo or something you're taking a bit of mauri off the living thing and then you're putting it into the digital world where that's...yeah, it's giving away the property, intellectual property rights and ownership of that data to faceless American corporations and other people, who'll then manipulate that data, make money off that data, yeah, and you've got no control of it anymore.

Audio (Ngapera): I think it's important to understand the distinctions. There's a lot of different types of data, right? You ask a young person, the data is what you top your phone up with, you know, that's 'the data'. And then there's personalised data which can identify people, and then there's

public, aggregate data, not personalised data, that's just information and numbers. For example, how many smokers are there in New Zealand and how many Māori, and you know, demographic data, those kinds of things. With regards to tapu, yeah, that's a really interesting question...I think it depends what type of data you're talking about, you know, whether that's tapu. If it's whakapapa data, is this data really personalised, where your iwi lives and identifiable, beneficiaries for example. That's, that really is a bit tapu, that is a taonga and that must be protected and acknowledged. But the aggregate data, I believe, and how to use it, yes it's a taonga but we've got to understand it in order to really use it properly, for good.

Audio (Te Arahi): So Tau, you generally say that this data isn't a taonga, so within that scope are you quite happy and free to share whatever on there, or do you have your boundaries as to what's good to share?

Audio (Tau): Yeah I do have boundaries, and I suppose the only boundary that I have is putting naked photos up (laughter). And, ok, it sounds funny, but that's my limit, you know, and so everything below that, as far as I'm concerned, you know like Karaitiana says he doesn't want to put a photo up of his tīpuna. I'm the sort of person who says 'ah hell no, I want people to share the knowledge that Wahine Kino is my great great grandmother, you know, and what a beautiful woman she was'. That she still is – in my mind. My view is this – if you think it's a taonga, if you think it's tapu, sweet – don't put it on then, ok? And that's why I respect what Karaitiana is saying. Me – I don't class that stuff, you know – I just think that – yeah course, there's always one person in the world – 7 billion people – there's always that one rogue, you know, that's going to use it for nefarious reasons. And the same with corporations – same with all sorts of photos. You know, I mean there are photos of me that don't belong to me – Getty Images – they own my image. I don't – I don't really care. You know, use it for whatever reason they want to...apart from, you know, advertising and they don't do a kickback to me. You know, this whole thing about – this is what social media was for – was to share, was to put out your views. Whether they are right wing, left wing, middle wing – whoever, whatever, it was about sharing. That was the initial reason for social media.

Audio (Te Arahi): Does Tau have a point here, that are we too precious? Like, what's the worst that's going to happen? Like, are we talking about extreme circumstances that happen somewhere – in Kazakhstan, where somebody got identity theft, or something along those lines...are we a little bit too uptight about what we share and what possibly could happen to it?

Audio (Ngapera): Well again I think it comes down to what type of data that we're talking about, right? And, you know, if you've got, if there's good intentions behind sharing and teaching and using information for good that's going to help future decisions, that's ka pai. If the data's going to be taken, for example, if somebody wants to get a hold of Māori stats around unemployment, and they want to use that to, you know, make – whakahī our people or whakaiti, then that's not good – but that's going to happen, because it's the nature of open data and having information out there. So that's why we want to teach people how to use it, and think about the responses. We talk to government agencies and private sector businesses, and, you know, data is hard. It's hard and it's changing all the time, so you just have to be ready. And this is why having discussions like this is so important, because it's for so long, data has been seen as the realm of the geeks, or the

mathematicians, or the statisticians, but kohanga reo tamariki can use data – everybody can use data - it's about breaking down the fear around it and having the kōrero.

Audio (Te Arahi): When you, Karaitiana, when you have a look on social media, what's the number one thing – especially when you see Māori people using on Facebook and Twitter, that you think “oh my gosh, what are you doing, why do you, why do you put yourself through that?”

Audio (Karaitiana): Sure. Mainly photos of themselves, and their babies, and their children; photos of the dead – someone mentioned before.

Audio (Te Arahi): So you have an issue with photos of them and their kids on there?

