

# 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

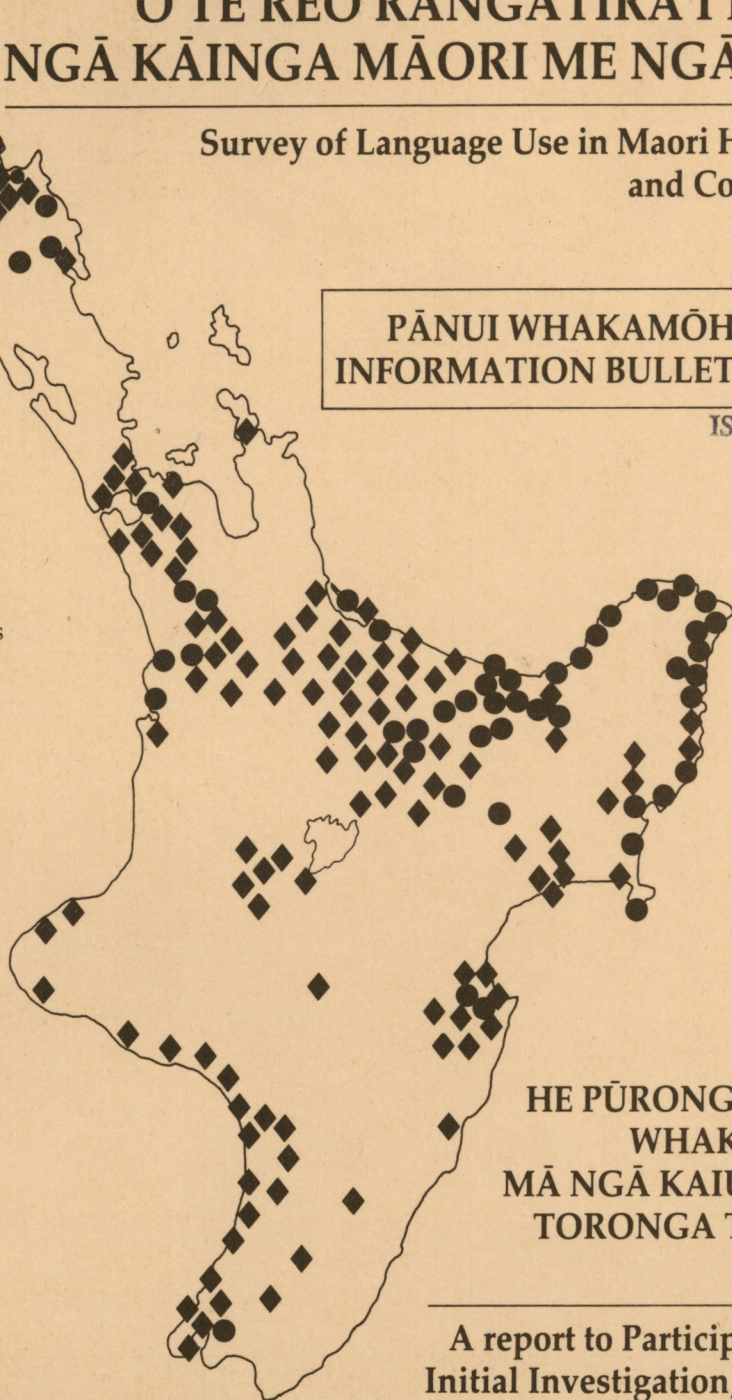
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Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

