

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

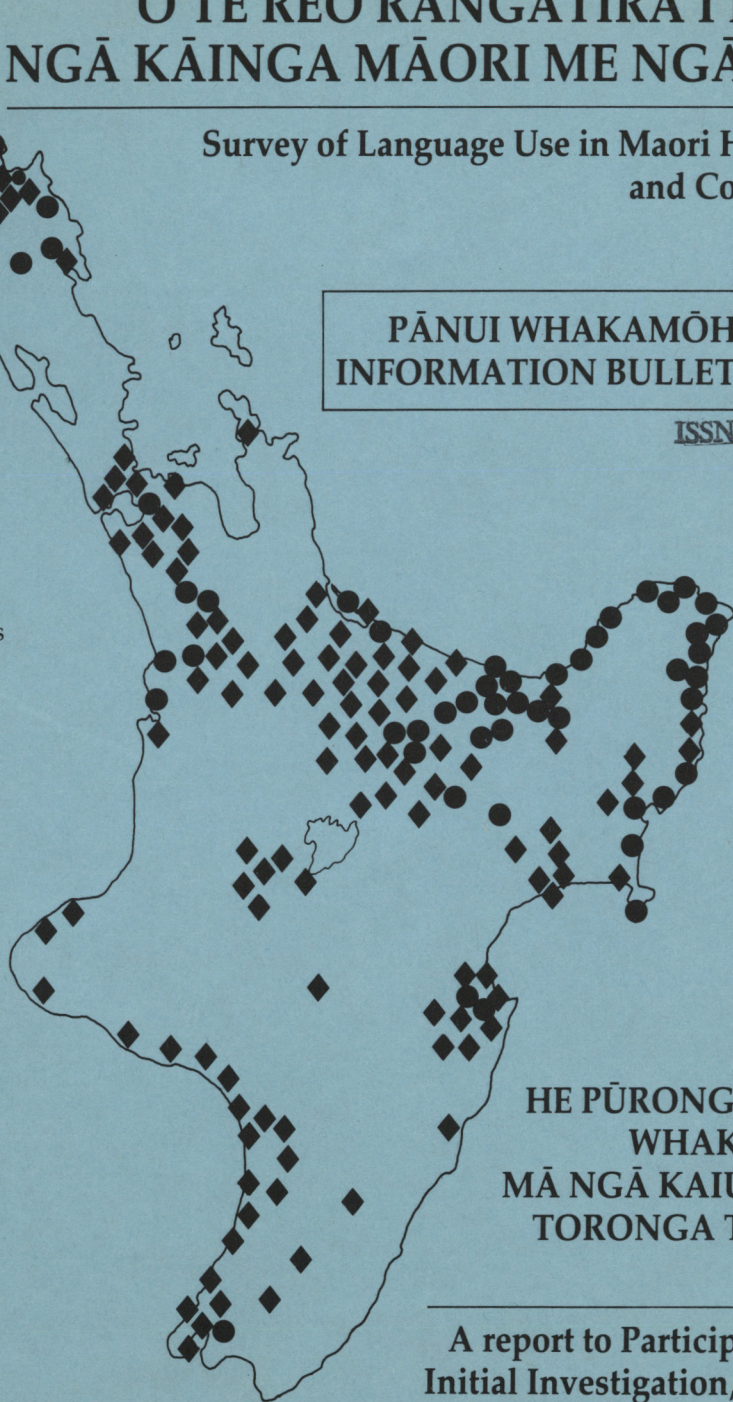
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Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

