

TE TIROHANGA I TE KÖREROTANGA O TE REO RANGATIRA I ROTO I NGĀ KĀINGA MĀORI ME NGĀ ROHE

Survey of Language Use in Maori Households
and Communities

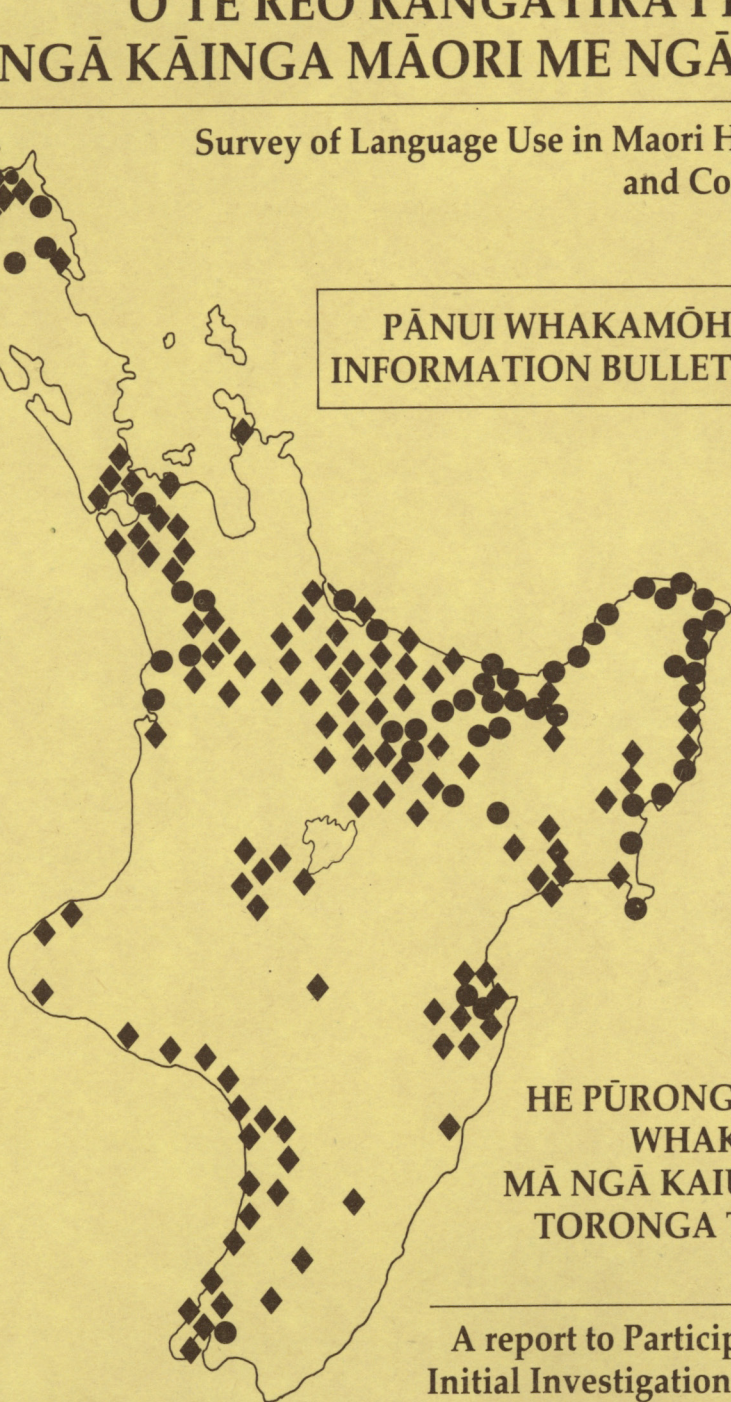
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

