

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

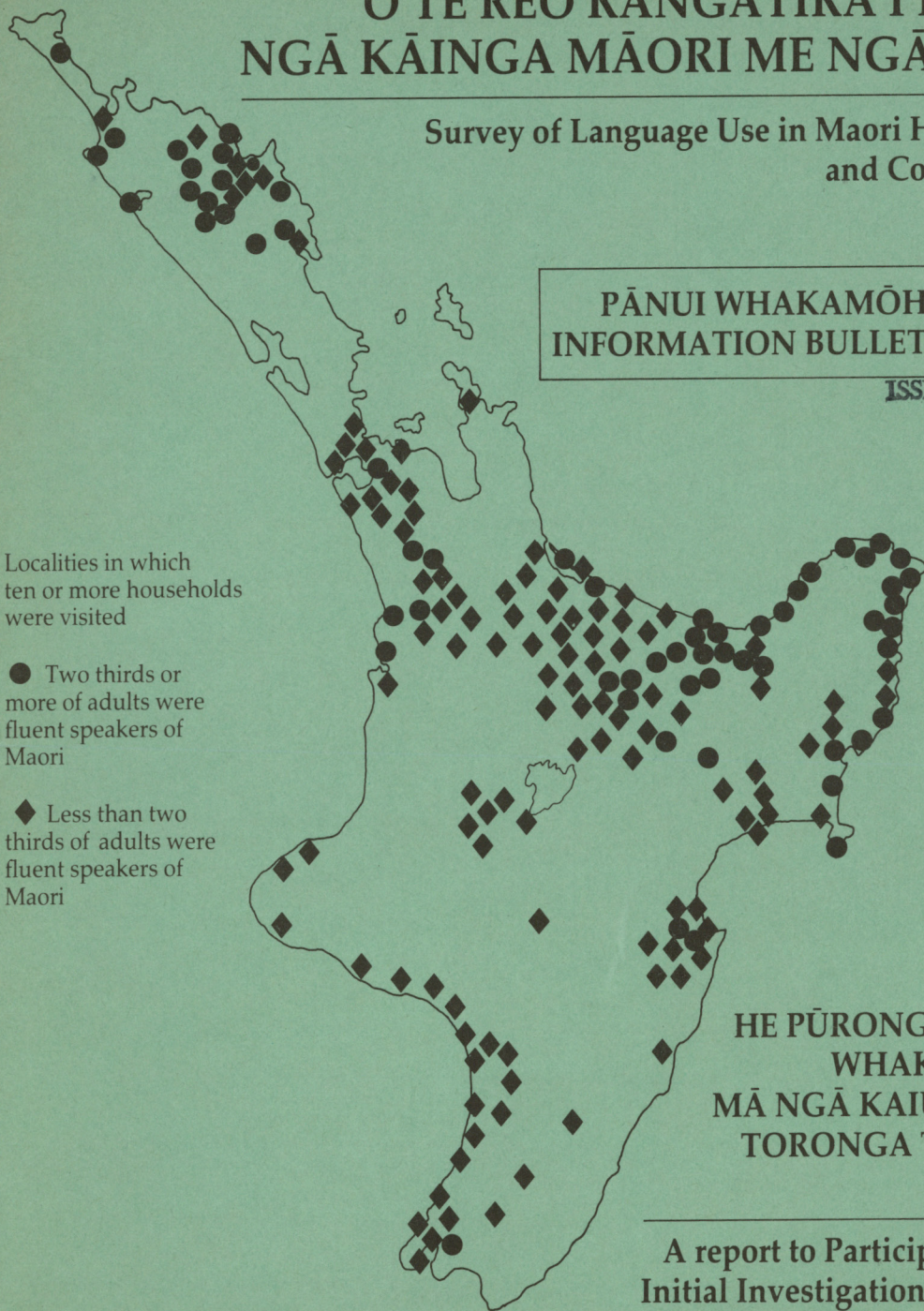
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Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

