

TE TIROHANGA I TE KÖREROTANGA O TE REO RANGATIRA I ROTO I NGĀ KĀINGA MĀORI ME NGĀ ROHE

Survey of Language Use in Maori Households
and Communities

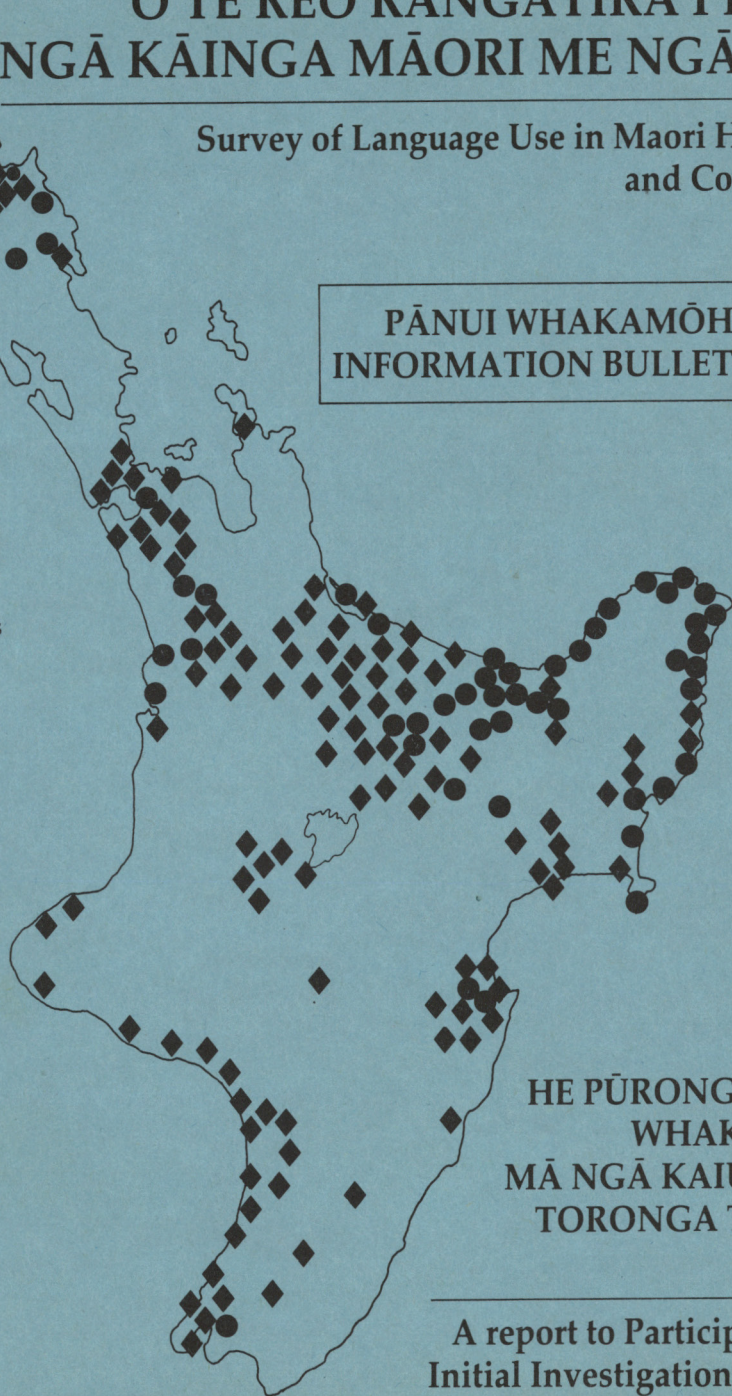
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

9

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ Less than two
thirds of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori



HE PŪRONGORONGO
WHAKAMŌHIO
MĀ NGĀ KAIURU KI TE
TORONGA TUATAHI,
1973-1978

A report to Participants in the
Initial Investigation, 1973-1978

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN MOUREA

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 25 households in Mourea in February 1978. The interviewers were Tom Rangihuna and Patricia Parata. Seven interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the rest were in English.