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

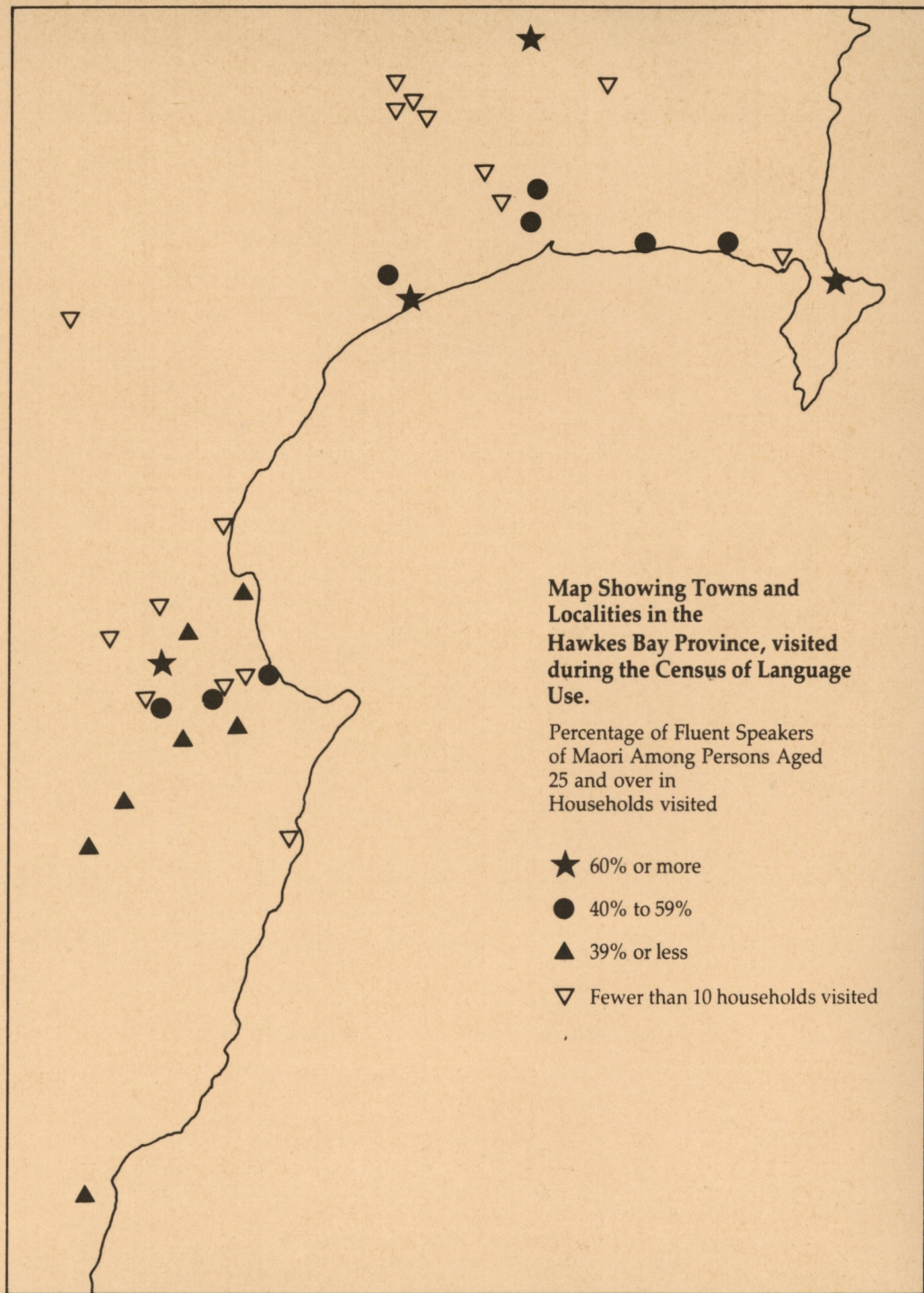
◆ Less than two  
thirds of adults were  
fluent speakers of  
Maori



HE PŪRONGORONGO  
WHAKAMŌHIO  
MĀ NGĀ KAIURU KI TE  
TORONGA TUATAHI,  
1973-1978

A report to Participants in the  
Initial Investigation, 1973-1978





### THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN WAIOHIKI, MOTEU, RUNANGA AND TE HAROTO

The four Hawkes Bay communities of Waiohiki, Moteu, Runanga and Te Haroto were visited between November 1977 and January 1978, in the course of the NZCER Maori language survey. Altogether 32 families from these communities were interviewed: 14 in Waiohiki (with 87 people, about three-fifths of the Maori population of that district at the time); eight in Runanga (with 38 people, almost all the Maori population); six in Moteu (34 people, just under half the Maori population), and four in Te Haroto (13 people, about a quarter of the Maori population of that district).