Audio (Karaitiana): Yes , so I know people can exploit people's – you know, physically exploit young children, when they see photos of them, those images of children – their faces can be put into other images, for illegal things – there's just no limits what can happen to those images.

Audio (Te Arahi): Interesting.

Audio (Tau): I went to put a photo of my moko up, and got told off by my daughter and my son-in-law. Not told off, you know, very respectfully, cos I would've told them where to go, but that sort of initiated a thing in me to be careful about who I put up. I suppose if you're in control of it, that's cool, but once it goes out, you're not in control – anybody can use it.

Audio (Karaitiana): Quite. As I say – and if your children grow up, and become quite aware, spiritually aware and tikanga aware, then they're going to question 'why did you put my photo all over the internet?' and 'why did you, yeah, you know, different aspects of my mauri and wairua get...'

Audio (Tau): But most Māoris don't believe that. That's just...that's just...

Audio (Te Arahi): (interrupting) Oh but look, generally speaking [inaudible] on my timeline is all my kids.

Audio (Ngapera): Yeah I love seeing people's kids on there...yeah.

Audio (Tau): Yeah.

Audio (Te Arahi): In saying that, so the majority of people, yep, same type of thing – very very freely about their image, about their information, about dirty laundry and things like that, that might possibly come back to haunt them a little bit later on, but do you feel as though, that we need better tikanga, around, you know, so general guidelines or because at the moment it's free for all, you know, and depending on who you are and what kind of state you're in at that time, you know, determines the type of information. Do you think that generally speaking there should be a bit more awareness about what is tikanga, or good practice around that.

Audio (Ngapera): Well. My thoughts are that guidance is always a good thing. And actually, people are sharing information because they're actually just a little bit unaware of that, that they're sending all their personalised information out to an American faceless corporation. So I think that awareness is important, and it's ka pai – if you're fully aware of what you're doing, and you know that this information is being collected about you, and you're ka pai with that, that's good. But I think

guidance is always a good thing, and when it comes to tikanga, yes, we should be considering this, because, because everything is so new, we just actually don't know what the implications are going to be – five, 10 years from now, so I think guidance and awareness is always important.

Audio (Te Arahi): Are we getting better, or are we getting worse...as the years go on, about the type of information that we share?

Audio (Karaitiana): I think we're getting worse. And we do need to consider, well what is going to happen in the future? I mean we look back at our tīpuna and it was cool to stop speaking Māori to blend in with society, so we did that. We thought it was the right thing to do to give up our gods because that was what society wanted, cause everyone did it. Land, we thought, well yeah, we'll just, you know, we'll give it to, you know, the colonisers, cause yep, that will help us, you know, get ahead in life. And now we're saying yep – we're going to give our data away, and we're going to forget about all of our privacy because that's what everyone else does. And I think we can look back in history and say "here's a lesson".

Audio (Te Arahi): (to Tau) You're shaking your head.

Audio (Tau): Oh I think that I might be from the wrong generation, I might be from the wrong side of the track, I might be a lot of things...but what we don't need is more regulation. It's we don't need a group of people telling us what to do. For goodness sake, people are adults...in fact a lot of the people that use social media aren't adults – you know, our kids. But I just hate rules and regulations I suppose. Ask any...

Audio (Te Arahi): (interrupting) I had no idea. (laughter) I had no idea that was the case.

Audio (Tau): Ask any one of my teachers. Yeah look, I just think that you've got to be careful, you've got to do all this. I mean, these two here – they're from a different generation – especially this one (gesturing at Ngapera) – but they both said something that worries me – and that was the – like a mini accusation - that an American corporation is going to use the information. America is not the only country – New Zealand, Australia, England, Africa – is a continent. You know, so let's not get bogged down in this fear that America is going to do something to us. I mean at the end of the day, this is the world of 7 billion people is getting smaller, and smaller, and smaller, as each day passes, and what we're talking about is the use of technology to better ourselves and our children and the world. So I think that, look, I agree with some of the stuff that they're talking about, and it is about growing, but again, I rail against too many rules and regulations.

