

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

Survey of Language Use in Maori Households
and Communities

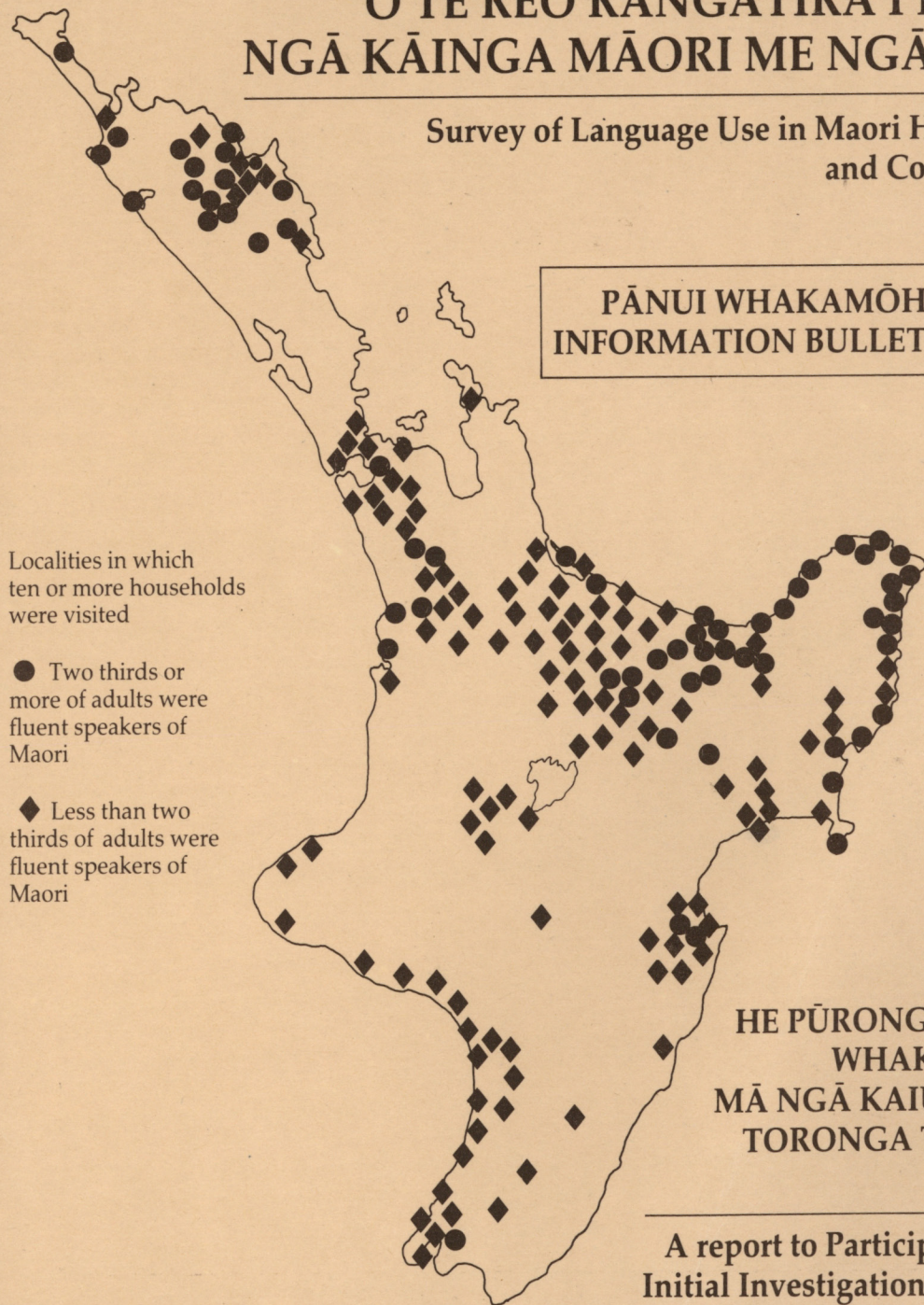
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