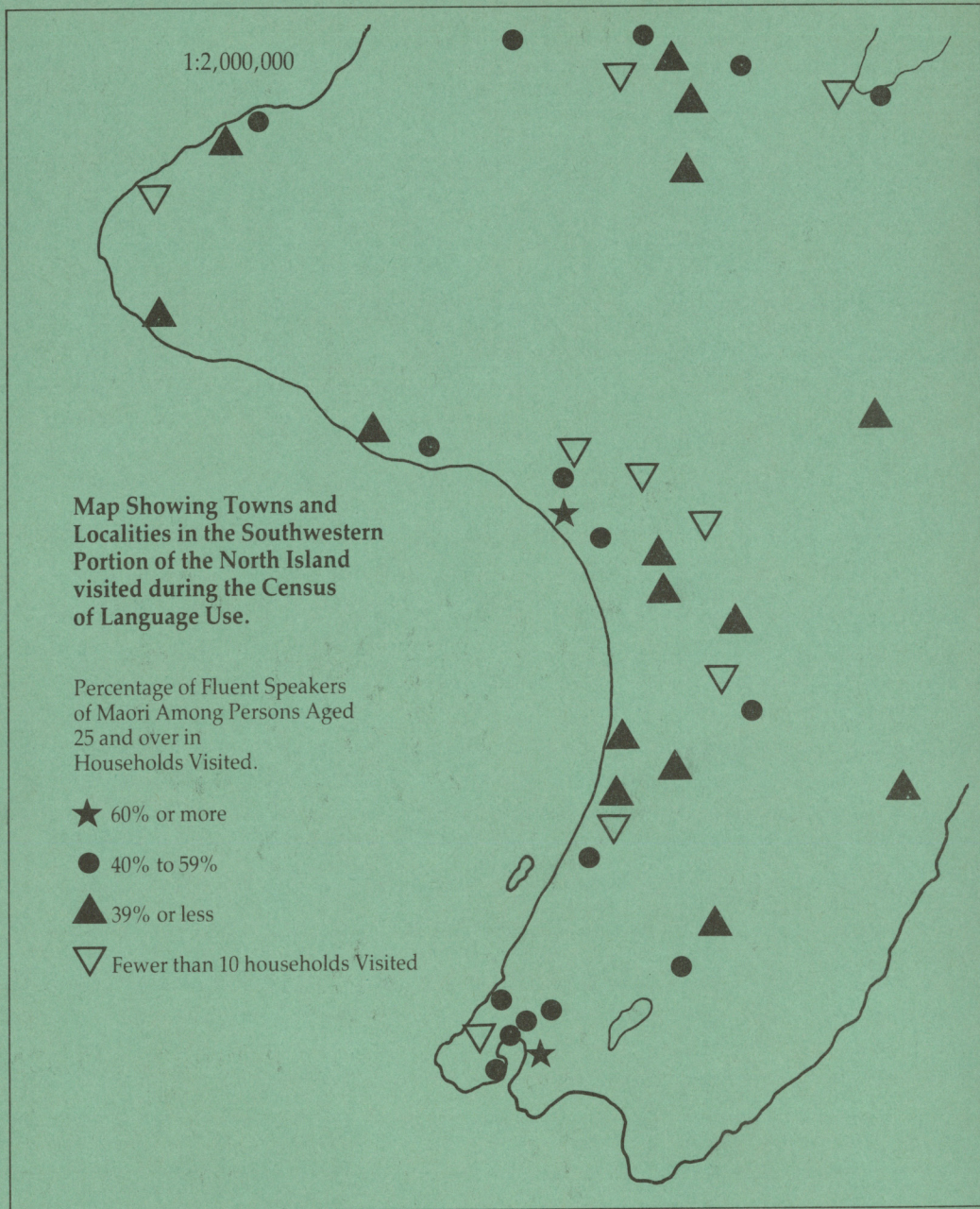
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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



Results of the Linguistic Survey
 KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN WANGANUI 1977
 J. A. Clouston

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN WANGANUI

Fieldwork for the survey of language use in Maori communities was carried out in and around Wanganui in January 1977. The interviewers were Candice Scrimshaw (Ngati Kahungunu), Evelyn Te Uira (Waikato), Judith Brown Hawera (Waikato), Phillip Hawera (Tuhoe/Ngaiterangi/Ngati Awa), Joe Rua (Te Whanau a Apanui), Kahu Waititi (Te Whanau a Apanui/Ngapuhi), Tawini Rangihau (Tuhoe), Raiha Smith (Ngati Kahungunu) and Lorna o'Sullivan (Ngati Porou).