Most of the people in Waiohiki and Moteu were affiliated with Ngati Kahungunu, and most of those in Te Haroto belonged to Tuwharetoa. At Runanga, 27 members of the families we visited regarded Ngati Kahungunu as their main iwi, and ten belonged to Tuwharetoa. (There were also a few people from other iwi in each of these communities.) The majority of the household heads in the families we visited in each district had grown up there or in a nearby community; this was the case with just over half those in Te Haroto and Runanga, and two-thirds or more in Moteu and Waiohiki.

The interviewers were Tamati Kruger (Tuho), Allan Hawea (Ngati Awa), Phillip Hawera (Tuho, Ngaiterangi & Ngati Awa), Joe Rua (Te Whanau a Apanui), Himiona Henry (Waikato & Maniapoto), Taringaroa Nicholas (Ngatiranginui, Ngaiterangi & Ngapuhi), Kay Waapu (Ngati Kahungunu), Patricia



KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN WAIOHIKI, MOTEQ,  
RUNANGA PA, AND TE HAROTO (1976)

	Waiohiki		Moteq		Runanga Pa		Te Haroto	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<i>Fluent Speakers</i>								
45 yrs & over	6	46	4	67	8	72	2	40
25 to 44 yrs	0	..	1	20	0	..	3	75
15 to 24 yrs	1	4	2	17	0	..	0	..
2 to 14 yrs	0	..	0	..	0	..	2	40
Overall	7	9	7	21	8	21	8	62
<i>Understand Easily</i>								
45 yrs & over	10	77	4	67	9	82	3	100
25 to 44 yrs	2	15	2	40	..	..	3	75
15 to 24 yrs	3	12	2	17	1	11	0	..
2 to 14 yrs	0	..	1	9	2	17	2	40
Overall	15	18	9	27	12	32	8	62
<i>Limited Understanding</i>								
45 yrs & over	1	8	2	33	2	18	0	..
25 to 44 yrs	6	46	3	60	4	67	1	25
15 to 24 yrs	12	48	5	42	3	33	0	..
2 to 14 yrs	9	28	3	27	1	8	0	..
Overall	28	34	13	38	10	26	1	8
<i>No Knowledge</i>								
45 yrs & over	2	15	0	..	0	..	0	..
25 to 44 yrs	5	38	0	..	3	33	0	..
15 to 24 yrs	10	40	5	42	5	56	1	100
2 to 14 yrs	23	72	7	64	9	75	3	60
Overall	40	48	12	35	16	42	4	31

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

Parata (Ngati Porou & Ngai Tahu), Kahu Waititi (Te Whanau a Apanui & Ngapuhi), Tom Rangihuna (Ngati Porou) and Hiria Tumoana (Tuhoe). Three interviews were in Maori, three in Maori and English, and the rest all in English, except for one question which everyone was asked in Maori.

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

As the table on the page opposite shows, Maori was basically the language of adults in all these communities, with a minority even of those over 45 being fluent speakers among the Waiohiki people. It was only in Te Haroto where we encountered a high proportion of younger adults who could speak Maori with ease. Of the 60 children under 15 years of age in the families surveyed, only two (both in Te Haroto) were fluent Maori-speakers. A high proportion of teenagers and young adults, and the majority of children, in all these communities were said to have practically no understanding of Maori at all.

