

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

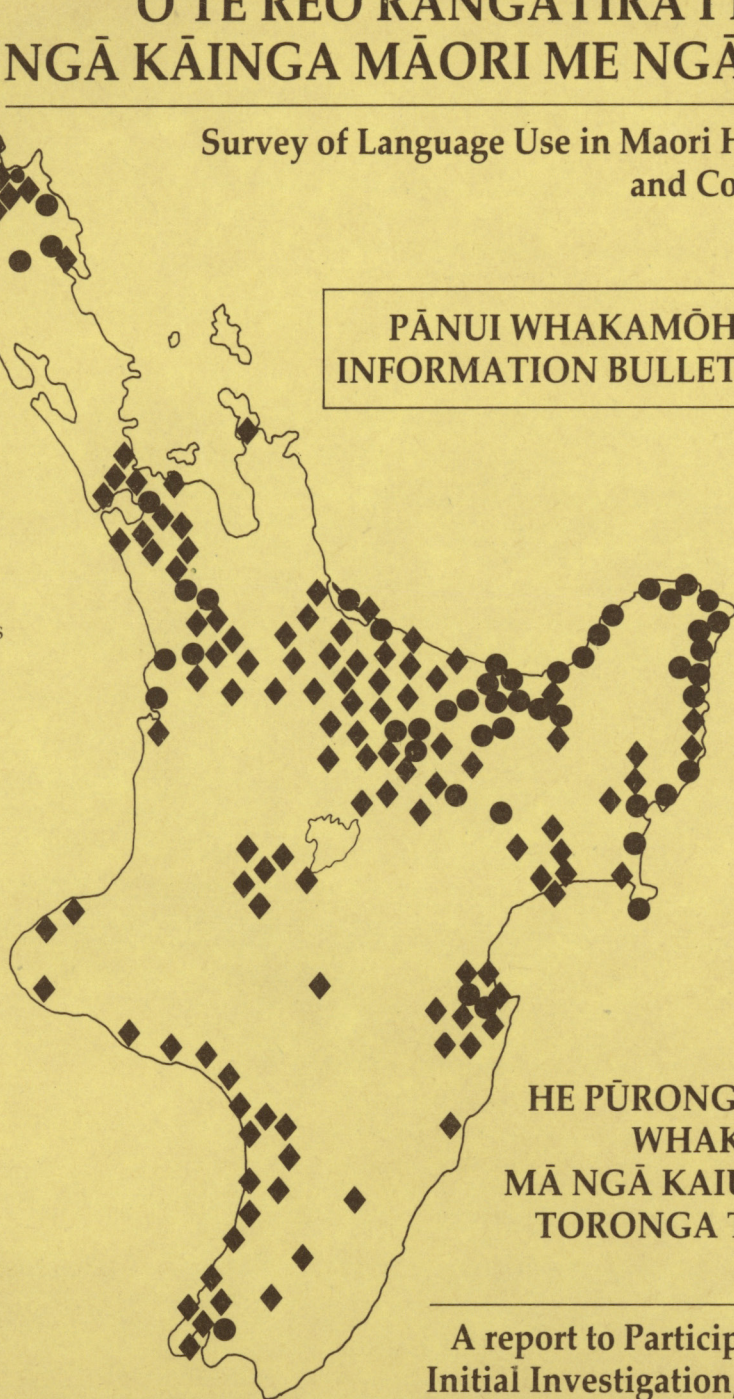
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

