

# 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

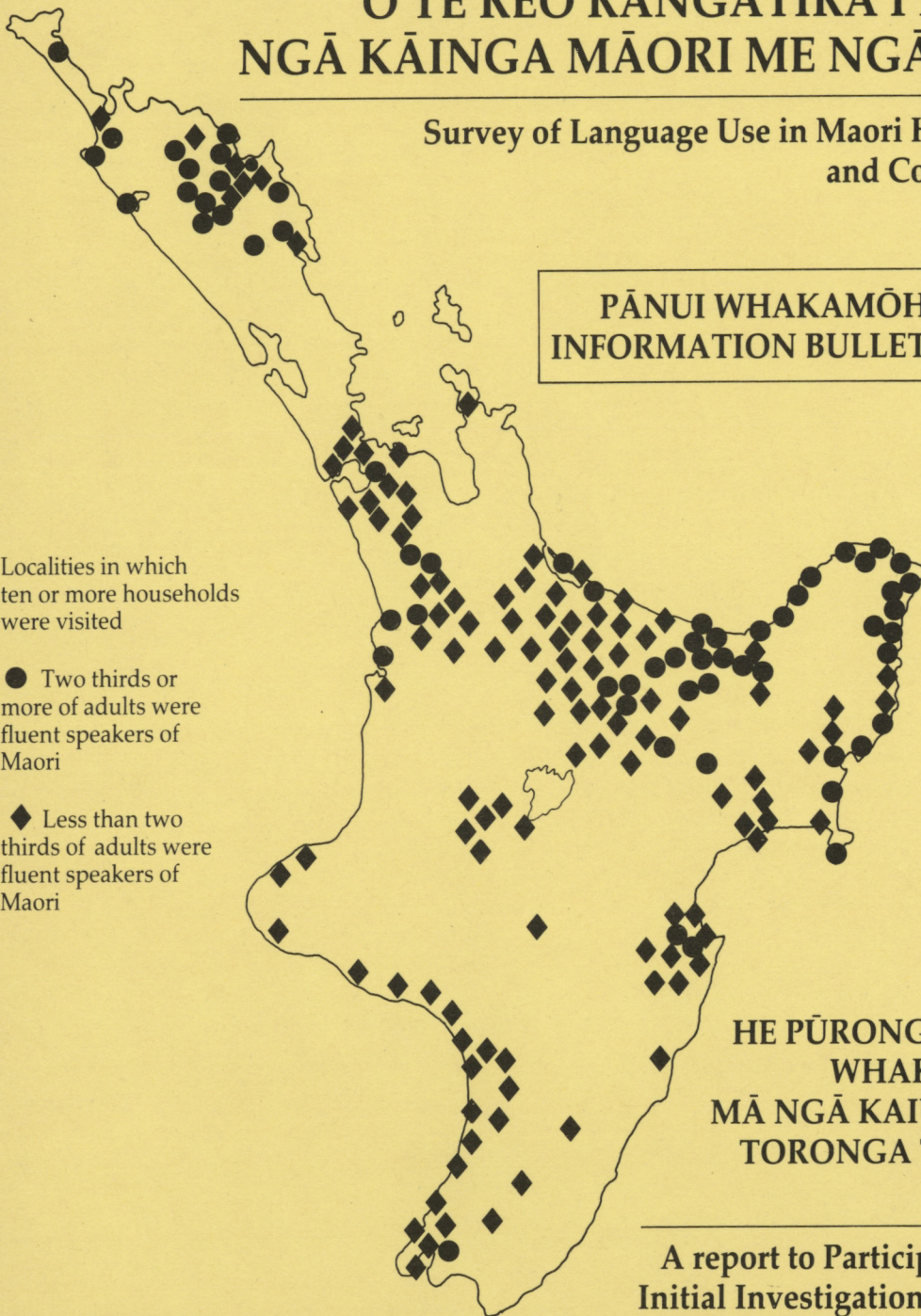
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO  
INFORMATION BULLETIN

24

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 TII, WHARENGAERE, AND KERIKERI

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 19 households in Wharengaere and Te Tii in August 1973, and in 6 households in Kerikeri in January 1975. Sixteen interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the rest were in English.