98

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

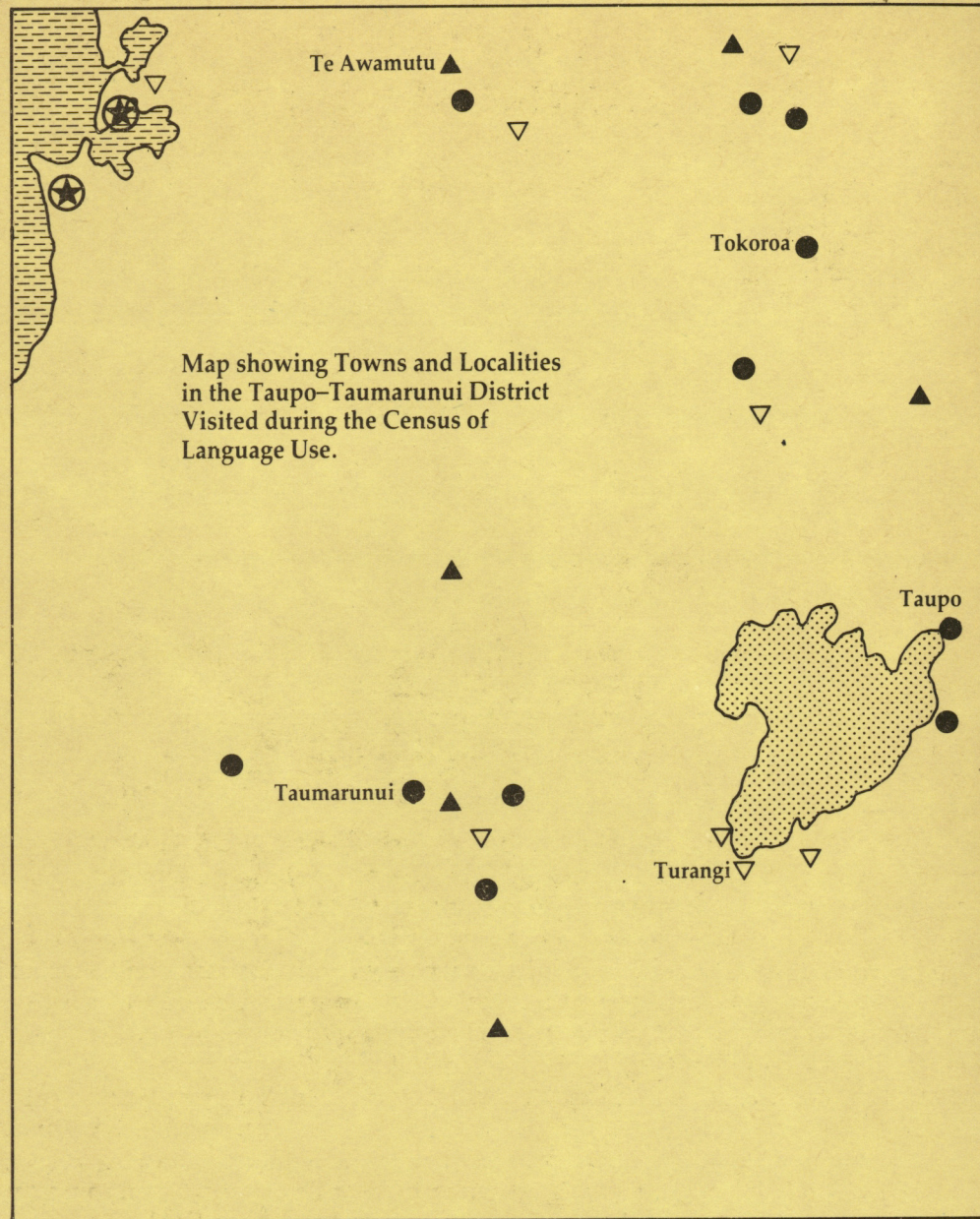
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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 the households visited.

- ★ More than 60%
- 40% to 60%
- ▲ Less than 40%
- ▽ Fewer than 8 households visited

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN MATAMATA, WAHAROA AND TE POI

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 22 households in Matamata in January and February 1978, 20 households in Waharoa and 10 households in Te Poi were also visited at this time.

The interviewers were Taringaroa Nicholas (Ngati Ranginui/Ngaiterangi/Ngapuhi), Himiona Henry (Waikato/Maniapoto), Numia Ponika (Tuhoe), Patricia Parata (Ngati Porou/Ngai Tahu), Awhina Ngatai (Ngaiterangi) and Tom Rangihuna (Ngati Porou).

The households visited in Matamata had a total population of 109 of whom 104 were of Maori descent. This was about 22 percent of the total Maori population of the area at that time. In Waharoa 104 people were included in the survey, 98 being of Maori descent - about 50 percent of the Maori population - and in Te Poi the total population of the households visited was 44 of whom 40 were of Maori descent, about 38 percent of the areas total Maori population at that time.

Five of the interviews were carried out entirely in Maori, two in both Maori and English and the rest in English only.

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Iwi Affiliation

In Matamata, the people interviewed mentioned eight major iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged. Ngati Raukawa with 33 members (or 30 percent of the total) was the largest iwi mentioned while Ngaiterangi with 20 members (or 18 percent) was the second largest. In Waharoa, of the four major iwi mentioned, Ngati Haua was the largest with 68 members (or 65 percent of the total). Eight major iwi were mentioned in Te Poi and the largest was Ngati Ruakawa with 29 members (or 70 percent).