115

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

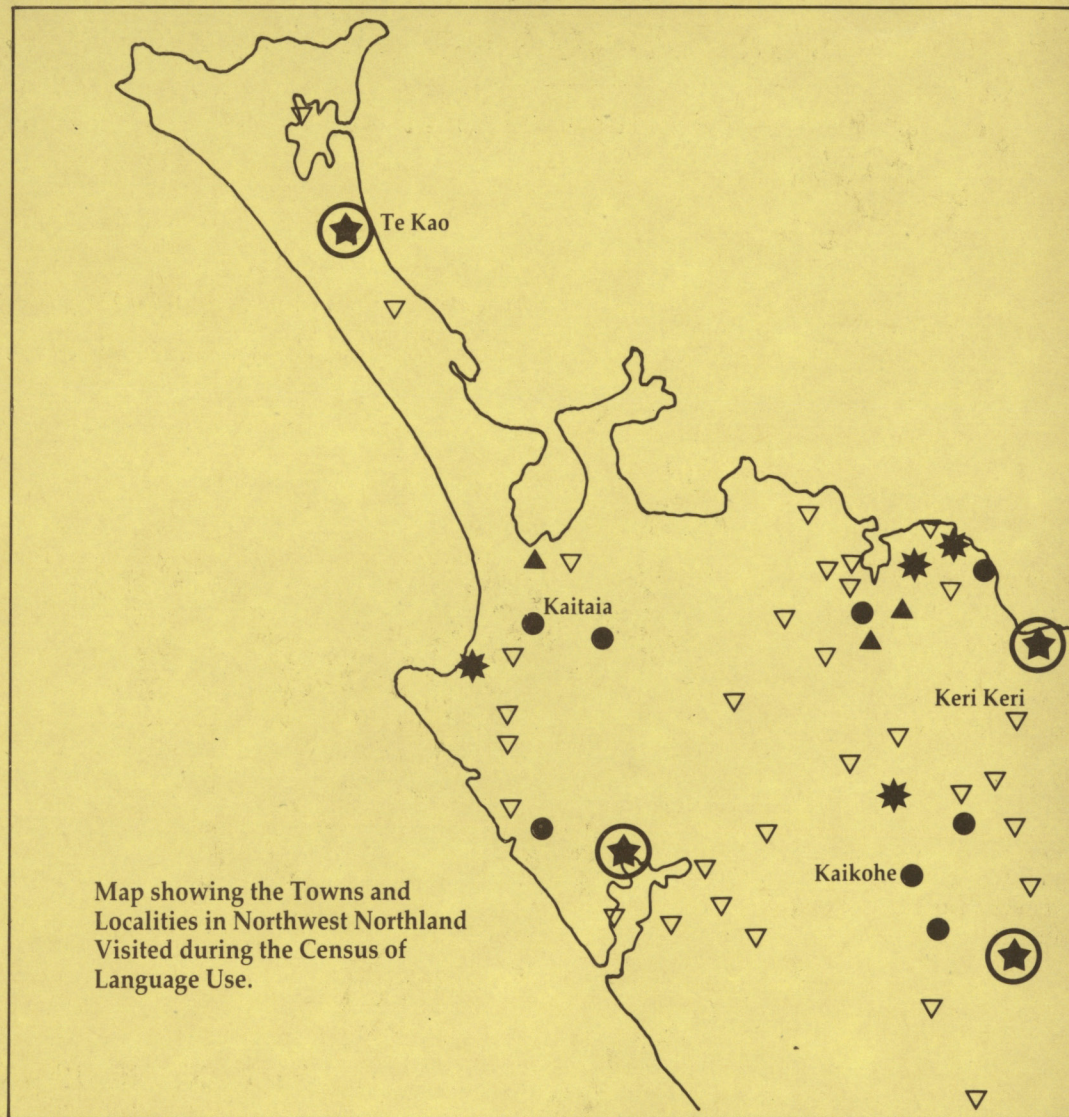
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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 the households visited.

★ More than 85%

☆ 76% to 85%

● 60% to 75%

▲ Less than 60%

▽ Fewer than 7 households visited

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN KAITAIA AND NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES

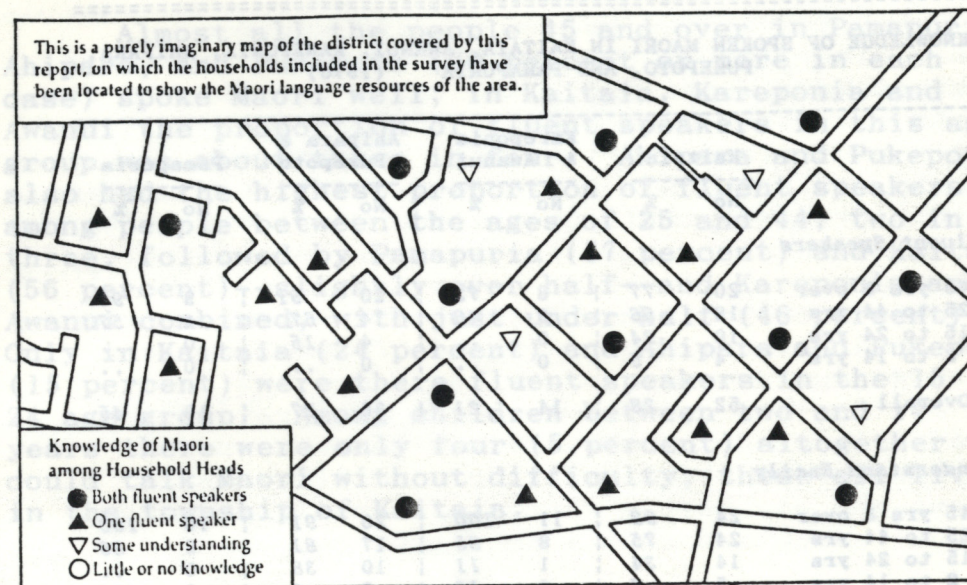
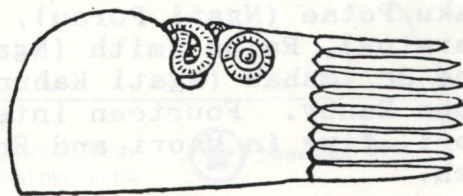
This report covers the township of Kaitaia and five neighbouring smaller localities in Mangonui County, which were included in the survey of language use in Maori households and communities in January 1976. Altogether 79 households were visited, with 437 people (434 of Maori descent; about a fifth of the Maori population in each locality at that time): 32 households in Kaitaia (with 196 people), five in Kareponia (16 people), ten in Awanui (50 people), 20 in Ahipara (109 people), five in Pukepoto (33 people), and seven in Pamapurua (with 33 people).

The interviewers in the survey in this district were Kahu Waititi (Ngapuhi/Whanau Apanui), Tawini Rangihau (Tuhoe), Peter Wensor (Ngapuhi), Iriaka Wensor (Ngapuhi), Susan Rikihana (Tuhoe), Rena Tito (Ngati Whatua), Maku Potae (Ngati Porou), Kathleen Grace Potae (Tuwharetoa), Raiha Smith (Ngati Kahungunu), Candice Scrimshaw (Ngati Kahungunu), Peter Ranby and John Ranby. Fourteen interviews were carried out in Maori, five in Maori and English, and the rest in English.

Iwi Affiliation

In three of these communities, Ngapuhi and Te Aupouri were the two major iwi represented among the families we visited. In Kaitaia about half the people mentioned Ngapuhi as their main iwi, and about a quarter Te Aupouri; Awanui had three-fourths Ngapuhi and one-fourth Te Aupouri, while in Kareponia two thirds were Te Aupouri and one-third Ngapuhi. In Pukepoto, Ngapuhi was also one of two major iwi, mentioned by a fifth of the people; however four-fifths belonged to Te Rarawa, making Pukepoto the only predominantly Rarawa community among the six covered by this report. In Pamapurua, a little over one third of the people visited also belonged to Te Rarawa; the other major iwi there were Ngapuhi (one third) and Ngati Kahu (just under a third). There were several iwi in Ahipara, but the most numerous were Ngapuhi and Te Rarawa (just over one-third of the people each) and Te Aupouri (about one-eighth). Altogether, Ngapuhi was the only one of the four major northern iwi mentioned by a tenth or more of the people in each of these communities.

Most of the heads of the households we visited were born or brought up in Mangonui County--six out of every ten in Ahipara and Kaitaia, seven in ten in Awanui, Kareponia and Pukepoto, and eight in ten in Pamapurua.