The interviewers were Ani Bosch (Ngapuhi), Joan Walker (Ngapuhi), Francis Riley (Ngapuhi), Ripeka Koopu Martin (Te Whanau a Apanui), Iriaka and Peter Wensor (Ngapuhi), Carol Hindmarsh Ngawati (Ngati Porou), Gerard Ngawati (Ngapuhi), Dr Richard Benton, Merepeka Wharepapa (Te Whanau a Apanui), and Peter Ranby.

The households surveyed had a combined population of 131, of whom 126 were of Maori descent. This included all but one of the Maori people living in Te Tii and Wharengaere at the time, and about a fifth of the Maori population of Kerikeri.

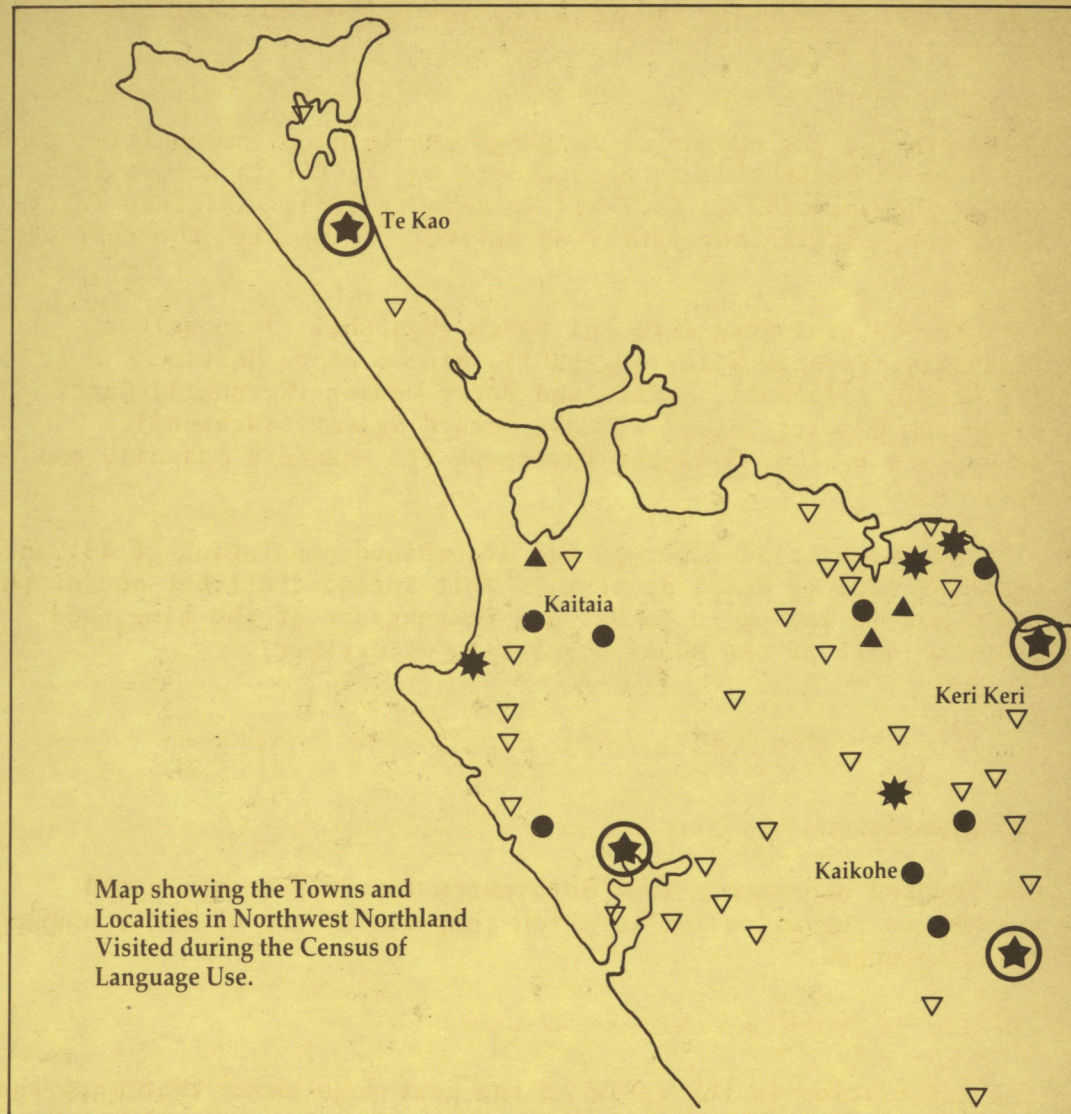
RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