Audio (Te Arahi): Ok, from a consumer standpoint, so a lot of the things that I go on social media for is to share family, you know, catch up with people and things like that, around business contacts with LinkedIn, but a lot of it that I actually appreciate, is that when Facebook sees my activity, and then they start chucking up ads into things that I'd be interested in that I never knew was even there, so that's a positive thing for me because I'm on there to...I'm looking for stuff, and I'm wanting to be interesting, or to buy things...what's the worst-case scenario? So from your two perspectives when you're saying you're being protective of certain things that you put out there. What do you think would be the worst thing that could happen when you're thinking 'I'm not going to do that because this might happen'.

Audio (Karaitiana): I guess for me it's going to be artificial intelligence which is very very close to becoming a big reality and then that artificial intelligence profiling me, profiling my friends, profiling my family and deciding 'oh well, I'm statistically likely to be a criminal because some of my friends are criminals or I'm statistically likely to die of cancer because of my family. So them being targeted by medical companies or targeted by law enforcement, by government, I think it's all...it's a reality at the moment.

Audio (Ngapera): Mmm I guess well it's not perfect yet. I got sent an ad for an old people's home the other day (laughter). I don't mind that kind of ...see it as a part, you know, I think that's actually one of the cool things about it, is having personalised. But what I do worry about then is not seeing an open view of the world. If you're only getting one source of information and one side of the story. You know, just left or right or whatever that you're just feeding, you're feeding one side because that's what it's feeding you. Whereas actually in order to be knowledgeable and seek wisdom you gotta have all angles. And so if it's only feeding you one, one lot of information that it thinks that you want to know, it's then, yeah that's a little bit of that area.

Audio (Te Arahi): It reminds me a bit of the early days back in Hotmail when I kept on getting sent messages about Viagra. Yeah, na, I've got enough kids thanks... (laughter). Interesting the two contrasting views. But what about government information, government data. Do you see that as a taonga?

Audio (Tau): Na, no I don't. I actually think it's an essential that governments have not only data but the use of data and the free availability of that data not only for government but also for the public. Because that's how we should make policy based on, it should be evidence-based. How many houses do we need, how much money do we have to spend on welfare, all those sorts of issues. Transport. So, and that should be a two-way thing, it shouldn't be protected by government and for only government, it should be for the community, for iwi, for whānau, for hapū, to use as they see fit as well. So that's our open data.

Audio (Ngapera): Oh I do see it as a taonga. Again. I think it's very important. Well it is a taonga in one way in that there are certain elements of it that do need to be protected, and that's why we have the IDI and things like that. Yes, Tau is absolutely right, we do need to be making decisions based on information, but the thing with data is that it's not perfect. You have to understand the gaps in it, you have to understand the context in which it was gathered. So for Māori in particular, who, many of who have a mistrust of government over time, you know, yes, we do need good data for Māori but we need to get better at the way we collect it and the type of questions that we're asking, and you know, there's awesome groups Te Mana Raraunga, the Māori Data Sovereignty Network, and a whole lot of experts that are constantly having this discussion. And I do think it's important, but I'm a huge proponent of open data. And yes, we have to make sure that our people are using it because data holds our stories, important stories of our country that we can use to make decisions, and funding, and all of those things. But there are certain elements of it that really do need to be protected and it's something that we all should be interested in.

Audio (Te Arahi): That's interesting. OK for the first time through this I see three heads nodding. That's the first time. Do you agree?

Audio (Tau): I was going to sleep (laughter).

Audio (Karaitiana): Yeah I think that any government data is a taonga. I also reckon, I also believe it needs to be labelled as a taonga so it gets Treaty recognition. Because there is some data that needs to be shared with iwi. There is some data that needs special, to be treated specifically in a specific way, yeah, with the care and recognition. And then I hear open data, but I always hear people talk about open data but they put open data inside a commercial database program, so I think we need to look at the back end as well, and say is that open source. If it's not open source, let's yeah, let's make it.

