

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

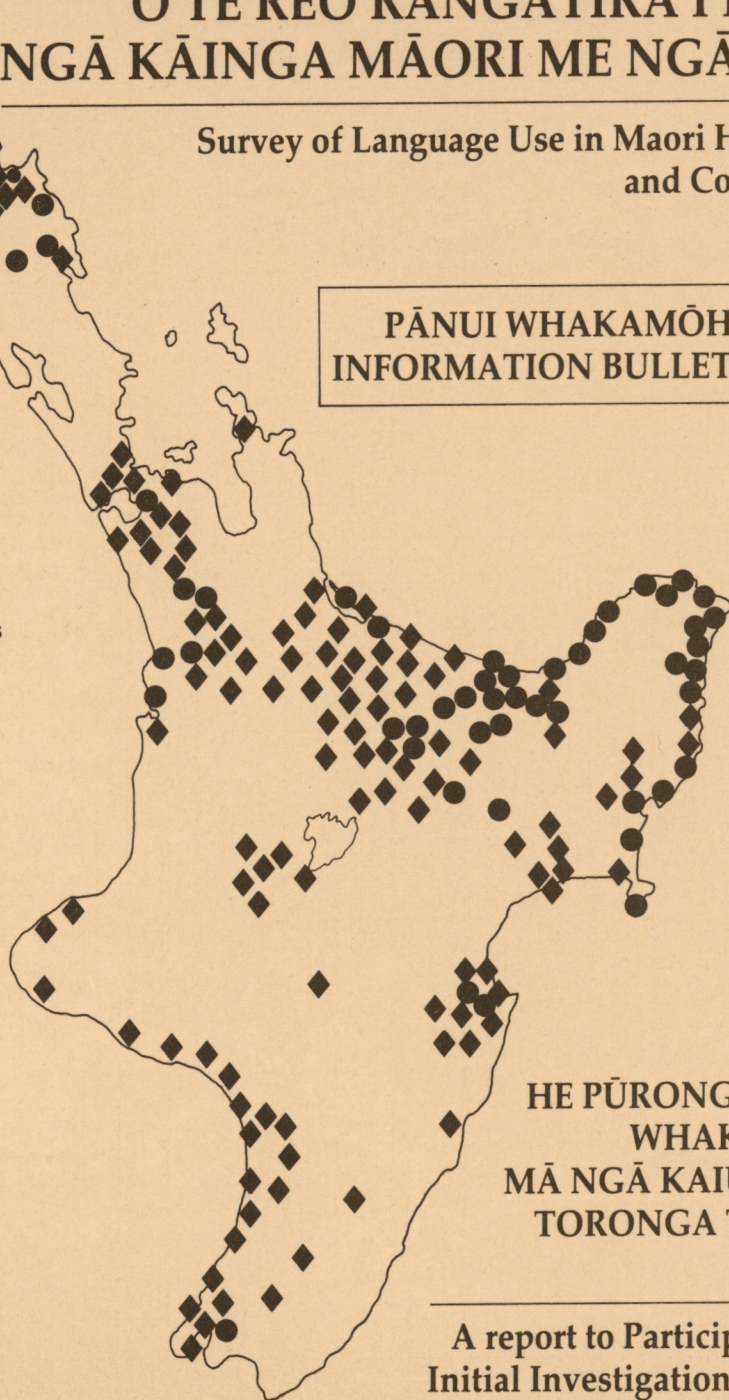
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

