

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

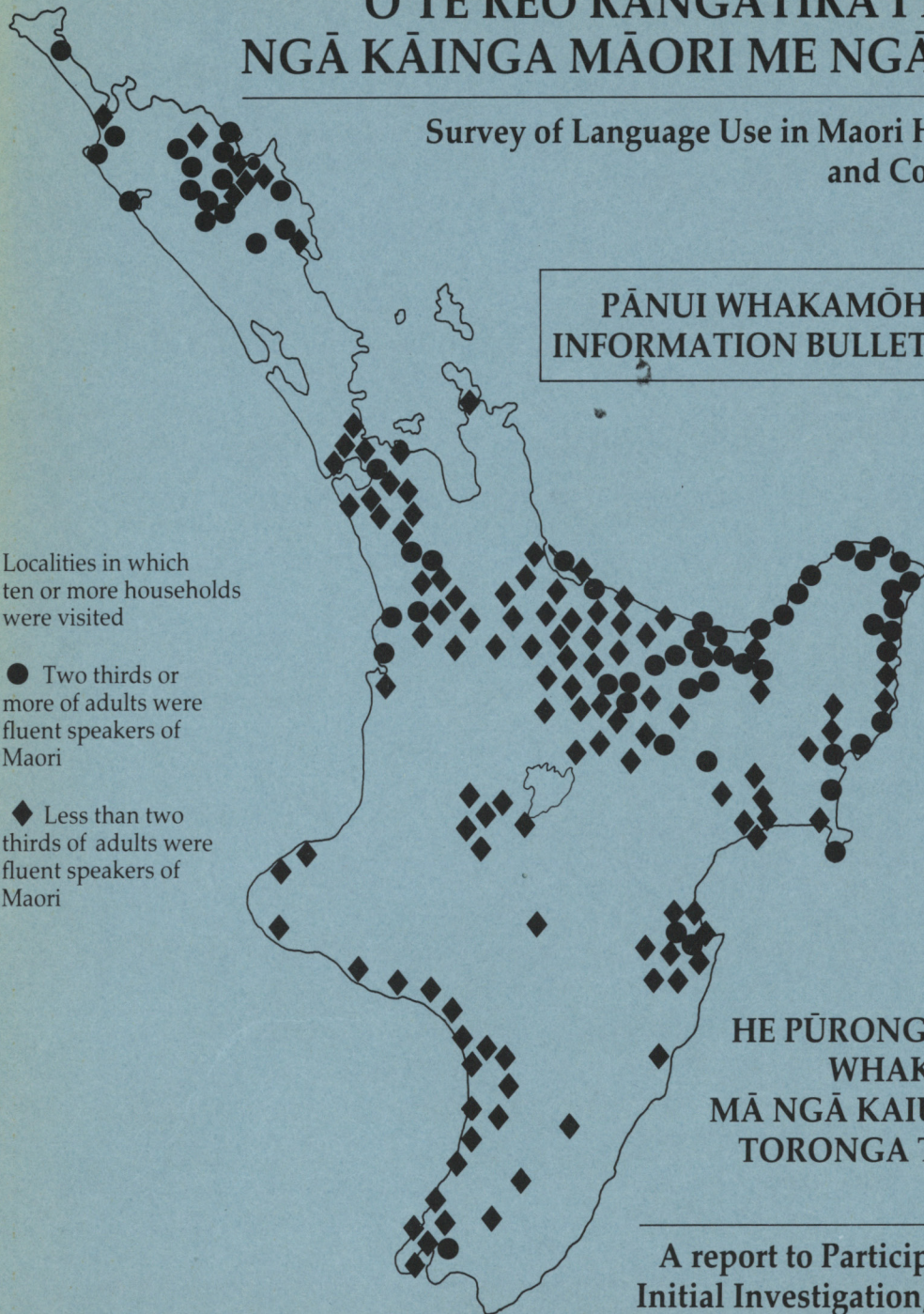
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