Audio (Te Arahi): On the back end of that, so that's about sharing that data on a government basis, but what about the process of collecting it and holding it.

Audio (Karaitiana): Mhmm

Audio (Te Arahi): I'm really interested to get your views on this, cos you're, in the real physical sense you have some strong opinions on that. How do you see that?

Audio (Karaitiana): I don't like the idea that our data or our taonga is being put inside a database where we have to pay money to leave it in there and we have to pay money to look at it. And then that data gets encrypted and spun around in all different ways which can only be read in that commercial package. I want the data to be in open software where the data is available to anyone without cost. Of course you have to pay for your normal services but the actual software itself should be open.

Audio (Tau): Yeah I mean I agree with my colleagues here that you do have to watch what is available and how you can store stuff in a central database but how you can also access that stuff. I'm a great fan of trying to go back and look at all the old news clippings, from the turn of the century. And it's becoming harder and harder to access that information unless you've got a credit card. You know, it's just those sorts of issues that will be ironed out, and hopefully with the help of people that are trying to make it accessible to everybody, for their own use, but yeah, I'm generally...I'm agnostic about a lot of data, how it's collected. I mean as long as it's not collected by the cops and the SIS and that for racial profiling issues and things like that. I mean I already know that Māori are sick, poor, dumb, unemployed, you know. You know, so we should be throwing money at those sorts of things and I personally get sick and tired of the statisticians and the researchers asking over and over and over the same questions. You know, and so we have a report in the 1970s that basically says the same things as a report said in 2014. About Māori. You know? There are too many people out there and organisations using Māori data just for a piece of coin.

Audio (Ngapera): Yeah, that's a big issue. And it's yeah, pffff (laughter)...

Audio (Tau): Go on, say you agree with me!

Audio (Ngapera): Yeah I do agree with you. I do agree but there's a big problem in that our country's datasets are in a big mess at the moment and actually the majority of the data that we see collected is actually not collected for what we need it for.

Audio (Karaitiana): Mmmm.

Audio (Ngapera): It's actually...most of it's collected as a byproduct of a service. You register your dog, you register your car, you enrol in a course, you go to school. All of these information sets are collected, but not...there's probably the census and a few others that are actually designed to get information. But even then I feel there's a lot of important information around technologies and things like that that are missing from those datasets. So this is why it's important to keep asking the questions, and for our country to keep being curious. Yeah.

Audio (Te Arahi, speaking to camera): We've run out of time to ask questions for you guys but it is never running out of time for you online. Make sure to share all your opinions, we'd love to view them, we'd love to see them and we'd love to discuss them on Facebook as well. (Speaking to panel) But just to sum everything up. We started with a Twitter version of who you are, what you're about. I just want a Twitter closing in regards to what you've learned and what you might be possibly changing now after this discussion on your online use – or nothing at all. Or is it exactly the same?

Audio (Karaitiana): Yeah my opinion is still the same. Data is a taonga and needs to be treated with, as tapu.

Audio (Ngapera): Yeah my opinions are a little bit the same, but yeah, just keep learning. I want people to keep asking questions about it and pushing the boundaries of it. Because yeah it's an exciting journey, we should all be on it.

Audio (Tau): Hashtag no change (laughter).

Audio (Te Arahi): We'll do that, we'll pass that all over Twitter straight after this. Engari tēnā rawa atu koutou tokotoru kua whai wahi mai ki te whakarangatira i tēnei kaupapa. Karaitiana, Ngapera, Tau, tēnā rawa atu koutou katoa. (Speaking to camera) O tera tēnā koutou i whai wahi mai ki te mātaki i tēnei hotaka. Thank you very much for everybody joining in and once again, make sure to share and express your views about this because it is an important subject and will be getting more and more important as we grow as a people. And for right now, make sure to follow Stats NZ on Facebook and also stats.govt.nz for any information about data and about anything you want to know about this kaupapa. No reira, mo tēnei wa, tēnā mihi atu, tēnā koutou katoa.

Taiki e.

Audio (Panel): Kia ora. [end]

Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa



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