

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

Survey of Language Use in Maori Households  
and Communities

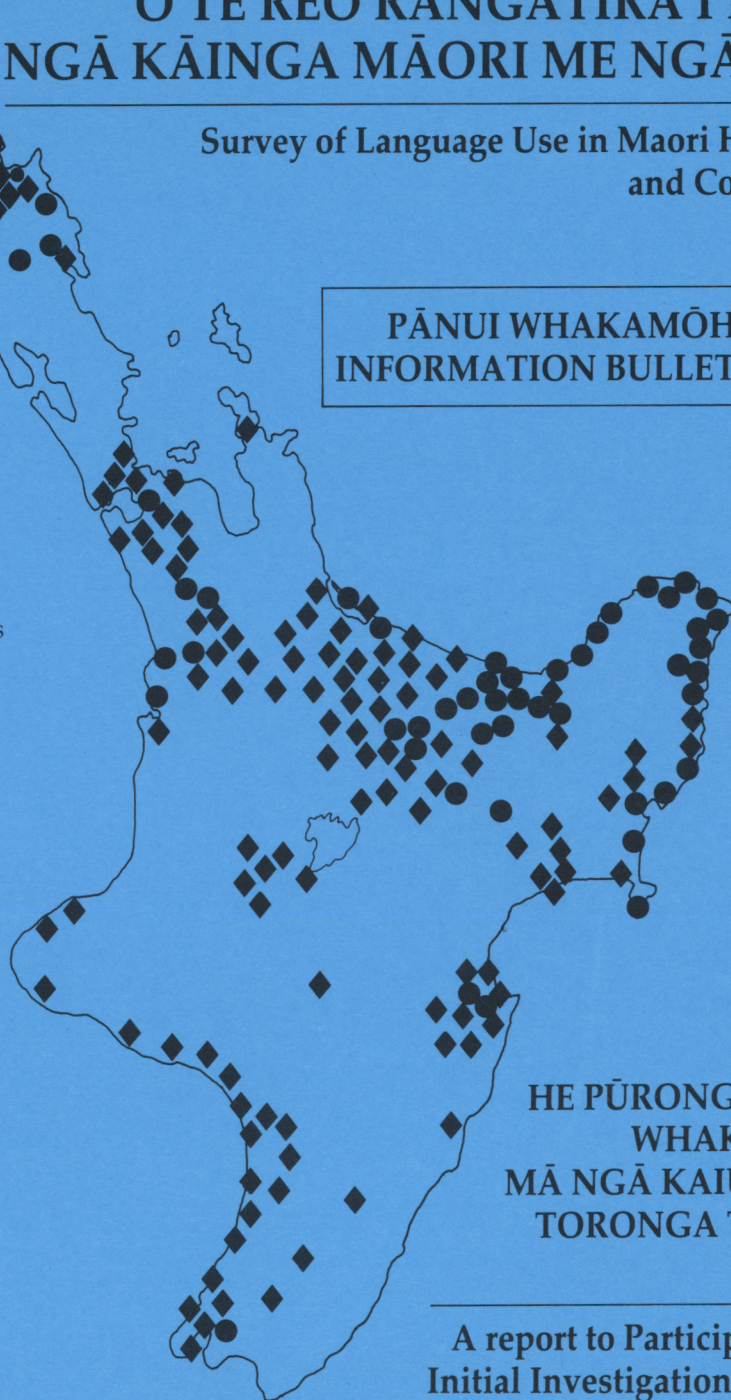
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO  
INFORMATION BULLETIN

88

Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

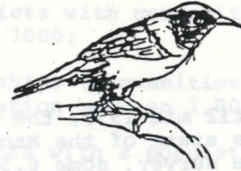
● Two thirds or  
more of adults were  
fluent speakers of  
Maori

◆ 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 A HUNDRED COMMUNITIES

by Richard A. Benton

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in Maori Households and Communities  
Information Bulletin No. 88.

(Reprinted from Te Korimako 1  
December 1983, Pages 68-82)

Poneke/Wellington  
Te Wahanga Maori  
Te Runanga o Aotearoa mo te Whakawa i te Matauranga

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## THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN A HUNDRED COMMUNITIES

by Richard A. Benton

From the end of 1973 until mid-1979, the NZCER undertook a wide-ranging survey of the state of the Maori language in the North Island. During the survey, some 6,500 Maori families provided detailed information about the present and past experiences, relating to the use of the Maori language in many different contexts, of their 33,000 members.