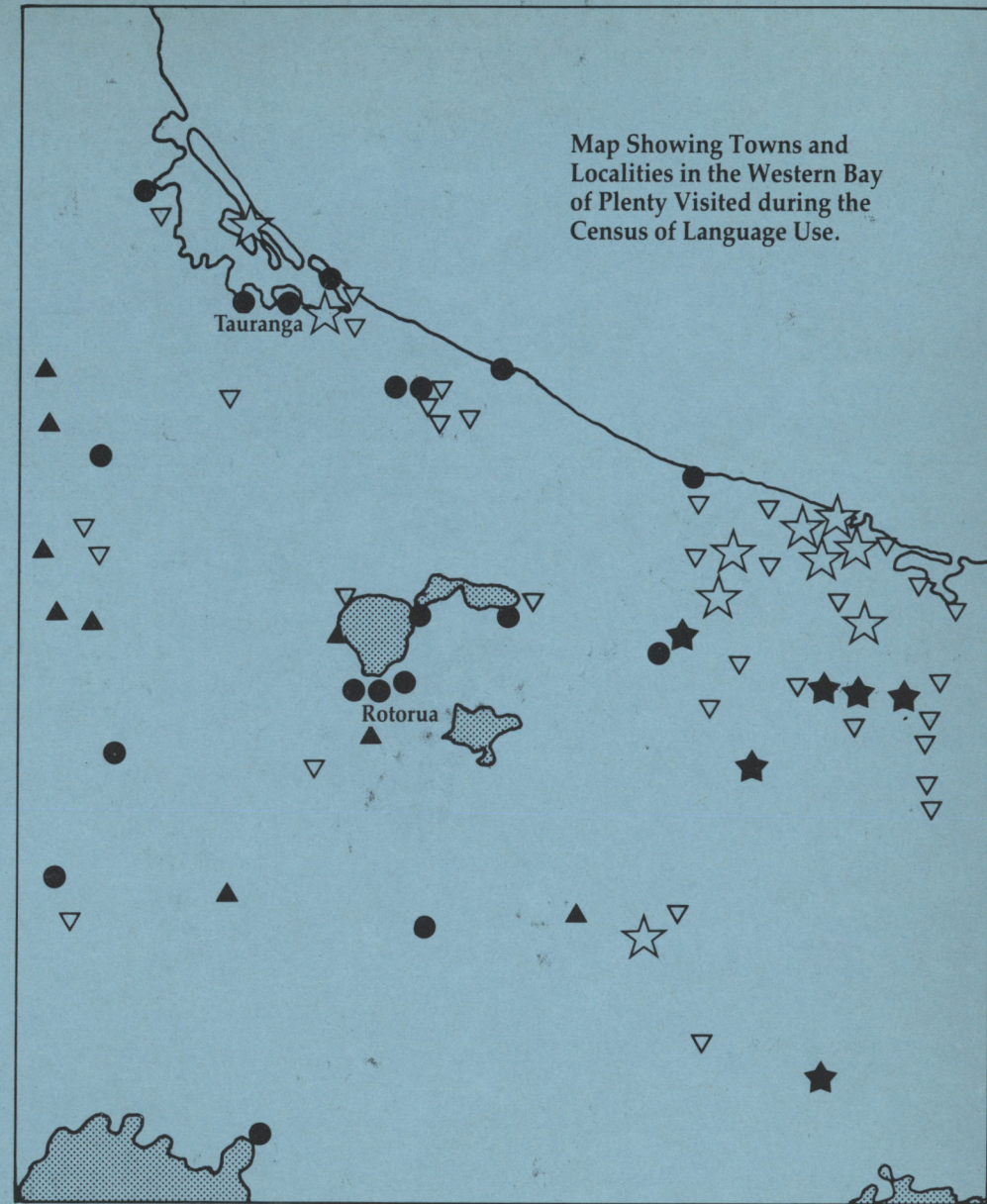
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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



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

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN OWHATA AND NEARBY DISTRICTS (1977/78)

Results of the Linguistic Survey

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN OWHATA AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS

Fieldwork for the survey of language use in Maori communities was carried out in and around Owhata in December 1977 and January and February 1978. The interviewers were Hiria Tumoana (Tuhoe), Taari Nicholas (Ngati Ranginui/Ngaiterangi/Ngapuhi), Allan Hawea (Ngati Awa), Himiona Henry (Waikato/Maniapoto), Patricia Parata (Ngati Porou/Ngai Tahu), Tom Rangihuna (Ngati Porou), Judith Brown Hawera (Waikato), Greta Aroha Yates (Te Arawa/Rongowhakaata), Awhina Ngatai (Ngaiterangi) and Sharon Moerkerk (Maniapoto).

Our interviewers visited a total of 35 households in Owhata as part of the survey. These homes had a population of 206, 202 of whom were of Maori descent. This was about a quarter of the total Maori population of Owhata at that time. Twenty households with a total of 109 people were included in the survey in Okere Falls. All 109 of these people were of Maori descent - over half the area's total Maori population. Another nine households with 50 people were visited in Awahou (48 of Maori descent - practically all of Awahou's Maori population at that time) and nine homes with 34 people were also included in the survey in Otaramarae (31 of Maori descent - just over one quarter of the total Maori population).

