

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

53

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

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

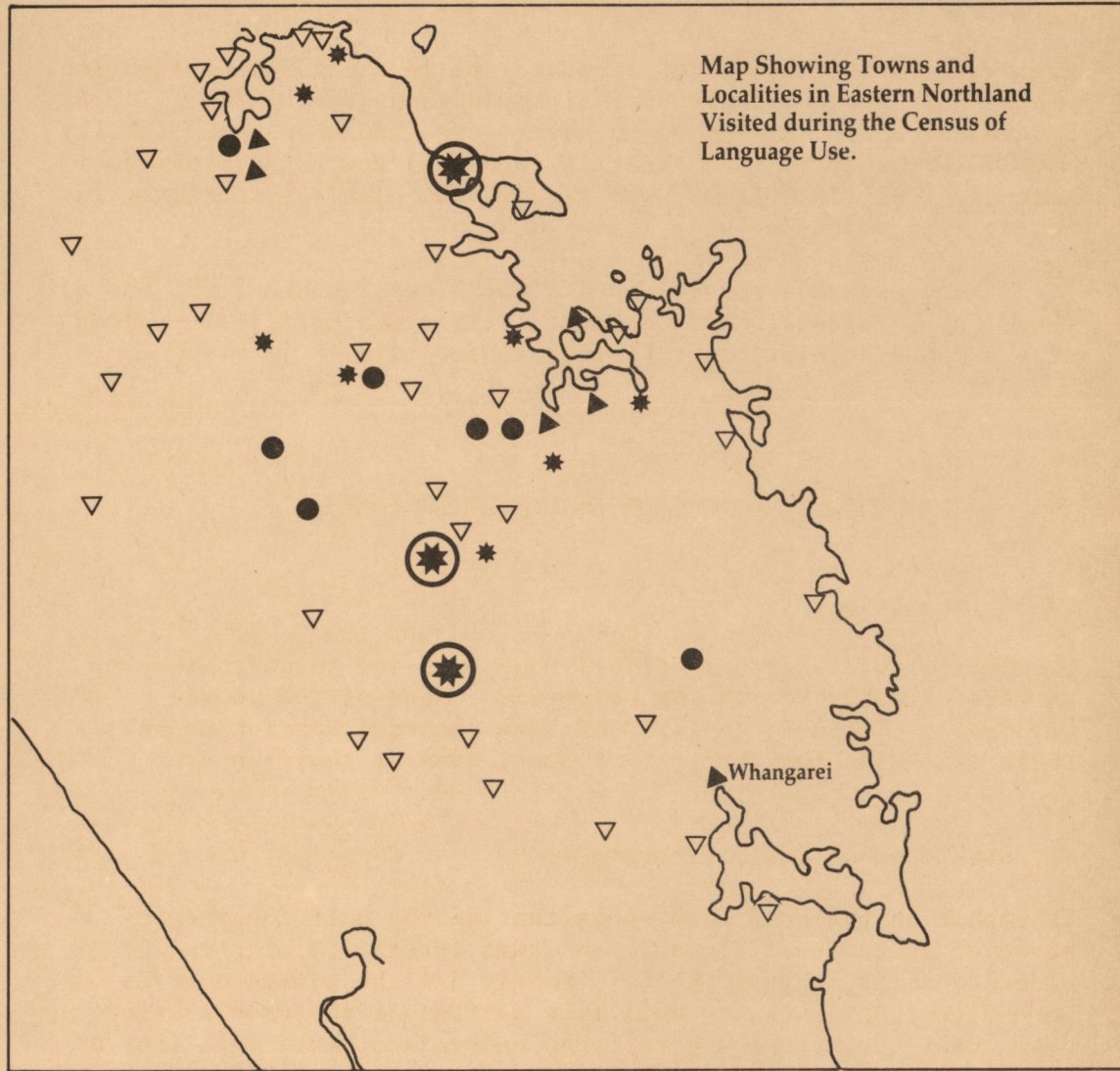
◆ Less than two
thirds of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

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 PIPIWAI

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

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 12 households in Pipiwai in January 1976. The interviewers were Ripeka Koopu Martin (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Willy Martin (Te Aupouri), Kahu Waititi (Ngapuhi) and Rena Tito (Ngati Whatua). Six interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the remainder were in English.