KAITAIA

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

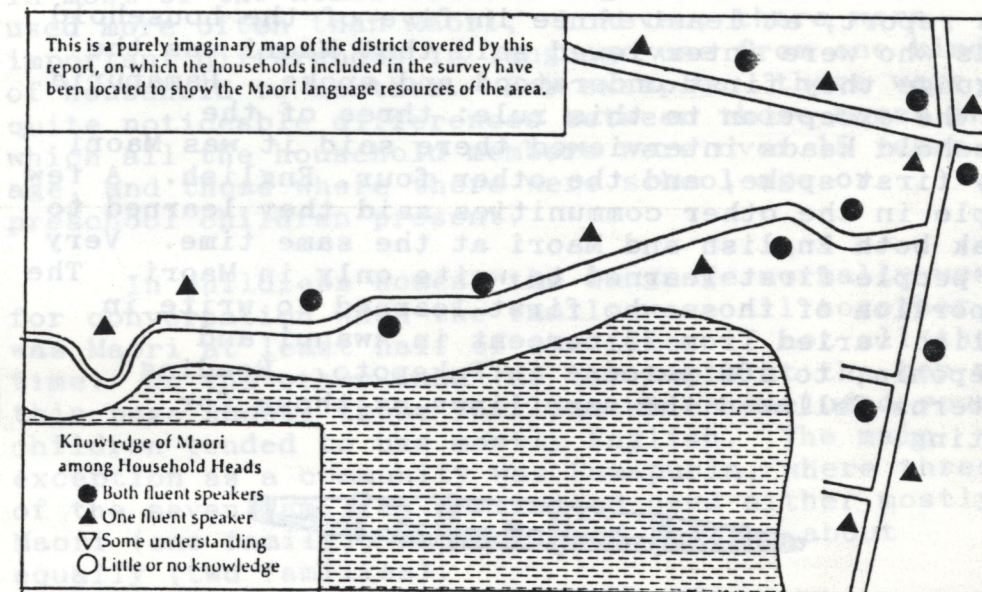
As the table on the next page shows, there was only one community, Pamapurua, where the proportion of people who could speak Maori well was almost one in two (45 percent). In other communities the proportion of fluent speakers, without taking age differences into account, ranged from about one in five in Kareponia and Awanui, to just over one in four in Ahipara, Pukepoto and Kaitaia.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN KAITAIA, AWANUI, KAREPONIA, AHIPARA,
PUKEPOTO, AND PAMAPURIA (1976)

	Kaitaia		Kareponia & Awanui		Ahipara & Pukepoto		Pamapurua	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Fluent Speakers								
45 yrs & over	20	77	8	73	20	91	9	90
25 to 44 yrs	18	56	6	46	14	67	4	57
15 to 24 yrs	10	24	0	..	4	15	0	..
2 to 14 yrs	4	5	0	..	0	..	0	..
Overall	52	28	14	21	38	27	13	45
Understand Easily								
45 yrs & over	24	92	11	100	20	91	10	100
25 to 44 yrs	24	75	8	85	17	81	6	86
15 to 24 yrs	14	34	1	11	10	38	0	..
2 to 14 yrs	5	6	6	18	7	9	2	20
Overall	67	35	26	39	54	38	18	60
Limited Understanding								
45 yrs & over	2	8	0	..	2	9	0	..
25 to 44 yrs	4	13	3	23	3	14	0	..
15 to 24 yrs	10	24	2	22	9	35	0	..
2 to 14 yrs	31	34	14	42	34	47	3	30
Overall	47	25	19	29	48	34	3	10
No Knowledge								
45 yrs & over	0	0	..
25 to 44 yrs	4	13	2	15	1	5	1	14
15 to 24 yrs	17	42	6	67	7	27	3	100
2 to 14 yrs	55	61	13	39	32	44	5	50
Overall	76	40	21	32	40	28	9	30

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

Almost all the people 45 and over in Pamapurua, Ahipara, and Pukepoto (90 percent or more in each case) spoke Maori well; in Kaitaia, Kareponia and Awanui the proportion of fluent speakers in this age group was about three in four. Ahipara and Pukepoto also had the highest proportion of fluent speakers among people between the ages of 25 and 44, two in three, followed by Pamapurua (57 percent) and Kaitaia (56 percent)--slightly over half--and Kareponia and Awanui combined, with just under half (46 percent). Only in Kaitaia (24 percent) and Ahipara and Pukepoto (15 percent) were there fluent speakers in the 15 to 24 age group. Among children between two and 14 years there were only four (5 percent) altogether who could talk Maori without difficulty; these all lived in the township of Kaitaia.



AHIPARA

Pukepoto was the only community where a sizeable minority of young people and children could understand Maori easily (in the table the figures for Pukepoto have been combined with Ahipara, where fewer children understood Maori well). In Awanui, Pamapurua and Kareponia there were relatively more young children who could understand Maori easily than in Kaitaia and Ahipara, although even in those areas a high proportion of children did not understand Maori at all at the time of the survey. However, in Kaitaia and Ahipara about a third of the teenagers and young adults could understand Maori easily. These are the hope of the future in the revival of the Maori language as they become parents and grandparents and start bringing up children and mokopuna who may have a chance of benefitting from bilingual education and te kohanga reo.