39

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

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

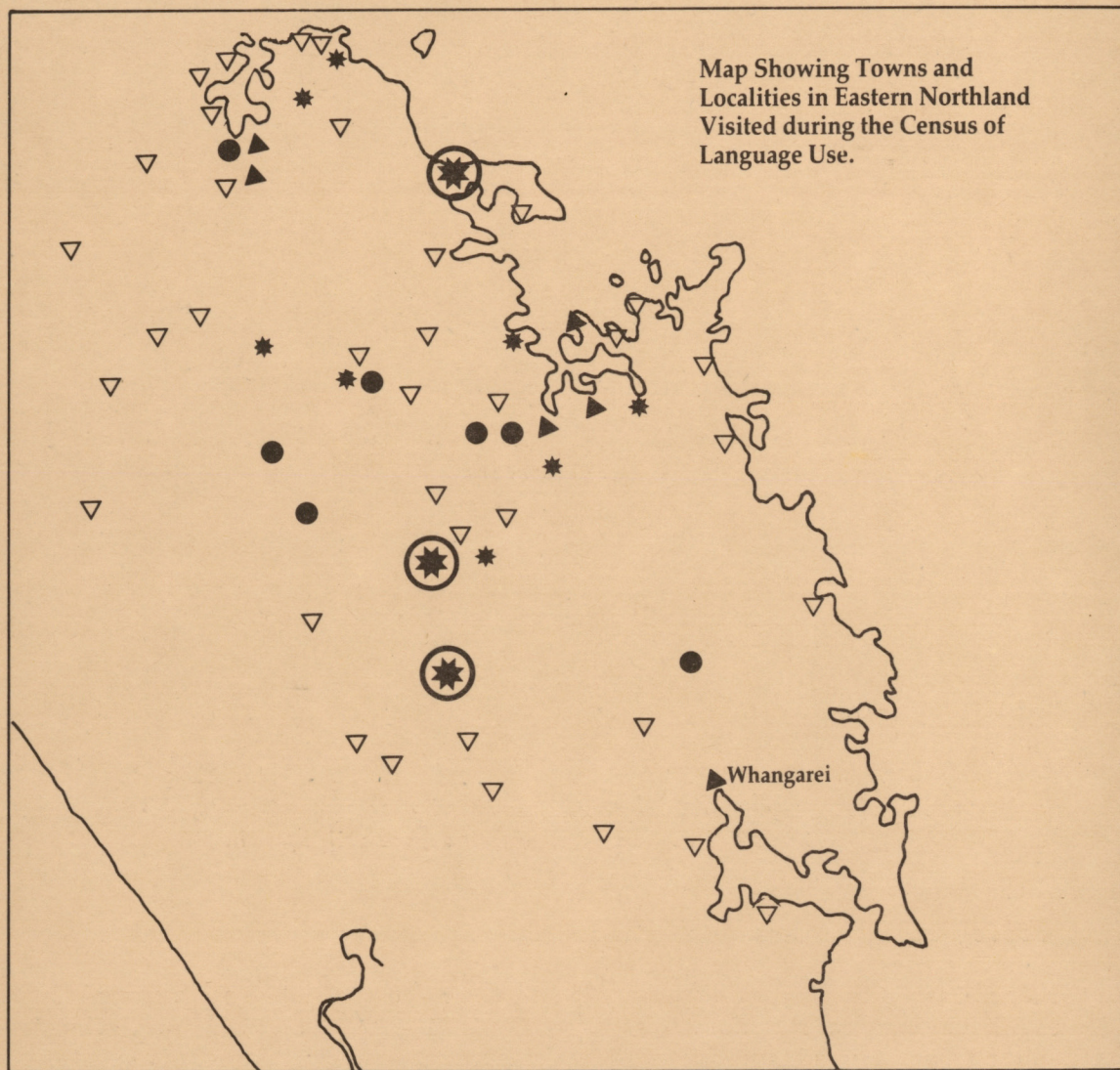
◆ Less than two
thirds of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori



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 Eastern Northland 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

● 75% to 89%

● 60% to 74%

▲ 50% to 59%

▽ Fewer than 8 households visited

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN WAIOMIO

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities was conducted in 16 households in Waiomio in January 1975. Ten interviews were carried out partly or entirely in English; the rest were in Maori. The interviewers were Rena Tito (Ngati Whatua), Rangi Nicholson (Ngati Raukawa), Dora Pryor (Tuhoe), Judith Brown Hawera (Waikato), Evelyn Te Uira (Waikato), Susan Rikihana (Tuhoe), John Miller (Ngapuhi), John Ranby, Joe Draper (Waikato), Joan Walker (Ngapuhi), Helen Gillespie and W. Gillespie.

The households surveyed had a total population of 87, and they were all of Maori descent. This was about half the total Maori population of Waiomio 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, 53 people (95 percent of the total), belonged to Ngapuhi.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The information in the table on the next page tells us that all the kaumatua in the survey spoke Maori fluently. Over half the adults between 25 and 44 also spoke Maori well, although very few people under 25 could talk with each other in that language. However, more than half of this age group knew different amounts of Maori from a lot to a little, and those who did not know the language at all were all under the age of 14.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN WAIOMIO (1975)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	19	100	19	100	0		0	
25-44	7	58	10	93	2	17	0	
15-24	1	8	6	46	3	23	4	31
2-14	2	5	13	34	6	16	19	50
Overall	29	36	48	59	11	13	23	28

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

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Use Of Maori Language In The Household

There were 13 households with dependent children visited, and in two of them everyday talk was entirely in English. This was also the main language used in four other homes, where some Maori was spoken, particularly by parents. The members of three families spoke only or mostly Maori, while in the other four homes both Maori and English were used equally.

