

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

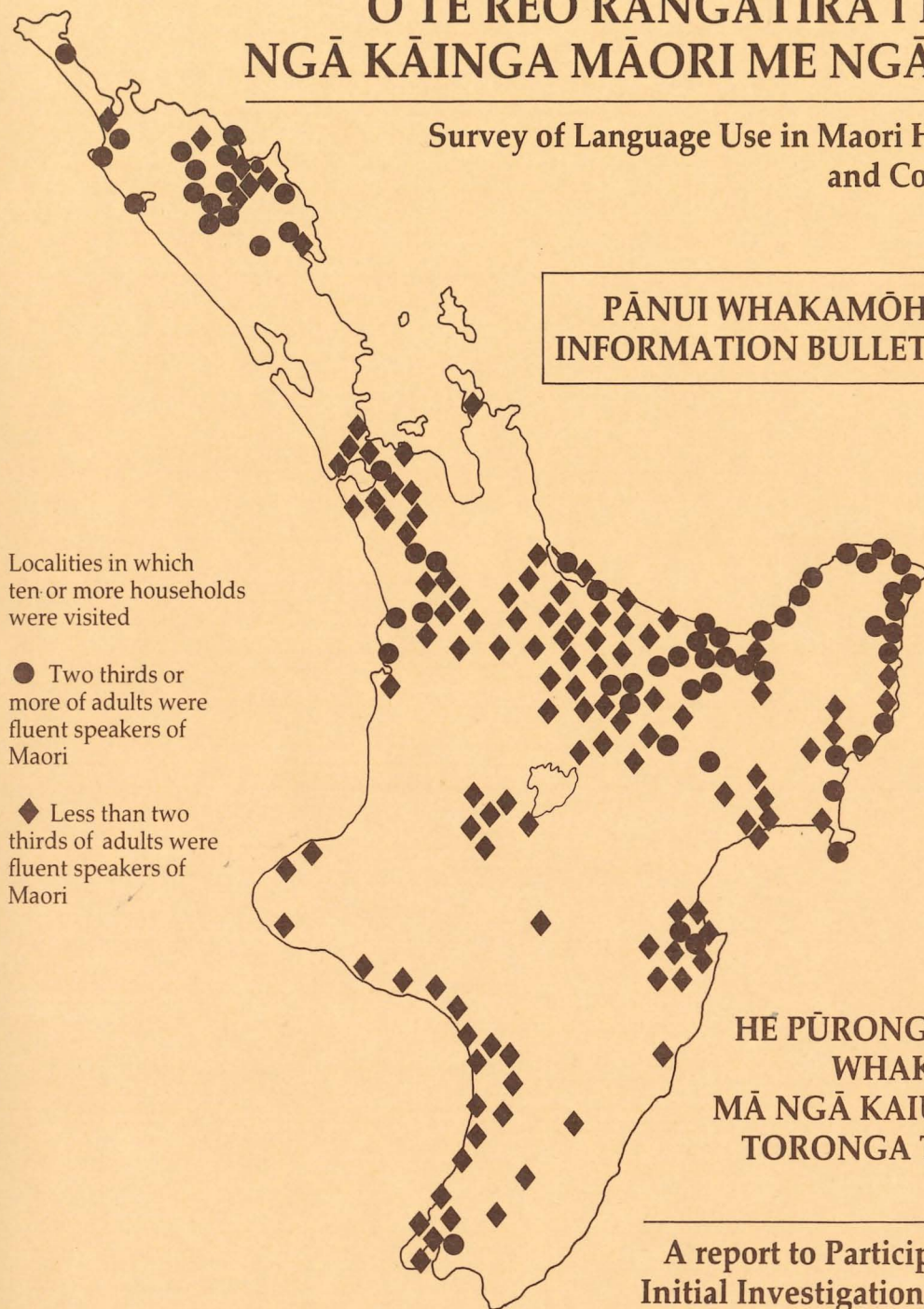
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

