

TE TIROHANGA I TE KÖRERÖTANGA O TE REO RANGATIRA I ROTO I NGÄ KÄINGA MÄORI ME NGÄ ROHE

Survey of Language Use in Maori Households
and Communities

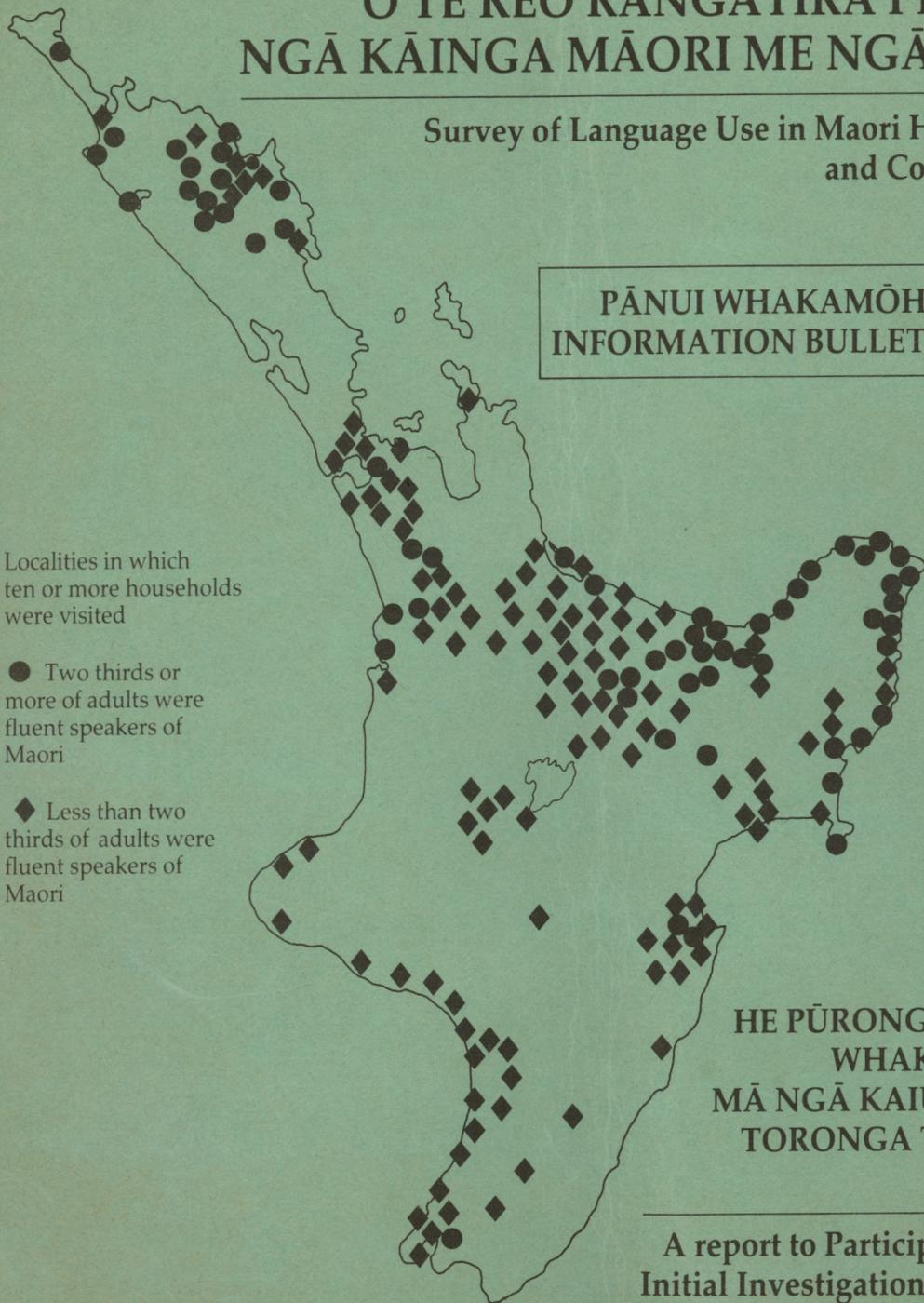
PÄNUI WHAKAMÖHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

