

# 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

91

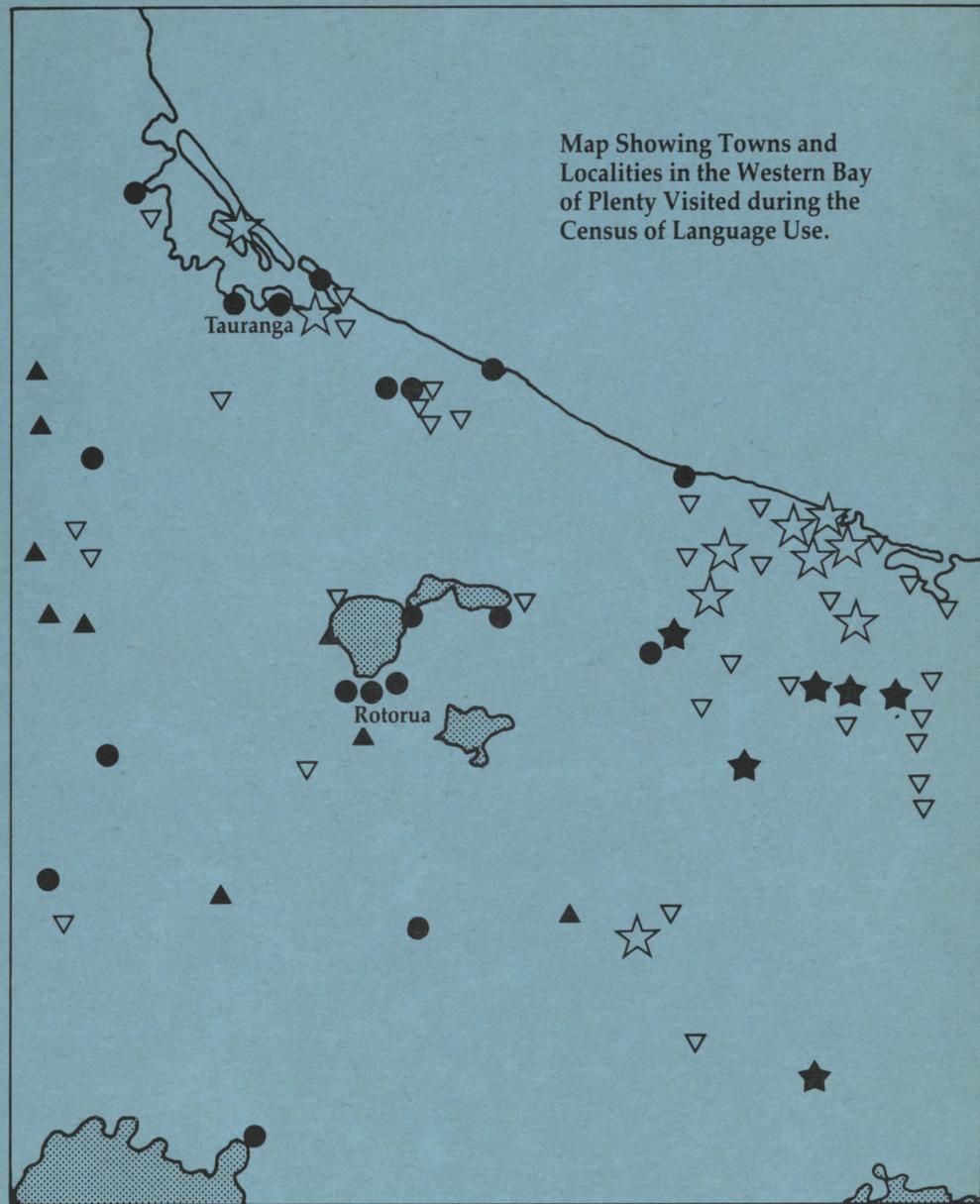
Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

● 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

☆ 66% to 89%

● 46% to 65%

▲ 45% or less

▽ Fewer than 10 households visited

Ability to speak Maori is Kutarere (1974)

Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Kutarere (1974)

Age

Group

Overall

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN KUTARERE AND WAINUI

Fieldwork for the survey of language use in Maori communities took place in 19 households in Kutarere and 5 households in Wainui in January 1974.

The interviewers were Ameria Ponika (Tuhoe), Joe Rua (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Ian Maxwell (Ngai Tai), Iriaka Wensor (Ngapuhi), Peter Wensor (Ngapuhi), Charee Ogle (Ngapuhi), and Carol Hindmarsh Ngawati (Ngati Porou).