In Wanganui itself (including Gonville, St John's Hill, Aramoho, Wanganui Central, Durie Hill and Wanganui East) 20 households were visited as part of the survey. These households had a total population of 106, 103 of whom were of Maori descent. (This was about two percent of the total Maori population of the area at that time). Nineteen households were included in the survey in Castlecliffe, with a total population of 112 (110 of Maori descent - about 12 percent of Castlecliffe's total Maori population at the time). In the Putiki 16 homes were visited. These had a total number of 58 people, 54 of whom were of Maori descent (28 percent of the total Maori population); and 13 households with 83 people were visited in Kaiwhaiki (7), Matahiwi (2), Operiki (1) and Ranana (3). 80 of these people were of Maori descent - over half the area's Maori population.

Three of the interviews were carried out entirely in Maori, 10 in both Maori and English and the remaining 55 were entirely in English.

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Iwi Affiliation

Our informants mentioned 34 major iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged. Most of these iwi had only a few members each. The iwi with the largest number of members was Tuwharetoa. A total of 52 people or 14 percent of the total claimed affiliation with this iwi. Although no single iwi, apart from Tuwharetoa, was claimed by more than ten percent of the people we surveyed, most belonged to one or other of the iwi of the Wanganui/Taranaki region. The most widespread was Te Ati Haunuiapaparangi with 34 members. The largest iwi in Kaiwhaiki was Ngati Paerangi; Wainuiarua was the largest in Ranana. In Putiki the largest iwi were Tuwharetoa and Te Ati Haunuiapaparangi, while in Wanganui City as a whole, the main iwi mentioned were, in order, Tuwharetoa, Wainuiarua, and Whanganui.

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

We can see from the information in the table that while nearly everyone over the age of 45 included in our survey could speak Maori fluently, virtually no one under 25 could speak or understand Maori well. Nearly one third of the people aged 25 to 44 could speak Maori well and well over one half of the same age group could understand spoken Maori with ease. In Castlecliffe only 12 percent of the people we came across could speak Maori fluently but in other areas this figure was up to nearly a third. In every case, nearly all these people were over the age of 25. Overall, about two fifths of the people included in the survey had absolutely no knowledge of Maori at all and the majority of these people were under the age of 25.

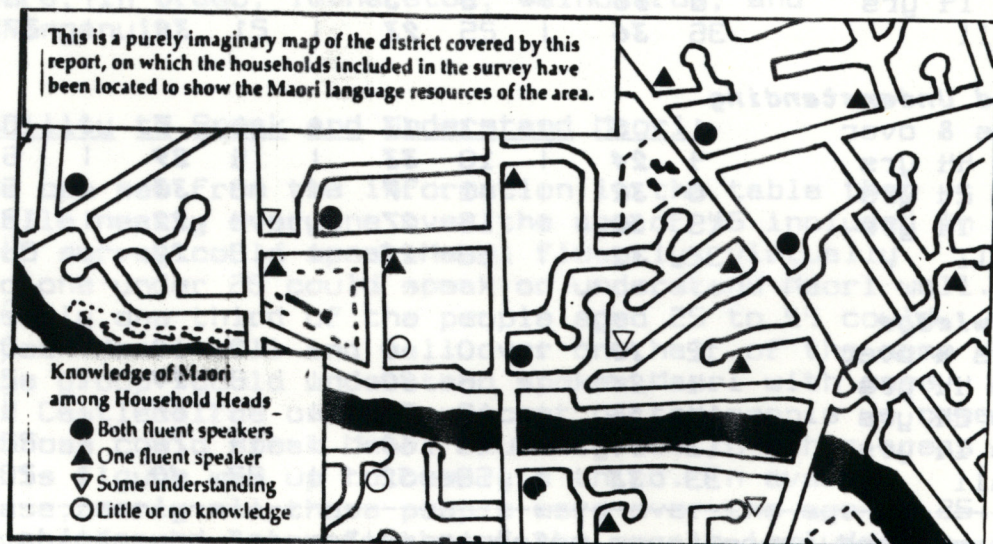
KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN HANGANUI 1977