There were three childless households visited, and people spoke only or mostly Maori in all of them.

The Maori Language In The Community

Both Maori and English were widely spoken in Waiomio, although few people under the age of 25 could talk for long entirely in Maori. Most of the adults liked to speak Maori with other Maori speakers, at home, in the community, at work, and in many other

settings. A quarter of the people we spoke with spoke English all the time in the community, and it is not surprising to learn that three-quarters of them had been punished for speaking Maori as school children.

The Maori language played an important part in ceremonies on the local marae, and in certain religious services. In other important functions in the community, such as weddings and twenty-first birthdays, speeches were often made in Maori.

If any two members of the Waiomio community were to meet unexpectedly, there was 1 chance in 5 that they would be able to talk together in Maori. If both people were adults the chances were very much higher - about 4 in 5.

However, the language used by fluent speakers of Maori usually depended on the person spoken to: English was therefore spoken with children, and with most Pakeha people.

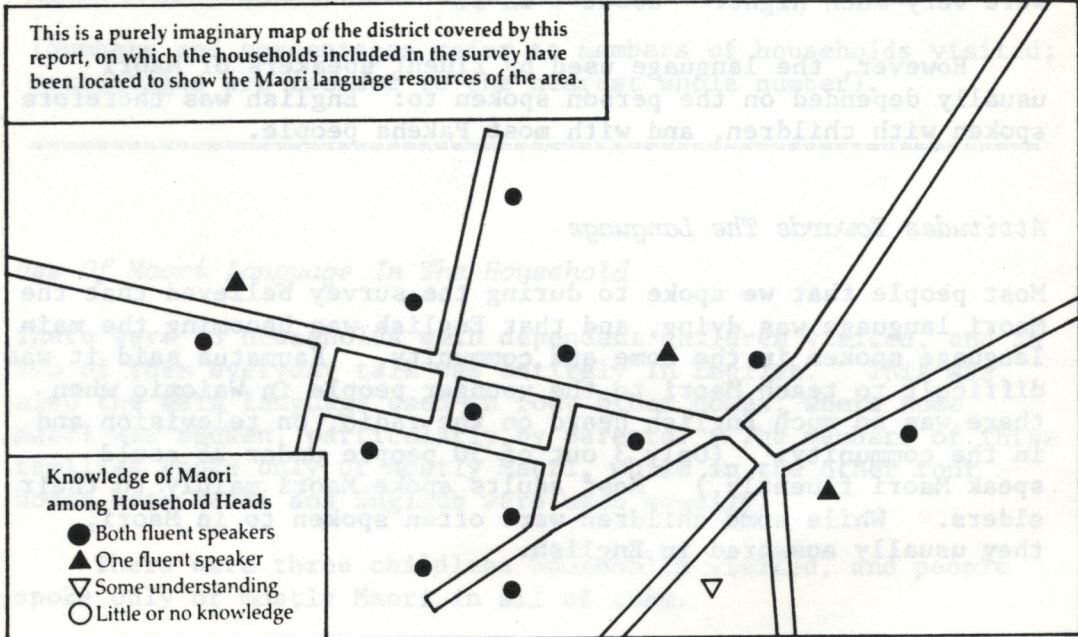
Attitudes Towards The Language

Most people that we spoke to during the survey believed that the Maori language was dying, and that English was becoming the main language spoken in the home and community. Kaumatua said it was difficult to teach Maori to the younger people in Waiomio when there was so much English heard on the radio, on television and in the community. (Only 3 out of 50 people under 25 could speak Maori fluently.) Most adults spoke Maori mainly to their elders. While some children were often spoken to in Maori, they usually answered in English.