89

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

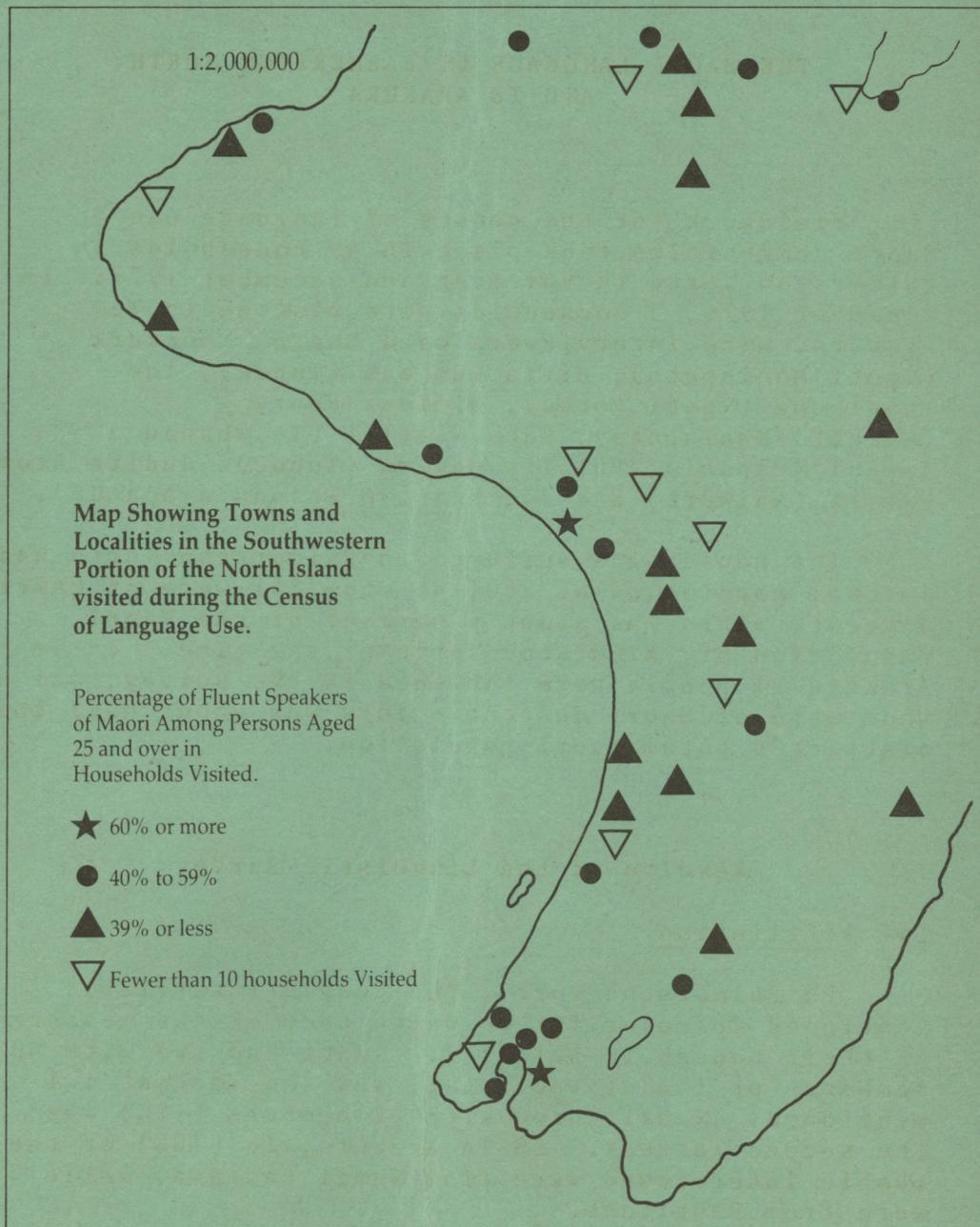
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

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



HE PŪRONGORONGO
WHAKAMÖHIO
MÄ NGÄ KAIURU KI TE
TORONGA TUATAHI,
1973-1978

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



THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN PALMERSTON NORTH AND TE ARAKURA

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 49 households in Palmerston North in November and December 1977. In December 1976, 5 households were visited in Te Arakura. The interviewers were Sharon Moerkerk (Ngati Maniapoto), Hiria Tumoana (Tuhoe), Tom Rangihuna (Ngati Porou), Himiona Henry (Waikato/Maniapoto), Kahu Waititi (Te Whanau a Apanui/Ngapuhi), Phillip Hawera (Tuhoe), Judith Brown Hawera (Waikato) and Joe Rua (Te Whanau a Apanui).

The households surveyed in Palmerston North had a total population of 260, of whom 241 were of Maori descent. This was about 6 percent of the Maori population of Palmerston North at the time. In Te Arakura 21 people were included in the survey, all of whom were of Maori descent - this was about half the district's total Maori population.