The households surveyed had a combined population of 119, of whom 115 were of Maori descent. This was about one-third of the Maori population of the district at the time of the survey.

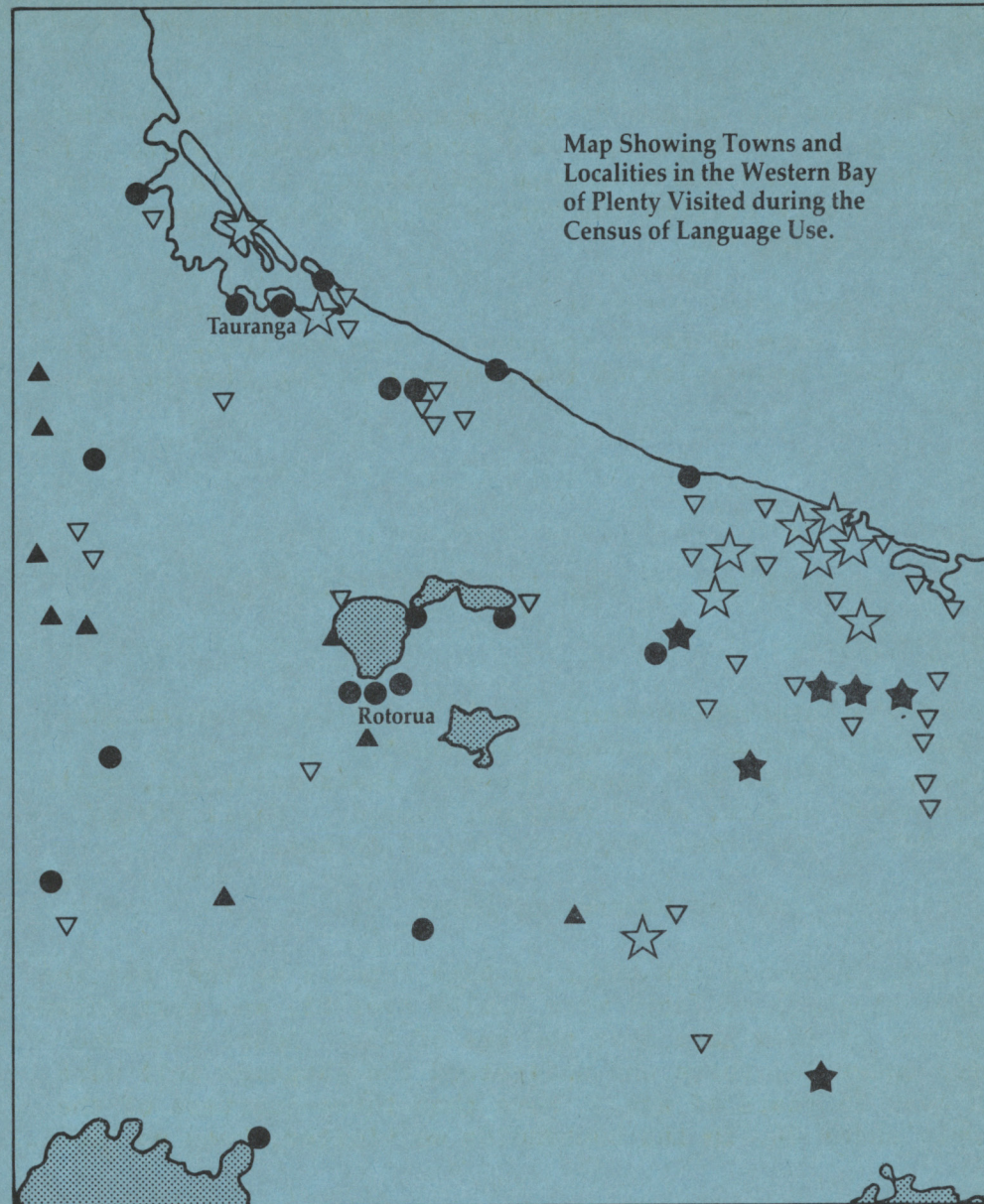
RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned 12 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. Sixty-five people, or 55 percent, named Arawa as their major iwi, while thirty-four people, or 28 percent, named Ngati Pikiao -- a member of the Arawa confederation of tribes.

