

# 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

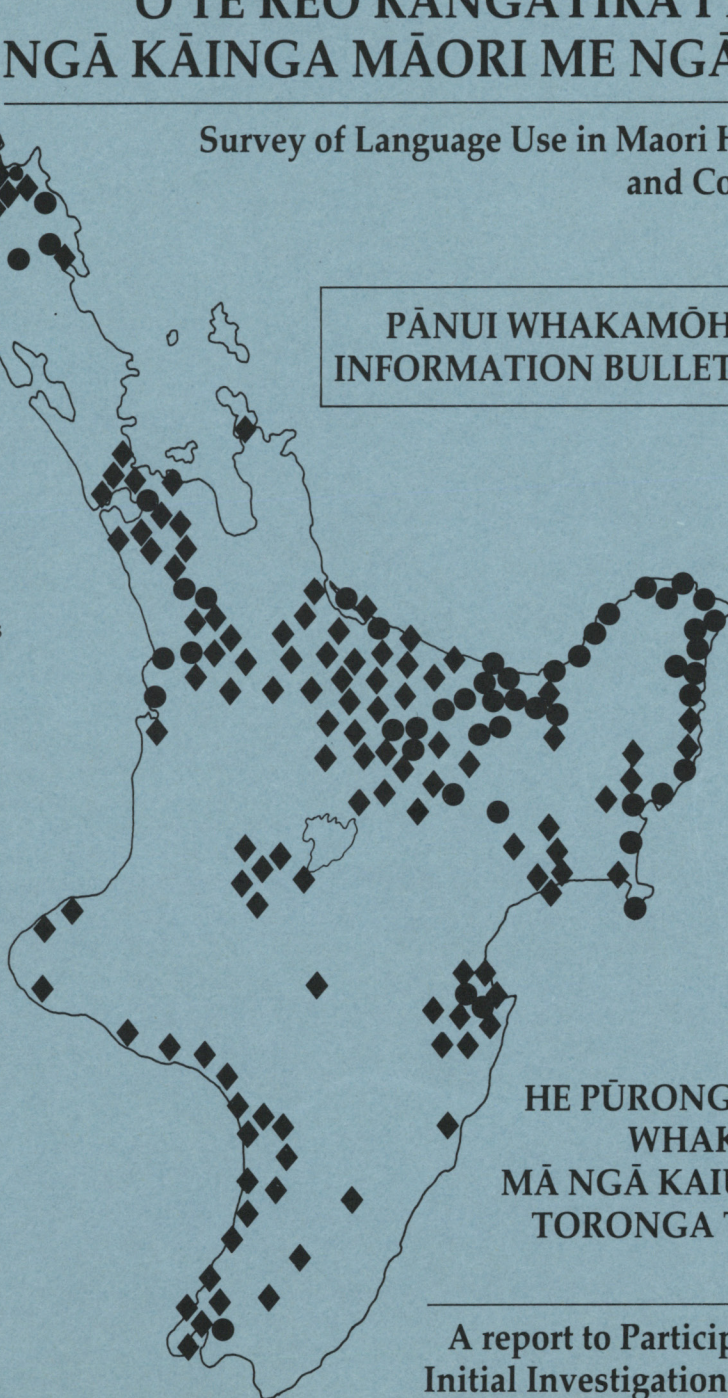
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO  
INFORMATION BULLETIN