The households surveyed had a total population of 73, and all these people were of Maori descent. This was nearly two-thirds of the Maori population of Pipiwai at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned four main iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. Most of the people belonged to Ngapuhi; a third of them regarded Ngati Hine as their iwi; the rest thought of Ngati Hine as their hapu.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The table on the next page shows that nearly half the people surveyed spoke Maori fluently and that two-thirds of them understood the language well. Nearly all the adults over 25 were fluent speakers, as well as a quarter of the people under 25. Half the school-age children understood Maori well, but a third of the people under 25 had little or no knowledge of the language at the time of the survey. Most of them were under 15.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN PIPIWAI (1976)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	10	100	10	100	0		0	
25-44	10	91	11	100	0		0	
15-24	5	42	6	50	4	33	2	17
2-14	8	21	20	51	3	8	16	41
Overall	33	46	47	65	7	10	18	25

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

The Maori Language In The Household

Maori and English were spoken in the households visited. There were nine homes with dependent children, and in three of them the people spoke mostly in Maori or used both languages equally. In three homes, the people spoke mostly or entirely in English. In the other three, English was the main language for everyday use, although Maori was often spoken, especially by adults.

There were three childless households, and in one of them the people always spoke English. In the other two households, Maori was spoken with visitors who spoke the language.

The Maori Language In The Community

Nearly all the adults over 25 could speak Maori fluently, and so it was used a lot in talking with neighbours, workmates and

friends of the same age. However, most everyday chat with school-age children, was in English.

The Maori language still had an important part to play in ceremonies on the marae and in certain religious services. Many people also used Maori for private and family prayer and grace.

If any two members of the community were to meet unexpectedly, the chances were about 1 in 3 that they could understand each other in Maori. If both people were school children the chances were 1 in 10, while there was every chance that two adults over 25 could talk in Maori, if they happened to run into each other.

Attitudes Towards The Language

Over half the people interviewed had been strapped or beaten for speaking Maori as school children. This does not seem to have stopped anyone from speaking Maori, but it may have led some people to believe that it was better to speak English.

One of the people interviewed said that Maori as a language for everyday use was not what it used to be: more and more of the young people could now speak only English. This person, a fluent speaker of Maori, would now rather speak English. So did some other people who explained that it was quicker and easier to put ideas and thoughts into English than it was into Maori.

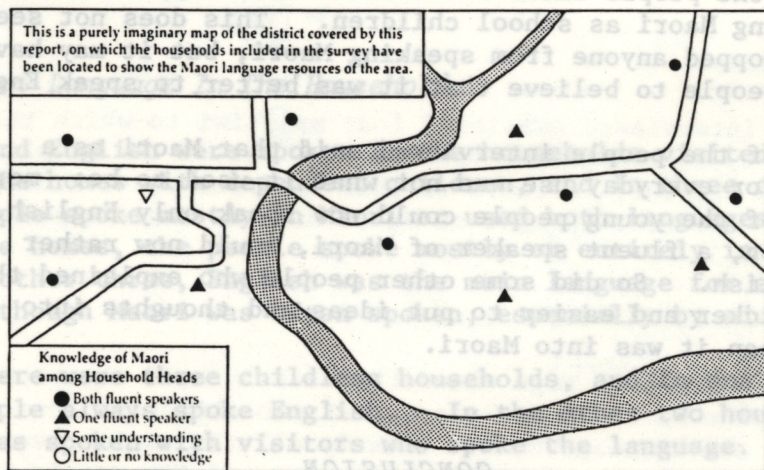
CONCLUSION

At the time of the survey, nearly half the people in Pipiwai could speak Maori fluently, and two-thirds of them could understand the language well. Although a quarter of the people under 25 were

fluent speakers, adults over 40 were the people most likely to use Maori as the everyday language in the home and community.

In most households with dependent children, English was spoken more often than Maori, while more than a third of the children under 15 hardly understood Maori at that time.