*Iwi Affiliation*

One hundred and twenty-four informants (or 98 percent) named Ngapuhi as the major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged.

*Ability to Speak and Understand Maori*

The information in the table on the next page shows that more than half the people living in Te Tii and Wharengaere were fluent speakers of Maori, and two-thirds of them knew the language well. Among the school-age children, nearly a third spoke Maori well and



- Percentage of fluent speakers of Maori among persons aged 25 and over in the households visited.
- ★ More than 85%
  - ▲ Less than 60%
  - ☆ 76% to 85%
  - ▽ Fewer than 7 households visited
  - 60% to 75%

almost a half understood the language well. Less than a fifth of the people did not understand Maori at all, and most of them were under the age of 14.

*KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN TE TII AND DISTRICT (1973)*

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 and over	17	100	17	100	0		0	
25-44	14	88	14	88	2	13	0	
15-24	10	83	10	83	1	8	1	8
2-14	17	31	26	46	14	25	17	30
Overall	58	58	67	66	17	17	18	18

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

*Use of Maori Language In The Household*

There were 18 households with dependent children visited, and in 5 of them communication was entirely or mostly in Maori. In 7 households both English and Maori were spoken for an equal amount of time, while in only 1 home, only English was used. In the remaining 5 households, more English than Maori was spoken.

There was 1 childless household visited, and there both Maori and English were used equally.

*The Maori Language In The Community*

Maori was the main language used by most people we spoke to in Te Tii and Wharengaere, and by most of those in Kerikeri also. Many people spoke in Maori with neighbours, friends, and Maori workmates, but spoke English with non-Maori speakers. Twelve out of 19 of the people who were interviewed preferred to use Maori on all occasions. Maori was also the main language used in most religious services, and especially in hui held on the community marae.

As almost all the adults surveyed spoke Maori well, the chances were that if two people met unexpectedly, they would speak in Maori with each other. If the two people were children the chances were about 1 in 5, and for any two members of the community the chances were 2 in 5; but if the two people were adults, the chances that they would be able to chat in Maori with each other would be much greater - at least 10 to 1 in favour.

*Attitudes Towards The Language*

Although nearly a third of the school-age children spoke Maori well, people were concerned at the growing number of young people in the area who couldn't speak Maori at all. (This decline was worse in Kerikeri, but the people in Te Tii were also worried about it.) Much of the blame was placed upon the local playcentre, because, in its early stages, it had encouraged mothers to speak English rather than Maori to their children. Television was also blamed as having a bad effect on the Maori language in the homes of many. Because television, radios and newspapers were almost entirely in English, many Maori-speaking parents fought an uphill battle, as their children replied to them more and more in English.

Several people felt strongly that the language was an important part of Maori culture, and said they would speak it 'to anyone who looked like a Maori'. Nine people told how they had been punished as children for speaking Maori at school.

CONCLUSION

The linguistic survey has shown that most people in these communities spoke Maori well (58 percent), and understood it easily (66 percent). Maori was the main language spoken in Te Tii and Wharengaere, especially by adults, but at home and in the community, many people were worried that children were speaking English more and more. Although more than three-quarters of the 15-24 year group spoke Maori well, less than a third of the school-age children spoke it well.