	Wanganui		Castlecliffe		Putiki/ Wikitoria		River Communities	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Fluent Speakers								
45 yrs & over	16	70	6	75	13	93	11	92
25 to 44 yrs	7	47	7	23	4	29	5	33
15 to 24 yrs	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
2 to 14 yrs	2	5	0	0	0	0	1	2
Overall	22	27	13	12	17	32	17	22
Understand Easily								
45 yrs & over	18	86	7	88	13	93	12	100
25 to 44 yrs	9	53	14	47	8	57	7	47
15 to 24 yrs	3	12	1	7	0	0	2	18
2 to 14 yrs	6	16	3	5	0	0	6	15
Overall	36	36	25	23	21	38	27	34
Limited Understanding								
45 yrs & over	1	5	1	13	1	7	0	0
25 to 44 yrs	4	24	10	33	4	29	6	40
15 to 24 yrs	8	32	1	7	3	33	5	45
2 to 14 yrs	19	50	16	27	4	22	13	32
Overall	32	32	28	25	12	22	24	30
No Knowledge								
45 yrs & over	2	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
25 to 44 yrs	4	24	6	20	2	14	2	13
15 to 24 yrs	14	56	12	86	6	67	4	36
2 to 14 yrs	13	34	40	68	14	78	22	54
Overall	33	33	58	52	22	40	28	35

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

Use of the Maori Language in the Household

English was the main language used in most of the homes we visited. Maori or mostly Maori was spoken in only one of the 50 households with dependent children included in the survey. English or mainly English was spoken in the remaining 49. English was also the main language spoken in the majority of childless households. Maori was used in 6 of the 17 childless homes and English was used almost exclusively in the others.