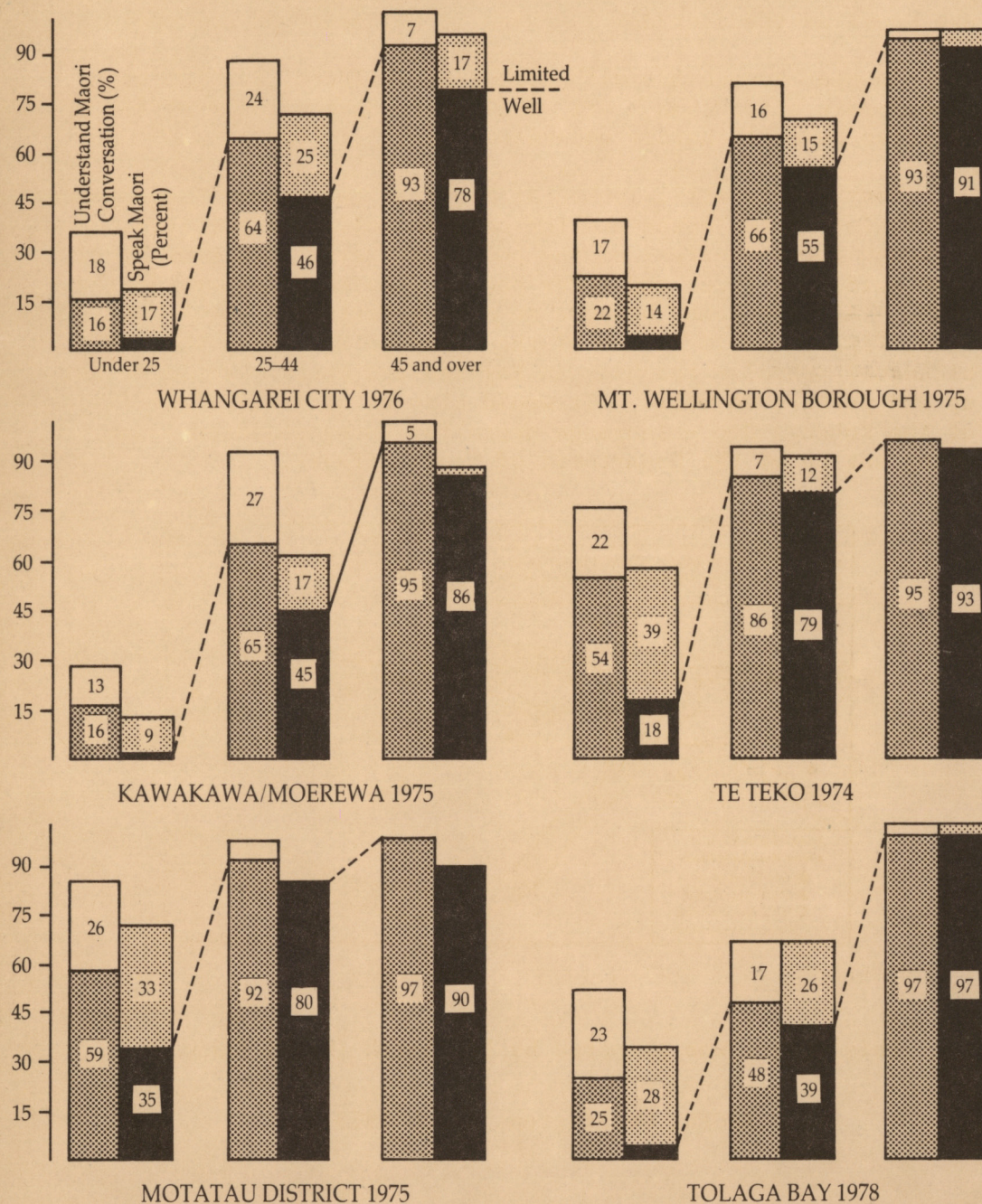
Most people still looked at Maori as the proper language for ceremonies on the marae and for certain religious services. Although three-quarters of the people surveyed knew some Maori, some said that fewer and fewer people used the language in the area. All the same, because so many parents can speak Maori well, Pihiwai could be one of the areas in Northland where a bilingual school - teaching in English and Maori - could be set up and perhaps do well. It would also be an ideal place for one of the Kohanga Reo - language nests for young children - now being set up by the Department of Maori Affairs.



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.