10

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

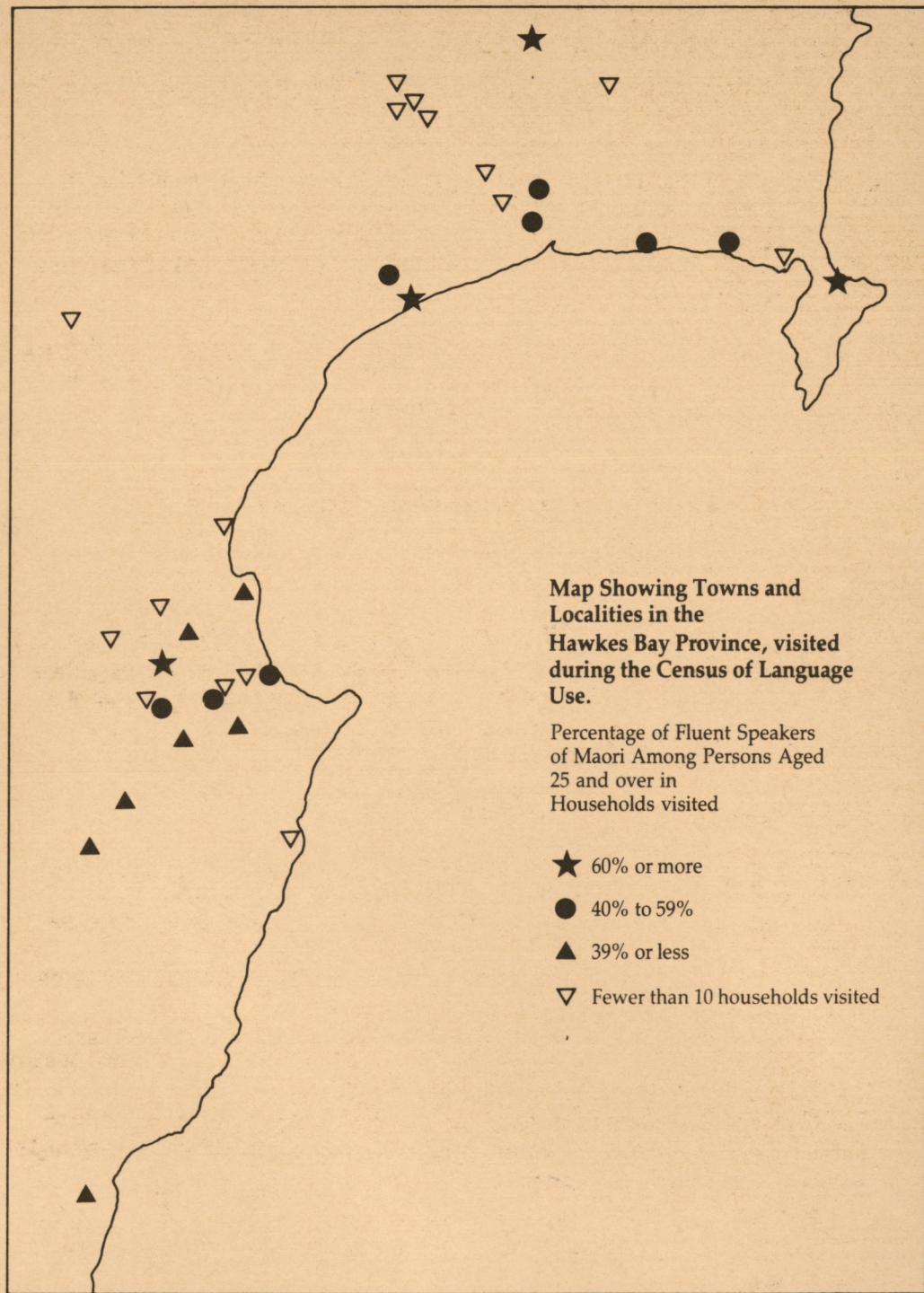
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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 TE HAUKE

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 18 households in Te Hauke in January 1978. The interviewers were Tamati Kruger (Tuhoe) and Alan Hawea (Ngati Awa). Four interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the rest were in English.

The households surveyed had a combined population of 81, of whom 73 were of Maori descent. This was just under half the Maori population of Te Hauke at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned 3 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. By far the most of them (63 people or 78 percent) belonged to Ngati Kahungunu, tangata whenua of the Hawkes Bay region.