Native-speakers of Maori were in a minority among the household heads we interviewed; 13 of them had Maori as their first language (six in Waiohiki, two each in Moteq and Te Haroto, and three in Runanga), as against 19 with English. Altogether 24 had first learned to write in English, compared with seven (mostly elderly people) who first learned to write in Maori.



*Use of the Maori Language in the Household*

Only two families used more Maori than English when all the family were together (for example, at mealtimes) -- one in Runanga and the other in Te Haroto. But even in those families, it was assumed that the younger members would be more likely to speak English than Maori. This was so even in the few families whose children were relatively fluent in Maori. The majority of parents interviewed in all districts spoke only English to their children, although parents in two families in Runanga and one in each of the other districts occasionally spoke Maori to their children. Only one family (in Moteo) expected that the children themselves would occasionally speak Maori to their parents. Conversations with visitors were generally more likely to be in Maori than those with the younger members of the household, but English was still usually the main language even with visitors in most homes.

Several families in the various districts were making an effort to teach their children Maori. However, this was not an easy task, because English was so strong in most aspects of everyday life. One grandmother in Runanga told us that her mokopuna had spoken Maori until she went to school; she could still understand Maori, but no longer spoke it spontaneously. Another person from the same community said that his parents had been fluent speakers, but used the language only when talking to each other, so he had not picked up very much himself as a child. Although we got the impression that most families we visited would have liked to have been able to use Maori more often in the home (and the table at the top of the next page shows that many did use the language at least occasionally), one of the people we talked to in Waiohiki said that, because her husband could not speak Maori, the family regarded English as the

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LANGUAGE USED WHEN ALL THE FAMILY WERE TOGETHER  
 (Families with dependent children under 18 years old)

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	Waiohiki	Moteo	Runanga	Te Haroto
	%	%	%	%
Mostly Maori	0 (...)	0 (...)	1 ( 14)	1 ( 25)
Half and half	0 (...)	0 (...)	0 (...)	1 ( 25)
Mostly English	8 ( 62)	5 (100)	6 ( 86)	2 ( 50)
English only	5 ( 38)	0 (...)	0 (...)	.. (...)
No. of Households	13	5	7	4

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language which made them feel togetherness; from her point of view, Maori caused divisions in the family.

The diagrams on the next two pages give an indication of how fluency in Maori was distributed through these communities. Very few homes were headed by two fluent speakers, so it is not so surprising that English had become the main language for most families.