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Iwi Affiliation

In Palmerston North, the people interviewed mentioned 18 major iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged. Ngati Raukawa with 40 members (or 15% of the total) was the largest iwi mentioned. Ngati Porou with 32 members (12%) was the second largest. In Te Arakura, 16 (76%) of the people interviewed were from Ngati Raukawa, while 5 were from Rangitane.

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Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Palmerston North (1977)

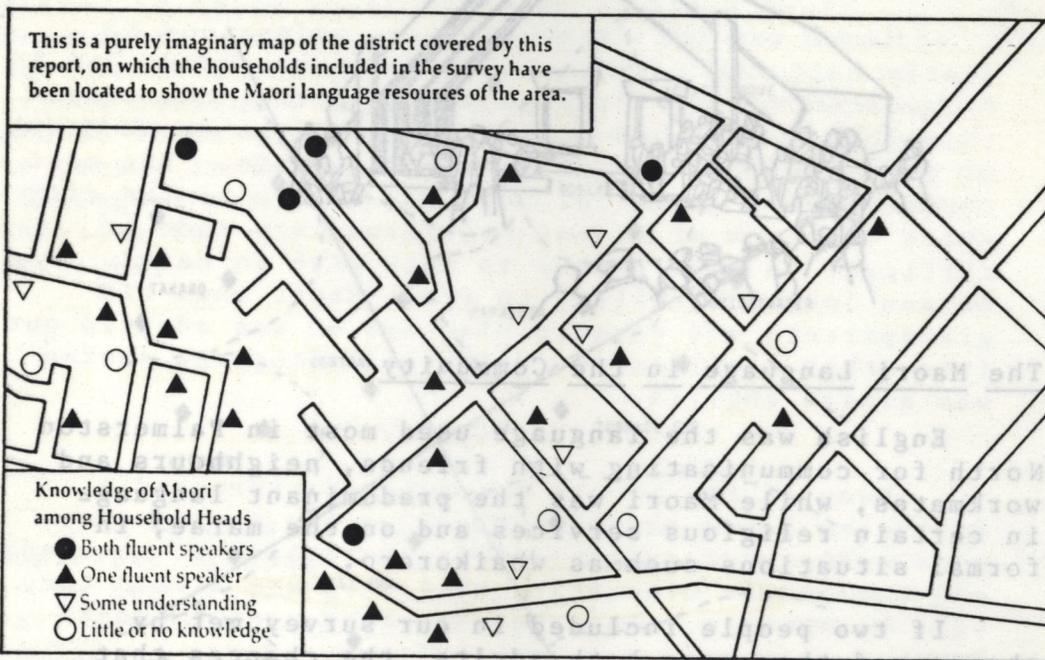
Age Group	Fluent Speakers	Understand Easily	Limited Understanding	No Knowledge
45+	13 (43%)	16 (53%)	5 (17%)	9 (30%)
25-44	22 (37%)	23 (39%)	9 (15%)	27 (46%)
15-24	5 (10%)	10 (21%)	13 (27%)	25 (52%)
2-14	9 (8%)	20 (17%)	25 (21%)	73 (62%)
Overall	49 (19%)	69 (27%)	52 (20%)	134 (53%)

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



Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table above shows that far fewer people under the age of 25 had a good understanding of Maori than did people over 25. Over half of the under 25s had absolutely no knowledge of Maori. While more than two out of five of those over 45 could be classed as fluent speakers, about one-tenth of the under 25s could speak Maori well. In Te Arakura we were told that noone under the age of 25 could speak or understand Maori well, although most people older than that had some knowledge of Maori.



PALMERSTON NORTH CITY

Use of Maori Language in the Household

English was the main language spoken in the homes. There were 41 households with children visited in Palmerston North and English was the only language used in all of them, except one where some Maori was spoken. There were 8 childless households and English was also the only language used in them. All 5 of the households visited in Te Arakura had children and English was the only language used there.

Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Maori was the first language understood by nearly half the parents and grandparents surveyed in Palmerston North. Many people, however, commented that they had either lost the ability to speak Maori or were finding it difficult to maintain. The most common reason given for this was a move to the city where the lack of fluent Maori speakers made it difficult to find anyone to talk with in Maori. One person lost the ability to speak Maori when his grandparents and parents died and he was adopted out into other families where the main language spoken was always English.

Many of the people interviewed expressed a desire to learn to speak Maori, a few saying they were embarrassed or ashamed at their lack of knowledge and two people mentioning that they are afraid they will be seen as Pakeha because they cannot speak Maori.

There were also those who were indifferent to the whole idea of speaking Maori and one person expressed the view that Maori people should forget about learning Maori and concentrate on getting a Pakeha education.