The households surveyed in Kutarere had a total population of 99 all of whom were of Maori descent. This was about 80 percent of the total Maori population of Kutarere at that time. In Wainui 31 people were included in the survey and all of these people were of Maori descent. This was about 90 percent of the total Wainui Maori population. Eight of the interviews were carried out entirely in Maori, two were in both Maori and English and the remaining 14 in English.

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Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Kutarere (1974)

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Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Well		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
45+	14	78	17	94	0	0	1	6
25-44	14	88	15	94	0	0	1	8
15-24	2	17	3	25	6	50	3	25
2-14	1	2	17	37	21	46	8	17
Overall	31	34	52	57	27	29	13	14

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

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Results of the Linguistic Survey

Iwi Affiliation

In Kutarere, the people interviewed mentioned 10 major iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged (most belonged to more than one iwi). Tuhoe with 38 members (or 67% of the total) was the largest iwi mentioned. Whakatohea with 32 members (63%) was the second largest while Ngati Porou had 11 members (18%) and Te Whanau-a-Apanui 10 members (15%).

In Wainui, 3 major iwi were mentioned; 21 people (or 68%) included in the survey were from Tuhoe while 8 (26%) were from Ngati Porou.

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table shows that people over the age of 25 generally had a much better understanding of spoken Maori than those under 25. While about one fifth of those under 25 could be classed as fluent speakers, compared to about four fifths of those aged 25 or over, most people under 25 had at least a limited understanding of Maori and about one third had a good understanding of Maori. Only about one fifth of those under 25 had no knowledge of Maori at all.

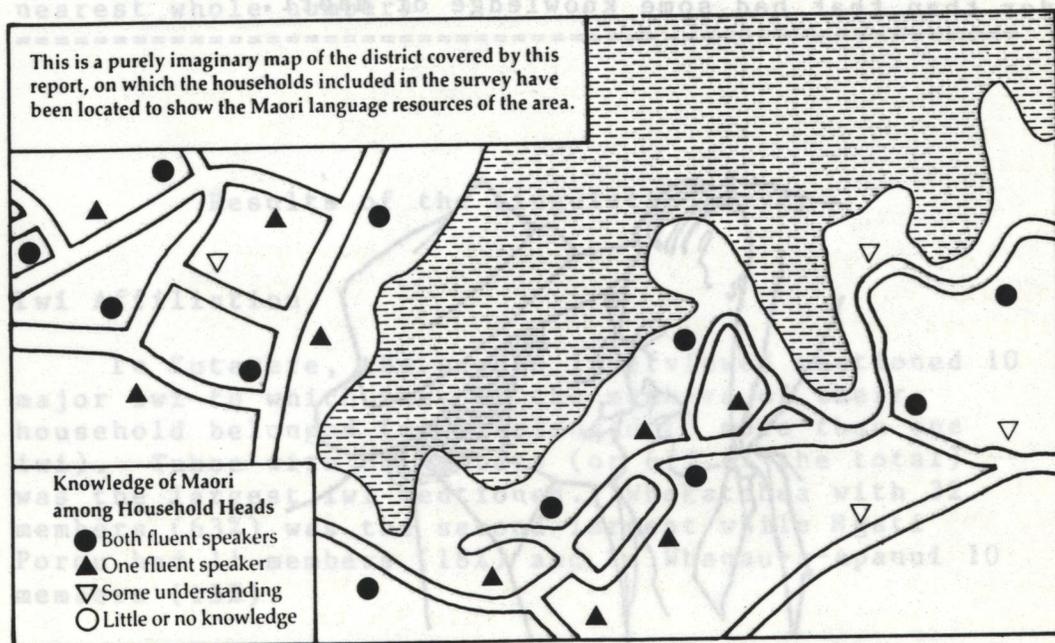
In Wainui we were told that there was practically no one under 25 who could either speak or understand Maori well, although most of the people older than that had some knowledge of Maori.



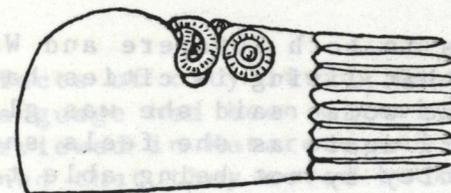
## Use of Maori Language in the Household

In Kutarere 14 households with children were visited. Of these, the members of only one household said that they used English all the time in the home. The rest of the households with children used both Maori and English. There were 5 households without children visited and most of these used both Maori and English, with 2 households mentioning the use of Maori when talking with visitors.