Soon after the fieldwork was completed, two reports were published summarizing the information about how many of the people included in the survey could speak and understand Maori, and drawing attention to the significance of this information for people who were interested in the survival of the language. It was also intended from the outset to report back to the families concerned on the information collected in each district. However, lack of finance prevented the Council from making a real start on that phase of the project, the preparation of "community reports", until early in 1982. In the following eighteen months (thanks initially to the generosity of the J.R. McKenzie Trust) a total of 85 reports were prepared, covering 139 of the 365 cities, towns, communities and localities visited.<sup>1</sup> It is hoped that the reports for the remaining 226 communities will be prepared during 1984.

In this article we will summarize briefly some of the information contained in the reports so far. To give some idea of the wide differences which exist between communities<sup>2</sup>, as well as the factors which separate some communities from others, we have grouped the districts for which information is now available into eleven categories, based on the extent to which the Maori language was known and used by the members of the Maori community as an everyday language in each area at the time of our visit. The traits which the communities have in common (and also some of their differences) are discussed for each category. There is also a brief discussion of the information gained overall, and what it might mean for the future of the Maori language and the teaching of Maori in the schools.

## THE DISTRICTS

The first 85 reports covered a wide range of districts:

- (a) 86 rural localities with populations of less than 1000;
- (b) 8 areas within counties classed as 'Townships' in the 1976 census reports, but which do not have community councils or other form of separate local government;

- (c) 8 districts with community councils but a population of less than 1000;
- (d) 17 townships (communities, town districts, or boroughs) with a population between 1,000 and 5,000;
- (e) 8 boroughs with a population of between 5,000 and 20,000;
- (f) 4 provincial cities; and
- (g) 8 segments of the Greater Auckland and Greater Wellington Metropolitan areas.

In the summaries which follow, some of the smaller areas have been consolidated with each other or with larger neighbours, to form a total of 103 "communities".

## COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

The communities in each category are listed together with some information about the use of the Maori language among the households visited, and some characteristics of the district as a whole.

Community and Type. This gives the name of the district, and an indication of its size based on the seven types listed as (a) to (g) in the preceding section. An asterisk (\*) before the name of the community indicates that less than 10 families (about 50 people) were visited there. (Where more than two communities are combined, only one is named, but the total number of communities is shown in parentheses).

The next seven columns indicate the proportions of people having various characteristics, using the following scale:

9, 90% or more;	8, 80% to 89%;	7, 70% to 79%
6, 60% to 69%;	5, 50% to 59%;	4, 40% to 49%
3, 30% to 39%;	2, 20% to 29%;	1, 5% to 19%
	0, less than 5%	

Maori descent. This column shows the approximate percentage of people of Maori descent in the community at the time of the 1976 census. The actual census figures have been used for communities with their own elected councils; for smaller rural towns and districts the proportion has been estimated on the basis of the 1971 census of the "Maori" population, and the 1976 census returns for the county as a whole and the total population of the district, as no specific information on the numbers of people of Maori descent is available for these areas.

Adult speakers. This indicates the proportion of people over 25 who could speak Maori fluently at the time of the survey in the households we visited.

Children's understanding. This shows the proportion of children aged 2 to 15 in the families we visited who could understand Maori conversation easily (the proportion of these who could speak Maori varied widely, and is reflected in the "community index").

Community Index. This gives an idea of how useful Maori is in the community as a whole, by multiplying the percentage of those who can speak Maori by the proportion who can understand it. The result gives an estimate of the likelihood that a successful conversation could take place in Maori when any two Maori people from that community meet each other by chance.

Family use. This indicates the proportion of households with children under the age of 15 where Maori was used at least as often as English in conversations between family members at home.

Maori-speaking parent. This column shows the percentage of families which have children under fifteen where at least one parent (or guardian) can speak Maori fluently. (These are families where, under favourable conditions, Maori could become the major household language fairly easily).

Tangata whenua. In this column shows the proportion of household heads (both male and female) who were born in the same geographical county as the locality. This gives an indication of the extent to which the Maori community (as represented by the families we visited) has been affected by migration.

Report number. The number of the bulletin in the NZCER Maori language survey community report series which deals with each district is indicated in the rightmost column.

#### TRULY MAORI-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES

Among the communities covered by the first 85 reports, only seven could be classified as areas in which Maori was at least as useful as English as far as the whole Maori community, children and adults, was concerned. These seven districts can be separated into two categories.