CONCLUSION

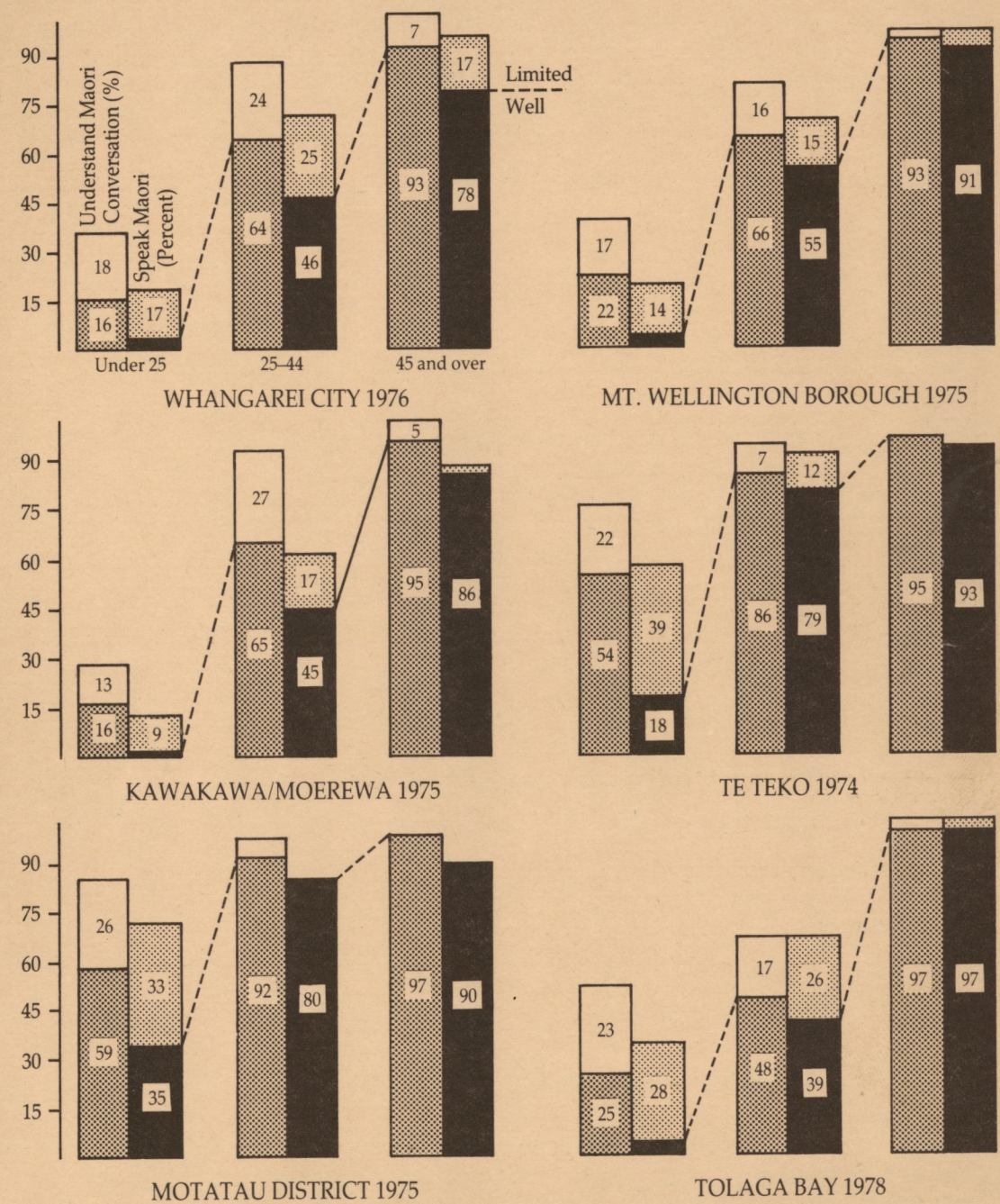
In Waiomio, at the time of the survey, Maori was spoken most of the time by kaumatua over the age of 45. While English was being used more and more in homes with young children, Maori was widely spoken by adults in the community and particularly on the marae. A lot

of people were sorry that fewer and fewer people, especially among younger people, knew Maori or could speak it although more than a third of the school children understood it well. Several parents were trying to teach their own children Maori in the home as one of the best ways of keeping the language from dying out altogether. Bilingual schools, where Maori is used as much as English, have been set up in a few other places where the people have wanted to keep the Maori language alive. This kind of school might also be helpful in Waiomio, if the people wanted one and were willing to support it by encouraging children to use Maori at home.



This report was prepared by Lee Smith (Ngati Kahungunu).

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.