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table shows us that in these districts no one under the age of 25 who was included in our survey could speak Maori well and only four (all in the 15 to 24 age group) were able to understand Maori well. The vast majority of people who could understand and speak Maori well were over 45 years of age.

While most people over 25 had at least some knowledge of Maori, a large number of people under that age had absolutely no knowledge of Maori at the time - over two thirds of the 15 to 24 years olds and over four fifths of the two to 14 year olds.

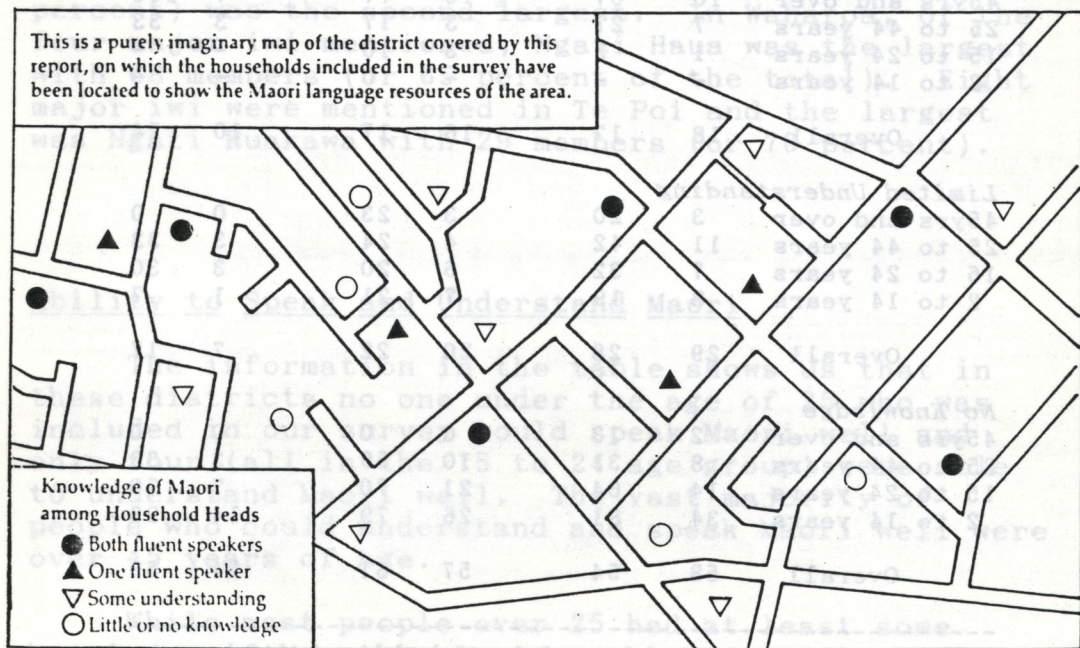
Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Matamata, Waharoa and Te Poi (1978)

	Matamata		Waharoa		Te Poi	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
<i>Fluent Speakers</i>						
45yrs and over	10	67	9	69	7	100
25 to 44 years	6	23	1	6	3	33
15 to 24 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 to 14 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
Overall	16	16	10	11	10	24
<i>Understand Easily</i>						
45yrs and over	10	67	10	77	7	100
25 to 44 years	7	27	3	17	3	33
15 to 24 years	1	5	3	10	-	-
2 to 14 years	-	-	-	0	-	-
Overall	18	17	16	17	10	24
<i>Limited Understanding</i>						
45yrs and over	3	20	3	23	0	0
25 to 44 years	11	42	4	24	3	33
15 to 24 years	7	32	6	20	3	30
2 to 14 years	8	19	7	21	1	7
Overall	29	28	20	22	7	17
<i>No Knowledge</i>						
45yrs and over	2	13	0	0	0	0
25 to 44 years	8	31	10	59	3	33
15 to 24 years	14	64	21	70	7	70
2 to 14 years	34	81	26	79	14	93
Overall	58	54	57	61	24	59

(Figures refer to members of households visited; percentages have been rounded to whole numbers)

Use of Maori Language in the Household

English was the main language spoken in the homes. In Waharoa, nobody reported using any Maori at all, while in Te Poi, of the eight households with dependent children two reported using a little Maori. In Matamata, two of the four households without dependent children used equal amounts of Maori and English and two households with children used some Maori. The remaining 18 households in Matamata used English all the time.



The Maori Language in the Community

English was the main language for talking with neighbours, visitors and children. A few parents in each area reported speaking some Maori with their children but said that the children usually replied in English.

One person reported that they spoke mostly Maori to neighbours, and two people usually spoke Maori to visitors - all three lived in Waharoa.