In all but one of the communities included in this report, at least three in five of the household heads who were interviewed said that Maori was the language they first understood and spoke. Pamapurua was the exception to this rule: three of the household heads interviewed there said it was Maori they first spoke, and the other four, English. A few people in the other communities said they learned to speak both English and Maori at the same time. Very few people first learned to write only in Maori. The proportion of those who first learned to write in English varied from 73 percent in Awanui and Kareponia, to 100 percent in Pukepoto. Reading patterns followed the same lines as those for writing.



LANGUAGE USED WHEN ALL THE FAMILY WERE TOGETHER

	Kaitaia	Kareponia & Awanui	Ahipara & Pukepoto	Pamapurua
Mostly Maori	.. (..%)	.. (..%)	2 (11%)	1 (14%)
Half and half	5 (17%)	1 (10%)	2 (11%)	2 (29%)
Mostly English	15 (51%)	8 (80%)	12 (67%)	3 (43%)
Entirely English	9 (32%)	1 (10%)	2 (11%)	1 (14%)
No. of Households	29	10	18	7

(Figures refer to households with dependent children only)

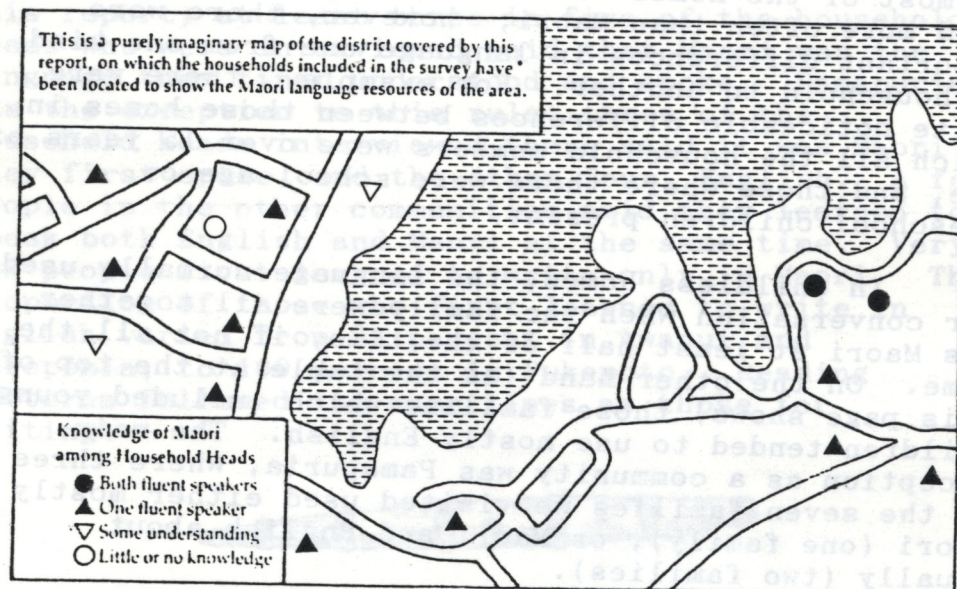
Use of the Maori Language in the Household

In most of the homes visited English seemed to be used more often than Maori; however, there were important differences in language use from one kind of household to another. For example, there were quite noticeable differences between those homes in which all the household members were over 15 years of age, and those where there were school-age or preschool children present.

In childless homes, the language normally used for conversation when the family were all together was Maori at least half of the time, if not all the time. On the other hand (as the table at the top of this page shows) those families which included young children tended to use mostly English. The main exception as a community was Pamapurua, where three of the seven families we visited used either mostly Maori (one family), or Maori and English about equally (two families).