27

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

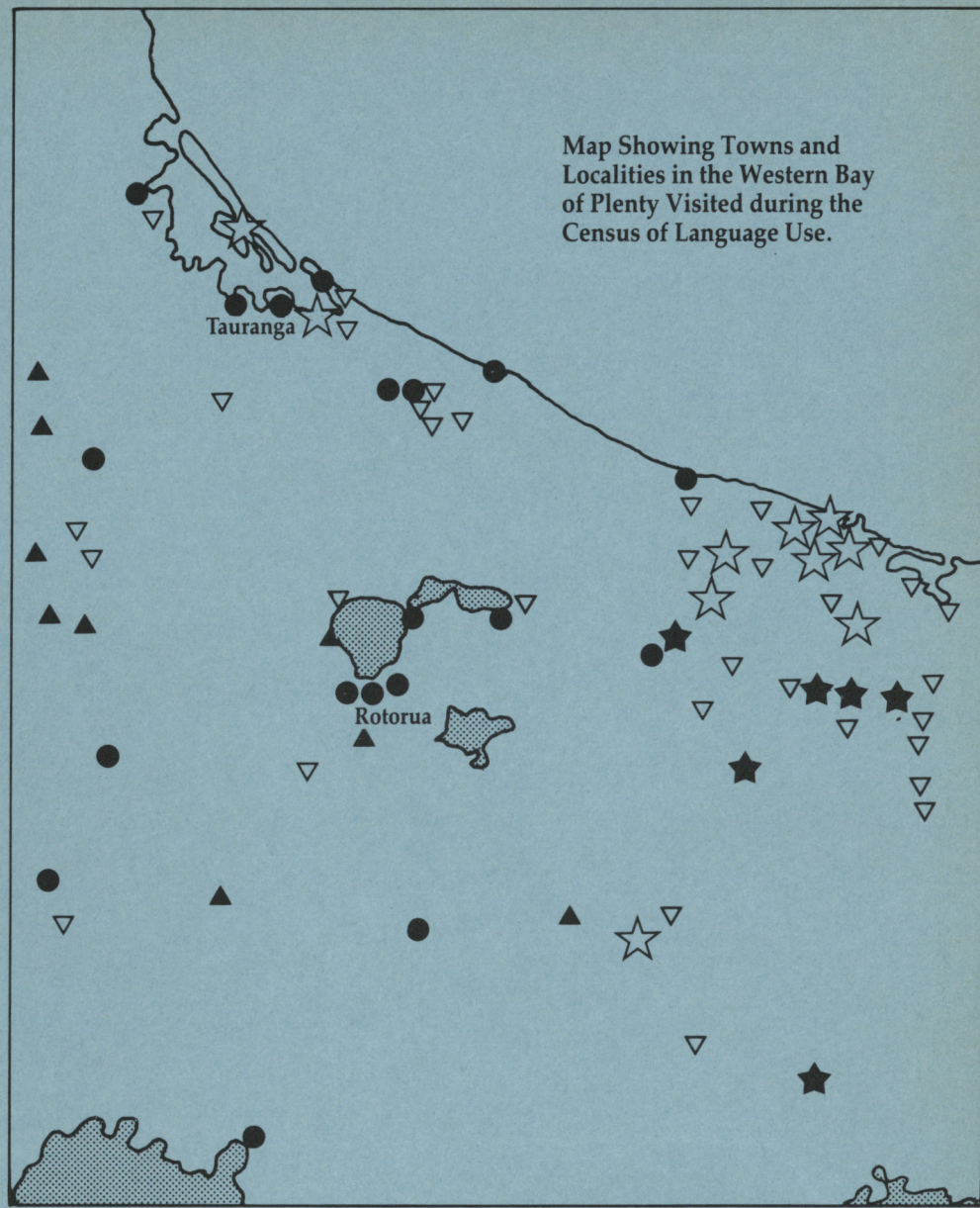
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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



Map Showing Towns and Localities in the Western Bay of Plenty Visited during the Census of Language Use.

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

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN MATAHINA AND TE MAHOE

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 7 households in Matahina and 6 in Te Mahoe in January 1974. Five interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the rest were in English. The interviewers were Broncho Te Kiri (Tuhoe), Willie Martin (Ngati Manawa/ Ngapuhi), Helen Donohue, Ripeka Koopu Martin (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Iriaka and Peter Wensor (Ngapuhi), Joe Rua (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), and Jenny Watson.

The households surveyed had a combined population of 79, and 77 of these people were of Maori descent. This was about two-thirds of the total Maori population of the area at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned 8 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. Tuhoe, with 30 members or two-fifths of the total, was the iwi with the most members. Ngapuhi was second largest, with 8 members or a tenth of the total.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The information in the table on the next page shows that a quarter of the people surveyed spoke Maori fluently, while nearly half of them understood the language well. Most of these fluent speakers were adults over 25, and few people under this age spoke Maori well. A quarter of the school age children understood the language easily, although most of the others had practically no knowledge of Maori at the time.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN MATAHINA AND TE MAHOE (1974)

| Age Group | Fluent Speakers | | Understand Easily | | Limited Understanding | | No Knowledge | |
|-----------|-----------------|----|-------------------|----|-----------------------|----|--------------|----|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| 45 & over | 7 | 88 | 7 | 88 | 0 | | 1 | 12 |
| 25-44 | 8 | 50 | 9 | 56 | 3 | 19 | 4 | 25 |
| 15-24 | 3 | 27 | 7 | 64 | 3 | 27 | 1 | 9 |
| 2-14 | 0 | | 11 | 28 | 2 | 5 | 26 | 67 |
| Overall | 18 | 24 | 34 | 46 | 8 | 11 | 32 | 43 |

(Numbers and percentages refer to those interviewed in January 1974; percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number).

