

# TE TIROHANGA I TE KÖREROTĀNGA 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

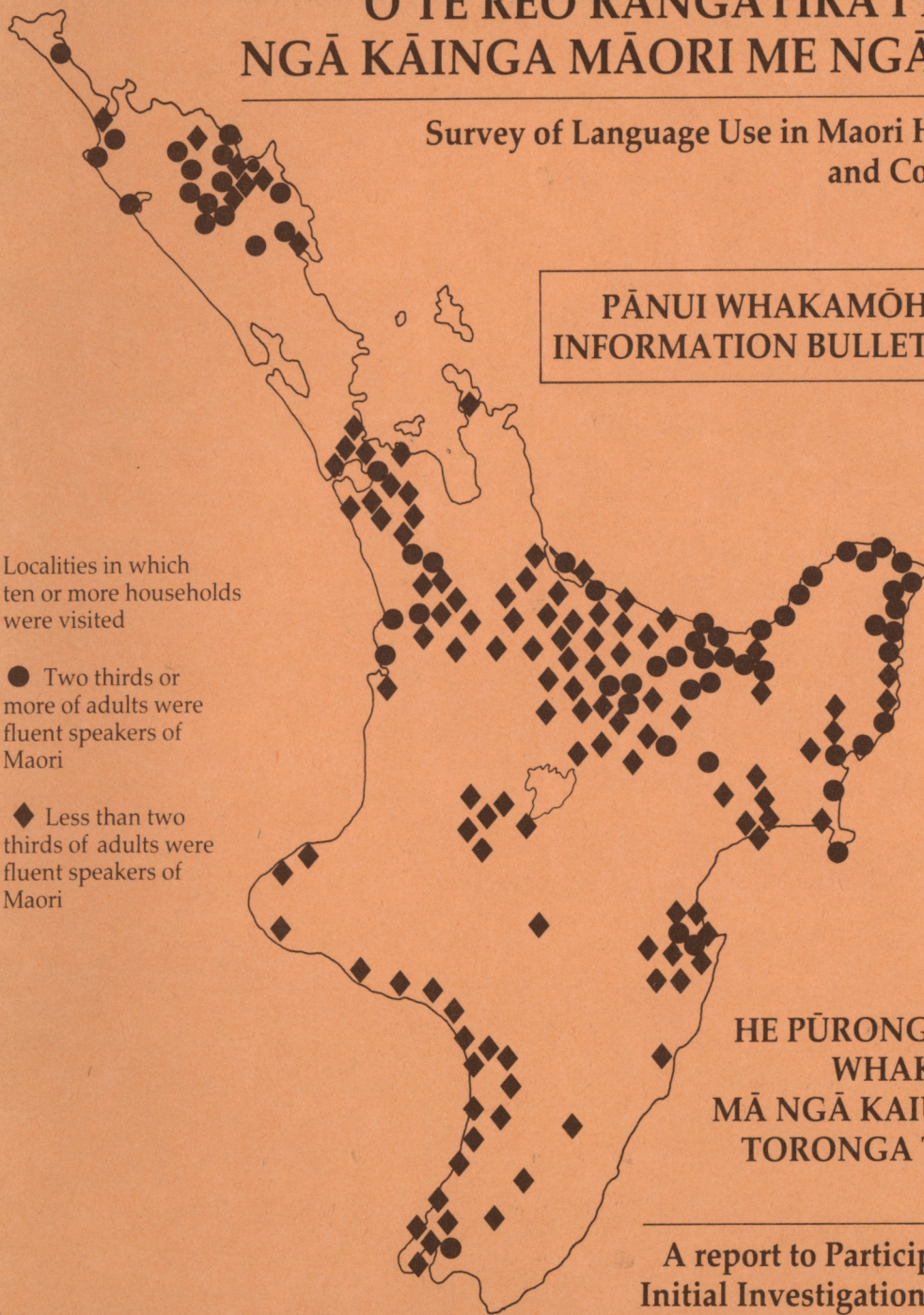
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Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