33

Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

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

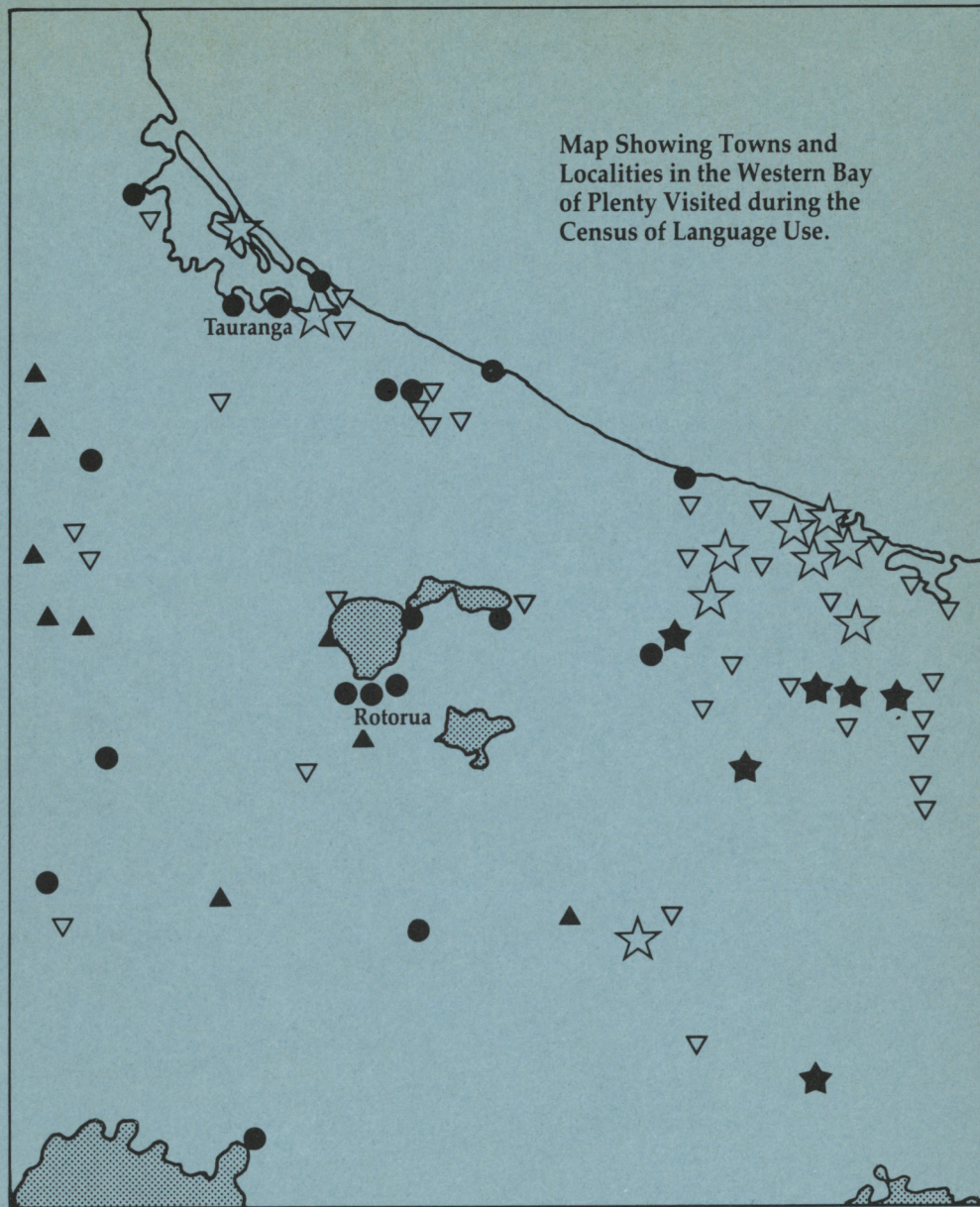
◆ Less than two  
thirds of adults were  
fluent speakers of  
Maori



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

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





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

- |               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| ★ 90% or more | ▲ 45% or less                      |
| ☆ 66% to 89%  | ▽ Fewer than 10 households visited |
| ● 46% to 65%  |                                    |

## THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN ROTORUA

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 129 households in Rotorua City in December 1977 and January 1978. The interviewers were Hiria Tumoana (Tuhoe), Sharon Moerkerk (Ngati Maniapoto), Aroha Yates (Te Arawa/Rongowhakaata), Awhina Ngatai (Ngai Terangi), Keri Tawhiwhirangi (Ngati Porou), Judith Brown Hawera (Waikato) and Phillip Hawera (Tuhoe/Ngai Terangi). Twenty-four interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the remainder were in English.