- (1) More than 90 percent of adults and children could speak Maori well; Maori could be used for all everyday purposes by practically everyone of Maori ancestry in the district; persons unable to speak Maori would definitely be disadvantaged in most social situations.

The only community in this category, among those we are considering, was Ruatoki. For convenience, the summary information about this district is included with that for the six communities in category (2).

- (2) Although less than 90 percent of children were fluent speakers, Maori was still the language of the greater part of the community, including many households. The chances of adults being able to converse with children were high; for the community as a whole, Maori was still at least as useful as English.

Group 1 & 2 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori-Speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
<u>Group 1</u> Ruatoki (b)	8	9	9	9	9	9	6	(16)
<u>Group 2</u> Waiohau (a)	9	9	7	5	8	8	7	(26)
Ngahina/ Owhakatoro (a)	8	9	8	7	7	9	6	(17)
Matawaia (a)	6	9	6	6	9	9	8	(14)
Panguru/ Rangi Point (a)	9	8	7	5	5	9	8	(28)

These seven communities had several common characteristics: all were relatively isolated geographically, with small populations (Ruatoki, the largest, had a population of 407 in 1976); most of the people living in the district were of Maori descent, and at least two-thirds of the Maori household heads were local people. Most parents were fluent speakers of Maori; none were completely without a knowledge of the language. Three of the communities (Panguru, Rangi Point, and Matawaia) are in Northland; the rest are located in the Eastern Bay of Plenty region.

All these areas are traditional Maori centres, and were formerly served by Maori schools (Panguru continued to have a Catholic Maori mission school as its sole primary school until very recently). Districts like these are the only ones where bilingual education could be justified on purely linguistic grounds, as many children come to school well prepared for an education in which the Maori language has a central role. If the school does not build on this resource, it is in fact depriving the children of an opportunity to develop further a talent which has been well nurtured by their families and the community. Significantly, the first official Maori/English bilingual school was created in Ruatoki in 1967, followed by the Tawera school (Ngahina) in 1980, and the schools at Matawaia and Panguru are members of a network of schools working towards official bilingual status.

#### MARGINALLY MAORI-SPEAKING AREAS

There were fourteen communities which formed a single grouping (3), where Maori had almost certainly been the dominant language at least until the mid-1960s, but where English had begun to dominate many aspects of community life by the time of the survey. In these communities there was a high degree of passive knowledge of Maori among children, but many did not speak the language. English was probably used more than Maori because many people under 25 would have found it easier to speak English; however most of these younger people would have heard Maori spoken at home quite often.

Group 3 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori- speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
Pipiwai (a)	5	9	5	3	3	9	7	53
*Waitaruke (a)	6	9	9	4	6	9	3	84
Onepu (a)	6	9	5	4	1	9	7	41
*Opoutama (a)	5	9	7	4	0	9	9	51
Te Hapua (a)	8	9	5	3	5	9	6	25
Waimana (a)	4	9	4	3	3	9	8	38
Motatau (3) (a)	7	8	5	4	7	9	8	23
Te Tii/ Wharengaere (a)	8	9	4	3	6	9	6	24
Ruatahuna (a)	9	9	5	3	3	9	6	18
Te Kaha (b)	6	8	4	4	1	8	8	81
Te Teko (c)	8	8	4	2	2	8	7	22



Demographically, these districts are very similar to the more solidly Maori-speaking areas, although three, Te Kaha, Te Teko, and Waimana, are larger and less isolated than the rest. Again, most have been the sites of Maori or Mission schools, and remain important traditional Maori centres. Use of the Maori language within the family varies greatly within and between communities, but it is largely a matter of degree. In Opoutama, for example, although English was the main language used in all households with dependent children at the time of the survey, the language was used some of the time in at least half these families. Opoutama is in northern Hawkes Bay. The other communities are located in Northland and the Eastern Bay of Plenty.

Because most parents in all these communities were fluent Maori speakers, bilingual education in Maori and English would certainly have been a practical possibility for cultural if not for linguistic reasons. One of these communities, Ruatahuna, had a request for a bilingual school endorsed by the National Advisory Committee on Maori/English bilingual education at the end of 1982. Motatau is a member of a network of schools working towards this end, and interest in bilingual education has also been expressed by schools or parents in some of the other districts in this category.

#### ENGLISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES WITH WIDESPREAD BILINGUALISM

The communities in which the transition from Maori to English as the dominant language was well advanced, but in which a significant proportion of children (at least one in five) still had a good understanding of Maori, could be divided into three groups, based on the proportion of adults who could speak and understand Maori well.

(4) There was a group of eleven districts where most adults were Maori speaking, and would have had little need to use any other language when speaking to each other. Although Maori was used frequently in the community and within the home, children would rarely have used the language themselves. In all these communities, there was a marked difference between children and adults in knowledge of Maori; few children could speak Maori fluently, and many did not understand the language easily.

Group 4 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori- Speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
Te Kao (a)	8	8	4	3	3	9	8	25
Wainui (3)(a)	5	7	4	2	4	8	7	84
Waiomio (a)	9	8	3	2	5	9	7	39
*Matangirau (a)	6	8	3	2	3	8	5	84
Rangitukia (a)	9	8	2	2	7	9	8	21
*Ngataki (a)	8	8	2	2	5	9	5	25
Poroporo (a)	6	7	2	1	1	8	6	45
*Otoroa (a)	4	8	2	1	5	8	8	84
Piripai (a)	5	8	2	2	1	9	7	43

All these communities are small and predominantly rural, and are traditional Maori centres. Most are geographically isolated, although Piripai and Poroporo are exceptions to this, located close to Whakatane township. Rangitukia is on the East Coast, and the remaining communities are in Northland. Although the community as a whole had the linguistic resources to support a bilingual education programme, none of the schools in these areas had publicly announced moves in this direction up to the middle of 1982.

- (5) Another group of 30 communities also had a high proportion of Maori-speaking adults; however, there were sufficient numbers of Maori adults in the community who could not speak Maori to make it likely that English would be used for many conversations. Nevertheless, Maori was likely to be as useful as English for casual conversations among adults as least as often as not, and a fair proportion of children (at least one in five) had a good understanding of Maori.
- (6) A few other communities also had fairly high proportions of children who could understand Maori, but had insufficient adults with a good knowledge of Maori to ensure that Maori and English would be at least equally useful for conversational purposes among the over-25 age group as a whole. Although Maori was still spoken in many households in these districts, English was clearly the dominant language of the Maori community as a whole.

Group 5 & 6 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori- Speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
<b>Group 5</b>								
Hick's Bay (a)	6	7	5	1	1	7	7	31
Waitangi (a)	5	7	4	4	6	9	7	48
Kawhia/ Aotea (c,a)	3	7	3	2	3	9	4	13
*Kahoe (3)(a)	1	7	3	1	3	8	5	84
Pupuke/ Mangapa (a)	5	7	2	2	3	9	5	84
Murupara (d)	7	6	2	1	1	7	5	85
*Otangaroa (a)	7	7	2	2	5	9	8	84
Whangarei								
rural (4)(a)	3	5	2	1	1	6	4	15
Kaikohe (d)	4	7	2	2	1	8	5	37
Pukekohe & Dis- trict(7)(e,a)	1	6	2	1	1	7	3	63
Kerikeri (c)	1	7	2	2	4	8	9	24
Ngaruawahia (d)	4	5	1	1	0	6	3	52
Waahi Pa/ Rakaumanga (a)	8	7	1	1	1	8	5	4
Moerewa (d)	5	6	1	1	4	8	6	40
<b>Group 6</b>								
*Horotiu (b)	3	6	3	1	0	7	5	55
Omahu (a)	6	6	3	1	1	7	4	5
Matahina/								
Te Mahoe (a)	5	6	2	1	1	5	4	27

These two groups of communities are much more varied in size and geographical location than the first four. Although some (like Hicks Bay, on the East Coast, and Pupuke, in Northland) are relatively isolated, others (for example Murupara, Pukekohe, and Ngaruawahia) are quite large towns. They are spread all over the north and east of the North Island, from Omahu (near Hastings) to Kawhia (Waikato) northwards. Some are still very important Maori centres, and many formerly had Maori schools. Although only a few of these communities had had a high proportion of families who used Maori extensively at home, Maori was used to some extent in a majority of homes surveyed in all except two of these areas (Ngaruawahia and Horotiu).

