Sad joke on a marae – Apairana Taylor

Tihei Mauriora I called
Kepe Paikea Te Kooti
Rewi and Te Rauparaha
I saw them
grim death and wooden ghosts
carved on the meeting house wall

In the only Maori I knew
I called
Tihei Mauriora
Above me the tekoteko raged
He ripped his tongue from his mouth
And threw it at my feet

Then I spoke
My name is Tu the freezing worker
Ngati D.B. is my tribe
The pub is my marae
My fist is my taiaha
Jail is my home

Tihei Mauriora I cried
They understood
The tekoteko and the ghosts
Though I said nothing but
Tihei Mauriora
For that’s all I knew

Strong verbs – instead of ‘said’ we have called.

Listing of the Maori names – makes it seem like there are lots of ancestors, shows their importance

Personal pronouns – ‘I’ links to the Maori man Tu, the ‘them’ creates a separation between him and his ancestors.

Metaphor – ‘wooden ghosts’ – links to ancestors (important to Maori)

Strong verbs – ‘ripped,’ ‘raged’ and ‘threw’

Repetition of ‘Tihei Mauriora’ – which clearly shows that it is the only Maori he knows – lack of knowledge

Personification – brings the ancestors to life, makes them ‘alive’ so we can identify with them.

Links to the powhiri and the challenge – the ancestor is challenging Tu to find his culture

Repetition of ‘is my’ – proves the point that everything he ‘is’ is not Maori.

Structured like a mihi (maori introduction) – shows that everything he identifies with is not Maori. Loss of identity.

He is almost the stereotypical Maori.

Strong verbs again ‘cried’ instead of said

‘They understand’ that he does not know anything more and it is not his fault.

‘all I know’ is repeated – to make it hit home that he has lost his culture.