

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

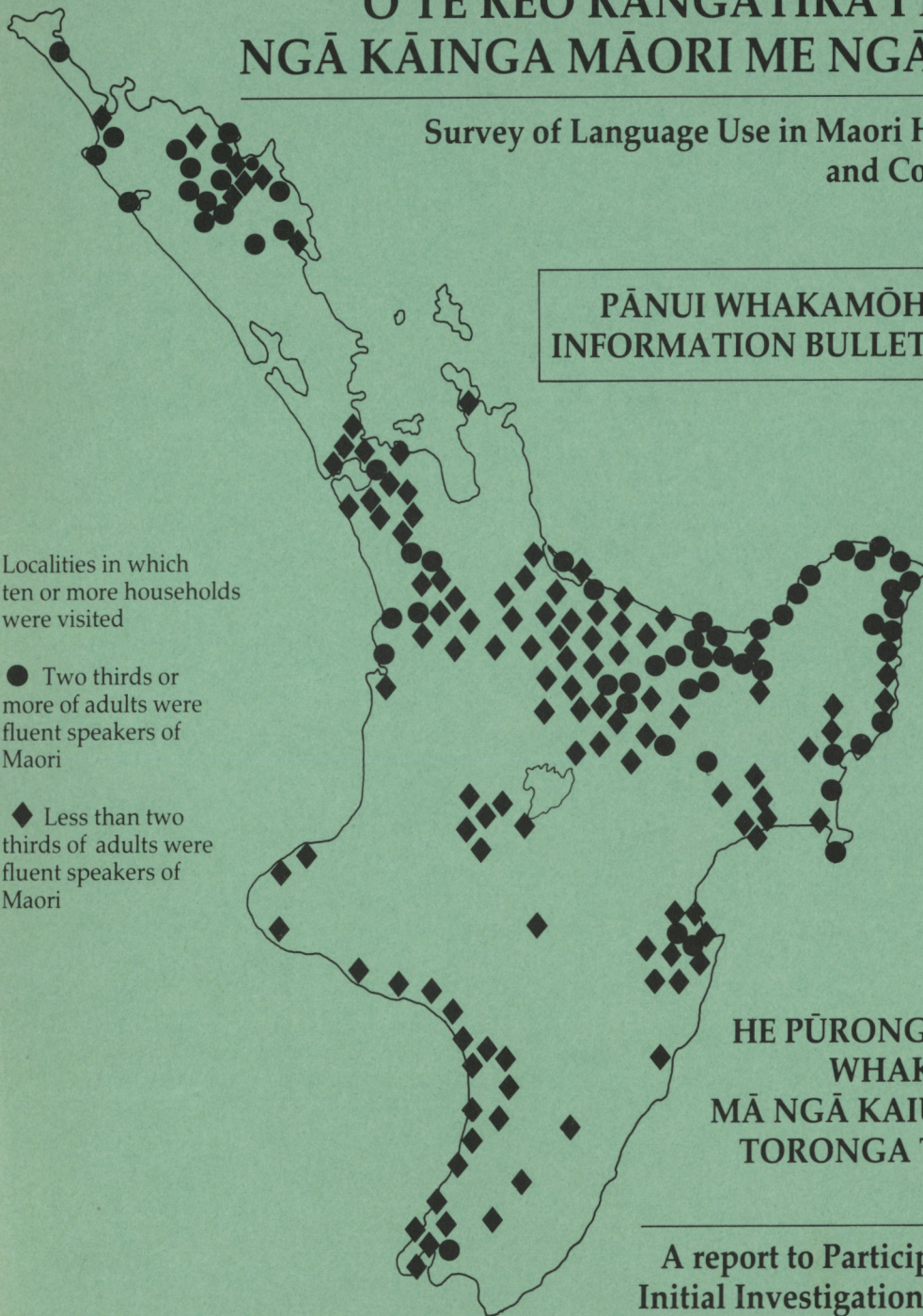
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

12

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

Some of the reasons for the decline in the knowledge and use of Maori in Wainuiomata are given below.