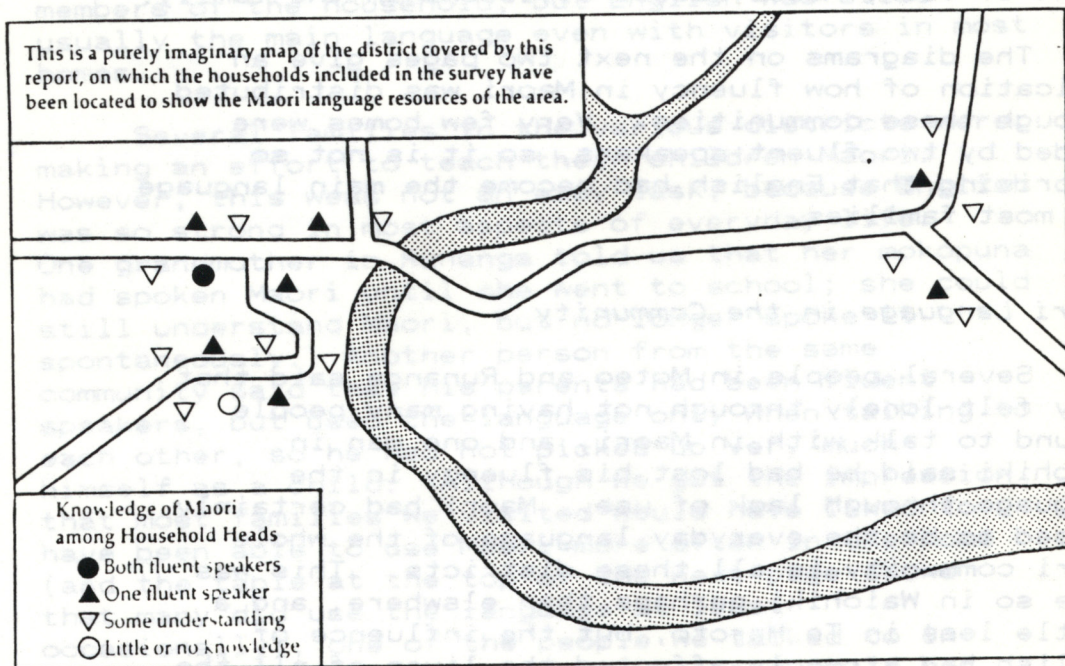
*Maori Language in the Community*

Several people in Moteo and Runanga said that they felt lonely through not having many people around to talk with in Maori, and one man in Waiohiki said he had lost his fluency in the language through lack of use. Maori had certainly ceased to be the everyday language of the whole Maori community in all these districts. This was more so in Waiohiki perhaps than elsewhere, and a little less in Te Haroto, but the influence of English had strongly affected the lives of all the families in the survey.

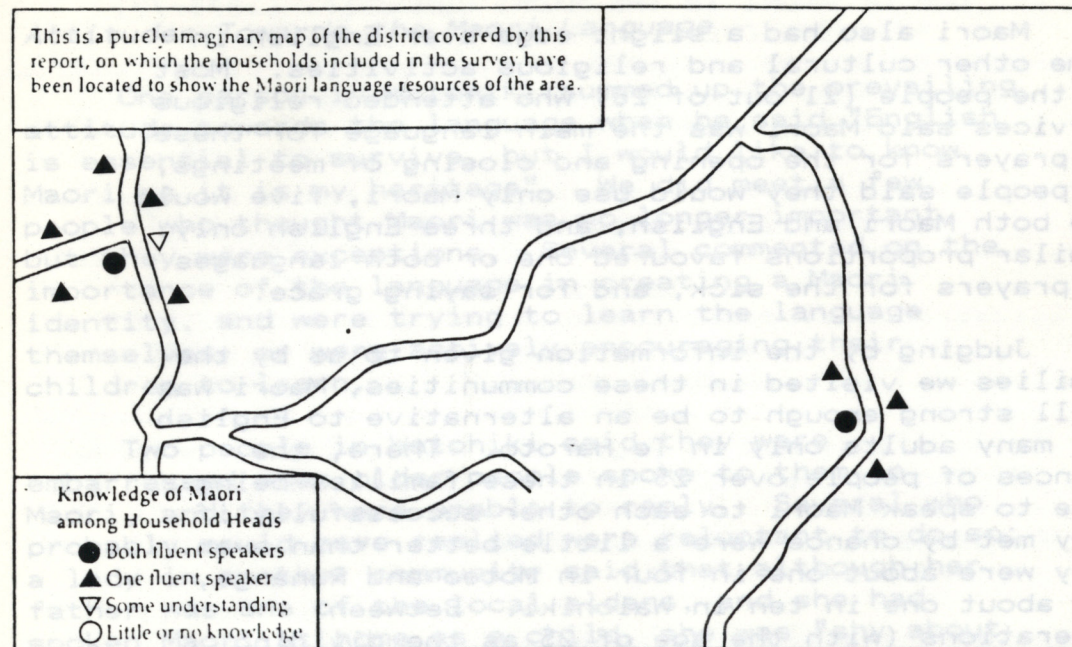


Some people were trying to teach their mokopuna, while others were happy that their children were learning some Maori at school. A few of the people we interviewed in each community had been punished for speaking Maori at school, and 15, exactly half of those who commented about their school days, said that speaking Maori had been forbidden or discouraged. One person had the opposite experience, and 14 (mostly unable to speak Maori anyway) said the language had neither been encouraged nor discouraged by their teachers.