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table on page 2 tells us that all the fluent speakers of Maori were adults over 25, and that three-quarters of them were over the age of 45. Apart from one child under 14, those who understood the language well were all over 25 years of age. More than three-quarters of the people under 24, in the households we visited, knew no Maori.



Percentage of Fluent Speakers of Maori among Persons Aged 25 and over in Households Visited.

★ 90% or more

☆ 66% to 89%

● 46% to 65%

▲ 45% or less

▽ Fewer than 10 households visited

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN MOUREA (1978)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	18	78	18	78	4	17	1	4
25-44	6	26	8	35	7	30	8	35
15-24	0	0	0	0	5	24	16	76
2-14	0	0	1	2	8	16	40	82
Overall	24	21	27	23	24	21	65	56

Numbers and percentages refer to those included in the survey; percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

The Use of Maori Language In The Household

English was the main language spoken in most households in Mourea. There were 22 households with dependent children visited and, in 19 of them, only English was used. In 2 households both Maori and English were spoken equally, while members of the remaining household spoke mostly in Maori. In 2 of the 3 childless households, Maori was entirely or mostly used, while, in the third home, English was spoken all the time.

The Maori Language In The Community

English was also the main language spoken in the community. Most of the people we spoke to used English when talking with their neighbours, friends and workmates, although the

older residents of Mourea spoke Maori with each other a lot of the time. The Maori language still remained important, however, in ceremonies on the marae, and also in certain religious services, both in public and in many private houses. If any two people were to meet unexpectedly, the chances were 1 in 20 that they would understand each other in Maori. If both people were adults over 25, the chances were much higher - about 1 in 3. But if one or both were children, it was very unlikely that they would be able to speak in Maori with each other.