The households surveyed had a combined population of 696, and 661 of them were of Maori descent. This was about one-tenth of the Maori population of Rotorua City at the time.

### RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

#### *Iwi Affiliation*

The people interviewed mentioned 31 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. Over half of them (363 people or 55 percent) were members of Te Arawa, tangata whenua of the region. Ngapuhi with 81 members or 12 percent was the next largest tribal group. Tuhoe and Ngati Porou, who together made up one-fifth of the total, were also well represented in the survey.

The importance of tribal associations was shown by the fact that a quarter of the people stated that they belonged to more than one iwi, while others remained loyal to particular iwi even when these were part of larger tribal groups.

Only fifteen people had 'never thought of' what iwi they might belong to.



*Ability To Speak And Understand Maori*

The information presented in the table below shows that the vast majority of those who spoke and understood Maori with ease were adults over the age of 25. Only five out of 290 school-age children spoke the language well. People over 45 (less than one-fifth of the total) made up almost two-thirds of the community's fluent speakers of Maori. Residents in the suburbs of Western Heights, Selwyn Heights and Fordlands were found to have a better knowledge of the language than those in other areas visited. (This was partly due to the presence of large numbers of people of Ngapuhi, Tuhoe and Ngati Porou ancestry who came from country areas where Maori is widely spoken.)

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN ROTORUA (1978)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	83	66	100	80	10	8	15	12
25-44	45	34	68	52	42	32	22	17
15-24	8	6	24	19	47	37	56	44
2-14	5	2	18	6	101	35	173	59
Overall	141	21	210	31	200	30	266	39

(Numbers and percentages refer to members of households visited; percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number).

=====

*Use Of Maori Language In The Household*

English was the main language spoken in most households surveyed. There were 107 households with dependent children, and in 81 households, or three-quarters of them, only English was spoken. Maori was the main language spoken in two households, but in the rest it was used much less often than English.

There were 22 childless households visited, and in 12 of them English was mostly or only spoken; Maori was used at least as often as English in the other ten.

*The Maori Language In The Community*

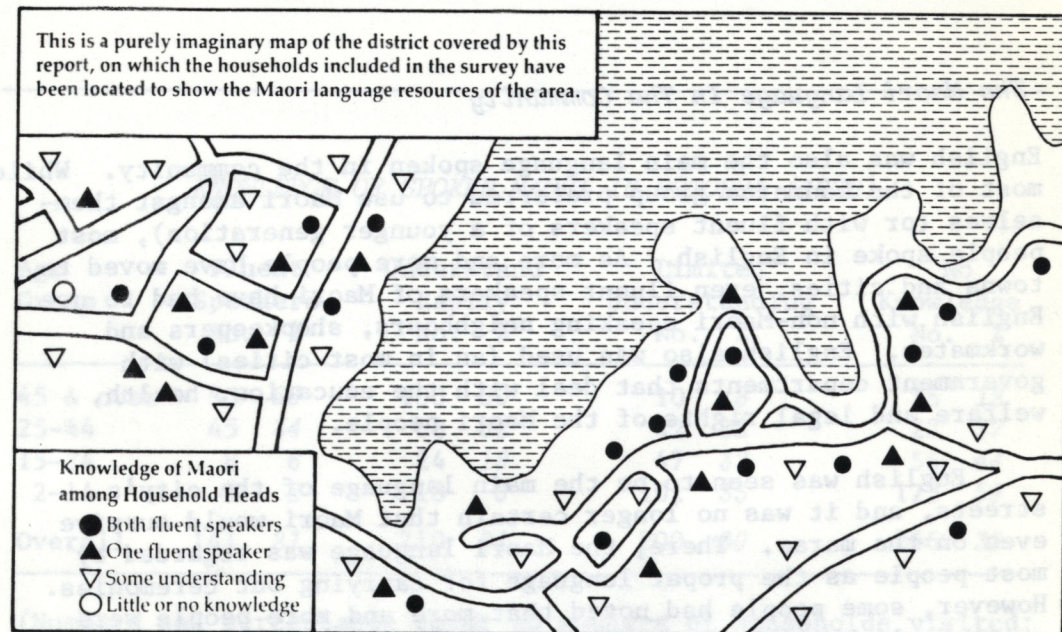
English was also the main language spoken in the community. While most of the kaumatua group preferred to use Maori amongst themselves (or with fluent speakers of a younger generation), most people spoke in English. As more and more people have moved to towns and cities, even fluent speakers of Maori have had to use English with non-Maori speaking neighbours, shopkeepers and workmates. English also was used (as in most cities) with government departments that deal with the education, health, welfare and legal rights of the Maori people.