Six of the interviews were carried out entirely in Maori, five in both Maori and English and the remaining 65 entirely in English.

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

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Iwi Affiliation

The people we spoke to mentioned a total of 13 major iwi to which they or the members of their household were affiliated. The iwi to which most people belonged was Te Arawa which had 285 members (or 71 percent of the total). The iwi with the next largest membership was Tuhoë to which 36 people (9 percent) belonged. Most of these people were in the Owhata area.



Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

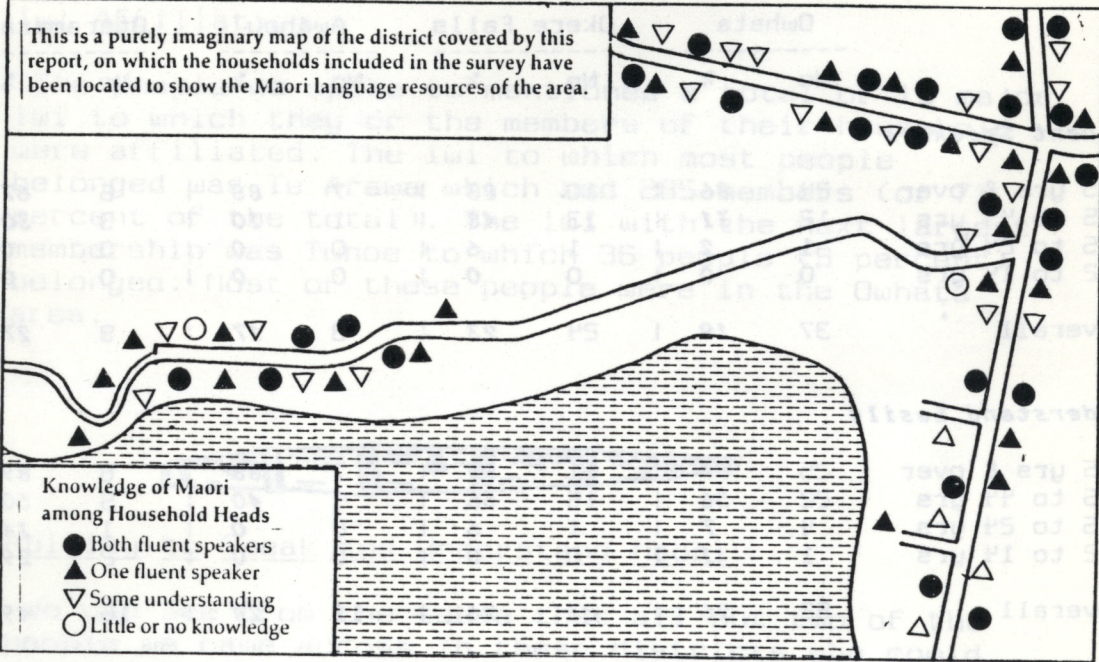
We can see from the table that all but two of the people we came across in these districts who could speak Maori fluently were over the age of 25. Nearly everyone over 45 was able to speak Maori well, as could about one third of the adults aged between 25 and 44, and an even higher proportion was able to understand Maori with ease. While not many people under 25 could understand Maori easily, over two fifths had a limited understanding. However, just over half of this younger age group had no knowledge of Maori at all. Overall, 90 percent of those people who had absolutely no knowledge of spoken Maori were under 25 although this age group made up only just over 60 percent of the total population of the households we visited in this area.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN OWHATA AND NEARBY DISTRICTS (1977/78)

	Owhata		Okere Falls		Awahou		Otaramarae	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Fluent Speakers								
45 yrs & over	24	86	10	83	7	88	6	67
25 to 44 yrs	12	31	13	48	1	10	3	30
15 to 24 yrs	1	2	1	6	0	0	0	0
2 to 14 yrs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall	37	19	24	23	8	17	9	27
Understand Easily								
45 yrs & over	25	89	11	92	7	88	8	89
25 to 44 yrs	22	56	15	56	4	40	5	50
15 to 24 yrs	4	7	1	6	0	0	1	14
2 to 14 yrs	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	29
Overall	52	26	27	26	11	24	16	49
Limited Understanding								
45 yrs & over	1	4	1	8	1	13	0	0
25 to 44 yrs	10	26	10	37	4	40	4	40
15 to 24 yrs	29	48	4	25	10	83	5	71
2 to 14 yrs	36	51	11	23	3	19	5	71
Overall	76	38	26	25	18	39	14	42
No Knowledge								
45 yrs & over	2	7	0	0	0	0	1	11
25 to 44 yrs	7	18	2	7	2	29	1	10
15 to 24 yrs	28	46	11	69	2	17	1	14
2 to 14 yrs	33	47	37	77	13	81	0	0
Overall	70	35	50	49	17	37	3	9