The Maori Language in the Community

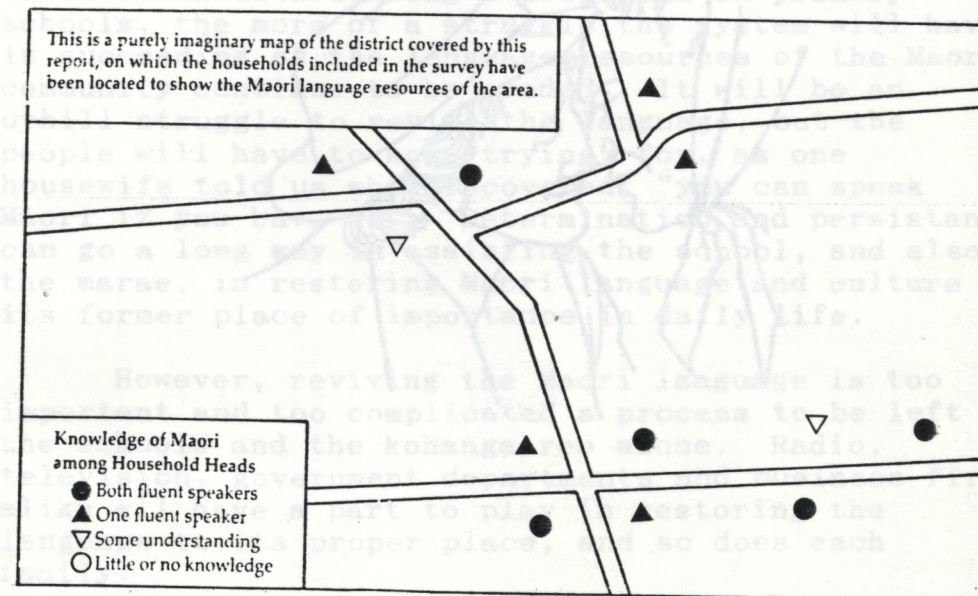
The rarity of children under fifteen years of age who understood or spoke Maori among the families we visited in these districts means that each succeeding generation will find it almost impossible to maintain the Maori language unless some drastic measures are taken to revive it. Only the older members of the communities found Maori useful as a language of conversation, and even among them Maori is obviously not the language to use with most of their neighbors, who cannot speak Maori. Indeed there were some communities, notably Pukepoto, and to a lesser extent Kareponia and Awanui, where the Maori language already seemed to be in grave danger of slipping away, as English was being allowed to encroach on what might normally have been regarded as an



AWANUI AND KAREPONIA

exclusively Maori-language situation, such as a hui on the marae. It was only in Ahipara where most people said they would rather speak Maori when they had a choice; for reading and writing, English was the preferred language everywhere.

In most of the communities, a third to a half of the parents and grandparents we spoke to had been caned, strapped, or had experienced some other kind of physical punishment for speaking Maori at primary school. The exceptions were Pukepoto (only a fifth) and Pamapurua (a quarter). Most of the Maori-speaking people we interviewed had experienced some kind of hostility or negative attitude from teachers for using Maori at school, even if they had escaped physical punishment, and they had understood the message that Maori had to be left at the school gate.



PUKEPOTO AND PAMAPURUA

In spite of this experience, however, many people still felt pride in the Maori language and their ability to speak it. Another, younger person probably spoke for several when she said that she felt ashamed at not being able to speak Maori when her friends spoke Maori between themselves. One of the people we spoke to was very hopeful that "there is going to be a big change soon -- the Maori language will be revived to a greater extent". This was a prophetic statement, as the kohanga reo movement has begun to bring about the changes which this person and many others longed for.



Conclusion

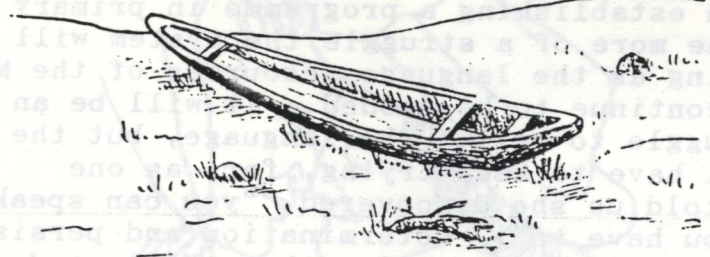
The six communities included in this report illustrate a range of personal experiences which on balance show that the Maori language is in need of strong support if it is to remain a healthy and vigorous language. A Pamapuria resident succinctly summed up the reasons why "children have lost the art of speaking Maori" in these words:

The parents are at fault for not teaching them, the education system is at fault also for trying to compulsorily make brown-skinned pakehas out of Maoris.

The urgency of the language situation was not lost on the families we visited. As some of the people said, the school has a big role. Bilingual education is definitely needed, and the more delay there is in establishing a programme in primary schools, the more of a struggle the system will have in succeeding as the language resources of the Maori community continue to be eroded. It will be an uphill struggle to revive the language, but the people will have to keep trying, for, as one housewife told us she discovered, "you can speak Maori if you have to". Determination and persistence can go a long way in assisting the school, and also the marae, in restoring Maori language and culture to its former place of importance in daily life.

However, reviving the Maori language is too important and too complicated a process to be left to the schools and the kohanga reo alone. Radio, television, government departments and business firms alike all have a part to play in restoring the language to its proper place, and so does each family.