English was seen to be the main language of the city's streets, and it was no longer certain that Maori would survive even on the marae. There, the Maori language was regarded by most people as the proper language for carrying out ceremonies. However, some people had noted that more and more people were using English on the marae as well, and that much of the talk, when the formalities were over, was in that language.

Maori still had an important part to play in certain religious services, but here also much English was being used.



If any two people were to meet unexpectedly in Rotorua there was 1 chance in 20 that they would understand each other in Maori. If both of them were adults over 25, the chances would be much greater - 1 in 3. This was because half this age-group spoke Maori fluently and two-thirds of them understood the language with ease. However, there would be little chance that any two school-age children, if they met unexpectedly, would be able to carry on a conversation in Maori.



LAKESIDE SUBURBS AND CENTRAL CITY

### Attitudes Towards The Language

Most people supported the teaching of Maori in local schools, and many parents were pleased that their children had more opportunities to learn the language than they did when they were young. However, many comments were made about the kind of Maori being taught which was often 'different' and did not help children to speak Maori well enough. Others said that to include Maori in a high school curriculum, for 45 minutes a day, could never teach pupils what it meant to be Maori or have a deeper understanding of their culture. These could only be taught in the home or on the marae.

Many non-speakers of Maori were sorry they couldn't speak the language, and had joined night classes or took lessons in Maori on the local marae. But a feeling of *whakama* and a fear of making mistakes stopped many people from speaking Maori confidently in the community, and forced them to talk in English.

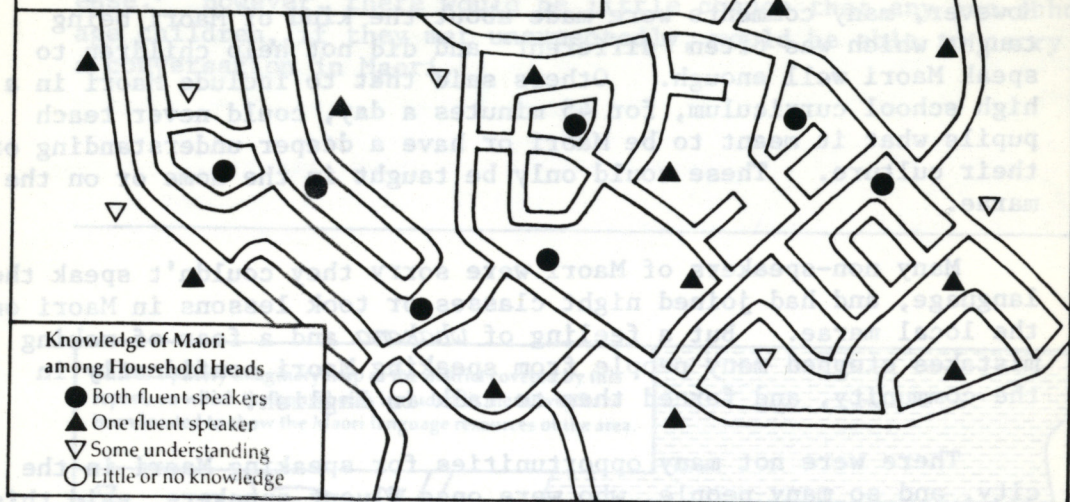
There were not many opportunities for speaking Maori in the city, and so many people, who were once fluent speakers, said this was causing them to lose their knowledge of spoken Maori. In an effort to prevent the total loss of the language, many parents and grandparents were giving support to the work done in schools by teaching their children and mokopuna the basics of Maori in the home.