The school experiences of Maori-speakers in various parts of the North Island are set out and discussed in a paper, "The Kahawai and the Shark", by Nena Benton, available from Te Wahanga Maori, NZCER. There are also a few more comments about schools in the "Attitudes" section of this report.



WAIOHIKI AND MOTEO



RUNANGA AND TE HAROTO

Maori remained the stronger language on the marae, however, at least in formal proceedings. Everyone we spoke to said that Maori would be the only language the local kaumatua would use for whaikorero. Most also thought that their kaumatua would use mainly Maori even when chatting informally in a marae setting. However, not one of the people we interviewed said that they would speak on the marae, although some were older than regular speakers in other communities we visited. Nine of them would use Maori at least some of the time in casual conversations on the marae, and the other 20 who attended marae functions said they would use only English. We got the impression that, partly because there were so few confident speakers below the age of 50, the people they regarded as "elders" were indeed very elderly.



Maori also had a slight edge over English in some other cultural and religious activities. Most of the people (21 out of 26) who attended religious services said Maori was the main language for these. In prayers for the opening and closing of meetings, 21 people said they would use only Maori, five would use both Maori and English, and three English only. Similar proportions favoured one or both languages in prayers for the sick, and for saying grace.

Judging by the information given to us by the families we visited in these communities, Maori was still strong enough to be an alternative to English for many adults only in Te Haroto. There, the chances of people over 25 in these families being able to speak Maori to each other successfully if they met by chance were a little better than even. They were about one in four in Moteo and Runanga, and about one in ten in Waiohiki. Between generations (with the age of 25 as the dividing line), communication in Maori was not likely to be easy anywhere: the chances were about one in four in Te Haroto, and much less than one in ten elsewhere.

As far as children were concerned, there was really no chance of a conversation in Maori taking place anywhere except Te Haroto, and even there the odds were more than four to one against this. However that at least may be one state of affairs which has changed greatly since the time of the survey. The kohanga reo movement, which arose out of Maori concern about the loss of the language to future generations, quickly spread throughout the country after the first kohanga were established in 1982. In May 1983 a kohanga was opened on the Waiohiki marae, and the 14 children who were there in 1984 would certainly have known a lot more Maori than any 14 pre-school children in that district five years earlier.

### *Attitudes Towards the Maori Language*

One person in Waiohiki summed up the prevailing attitude towards the language when he said "English is essential to survive, but I would like to know Maori as it is my heritage". We did meet a few people who thought Maori was no longer important, but they were exceptions. Several commented on the importance of the language in creating a Maori identity, and were trying to learn the language themselves, or were actively encouraging their children to learn.

Two people in Waiohiki said they were embarrassed when older people spoke to them in Maori, and they were unable to reply. Several who probably could have replied were reluctant to do so; a lady in another community said that although her father was one of the local elders, and she had spoken Maori at home as a child, she was "shy about using Maori". A man in Moteo told us that he had been punished for speaking Maori at school, and the loss of confidence he felt then had lasted, so that he does not speak on the marae even though he ought to be one of the people to do so. A woman in Waiohiki also attributed her loss of fluency in Maori to her experiences at school.

Families also had a part to play in forming attitudes to Maori, of course. Another person from Waiohiki told us that her parents supported the school's disapproval of Maori by using only English with the children, trying to help her get a good education. There is no doubt that, in the past, many teachers sincerely believed that the use of the Maori language was a major obstacle to progress and economic advancement for Maori people, and it is not surprising that many parents, concerned that their children should have a better chance in life, came to accept this view. By the time of the survey, many people had come to feel that the exclusion of



USE OF MAORI IN THE MAORI COMMUNITY (1973-79)  
(SELECTED DISTRICTS IN HAWKES BAY)

MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS

(None)

MARGINALLY MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS

Opoutama (51)

DISTRICTS WHERE AT LEAST ONE CHILD IN FIVE  
UNDERSTOOD MAORI EASILY

Chances that ADULTS could talk Maori with each other:  
(1) Two-to-one (2) Fifty-fifty (3) Less than even

Rangiahua (114)	Omahu (5)	Frasertown (114)
** Te Haroto		** Runanga
		Pukehou (113)

DISTRICTS WHERE MANY ADULTS WERE BILINGUAL

Chances that adults could talk Maori with each other:  
(1) Two-to-one or better (2) At least fifty-fifty

Mahia (51) Ruakituri (114) Nuhaka (58)

DISTRICTS WHERE MAORI-SPEAKERS WERE A MINORITY

Proportion of families with a Maori-speaking head:  
(1) Two-thirds (2) About half (3) Not many

Mohaka (56)	Whakaki (57)	Porongahau (61)
Raupunga (59)	Haumoana (54)	Bay View (142)
Wairoa (3)	Hastings (86)	Pakipaki (8)
	** Moteo	Bridge Pa (11)
	** Waiohiki	Waimarama (112)
	Te Hauke (10)	Flaxmere (86)

\*\* Included in this report; ( ) Other report numbers.

Maori from school and home had been unfortunate, and that they and their children had lost something very precious because of this. So there was considerable support for the revival of the language, including its use in schools.

Those people who could speak Maori fluently generally preferred to speak Maori rather than English when they had the opportunity. Of the household heads we interviewed in these four communities, 16 preferred Maori for conversation, and 12 preferred English. Two (from Waiohiki) liked both languages equally, and another two (also from Waiohiki) preferred English "most of the time". For reading and writing, 12 preferred Maori (rather more than we would have expected, as most of these people had learned to read and write in English), and 13 English; four liked both languages and the rest were more inclined to English most of the time. The comparatively strong preference for reading and writing in Maori was an encouraging sign -- many people here and in other places would like to have access to more reading material in Maori, and the support is there in principle for a flourishing Maori literature.

Conclusion

As you can see from the chart on the opposite page, Waiohiki and Moteo were typical Central Hawkes Bay Maori communities, where Maori was known well mainly by an ageing adult minority. Te Haroto and Runanga were districts where knowledge of Maori was comparatively more widespread, but even there few children and young people were fluent in the language. There were plenty of signs, even at the time the survey took place, that the people in these communities were not happy about the situation, and were looking for ways of restoring Maori to a more prominent position in everyday life.



USE OF MAORI IN THE MAORI COMMUNITY (1973-79)