● 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 of the Waikato Region of the North Island visited during the Census of Language use

Percentage of Fluent Speakers of Maori Among Persons Aged 25 and over in Households visited

- ★ 70% or more
- ◆ 55% to 69%
- 40% to 54%
- ▼ Less than 40%
- Fewer than 10 households visited

Results of the Linguistic Survey  
 Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Whatawhata (1977)  
 Int. Affiliation

Age	Fluent	Understand	Don't know	Total
25-44 yrs	5 (71%)	7 (90%)	0	12 (100%)
15-24 yrs	3 (38%)	13 (50%)	8 (31%)	24 (100%)
45-74 yrs	0	8 (32%)	7 (28%)	15 (100%)
Overall	8 (32%)	28 (52%)	15 (25%)	51 (100%)

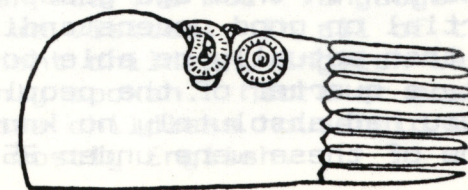
### The Maori Language in Whatawhata

Fieldwork for the survey of language use in Maori communities was carried out in Whatawhata in January and February 1977.

The interviewers were Phillip Hawera (Tuhoe/Ngati Rangihau), Tawini Rangihau (Tuhoe), and Raiha Smith (Ngati Kahungunu).

Seventeen households with a total population of 90 were visited. Everyone included in the survey was of Maori descent - this was nearly half the total Maori population of Whatawhata at that time.

One interview was carried out entirely in Maori, five in both Maori and English and the remaining 11 entirely in English.



## Results of the Linguistic Survey

### Iwi Affiliation

The people we interviewed mentioned a total of five major iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged. The vast majority of people claimed affiliation with Waikato - 74, or 82 percent of the total.



### Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table tells us that most people over the age of 25 included in our Whatawhata survey could understand and speak Maori with ease. However, we came across only three people under the age of 25 (out of a total of 53) who could speak Maori fluently. A person in this age group was more likely to have a partial or good understanding of spoken Maori rather than actually be able to speak it themselves. Overall, a quarter of the people included in the survey had absolutely no knowledge of Maori and all but one of these were under 25.

### Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Whatawhata (1977)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers	Understand Easily	Limited Understanding	No Knowledge
45 years & over	24 (96%)	24 (96%)	0 (0%)	1 (4%)
25-44 yrs	5 (71%)	7 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
15-24 yrs	3 (12%)	13 (50%)	6 (23%)	7 (27%)
2-14 yrs	0 (0%)	8 (28%)	7 (24%)	14 (48%)
Overall	32 (38%)	52 (60%)	13 (15%)	22 (25%)

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



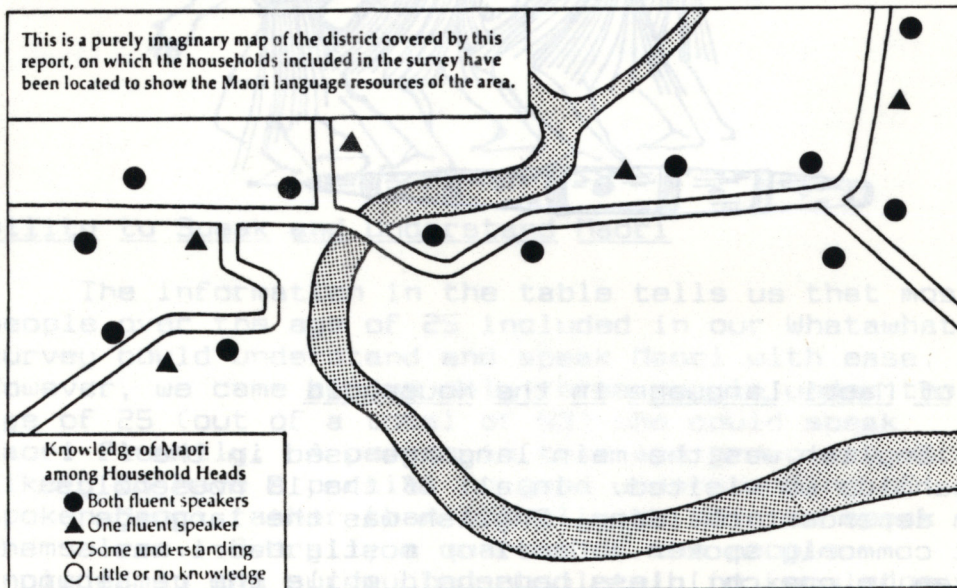
### Use of Maori Language in the Household