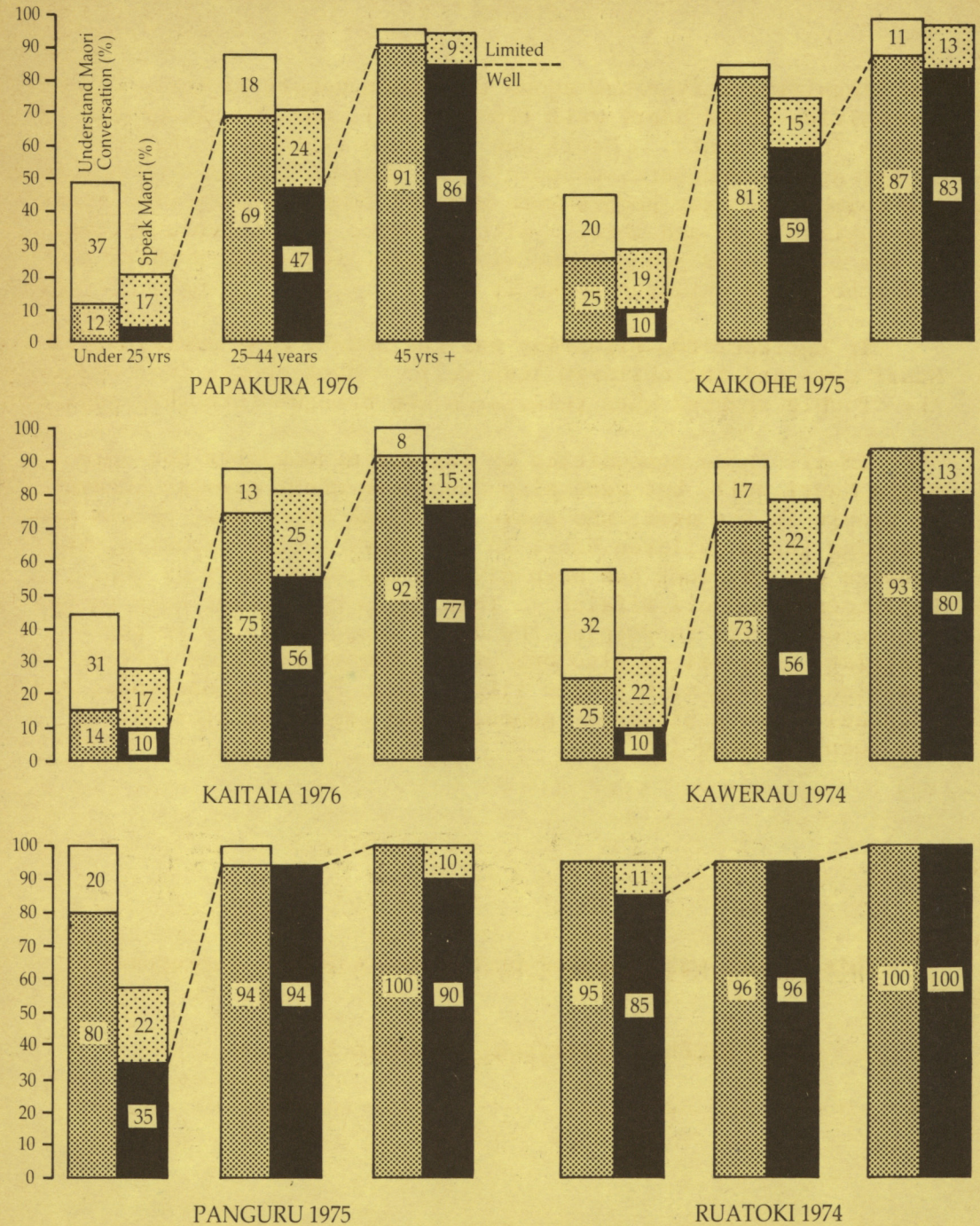
In Kerikeri the situation was the same - most adults spoke Maori well and the children less well. Many people feel that the trouble started when television was brought into this area.

In all these communities by far the most adults not only spoke Maori well, but were also concerned about growing number of people in the area, who could not speak it. Many people were teaching their children Maori in the home. More recently, the Kohanga Reo movement has been given a lot of support by the Department of Maori Affairs. This could be a great help to the people of Te Tii in keeping the Maori language alive in the district. Te Tii is also one of the few communities left in Northland (along with places like Te Kao, Panguru, Matawaia, and Motatau) where a bilingual school could easily be started, if the people wanted it.

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.