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

Results of the Linguistic Survey



Use of the Maori Language in the Household

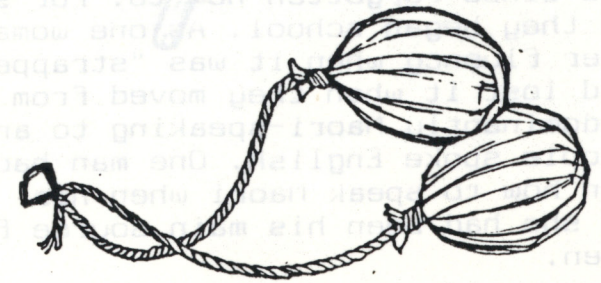
English was the main language used in most of the homes we visited. Of the 62 households with dependent children included in the survey, English or mostly English was used in 55 and Maori and English were used equally in the other seven. There were 11 childless homes visited and English or mostly English was the main language of nine while English and Maori were used equally in two.

Maori Language in the Community

English was also the main language used by most people with neighbours and children. Over half said they used both Maori and English with their visitors and about a third reported using some Maori with neighbours. A few people in Owhata and one in Otaramarae said that Maori was the main language they used with children in the community.

However, in all communities Maori was the main language used in certain religious ceremonies and on the marae in formal occasions such as whaikorero. More people said they used Maori for informal chatting when they were on the marae than in other situations.

If any two people included in our survey were to have met unexpectedly, the chances that they would have been able to have a conversation in Maori would have range from less than one in twenty in Awahou to about one in eight in Otaramarae. If both of the people had been adults, the chances would have been much higher - about one in four in Awahou up to about two in five in Owhata and Otaramarae.



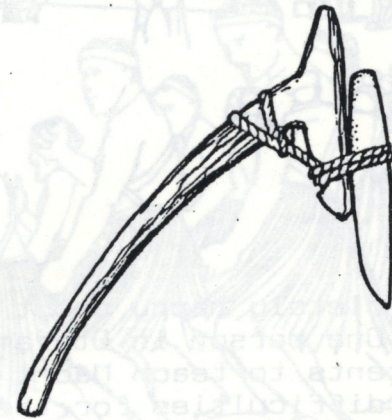


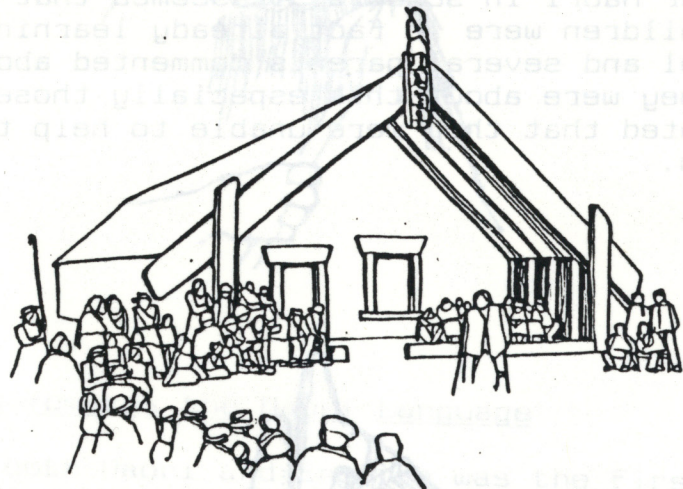
Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Maori or both Maori and English was the first language understood by three fifths of our informants. Nearly two thirds said that Maori (or both Maori and English) was the language they most preferred to use for everyday conversations.

Some people who had been able to speak Maori when they were young had since forgotten how to. For some this happened when they began school. As one woman put it, she lost her fluency when it was "strapped out of her." Others had lost it when they moved from an area which was predominantly Maori-speaking to an area where most people spoke English. One man had gradually forgotten how to speak Maori when his mother had died as she had been his main source for hearing Maori spoken.