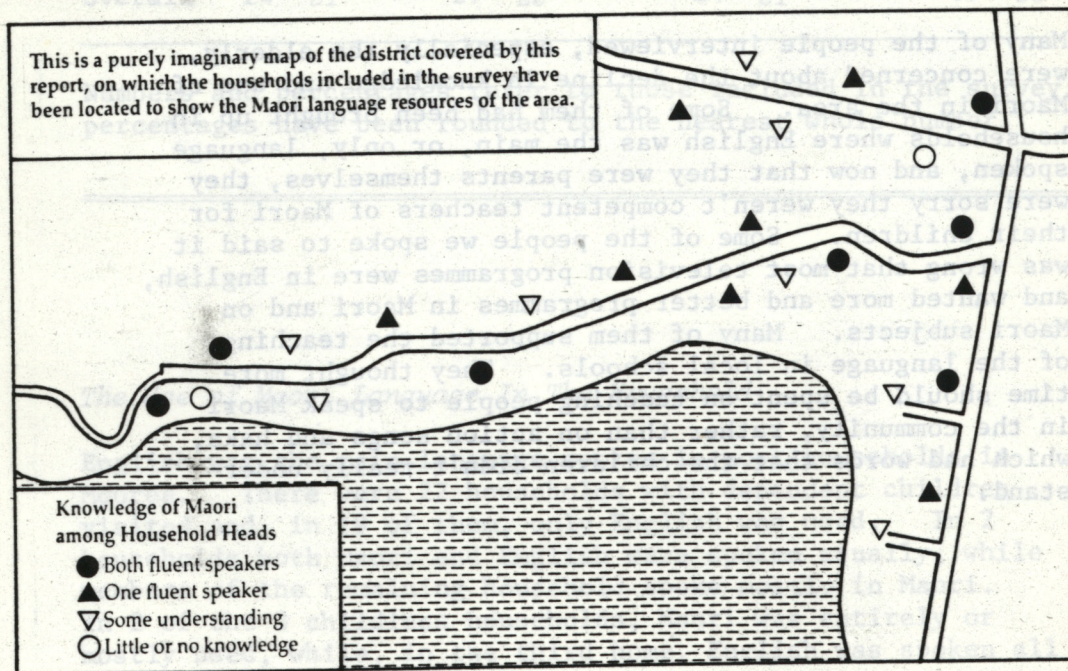
Attitudes Towards The Language

Many of the people interviewed, especially the elderly, were concerned about the decline in knowledge and use of Maori in the area. Some of them had been brought up in households where English was the main, or only, language spoken, and now that they were parents themselves, they were sorry they weren't competent teachers of Maori for their children. Some of the people we spoke to said it was wrong that most television programmes were in English, and wanted more and better programmes in Maori and on Maori subjects. Many of them supported the teaching of the language in local schools. They thought more time should be spent on teaching people to speak Maori in the community, rather than on action songs and haka, which had words that the children didn't really understand.

CONCLUSION

The results of the survey show that all fluent speakers of Maori in Mourea were adults over the age of 25, except for one child. Those who understood the language well, but could not speak it fluently, were also over 25. Many of the people interviewed were worried that the younger people did not know the language, and they wanted the local

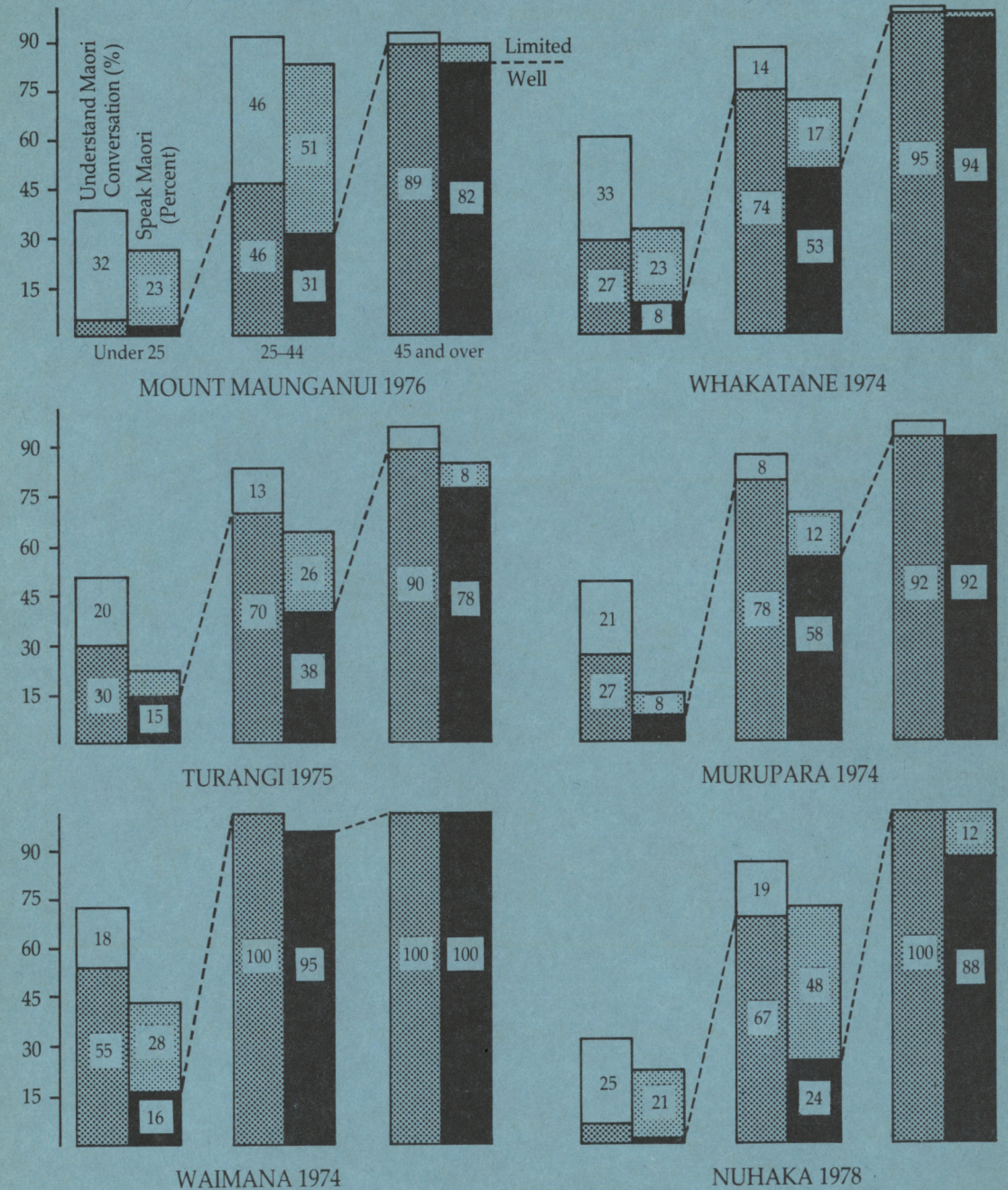
schools and marae committees to help them to teach Maori in the homes. As they were often disappointed, because their children preferred to watch television instead, many of them wanted the Maori language to be used more in radio and television programmes and newspaper stories. (One person wanted a Maori Television Unit to be set up, paid for by Maori people, and making programmes that Maori people wanted to watch.) People are still trying to get more and better Maori television and radio programmes, but they are having greater success in the teaching of Maori in schools. For some parents, however, a bilingual (Maori-English) approach in the schools seemed the only way to make sure that the Maori language survives in the district.