About one-fifth of the informants had been beaten for speaking Maori as children at school, while many others had been put off it as infants within the Rotorua region and in outside areas. A knowledge of Maori arts and crafts, waiata-a-ringa, haka, and so on, was made more important than language in being a Maori - surely the result of decades of successful propaganda and educational policies to get rid of the Maori language.

The present-day use of the Maori language in Rotorua was seen to be a ceremonial one, mainly in greetings, whaikorero and prayer on formal occasions, and of course in entertaining tourists.



This is a purely imaginary map of the district covered by this report, on which the households included in the survey have been located to show the Maori language resources of the area.



Knowledge of Maori among Household Heads  
 ● Both fluent speakers  
 ▲ One fluent speaker  
 ▽ Some understanding  
 ○ Little or no knowledge

PLEASANT HEIGHTS, WESTERN HEIGHTS, AND SELWYN HEIGHTS

CONCLUSION

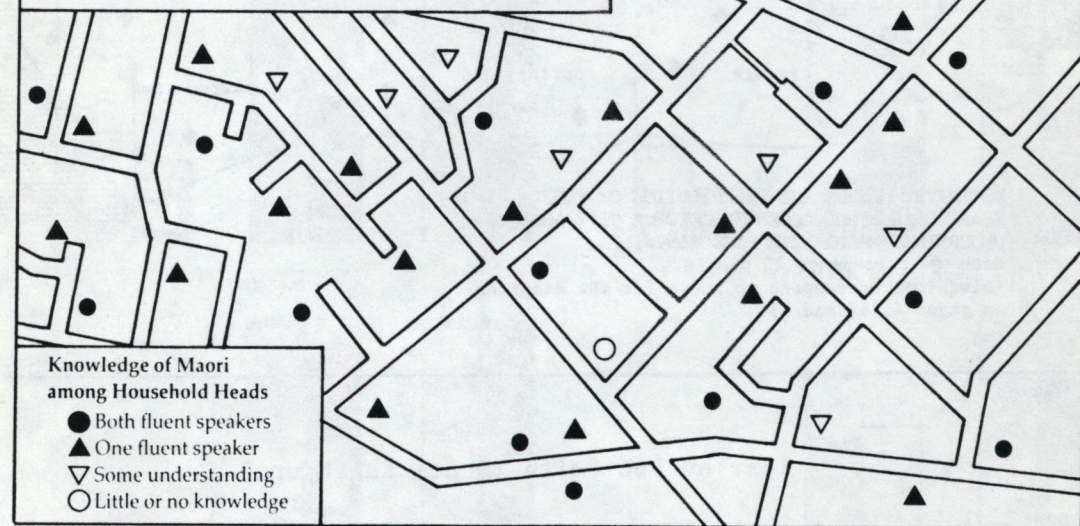
The survey showed that 21 percent of the people we visited could speak the language fluently, while 31 percent of them had a good understanding. Easily the most of these were adults over 25, and more than half of those under 25 had no knowledge at all of the language beyond greetings and a few basic phrases. English was the main language spoken in most households and in the community.

The difficulties in trying to hold on to the Maori language in an English-speaking community were enormous. Many adults were learning Maori, teaching one another and their children to see that the language survived for another generation. Since then, Maori mothers have shown a lot of interest in setting up Maori-speaking creches (Te Kohanga Reo) in Rotorua. (Further

information on this scheme is available at the local Department of Maori Affairs offices.) In certain schools, Maori could be used on the same basis as English for teaching ordinary subjects. This is a new idea which is gaining support from the community now that many people have doubts about the way that Maori is being taught in schools. However, at the beginning of 1983 no official bilingual school had been set up in Rotorua or in any other Te Arawa community.