A large number of the people we spoke to expressed an interest in learning to speak Maori and an equally large number hoped that their children would one day learn to speak it as well. Because many parents who wanted their children to learn Maori were unable to teach them themselves, there was great support for the teaching of Maori in schools. It seemed that quite a few children were in fact already learning Maori at school and several parents commented about how pleased they were about this especially those who were disappointed that they were unable to help their children learn.



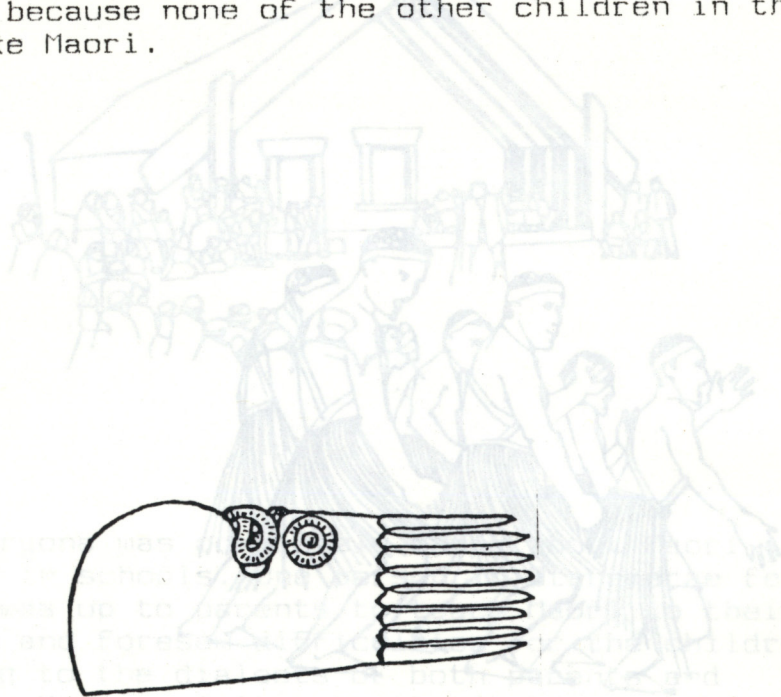


Not everyone was completely happy about Maori language in schools. One person in Otaramarae felt that it was up to parents to teach Maori to their children and foresaw difficulties for the children adjusting to the dialects of both parents and teachers. He also felt that it was better to learn Maori by talking with people, especially elders, than through books.

Of those parents and grandparents who could speak Maori fluently themselves, many were trying to teach their children or grandchildren to speak Maori. Most children seemed to be very receptive to this and were keen to learn although some parents reported that, even though their children understood what was being said, they still replied in English. One woman said that she speaks Maori to her children as she feels "sorry for people who don't know anything about Maori."



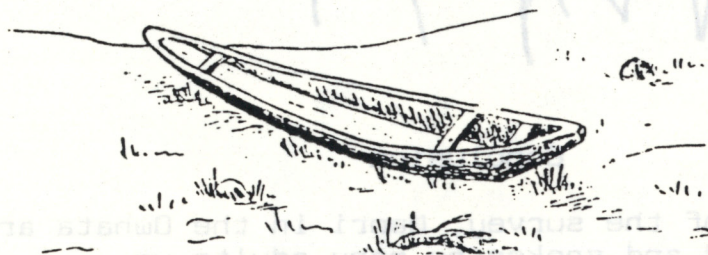
A large problem for many people, both in ensuring their children are fluent in the language and in maintaining their own ability to speak Maori, was the scarcity of other people in the Rotorua area who could or would speak Maori. Some were finding it difficult to retain their own knowledge of Maori simply because they had no one else to speak it to. One woman in Owhata said that her children had forgotten how to speak Maori since moving to the district because none of the other children in the area spoke Maori.



Conclusion

At the time of the survey, Maori in the Owhata area was understood and spoken by many adults we interviewed, and was the main language used in religious ceremonies and on the marae. While very few of the children we came across could speak Maori fluently, a majority had at least some ability to understand spoken Maori. A number of grandparents were making efforts with their mokopuna to use the language as much as possible to try to ensure that these children were fluent in Maori and felt good about using that knowledge. As well as this, a large number of children were also learning Maori at school - a fact which both parents and children alike seemed pleased about. The main problem that many people had encountered was that so few people in the area could speak Maori or were willing to use what they knew.