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Use of Maori Language In The Household

English was the main language spoken in most households surveyed. There were 11 households with dependent children visited, and in 6 of them mostly English was spoken for everyday purposes. In 1 household, both Maori and English were spoken equally, while in the rest, more English than Maori was used. There were 2 childless households visited. In 1 of them Maori was mostly spoken, while, in the other, only English was spoken.

The Maori Language In The Community

'Nobody speaks Maori now', was the comment made by one of the kaumatua in the survey. While other people's comments showed that English was being spoken more and more in the community, Maori still played an important part in ceremonies on the marae, and also in church services. Neighbours, friends and workmates talked among themselves both in Maori and in English; the language they chose depended on their age and whether they were Maori or non-Maori.

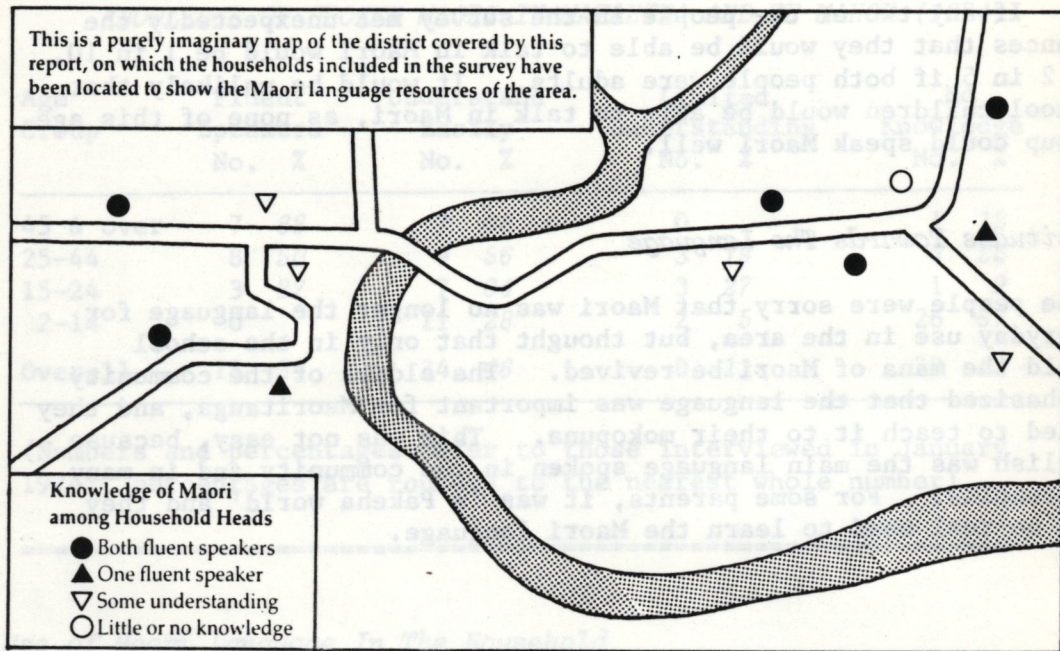
If any two of the people in the survey met unexpectedly the chances that they would be able to talk in Maori would be 1 in 10, or 2 in 5 if both people were adults. It would be unlikely that school children would be able to talk in Maori, as none of this age group could speak Maori well.

Attitudes Towards The Language

Some people were sorry that Maori was no longer the language for everyday use in the area, but thought that only in the school could the mana of Maori be revived. The elders of the community emphasized that the language was important for Maoritanga, and they tried to teach it to their mokopuna. This was not easy, because English was the main language spoken in the community and in many households. For some parents, it was 'a Pakeha world' and they saw no real need to learn the Maori language.

CONCLUSION

The survey has clearly shown that the Maori language had lost its hold in these two country communities which once were Maori-speaking. Only a quarter of the people spoke Maori fluently, while almost half of them understood the language well. Although there were no fluent speakers among the school children, a little more than a quarter of them understood it well. Although many of the parents could speak Maori, they felt they had to speak mainly English in the home, because they were living in a Pakeha world where English was spoken all the time. Some of these people, together with other parents, thought that the school could probably revive interest in the Maori language and encourage its use among younger people in the community.