This report was written by Lee Smith (Ngati Kahungunu)

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Knowledge of Maori Language by Age Groups in Selected Areas at the Time of the Linguistic Census



The Survey of Language Use in Maori Households and Communities

The census of language use on which this report is based is the first part of a general study of the place of the Maori language in Maori communities, its structure, how it is spoken and written under modern conditions, and its relevance to New Zealand as a nation. This study is being conducted by the Maori Unit of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. Fieldwork for the census phase began in Whangaroa County and Te Tii in August 1973, and ended in August 1978. Follow-up studies and studies in additional communities will be undertaken from time to time (the first of these was conducted in Waverley in August 1979).

The map on the front cover shows the approximate localities in which ten or more households were visited between 1973 and 1979. Since the linguistic census was completed, the major task of the Unit has been the analysing and reporting of the information collected. At the same time, however, studies of the structure and usage of the Maori language have commenced; these will result in a series of handbooks and other materials for teachers of Maori (including parents), and for people wishing to learn the language. An example of this is *The First Basic Maori Word List*, published in 1982. Other publications have included background studies for bilingual education projects, and reports on policy issues affecting the Maori language and Maori speakers – for example, the legal status of Maori in New Zealand.

The Purpose of This Report

This report has been prepared for the people who participated in the original survey and who provided the information on which it is based. It is hoped that it will encourage people to compare the situation now with that at the time covered by the report, and that this information will provide a basis for discussion and debate about what action, if any, each community might take to ensure that the Maori language is at least as important in the twenty-first century as it was in the 1970s.

Further Information

One copy of this report is provided free to each person interviewed during the linguistic census in the area concerned, and to local schools, Maori Language Boards, and Maori Committees. Further information about the linguistic survey, and lists of publications, may be obtained from the Maori Unit, New Zealand Council for Educational Research, P. O. Box 3237, Wellington.



Ngā Mihi/Special Thanks

Our first thanks must go to the 6,500 Maori families who entrusted us with the information presented in this series of reports. Fieldwork for the survey was funded substantially by contributions from the Lottery Board of Control, Fletcher Holdings Limited, the Maori Purposes Fund, and the Maori Education Foundation. The coding and analysis of the data was supported initially by a grant from Fletcher Holdings Limited, and further financial assistance for these purposes has been provided by Mobil Oil N.Z. Limited, the Post Primary Teachers Association, the New Zealand Educational Institute and the Raukawa Trustees. The writing of these reports was made possible by the generosity of the J.R. McKenzie Trust.