Hopefully, with the current resurgence of interest in Maori language and developments such as Te Kohanga Reo and bilingual schooling, more people, both young and old, will be encouraged to put to good use the knowledge of Maori that many people in this area already have.

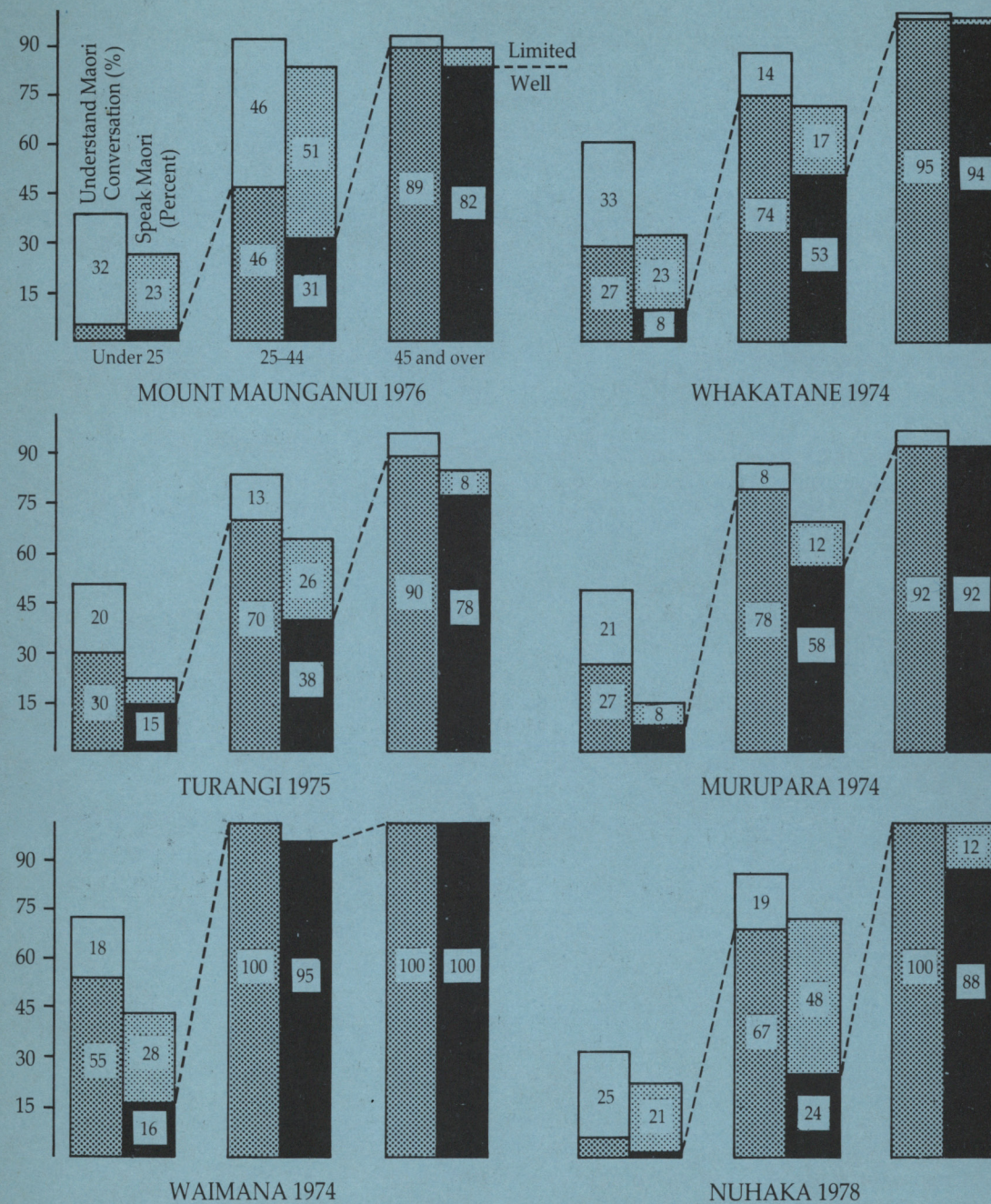


This report was prepared by

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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.