English was the main language used in the households with children which were surveyed in Wainui while Maori or mostly Maori was used in the households without children.



KUTARERE AND WAINUI



## The Maori Language in the Community

In everyday communication with neighbours, workmates and children, a mixture of Maori and English was used by most of the people interviewed in Kutarere. Virtually no English was used in certain religious services or in formal situations on the marae such as whaikorero. Nearly all the parents and kaumatua we interviewed said that they used Maori most of the time when chatting informally on the marae.

In Wainui, English was the main everyday language but it was replaced by Maori in prayers, religious services, and formal occasions on the marae.

If two people in our Kutarere survey met by chance and they were both adults, the chances that they would be able to have a conversation in Maori would be about 4 in 5; in Wainui it would only have been about 1 in 5. However, in both communities the chances that children would be able to talk with each other in Maori would be practically nil, as very few people under 15 in either community could speak Maori fluently.

## Attitudes Towards the Language

Several informants in both Kutarere and Wainui mentioned the effects that living in cities have on the Maori language. One woman said she was glad to be living in the country again as she feels she lost a lot of her Maori identity by not being able to use her Maori language while living in the city. Another couple expressed regrets that their children seem to enjoy living in the city as they feel that they will lose their Maoritanga, if they have not lost it already.

A few people expressed the desire to learn Maori but more people said they regretted not having taught their children and grandchildren to speak Maori fluently. One man insisted that his nieces and nephews speak Maori and said he became quite angry when they replied in English. Others, while hoping their children will want to learn Maori, would not force them into it against their will.

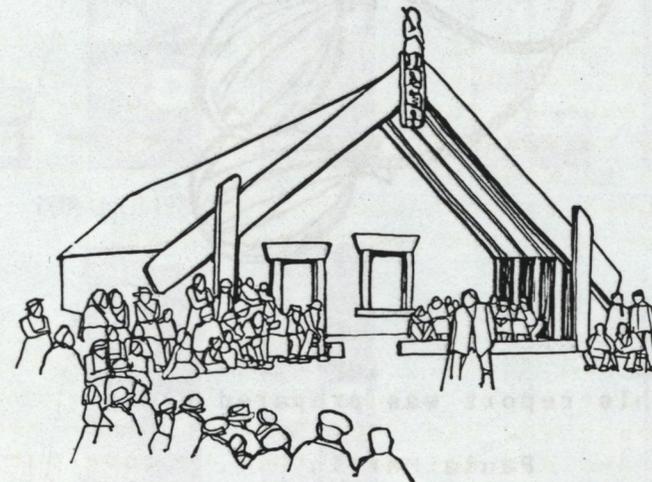
Some people spoke of the isolation they felt in not having anyone to talk with in Maori, one woman saying that as most of the people she knows speak Pakeha, she has to speak it too. Some people used Maori only when talking with elders and one woman said she only used it when she didn't want her children to know what she was talking about.

There were other people who were not particularly concerned about whether or not their children understood Maori. The dilemma of living in Pakeha society was amply illustrated by one woman who said that although she did "her best to teach her children Maori she did not want them to lose out on their English as English is the language of this country."

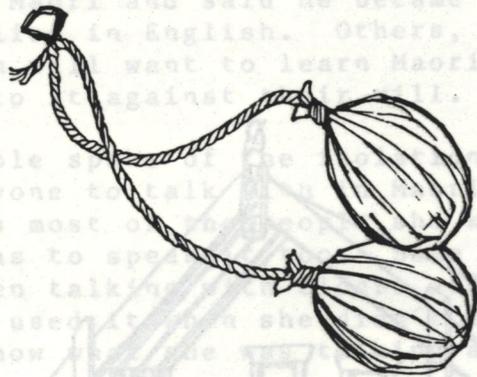
## Conclusion

The effects of city living on the maintenance of the Maori language had been clearly realised by the people interviewed in Kutarere and Wainui; several of them mentioned that they moved back into the district in order to keep their Maoritanga.

The strong support that many informants felt for the teaching of Maori to children as well as the fact that some of the young people already had a very good understanding of the language would indicate that, given encouragement, more young people should be able to become fluent speakers of the language.