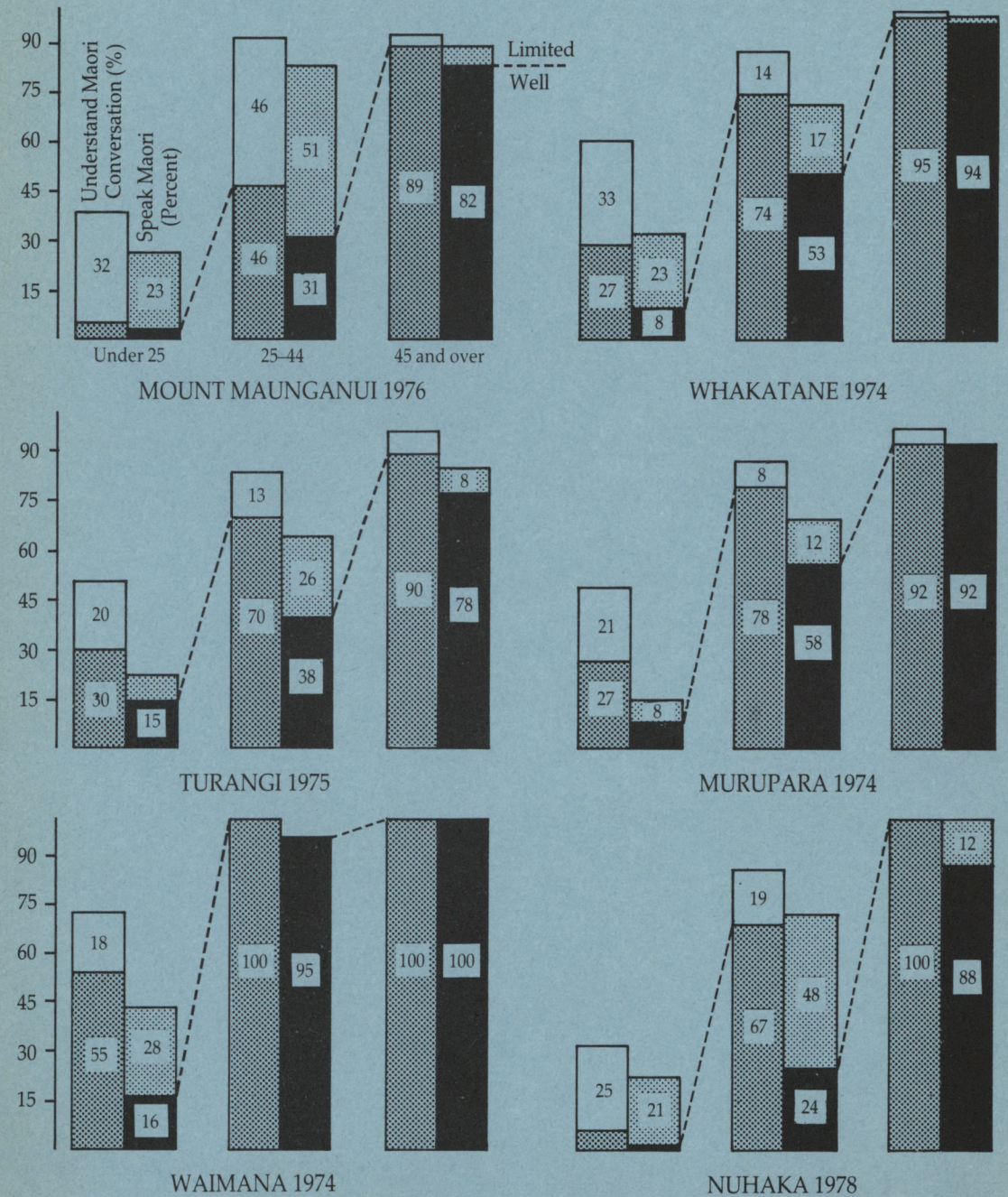


English was the main language spoken in most households. There were 11 households with children aged 15 years and under. The survey has shown that the Maori language is still spoken in many households. Only a small number of households have no Maori speakers. In all the households surveyed, the school children are taught in English. Although many of the parents could speak Maori, they felt they had to speak mainly English at home, because they were living in a bilingual area. Some of these people, together with other parents, thought that their children could benefit from learning Maori. The school children are taught in English. Although many of the parents could speak Maori, they felt they had to speak mainly English at home, because they were living in a bilingual area. Some of these people, together with other parents, thought that their children could benefit from learning Maori.

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.