English was the main language used in the households we visited. In all of the 13 households with dependent children, English was the language most commonly spoken. Maori or mostly Maori was spoken in one childless household while the remaining three used mostly English.

## The Maori Language in the Community

Most people used both Maori and English for everyday communication with children, neighbours and visitors. A few people used mostly Maori and a few others used entirely English. However, nearly everyone said that Maori was the only language used in many religious ceremonies and also on the marae in both formal occasions such as whaikorero and also in informal chatting.

If any two people included in our Whatawhata survey were to meet unexpectedly, the chances that they would be able to have a conversation in Maori would be nearly one in four. However, if both people were adults the chances of a conversation in Maori would be considerably higher - nearly nine in ten.



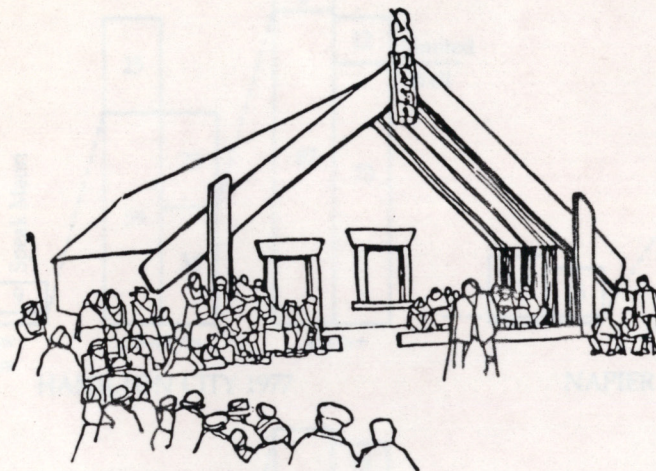
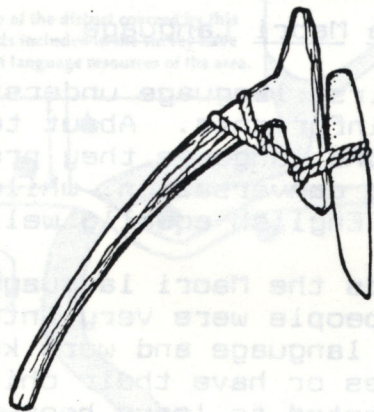
## Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Maori was the first language understood by about seven tenths of our informants. About two thirds said that Maori was the language they preferred to use most for everyday conversation, while a quarter liked both Maori and English equally well.

Attitudes towards the Maori language varied considerably. Many people were very interested in Maoritanga and Maori language and were keen to either learn Maori themselves or have their children learn. One woman said she wanted to learn because she felt very whakama when elders spoke to her in Maori and she could not reply. One kuia told us she couldn't speak English before she went to school and got many hidings for this. However, she vowed and declared she wasn't going to lose her Maori language.

Some people told us they encouraged their children to learn Maori - one woman said she spoke Maori to her children who, although they understood, were too shy to reply back as yet - while others said they only spoke Maori in front of their children when they didn't want them to know what was being talked about. The children of one informant who told us this were angry that their parents had never taught them Maori.

On the other hand, one young woman said that there was no point in learning Maori because "it's a Pakeha world."