This struggle to make sure that Maori survives in Rotorua City as a language for everyday use (not just for ceremonies and services on the marae), can be seen in many other towns and cities throughout the country. Individuals and organized groups continue to petition the Department of Education and the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation for an improvement in the quality of Maori language programmes.

This is a purely imaginary map of the district covered by this report, on which the households included in the survey have been located to show the Maori language resources of the area.

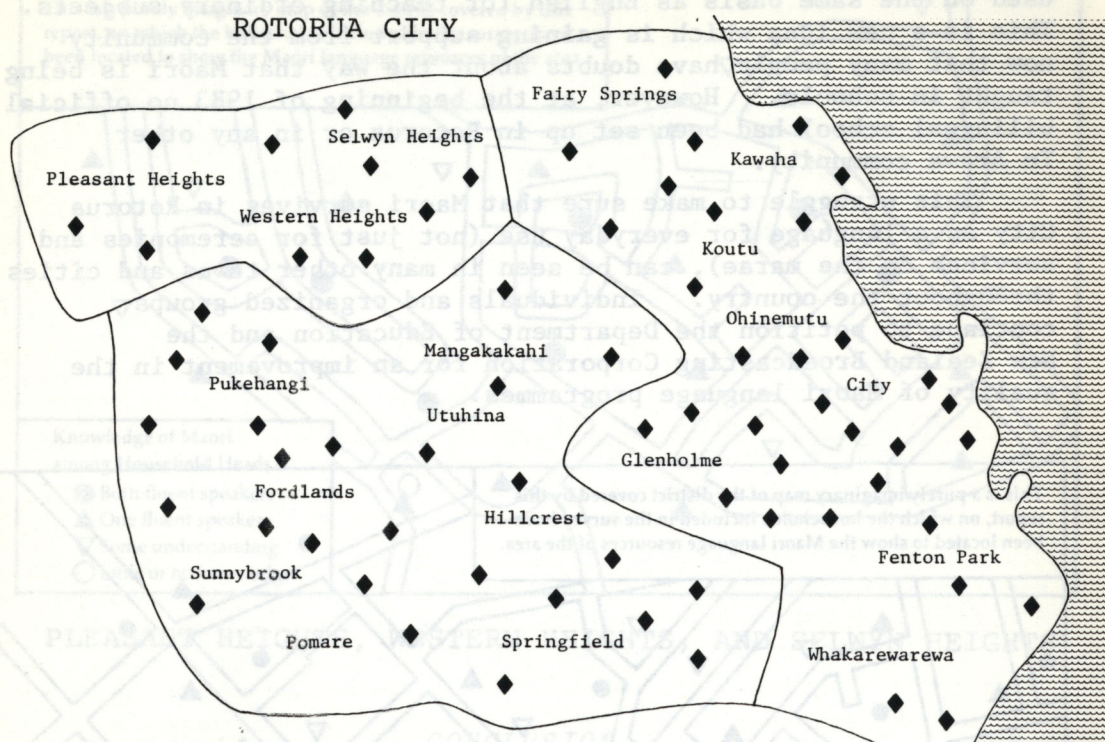


Knowledge of Maori among Household Heads  
 ● Both fluent speakers  
 ▲ One fluent speaker  
 ▽ Some understanding  
 ○ Little or no knowledge

FORDLANDS AND ADJACENT SUBURBS



Information on this scheme is available at the local Department of Maori Affairs offices. In certain schools, Maori could be used as the basis for teaching English and other subjects.