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table on the next page shows that:

- (1) Nearly half the kaumatua surveyed were fluent speakers of Maori.
- (2) Slightly less than a quarter of the people aged 25-44 spoke Maori well.
- (3) There were no fluent speakers among the school children.
- (4) About one-third of the group surveyed understood Maori easily (no school-age children were among them).
- (5) Slightly more than a third of the people could not understand Maori at all. Nearly three-quarters of these people were school-age children.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN TE HAUKE (1978)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	10	46	17	77	5	23	0	
25-44	3	21	6	43	3	21	5	36
15-24	1	10	2	22	4	44	3	33
2-14	0		0		14	40	21	60
Overall	14	17	25	31	26	33	29	36

Numbers and percentages refer to people 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 used in most households visited. There were 14 households with dependent children and in 11 of them, while some Maori was spoken, everyday conversation was mainly in English. In the other three households English was the only language used.

There were 4 childless households, and in 3 of them English was used most of the time. In the remaining household, visitors were spoken to in Maori.

The Use of Maori Language In The Community

English was also the main language spoken in the community. All the fluent speakers of Maori said they preferred to use Maori

rather than English when talking with friends, family, and neighbours. However, the language they spoke usually depended on the age of the person spoken to, and they had to use more English than Maori in everyday situations in the community, as most of the younger people spoke little Maori.

Maori still remained important, however, in ceremonies at all marae hui in the area, and also for certain religious services. Most people would go back to English when these were over.

The chances that any two members of the community would be able to understand each other in Maori if they met unexpectedly, were about 1 in 17. Not far away, in Omahu, the chances were better - 1 in 8; in Pakipaki they were very slim - 1 in 50. If both of these people were adults the chances were much higher: 1 in 5 in Te Hauke; 1 in 2 in Omahu; and 1 in 10 in Pakipaki.

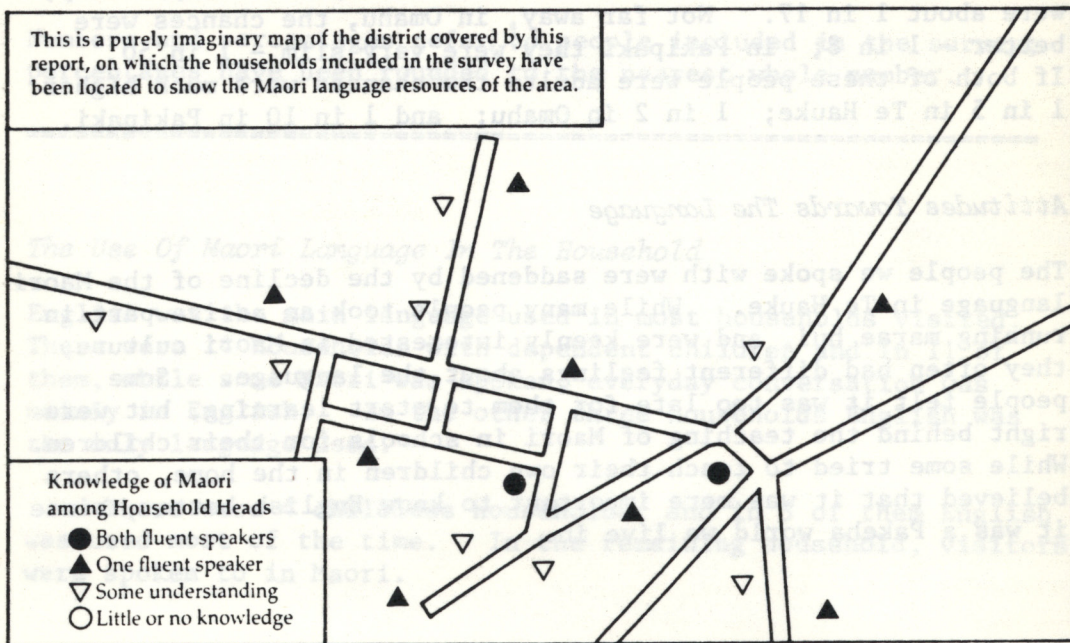
Attitudes Towards The Language

The people we spoke with were saddened by the decline of the Maori language in Te Hauke. While many people took an active part in running marae hui, and were keenly interested in Maori culture, they often had different feelings about the language. Some people felt it was too late for them to start learning, but were right behind the teaching of Maori in schools for their children. While some tried to teach their own children in the home, others believed that it was more important to know English better, since it was a Pakeha world we live in.