However, since the survey took place, a lot more Maori is being taught in schools in the area. If we held another survey, we would probably find that a good many school-aged children, who did not understand Maori before, now know it a little, or even understand it easily.

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	14	88	15	94	0	0	1	6
25-44	34	64	40	76	6	11	7	13
15-24	11	26	17	40	7	16	17	40
2-14	5	4	14	11	13	10	98	77
Overall	64	27	86	36	26	11	123	52

Numbers and percentages refer to people in the survey in May 1974; percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

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The Use of Maori Language In The Household

English was the main language used in most households. There were 36 households with dependent children, and, in 29 of them (81 percent), only English was spoken. In the 7 remaining households with children, English was the main language spoken.

There were 3 childless households visited. In 1 of them, people spoke mostly in Maori, while, in the other 2, they spoke mostly in English.

The Maori Language In The Community

English was also the main language spoken in the community. A little more than a quarter of the people surveyed were competent speakers of Maori. Most of them preferred that language, but had to speak English more than Maori, because most of the people in the community that they mixed with spoke only English. Adults spoke Maori with their friends, in Maori committee hui or in certain religious services.

If any two members of the Maori community in Wainuiomata met unexpectedly, the chances that they would be able to talk to each other in Maori would be about 1 in 10. If both persons were adults, the chances would be 1 in 2. At the time of the survey there was only a slim chance that school-age children would be able to speak in Maori with each other.

Attitudes Towards The Language

Many of the people we spoke with knew that fewer people than in the past spoke or knew Maori in Wainuiomata. However, most of the adults thought highly of being able to speak Maori well, and some were attending courses to improve their own ability. While there was much support for the teaching of Maori in the schools, others were gloomy about the survival of the language in towns or cities where mostly English was spoken. People we spoke to in other urban areas also thought that the Maori language would have a hard time holding its own against English.

CONCLUSION

This survey has shown that most adults in Wainuiomata spoke Maori well and understood it well. Many of them were brought up, and spoke the language, in Maori-speaking country areas (especially on the East Coast). When they moved to the city to look for work and 'a better life' for their children, they found that they

The three sets of graphs for each locality on the page opposite represent the under 25, 25 to 44, and over 45-years-old age groups, respectively.

couldn't always speak Maori if they wanted to be understood. Many parents believed that their children needed to know English better to survive in the Pakeha world, and English soon became the main language spoken in most homes. This meant that some people who spoke Maori fluently before forgot how to speak it, while the young people never had a chance to learn to speak it. This is a great worry to many of the Maori people in Wainuiomata. One of the first kohanga reo in New Zealand was established in Wainuiomata, which is a sign that the Maori people in the district are not prepared to let the language just fade away. Because so many adults in the area can speak Maori - the highest proportion among Maori communities in the Wellington region - Wainuiomata was an excellent place in which to make a start in reviving the use of Maori in everyday life.