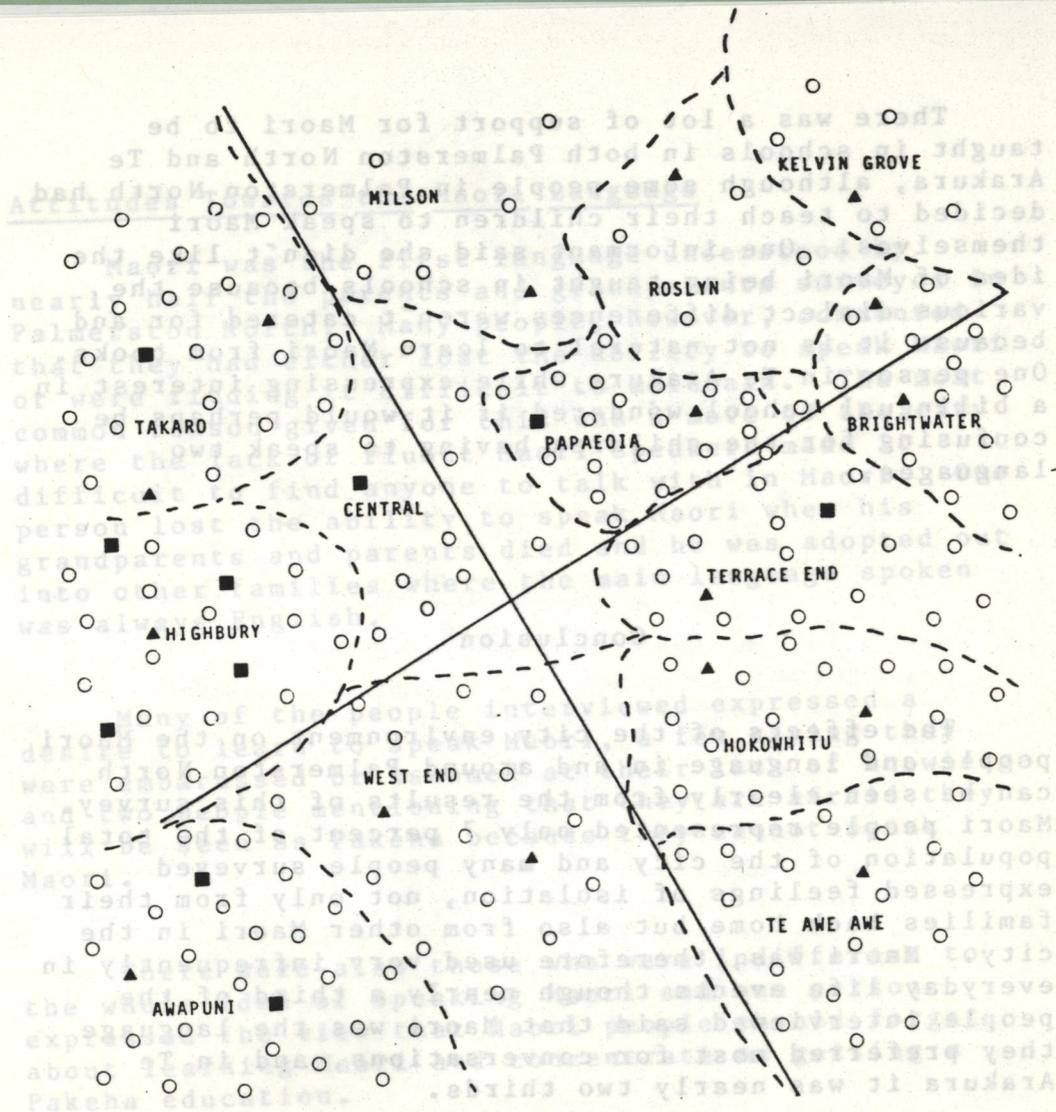
In Te Arakura, as in Palmerston North, there were people who felt very self-conscious about speaking Maori or about their lack of knowledge of Maori although one of the women who expressed this feeling said that she was very proud of her daughter who had learnt Maori in school.

There was a lot of support for Maori to be taught in schools in both Palmerston North and Te Arakura, although some people in Palmerston North had decided to teach their children to speak Maori themselves. One informant said she didn't like the idea of Maori being taught in schools because the various dialect differences weren't catered for and because it is not natural to learn Maori from books. One person in Te Arakura while expressing interest in a bilingual school wondered if it would perhaps be confusing for the children having to speak two languages.