WANGANUI CITY

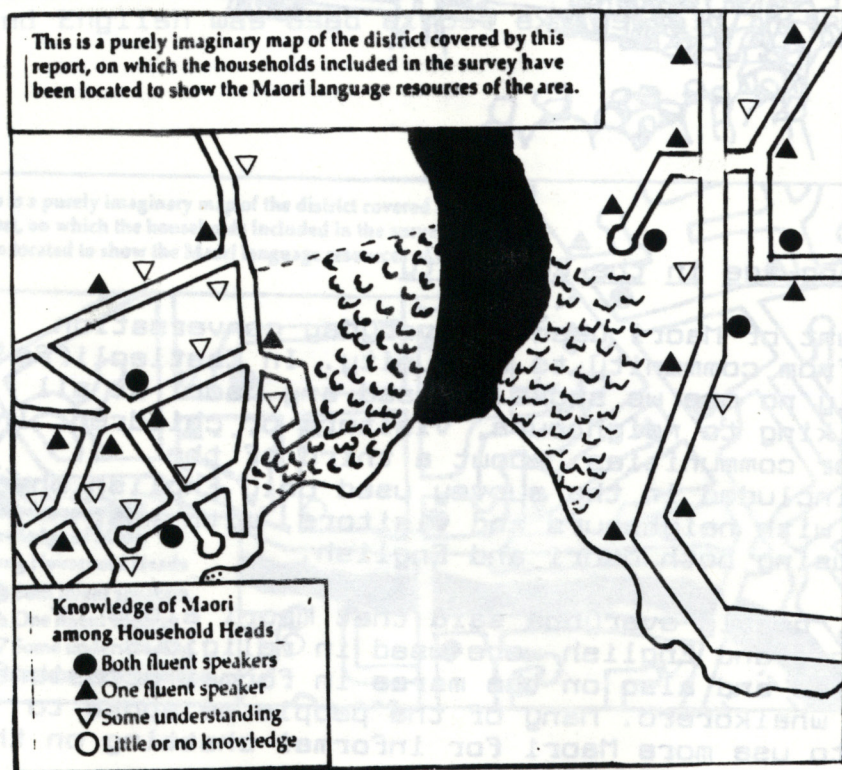


Maori Language in the Community

The amount of Maori used in everyday conversation varied from community to community. In Castlecliffe virtually no one we spoke to used any Maori at all when talking to neighbours, visitors or children. In the other communities about a third of the people included in the survey used only English when talking with neighbours and visitors, with most people using both Maori and English.

However, nearly everyone said that Maori alone or both Maori and English were used in religious ceremonies and also on the marae in formal occasions such as whaikorero. Many of the people we spoke to tended to use more Maori for informal chatting on the marae than they did elsewhere.

If any two adults included in our Wanganui survey were to meet unexpectedly the chances that they would be able to have a conversation in Maori would have ranged from about two in ten up to nearly one in two. In all the communities we visited, if one or both of the people had been children the chances of a conversation in Maori would have been practically nil as we came across so few people under 25 who could speak Maori well.



CASTLECLIFF and PUTIKI.



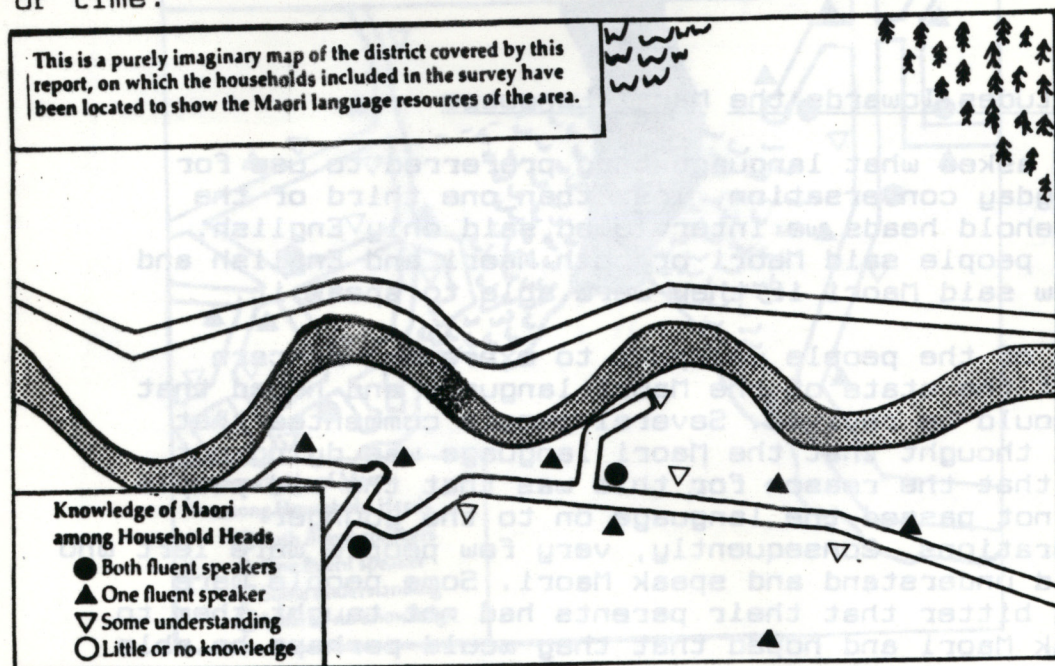
Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

When asked what language they preferred to use for everyday conversation, less than one third of the household heads we interviewed said only English. Most people said Maori or both Maori and English and a few said Maori if they were able to speak it.