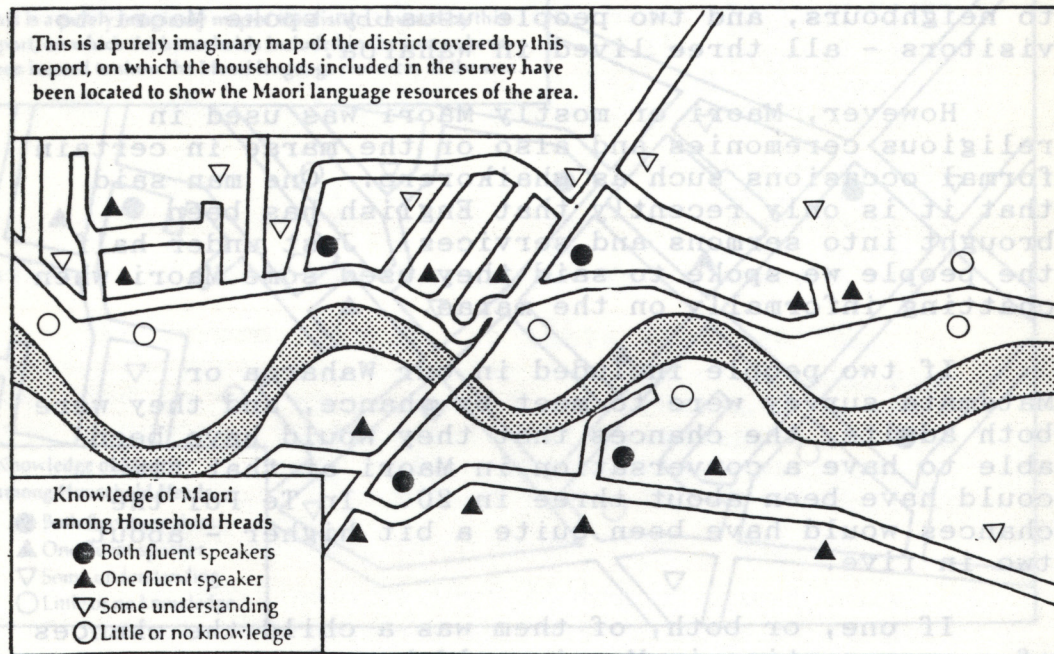
However, Maori or mostly Maori was used in religious ceremonies and also on the marae in certain formal occasions such as whaikorero. One man said that it is only recently that English has been brought into sermons and services. Just under half the people we spoke to said they used some Maori when chatting informally on the marae.

If two people included in our Waharoa or Matamata survey were to meet by chance, and they were both adults, the chances that they would have been able to have a conversation in Maori at that time could have been about three in 20. In Te Poi the chances would have been quite a bit higher - about two in five.

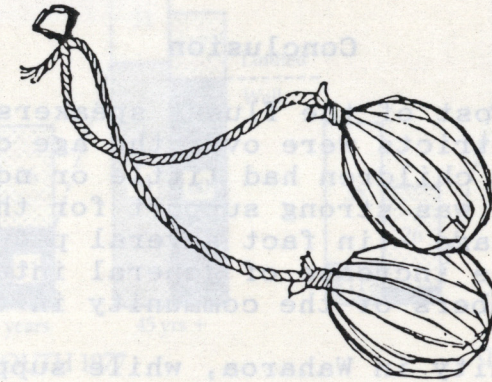
If one, or both, of them was a child the chances of a conversation in Maori would have been practically nil.

Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Maori was the language preferred most for conversations by well over half our informants. It was also the first language understood by about the same proportion. However, several people mentioned the difficulty they had in finding people to speak Maori with. Consequently, people felt forced into using English since so few people in the area were able to understand Maori.



WAHAROA AND TE POI



One man said he felt he lost his Maori when he started school and was forbidden to use it. Several others said they would like to learn Maori themselves. One man wanted to learn to speak Maori so that he could be able to reply when elders speak to him in Maori, rather than just "stare blankly".

Quite a few people expressed interest in the general revival of Maori language - in particular people mentioned wanting their children to learn Maori, supporting Maori in schools and wanting T.V. programmes in Maori to be shown.

One man spoke of the dilemma faced when on the one hand he wanted his children and mokopuna to take full advantage of the opportunities offered at school but felt that to do so required a person to be "fully capable in English and consequently the Maori suffers."

Some people said that while they were supportive of Maori in schools they felt it was too late to do any good and a few people were teaching their children and mokopuna to speak Maori themselves.

Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Conclusion

Although most of the fluent speakers of Maori in these three districts were over the age of 45, and the majority of children had little or no knowledge of Maori, there was strong support for the revival of the Maori language - in fact several people commented on the increase of general interest amongst the members of the community in this regard.

The community in Waharoa, while supporting Maori in schools had in fact already set up a kind of "kohanga reo" at the time of the survey (1978) where pre-school children and their mothers were learning the language.

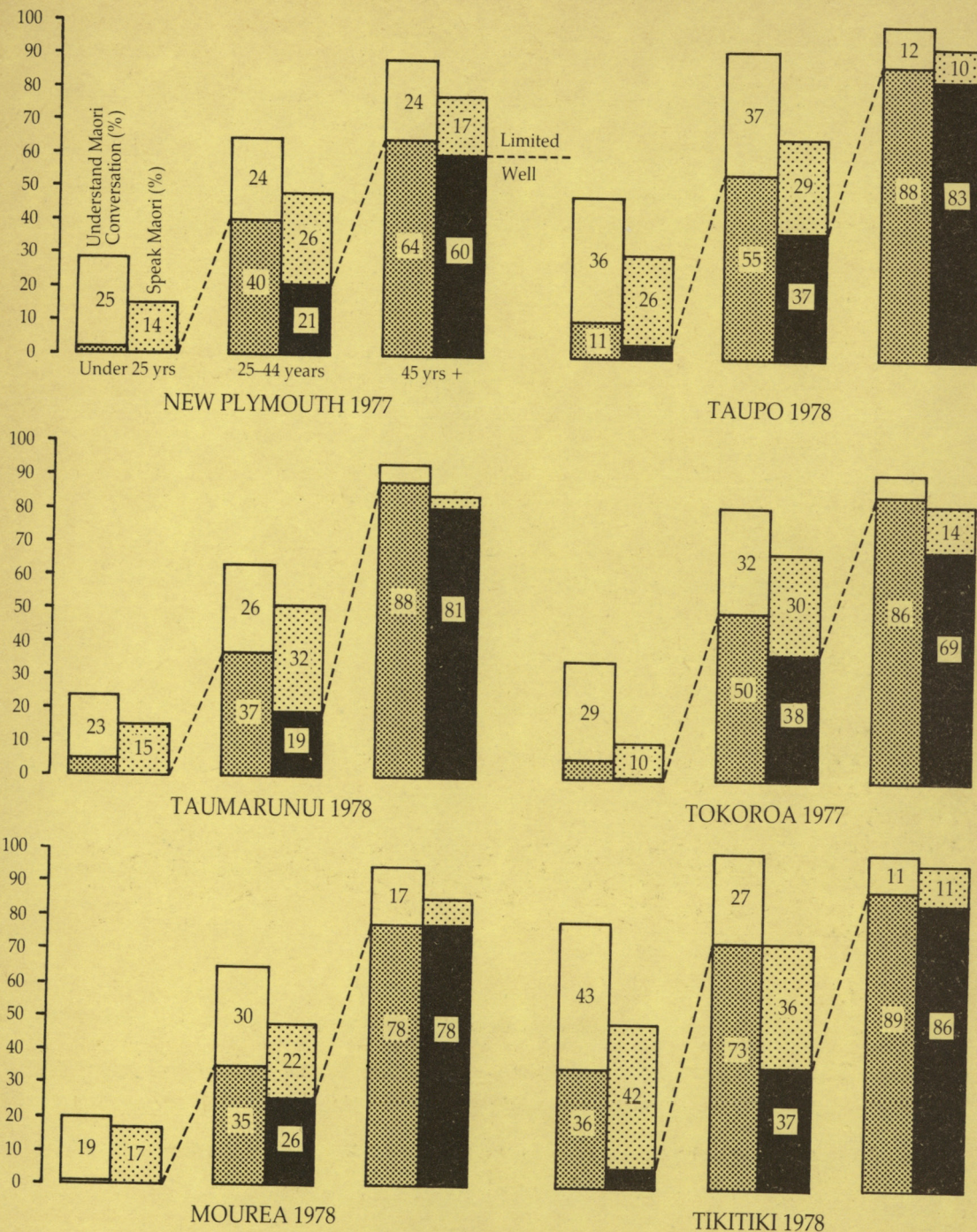
In all three communities, however, there seemed to be general support for greater use of Maori language with many people expressing regret that they had never learned or had lost the language.

New developments such as bilingual schooling may encourage those people who were worried that proper attention to Maori might make it harder for their children and grandchildren to cope with English. At the time of the survey, worries such as this had undoubtedly played a part in the shift from Maori to English as the everyday language of the Maori community.

This report was prepared by: Paula Martin
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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.