The Maori language resources in these communities were still fairly widely distributed at the time of the survey, with most homes having at least one fluent speaker of Maori. Omahu (in group 6) gained official recognition for a bilingual education programme in its school in 1980, and the National Advisory Committee recommended in 1983 that Rakaumanga School (group 5) be accorded similar status. These districts were both predominantly Maori in population when the survey took place; however, since the Huntly power project commenced, the Waahi Pa/Rakaumanga area has been engulfed by the expansion of Huntly township. Prospects for sustaining bilingualism in some of the other areas in these categories, for example Pukekohe (with the Maori population constituting only about 17 percent of the total for the district) would be even more dependent on the goodwill and cooperation of the non-Maori members of the local community. In places like Hick's Bay and Murupara, however, the Maori community could perhaps exert a greater influence on its linguistic future.

#### COMMUNITIES WHERE MAORI WAS CLEARLY THE LANGUAGE OF THE OLDER GENERATION

In the remaining communities studied so far, there was a very sharp dividing line between adults and children in knowledge and use of the Maori language. Fewer than one child in five had a good understanding of conversational Maori, and English was the dominant language in most homes. These districts could be further subdivided, however, into five groups, when the extent to which knowledge and use of Maori among adults was taken into account.

In two sets of communities knowledge of Maori was sufficiently widespread among persons over 25 to make it possible for most adult members of the Maori community to use it in preference to English as a normal language for conversation among themselves.

(7) There was a small group of communities where, although few children spoke Maori, most Maori adults had Maori as their first language, and even more had a good understanding of it. Maori could probably have been used twice as often as English when adults from these communities met by chance.

(8) In another group, there was also a substantial number of native speakers of Maori over the age of 25, and Maori could have been used about as often as English by the adult members of these communities in chance meetings.

Group 7 & 8 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori-speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
<u>Group 7</u>								
Tuakau (d)	2	8	1	2	1	9	5	47
Opotiki (d)	7	8	1	1	1	9	6	67
*Matauri (a)	5	8	0	1	3	8	6	84
Wainaha (a)	8	7	0	1	3	8	6	36
Mahia (a)	7	7	0	3	0	7	7	51
Rangiora (4)(a)	4	7	1	1	0	7	7	29
<u>Group 8</u>								
Te Araroa(2)(b,a)	7	7	1	1	4	9	7	30
Paroa (a)	7	7	1	1	1	8	4	42
*Horoera (a)	9	7	1	1	8	9	8	30
Matakana (a)	7	7	1	1	0	8	7	64
Wainuiomata (g)	1	7	1	1	0	6	1	12
Gisborne (f)	2	6	1	1	1	7	2	35
Te Puna (b)	3	6	0	1	1	9	6	32
Whakaangi (a)	7	7	1	1	6	6	8	30
Ngapuna (a)	6	6	1	1	0	7	7	77
Ngapuke (a)	7	5	0	1	1	7	4	69

These again are mixed groups geographically and demographically. Some, like Mahia (Hawkes Bay) and Waihaha (Northland) are traditional Maori communities which a generation ago would have been predominantly Maori-speaking. Gisborne is a major provincial city, about 25 percent Maori in population. Like Wainuiomata, in the Greater Wellington area, a high proportion of its adult Maori population has migrated from Waiapu County in the northern part of the East Coast region (represented also in Group 8 by Horoera, Te Araroa, and Whakaangi).

Although in some of these districts practically no children had a good understanding of Maori, and the proportion of families using Maori frequently at home was low, there were also very few children who would have had no contact at all with the Maori language. In some of these areas efforts are being made to revive the use of Maori within the community as a whole. Te Matai school (near Rangiora) has been working towards a bilingual education programme for some years, and Wainuiomata was one of the first areas of New Zealand in which a kohanga reo was established.

In two more sets of communities, Maori-speaking adults were distributed throughout the community, but were not sufficiently numerous to make it probable that they would be able to use Maori at least as often as English when meeting other adult members of the local Maori community.

- (9) In 17 communities where English was likely to be the preferred language for conversation among adults as well as children, at least two-thirds of the Maori households with dependent children had at least one Maori-speaking household head.