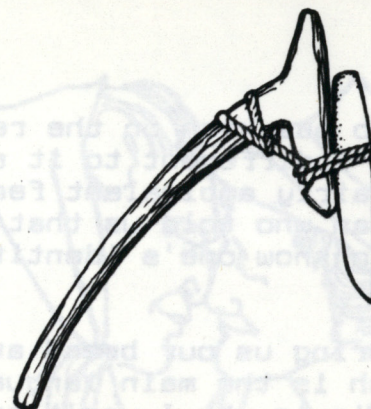
Many of the people we spoke to expressed concern about the state of the Maori language and hoped that it could be revived. Several people commented that they thought that the Maori language was dying out and that the reason for this was that the old people had not passed the language on to the younger generations. Consequently, very few people were left who could understand and speak Maori. Some people were very bitter that their parents had not taught them to speak Maori and hoped that they would perhaps be able to learn elsewhere.

Others had given up hope of ever learning themselves but hoped that their own children might be able to learn. Because many parents were unable to teach their children Maori, there was much support expressed for the teaching of the language in schools.

Some people had reservations about the teaching of Maori in schools saying that it was not taught properly or that children could not come to understand the culture fully in a classroom and that the language was better learnt on the marae. One woman, however, had the view that Maori should be taught in schools in place of French and other languages as "it is more useful and French is a waste of time."



KAIWHAIKI, MATAHIWI, OPERIKI and RANANA.



The Maori language was very important for many people as a means of knowing their identity. Several of the people we spoke to expressed feelings of embarrassment because of their lack of knowledge of Maori. One man told us he has to keep reminding his son that he is Maori and should learn the language. One koroua summed up the feeling when he said:

If you're a Maori, you know that to keep your identity and heritage you must have and keep your language.

Some people in Wanganui who were fluent speakers of Maori did not find many opportunities to use their Maori. For a few, this was because there were no people in their neighbourhood who could understand Maori, and several people mentioned that dialect differences made it difficult to find people to talk with in Maori. One woman, who was not from the Wanganui area, was laughed at by locals because of her dialect. This initially caused her to be so embarrassed that she stopped speaking Maori altogether but later she started speaking it again. One other woman said that for the Maori language to survive there would have to be only one basic dialect.

Not everyone we spoke to was keen on the revival of Maori. Some people were indifferent to it and many people seemed to have fairly ambivalent feelings about the issue. One man who told us that Maori language is essential to know one's identity also said:

Maori doesn't bring us our bread and butter...English is the main language of today and this is why I won't teach my mokopuna Maori. I feel they must be educated so that they're as good as any Pakeha and then afterwards they can trace their Maori language and ancestry.

Another woman also said European things are necessary to get on in life. Her reasons, however, for not wanting to send her children to a "Maori school" were because she did not want them to grow up not knowing how to mix with Pakeha.

One informant told us that he had quite a different experience with his elders regarding the learning of Maori language than many of our other informants. His grandfather had not let him go to school because, he had said, "the Maori will lose their ways if they go to school." This person on the other hand, believed that "the Maori today needs education to get anywhere."



Conclusion

One fifth of the people we came across in our survey of Wanganui City and the River communities were able to speak Maori fluently and nearly a third could understand it with ease. The majority of these people were over the age of 45. Many parents and grandparents, both those who could speak Maori and those who could not, spoke of how important the language is for their sense of identity. Strong support was expressed for the revival of the Maori language and the introduction of the teaching of it in schools. A few people had decided that it was more important to know how to speak English and that this should always come first but many people felt that a knowledge of Maori was not going to hamper their child's ability in English and hoped that they would take advantage of any opportunity to learn Maori that they could.