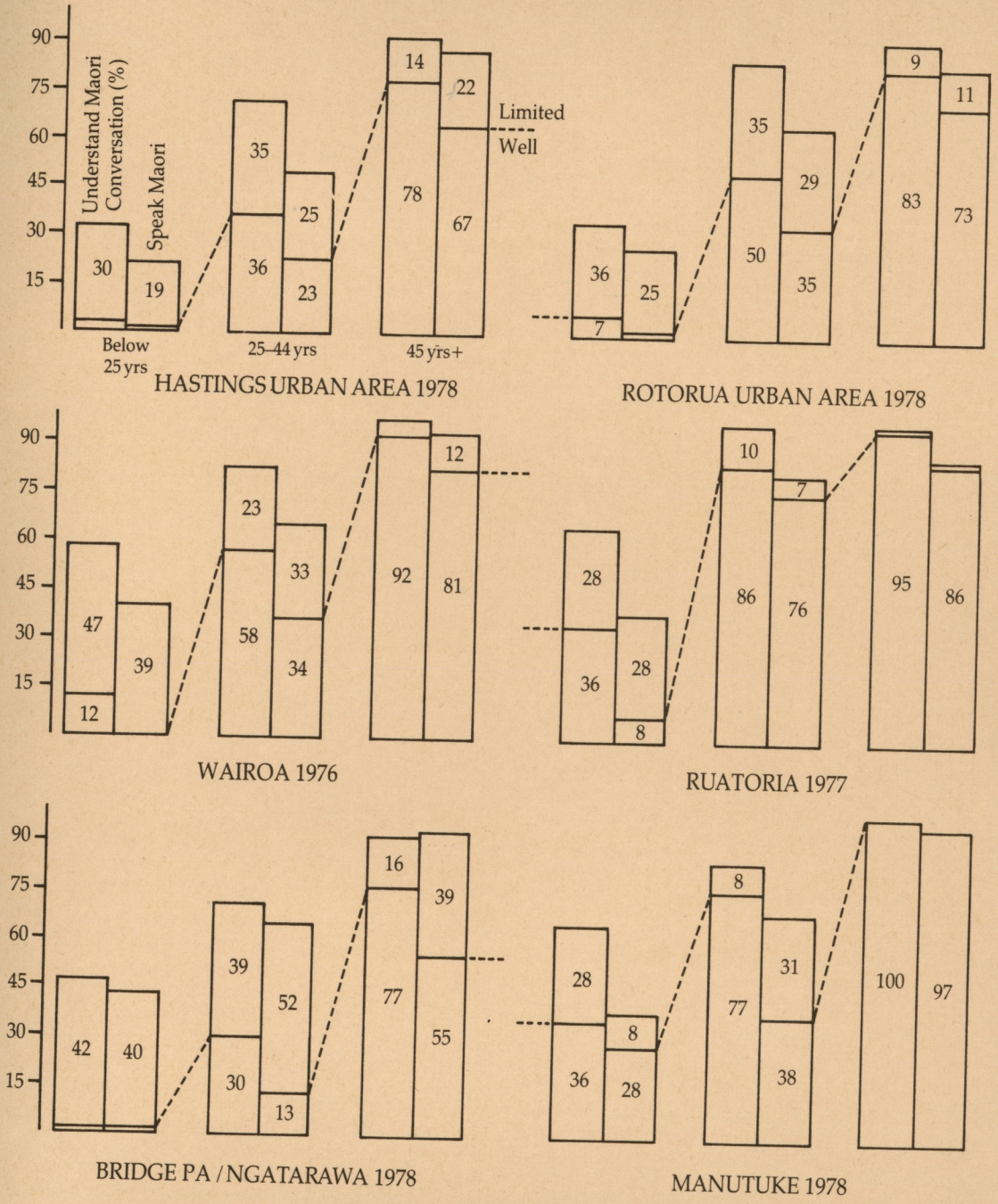
One nearby community, Omaha, was able to make use of the survey results to prepare a successful case for establishing a bilingual school, which started in 1979, with the support of the Hawkes Bay Education Board, and gained official government recognition a few years later. The people in Waiohiki were obviously inspired by the ideals of the kohanga reo movement, and one of the first kohanga in Hawkes Bay was established in their community. Local schools were also responding to the community's wish for Maori language to become part of the curriculum.

With the passing of the Maori Language Act in 1987, a new source of support has become available to all individuals, communities and groups wishing to promote the use of Maori. The Act set up the Commission for the Maori Language (*Te Komihana mo te Reo Maori*), which has the task of advising the government on all matters concerning the language. People can call on the Commission to support them in their efforts to widen their opportunities to learn and use the language. The Act also made Maori an official language of New Zealand, which gives the language its rightful place as a language for all New Zealanders. It is to be hoped that the people in Waiohiki, Moteo, Te Haroto and Runanga will be able to take advantage of these new developments to advance the Maori language cause in their own families and communities.

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This report was prepared by Richard Benton  
 Field Records abstracted by Paula Martin  
 (Rangitane & Ngai Tahu)  
 Design & Production: Hone Whaanga (Ngati Kahungunu)

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.