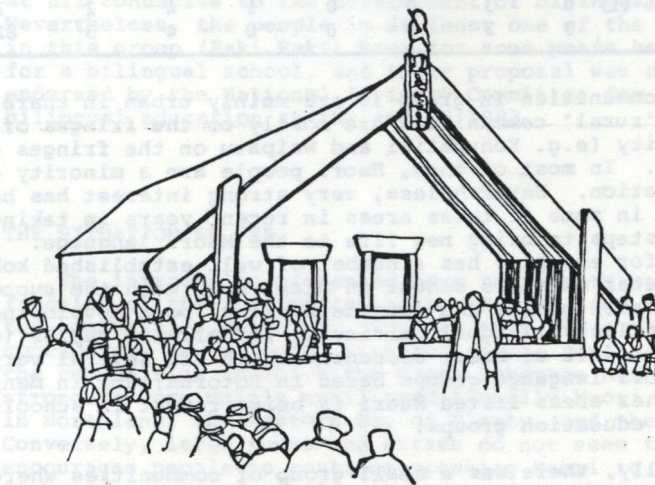
Group 9 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori-Speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
<b>Group 9</b>								
Kawerau (e)	3	6	1	1	1	7	3	44
Te Atatu (g)	1	5	1	1	1	7	0	62
Nuhaka (a)	6	5	1	1	1	7	6	58
Wairoa (e)	3	5	1	1	1	7	9	3
Otara (g)	3	5	1	1	1	7	0	19
Papakura (g)	1	5	1	1	1	7	1	60
Whangarei (f)	1	5	1	1	1	7	3	15
Rotoiti (a)	8	5	1	1	1	7	4	83
Rapunga (b)	7	5	1	1	1	7	7	59
Mohaka (a)	6	5	1	1	0	7	6	56
Kawakawa (d)	3	5	1	1	1	7	4	50
<b>Kaeo/</b>								
Omaunu (b)	2	5	1	1	1	7	4	34
Cambridge (e)	1	5	0	0	0	7	2	65
*Waitahanui (a)	5	4	1	1	0	7	6	76
<b>Greytown (d)/</b>								
Papawai (a)	1	4	0	1	0	7	4	72

The communities in this group had very little in common, at least on the surface, apart from the similar fate which had befallen the Maori language in each of them. They included some major urban areas (Whangarei, Otara, Te Atatu, and Papakura, all populated mainly by immigrants from Northland - i.e. where their Maori communities were concerned), a number of important provincial centres (Wairoa, Kawakawa, Cambridge),

and a few small communities, some of which had been traditional Maori centres (e.g. Papawai, the headquarters of the kotahitanga movement, and Rotoiti, an important Arawa community). A few were predominantly Maori in population, but most of the larger districts were overwhelmingly non-Maori. Many of the smaller communities were near large centres of non-Maori population (e.g. Rotoiti and Waitahanui, near the tourist centres of Rotorua and Taupo, and Papawai, in the predominantly non-Maori Wairarapa region).

Two of the most highly urbanized areas in this group, Te Atatu and Otara, have had highly successful kohanga reo established in them, and in Otara one of the primary schools was setting up a special bilingual education unit in 1983 to enable the children coming from the kohanga reo to begin their schooling in Maori as well as English. Some of these areas have very large Maori populations to draw on (Otara alone had about 8,000 people of Maori descent in 1981), and, with a good knowledge of Maori widespread in the adult community, conditions for the revival of Maori as a language for everyday use in many of these districts are reasonably favourable (although the competition from English is still intense).

- (10) There were also twenty communities where, although very few children understood Maori, about half the households with dependent children visited during the survey had a Maori-speaker as a household head.





Group 10 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori- Speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
Waiuku (d)	1	5	1	1	0	5	2	46
Whakaki (a)	8	5	0	1	0	6	8	57
Huntly (e)	2	5	0	1	0	6	4	70
Taupo (e)	2	5	1	1	0	6	3	76
Rotorua (f)	2	5	1	1	0	6	3	33
Kohupatiki/ Waipatu (a)	4	5	0	1	0	5	6	68
Ngongotaha (d)	3	4	0	1	0	5	5	78
Mourea (a)	7	5	0	1	1	5	6	9
Karetu (a)	5	5	0	1	0	5	8	49
Maketu (c)	5	4	1	0	0	4	6	20
Porirua (g)	1	4	1	1	0	5	1	6
Pongaroa (a)	2	4	0	0	0	4	2	73
Te Kauwhata (c)	1	4	0	0	0	5	5	71
Ratana (c)	9	4	0	0	0	5	5	79
Waitara (e)	2	4	0	0	0	4	4	75
Otaki town (d)	2	4	1	1	0	5	5	2
Te Hauke (a)	8	3	0	1	0	5	5	10
Waverley (d)	2	3	0	0	1	4	3	1
Haumoana (d)	2	4	0	0	1	6	3	54
New Plymouth (f)	0	3	0	0	1	4	2	7
Patea (d)	3	3	0	0	0	4	3	82