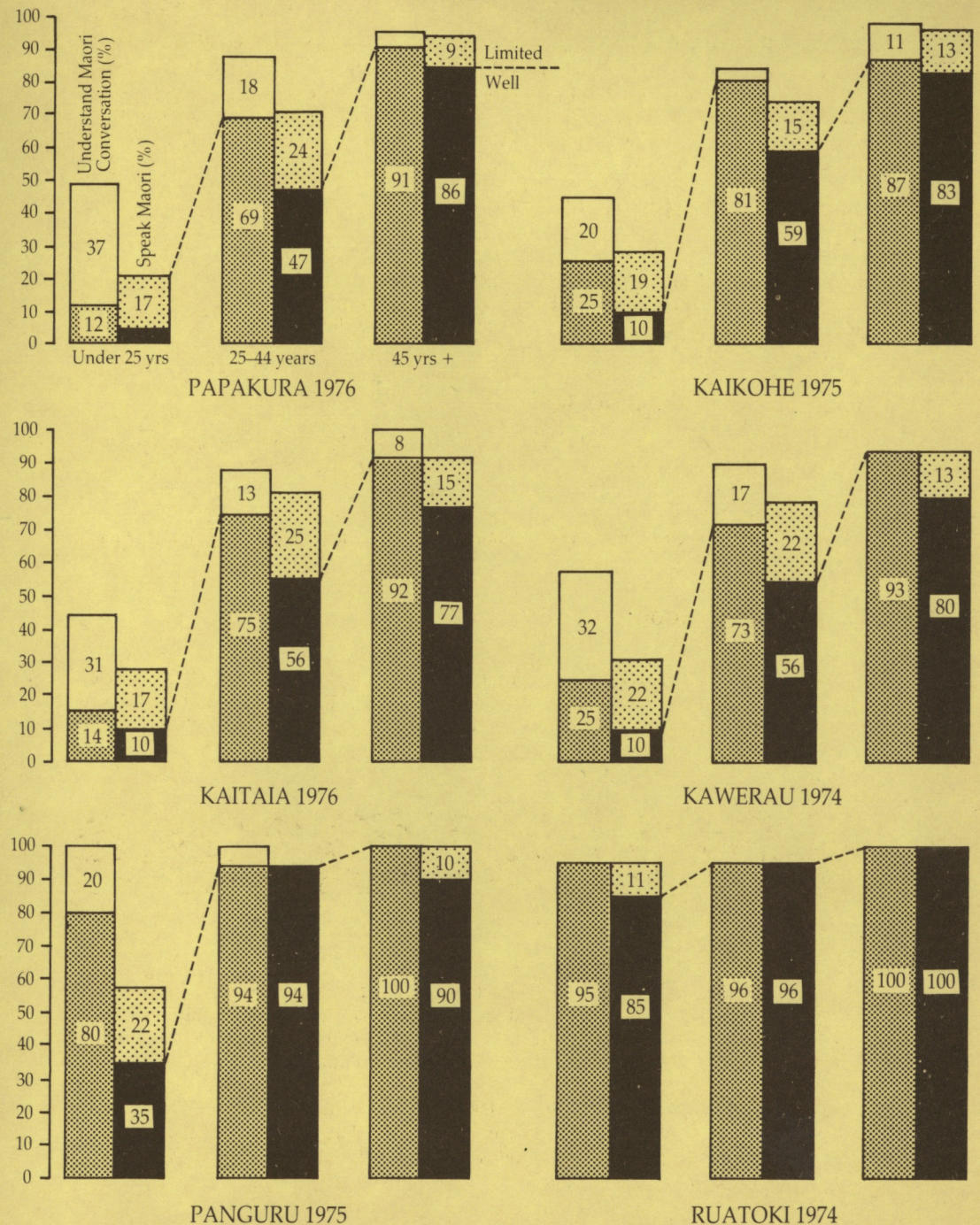
One young mother from Kaitaia had a good idea which others could also share. She thought that teaching Maori in schools would give a good chance to reviving the language, but instead of waiting around until her children were of school age, she got their grandfather to help her teach them Maori before they started school. For families like this, and many other people who would like to see the Maori language given a new lease of life, the kohanga reo and bilingual education could be an invaluable source of support outside the home and the marae, paving the way for wider use of Maori in offices and shops as well as on radio and television, as the language and its speakers gain strength and influence.



This report was prepared by Nena Benton

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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.