The kohanga reo movement would assist older people in these communities to pass on their knowledge of Maori to their grandchildren's generation. This would need to be supported also in the local schools, however, if children are to be able to increase their knowledge of Maori while also learning to use English. Otherwise, people will continue to think that they really have to choose between Maori and English - in Kutarere and Wainui many people we spoke to seemed to have chosen Maori for themselves, but thought that their children's future depended on English, and, because of this, Maori had faded into the background.



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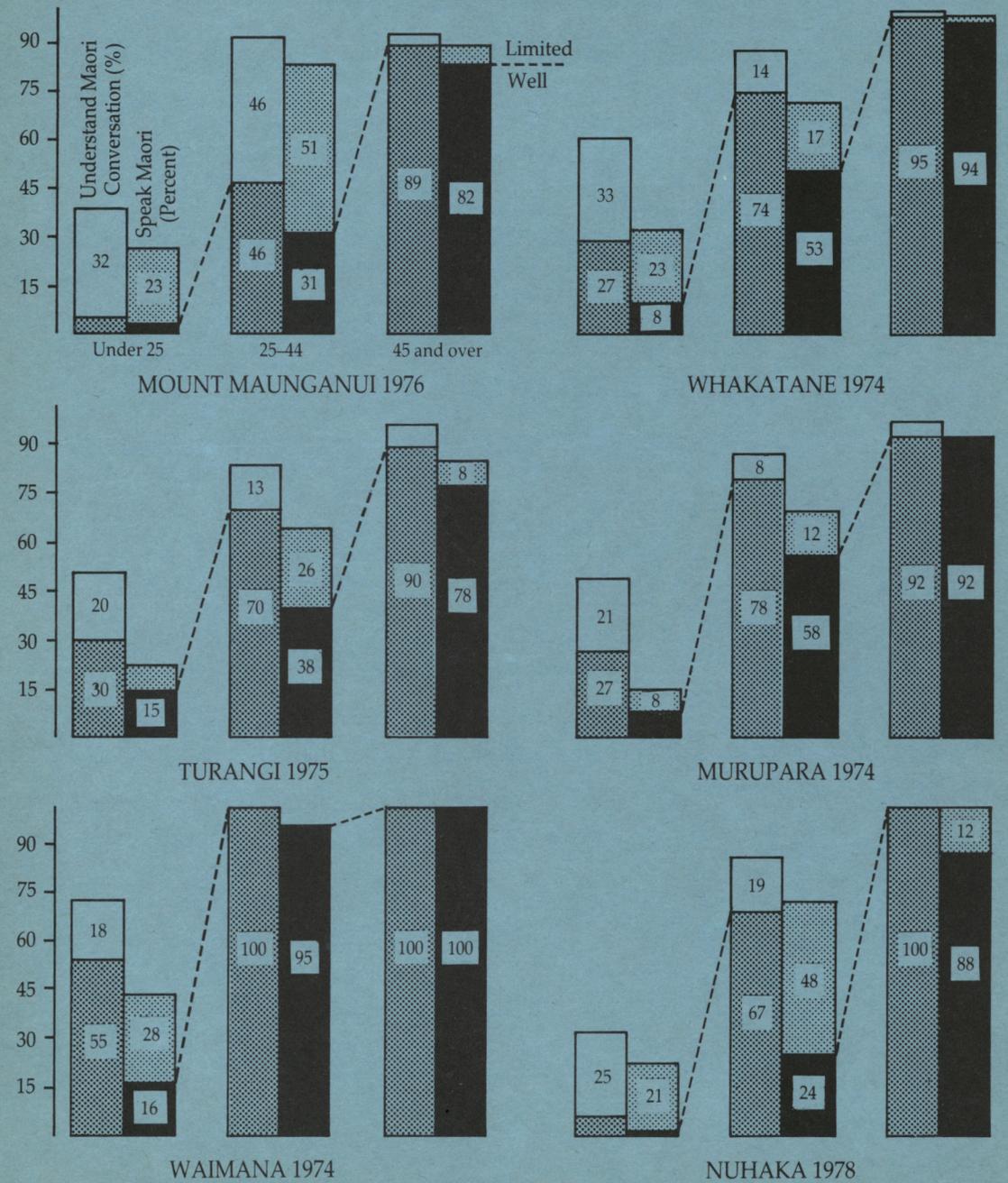
There were particularly children understood Maori. The Pakeha society said that although she did her children Maori she to lose out on their English a age of this country."

This report was prepared by

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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.