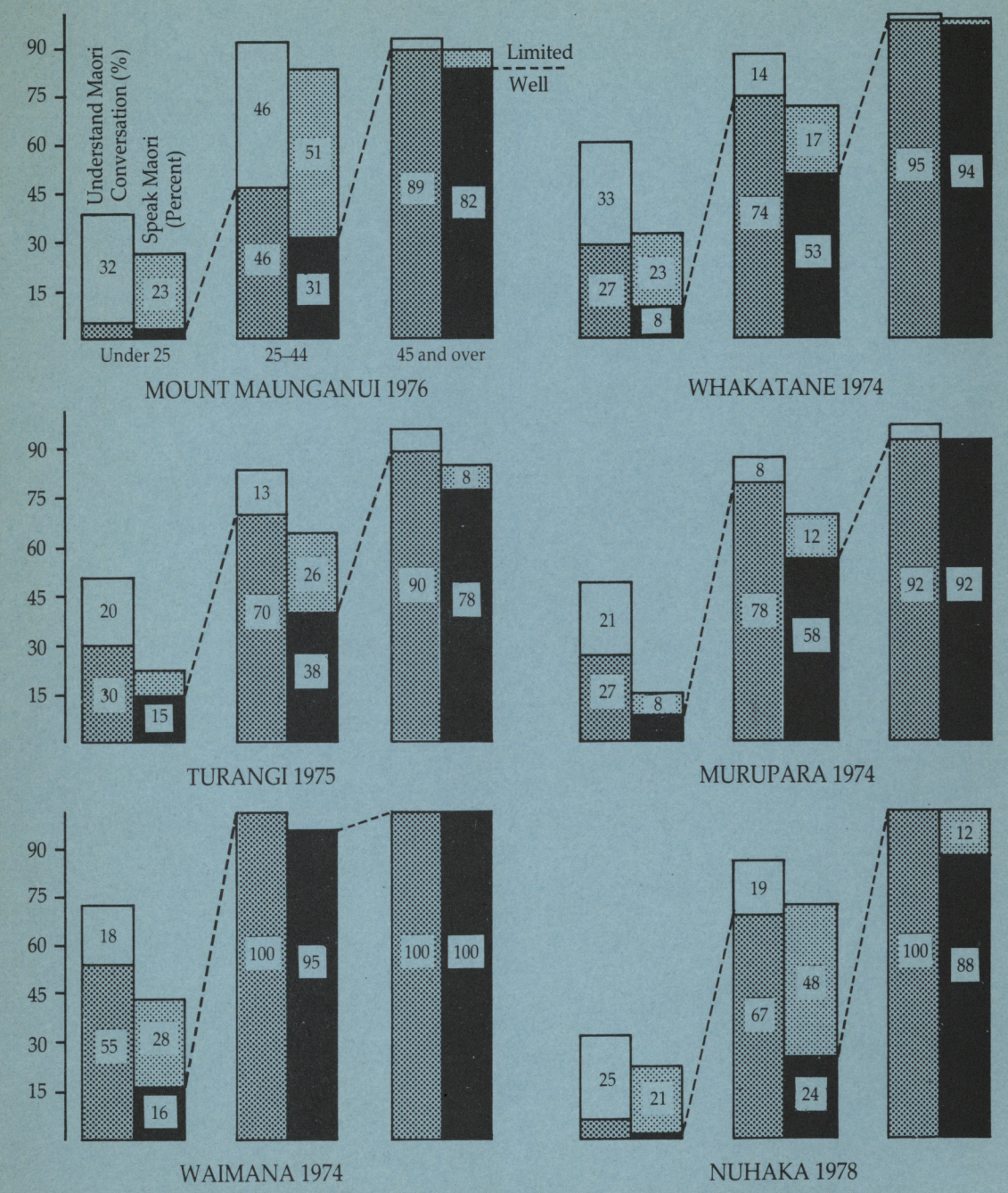
ESTIMATED NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF PEOPLE 25 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER IN ROTORUA CITY ABLE TO UNDERSTAND MAORI WITH EASE (1978). Each  $\blacklozenge$  represents 25 people. (Divisions correspond to those for the diagrams on pages 4, 6, and 7)

Text by Lee Smith (Ngati Kahungunu)

Maps by Richard Benton and Peter Ridder

© NZCER, Wellington, February 1983

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.