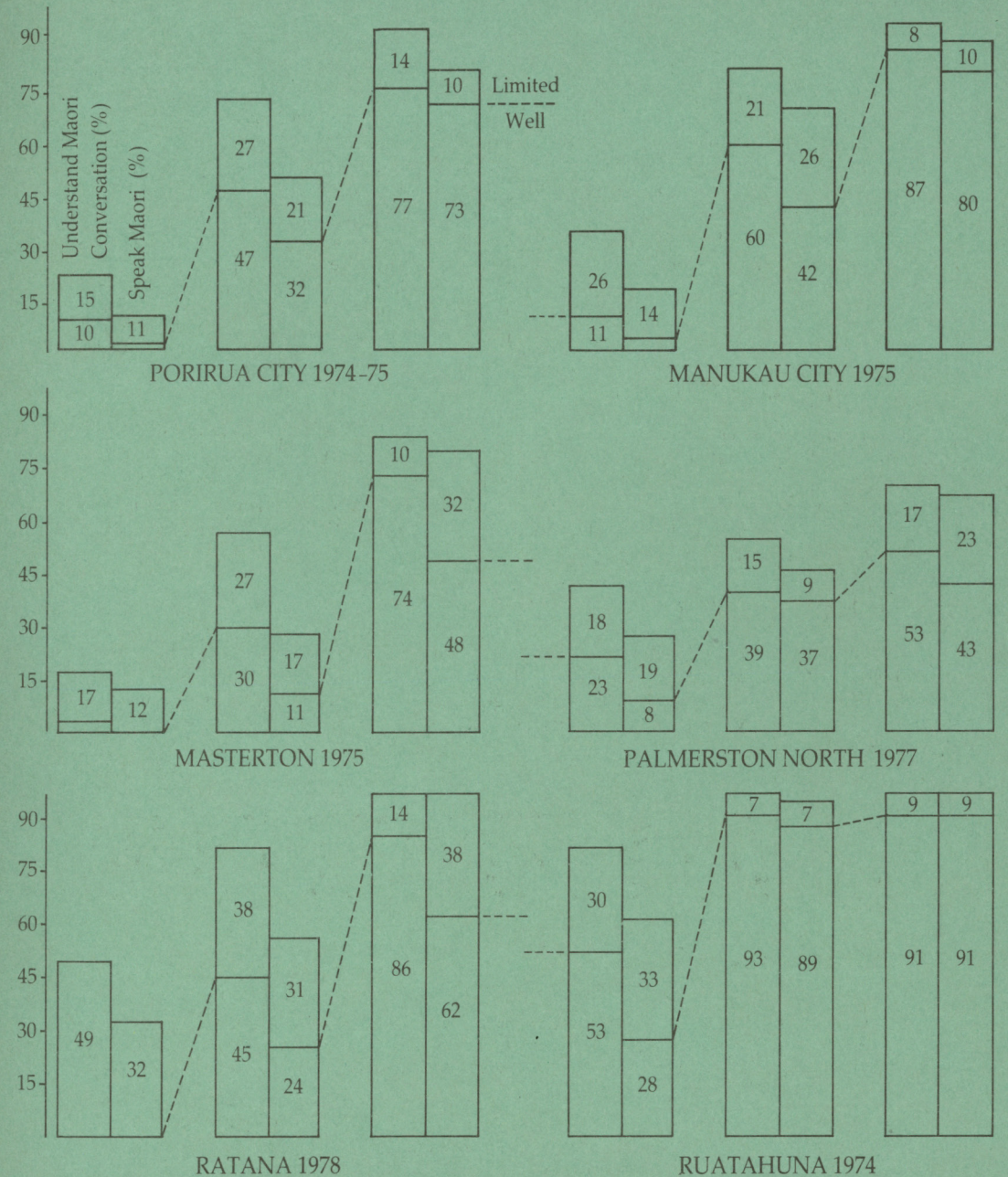
Since the time of the survey, this interest in the Maori language and concern for its survival has not diminished. By 1985, for example, kohanga reo had been established in Putiki and Wanganui City, as well as in several outlying communities. If these attempts are adequately supported through the schools and increased use of the languages on radio and television and in government agencies, the chances for a real revival of the use of Maori in the Wanganui district will be much greater in the late 1980s than they were when this survey was conducted.



This report was prepared by:
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 (Ngai Tahu/Rangitane)

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Knowledge of Maori Language by Age Groups on 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.