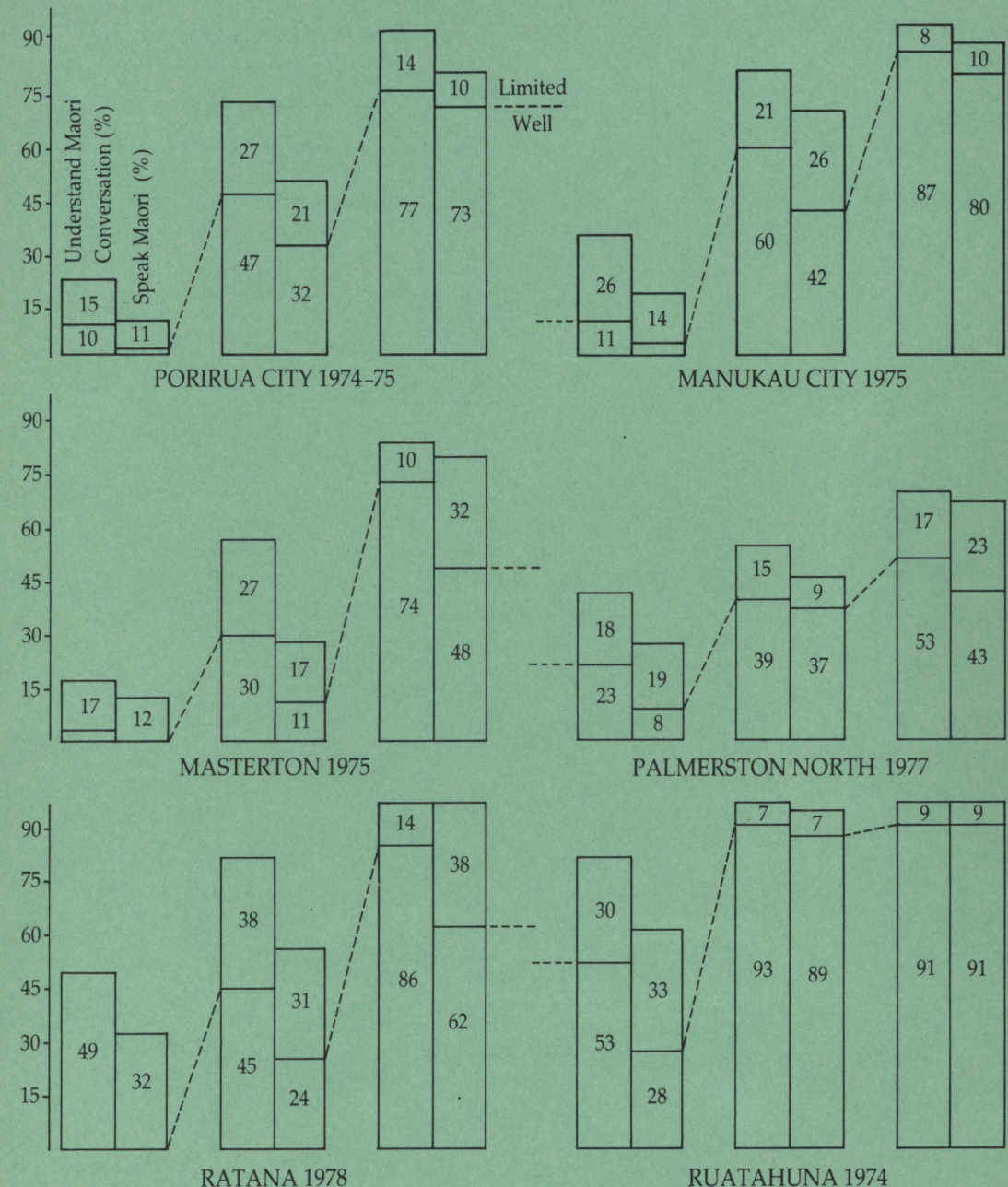
The interviewers in the Wainuiomata survey were Peri Leaf (Ngapuhi/Te Rarawa), Joe Rua (Te Whanau a Apanui), Peter and Iriaka Wensor (Ngapuhi), Charee Ogle (Ngapuhi), Lorna Dyall (Maniapoto), Dora Pryor (Tuhoe), Nehu Gage (Whakatohea), Rose Ruru (Ngati Porou), Trevor Diamond (Ngapuhi) and Ameria Ponika (Tuhoe).

The Use of Maori Language In The Household

English was the main language used in most households. There were 36 households with children, and, in 29 of them (81 percent), only English was spoken. In the remaining 7 percent, Maori was spoken at home. Many of them were brought up, and speak the language well and understood it well. Many of them were brought up, and speak the language well and understood it well. Many of them were brought up, and speak the language well and understood it well.

This report was written by Lee Smith (Ngati Kahungunu)

Knowledge of Maori Language by Age Groups on 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.