Conclusion

The effects of the city environment on the Maori people and language in and around Palmerston North can be seen clearly from the results of this survey. Maori people represented only 7 percent of the total population of the city and many people surveyed expressed feelings of isolation, not only from their families back home but also from other Maori in the city. Maori was, therefore used very infrequently in everyday life events though nearly a third of the people interviewed said that Maori was the language they preferred most for conversations, and in Te Arakura it was nearly two thirds.

While most of the fluent speakers were adults, the support found for the teaching of Maori in schools indicates that there is a desire in this community for the children to learn Maori and carry the language on. New developments, like the Kohanga Reo, should also help to bring people together and help to create the kind of community feeling that would support greater use of the Maori language by both native speakers and learners.



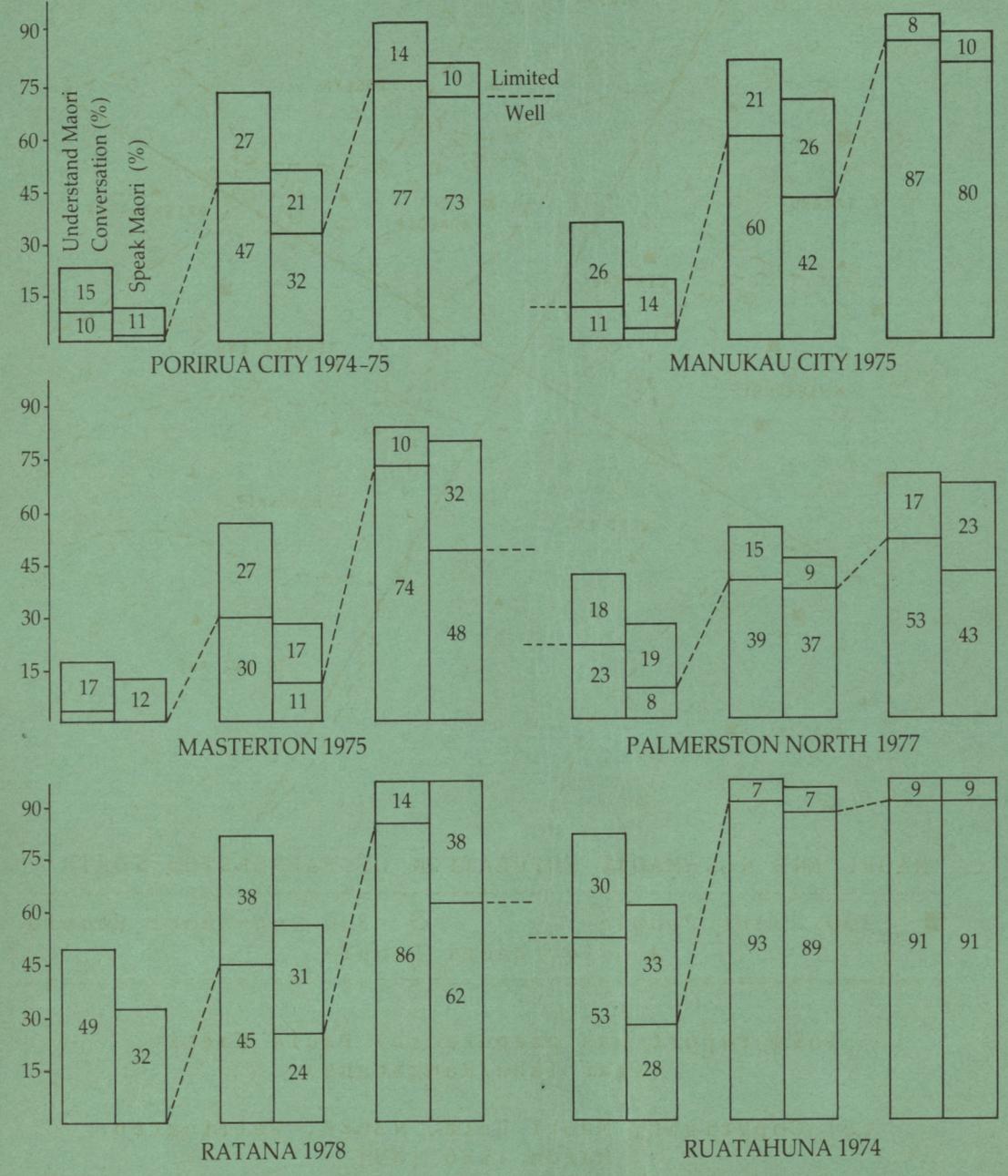
MAORI AND NON-MAORI POPULATION OF PALMERSTON NORTH

■ 300 Maori People ○ 300 Non-Maori People
 ▲ 100 Maori People

This report was prepared by Paula Martin
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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.