The communities in group 10 are mainly urban in character. Even the 'rural' communities are mostly on the fringes of a town or city (e.g. Kohupatiki and Waipatu on the fringes of Hastings). In most of them, Maori people are a minority of the population. Nevertheless, very strong interest has been expressed in some of these areas in recent years in taking positive steps to bring new life to the Maori language. Porirua, for example, has a number of well-established kohanga reo; St Peter Chanel's school in Otaki has, with the support of local Maori groups and outside sources, been developing a Maori/English bilingual curriculum for all its pupils (only half of whom are of Maori descent); there are several very active Maori language groups based in Rotorua; and in many of the other areas listed Maori is being taught in schools and adult education groups.

- (11) Finally, there was a small group of communities where fluency in Maori was confined largely to the kaumatua (grandparental) age-group; most of the households in this group did not have a Maori-speaking household head, and many parents had very little command of Maori at all.

Group 11 Communities	Maori Descent	Adult Speakers	Children's Understanding	Community Index	Family Use	Maori- Speaking Parent	Tangata Whenua	Report Number
Bridge Pa (a)	7	4	0	0	0	3	5	11
Otaki rural (3)(a)	3	3	0	0	0	3	7	2
Porangahau (c)	5	3	0	0	0	3	5	61
Opunake (d)	2	3	0	0	0	3	5	66
Foxton (d)	2	3	0	0	0	3	3	80
*Ngatarawa (a)	5	2	0	0	0	3	5	11
Paki Paki (a)	6	2	0	0	0	3	4	8
Masterton (e)	1	2	0	0	0	3	3	74
*Okato (c)	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	7

Although some of these communities are traditional Maori centres, all are in parts of the southern half of the North Island where Maori-speakers for several generations have had to contend with a basically English-speaking environment not at all conducive to the development of bilingualism. Nevertheless, the people in at least one of the communities in this group (Paki Paki) have for some years been campaigning for a bilingual school, and their proposal was officially endorsed by the National Advisory Committee for Maori/English bilingual education at the end of 1983.

#### THE SITUATION SO FAR

The information presented here represents only a small fraction of the information gathered from less than half the communities surveyed. Even at this stage, however, a few conclusions may be drawn with reasonable confidence. Firstly, the communities in which the Maori language had remained strongest were mainly small traditionally Maori settlements in Northland, the Eastern Bay of Plenty, and the East Coast. Conversely, large towns and cities do not seem to have encouraged people to continue speaking Maori to their children. Perhaps because of similar pressures from their English-speaking neighbours, people living almost anywhere in the southern half of the North Island seem to have had an up-hill struggle to keep the Maori language alive in their homes and community.

On the other hand, even though there have been very few completely Maori-speaking or bilingual communities located so far, it is obvious that the Maori language is far from dead. Bilingualism is still widespread among adults of Maori descent, and interest in the language is strong even in the most anglicized areas. Kohanga reo and bilingual education programmes, both dependent on strong support from the local community, have been set up in areas with very different linguistic backgrounds.

The contrasts from one community to another, even within the same geographical area, highlight the need for a variety of approaches to teaching Maori and to using it for educational and general purposes. The fact that Maori has not fared well in urban areas should remind non-Maori New Zealanders of the part they have to play in the fate of this country's own language. Most Maori people now live in cities and larger towns. Many have brought with them a linguistic resource which can only be developed if the community as a whole, Maori and non-Maori alike, recognizes its value. Maori-speakers no longer live isolated from the English-speaking world; because of their numbers, location, and influence, it is New Zealand's English-speaking majority which exert the strongest influence on the ultimate fate of the New Zealand language.

#### NOTES

1. A summary description of the survey, with lists of publications and reports, is contained in the bulletin The NZCER Maori Language Survey (Maori Unit, NZCER, 1983).
2. In this paper the word 'community' generally refers to the Maori people living in a particular place. The term 'Maori' refers to anyone who is of Maori descent. Comments on the number of people who speak Maori in a particular place refer to those families which were visited during the linguistic survey.
3. 'Household head' refers to the people in charge of the household: in a family where there is both a husband and wife, both would be counted as household heads.



## 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.