CONCLUSION

More than a third of the adults over 25 in the Te Hauke survey group were fluent speakers of Maori, and 64 percent of them had a

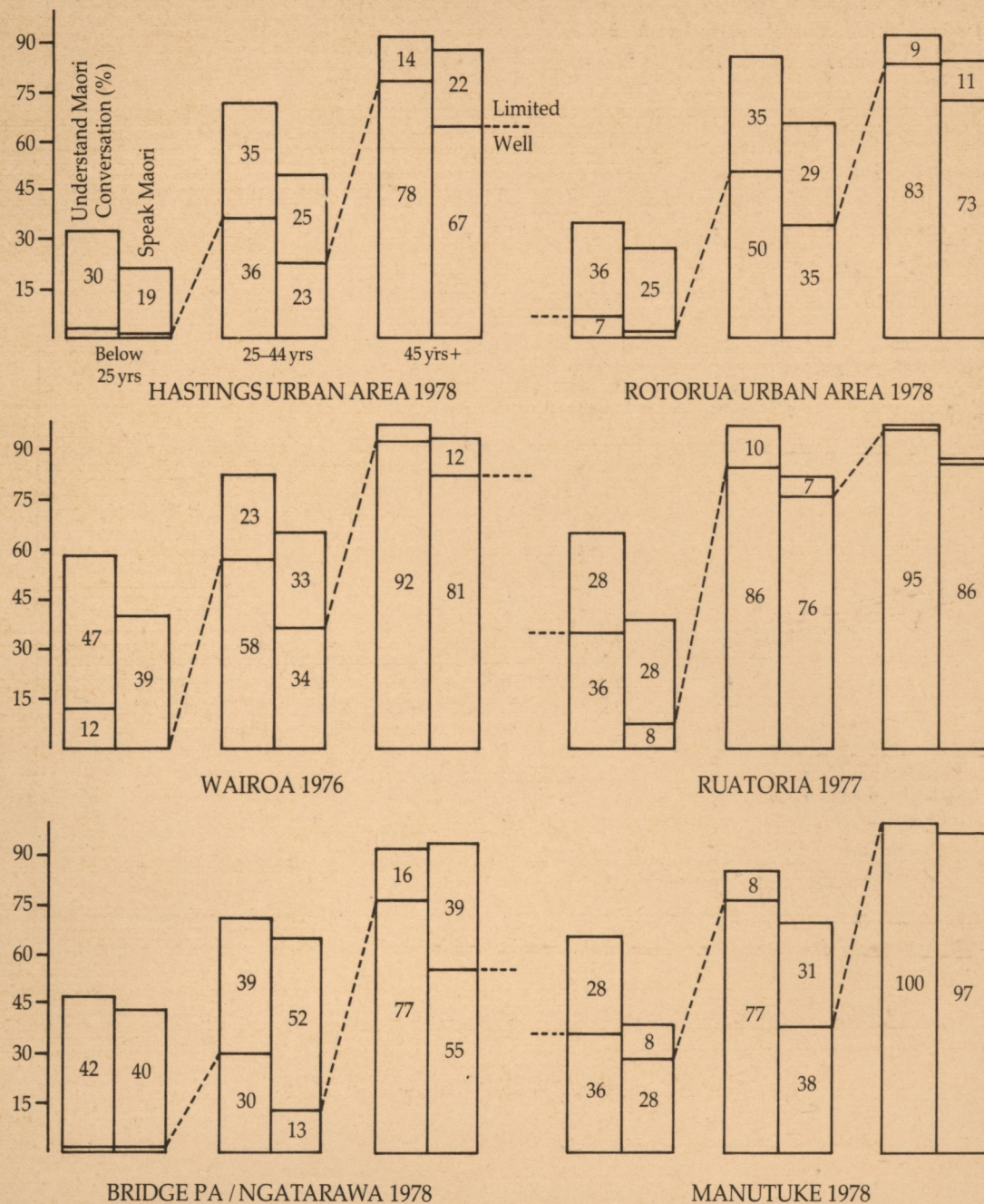
good understanding of the language. Amongst the younger people, only a few knew Maori at all well, and none of these were school-age children. The Ngati Kahungunu people have been worried about the decline (or perhaps loss) of the Maori language for many years, and they are now carrying out plans to help bring the language back. They now have new Maori language classes either with or without the support of the Takitimu Language Board, as well as the language wananga for parents, and the proposed Te Kohanga Reo in Te Hauke. These are seen as positive moves in keeping a hold on the language in this area.



This report was prepared 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.