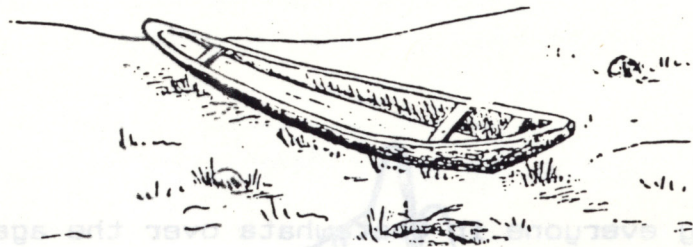


### Conclusion

Nearly everyone in Whatawhata over the age of 25 could speak and understand Maori well. Although few people under that age could speak fluent Maori many had a partial or good understanding of spoken Maori. At the time of the survey Maori was very much a living language, used by many adults and kaumatua for everyday communication amongst themselves and, to a lesser extent, with their children. These factors, together with the obvious pride many people felt about their Maoritanga, should make it easier for more younger people to develop and expand in their knowledge of Maori and perhaps become fluent speakers of the language. The establishment of a kohanga reo in the community, if followed by a bilingual school, would greatly help the people of Whatawhata achieve that goal.

Some people told us they encouraged their children to learn Maori - one woman said she spoke Maori to her children who, though they understood, were too shy to reply back - while others said they only spoke Maori to their children when they didn't want them to know what was being talked about. The children of the informant who told us this were angry that their parents had never taught them Maori.

On the other hand, some people said that in the Pakeha world, there was no point in learning Maori.



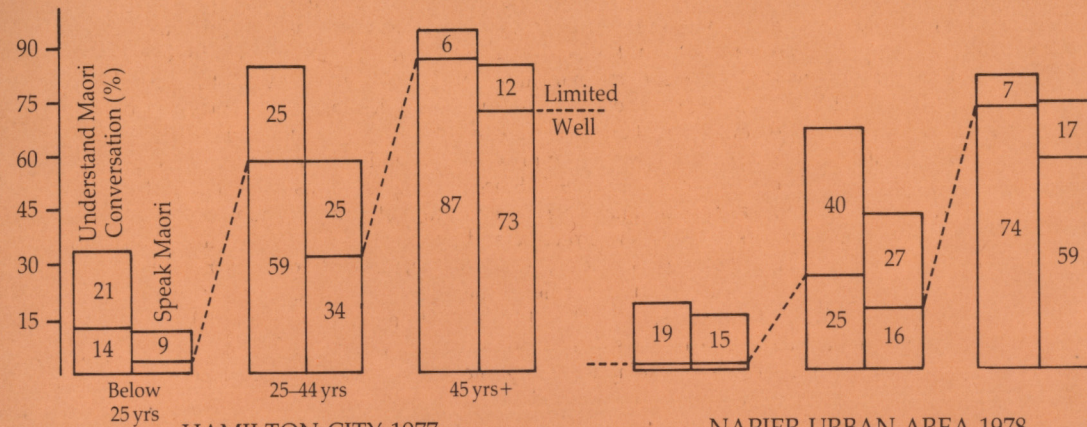
This report was prepared by:

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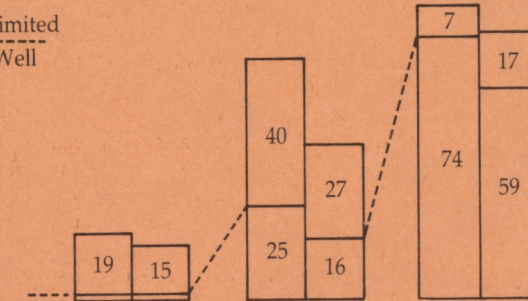
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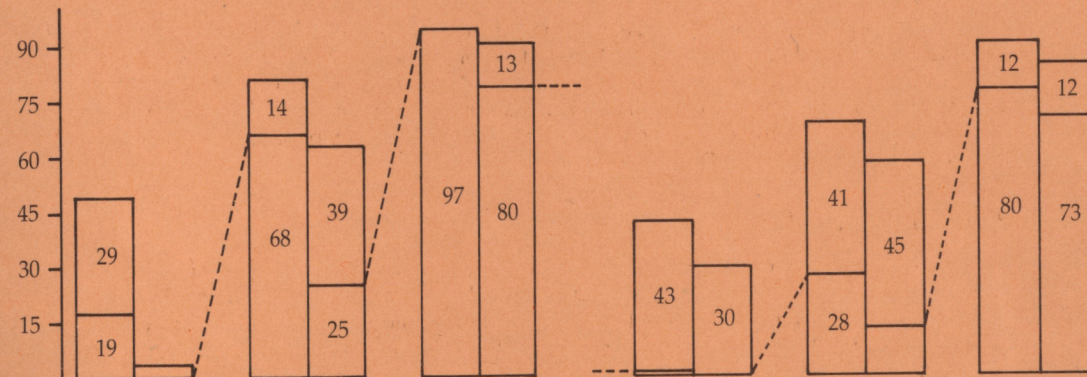
### Knowledge of Maori Language by Age Groups in Selected Areas at the Time of the Linguistic Census



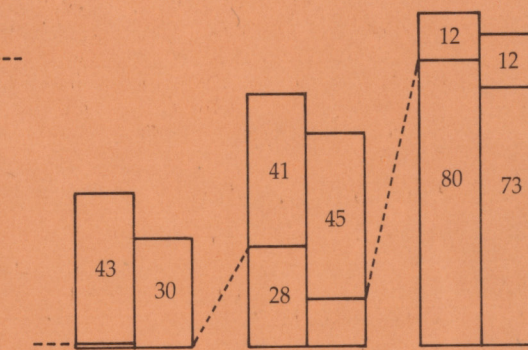
HAMILTON CITY 1977



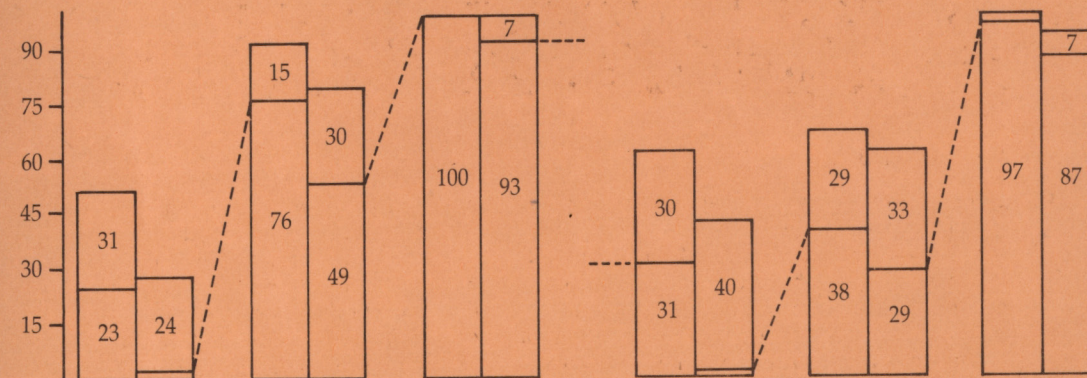
NAPIER URBAN AREA 1978



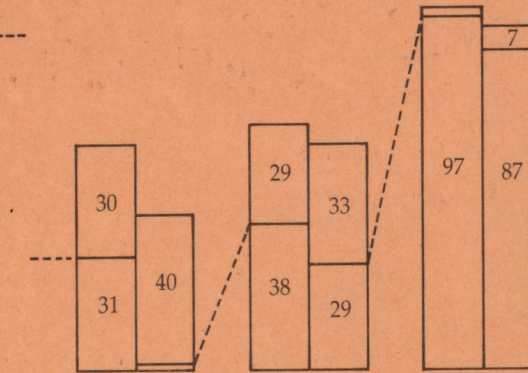
NGARUAWAHIA 1976



WAITARA 1977



WAAHI PA/RAKAUMANGA 1977



OMAHU 1977

## 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.