36

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

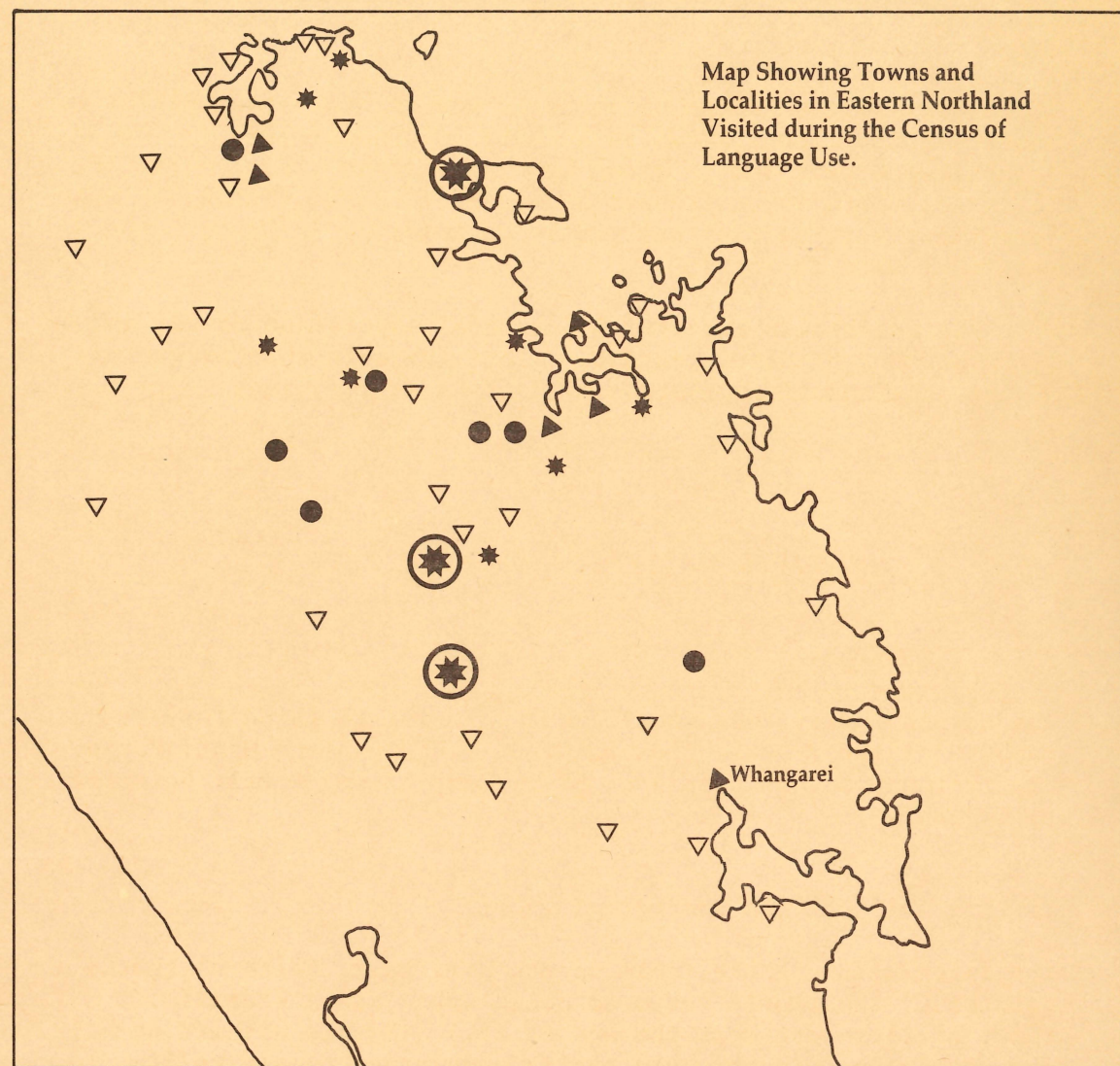
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

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

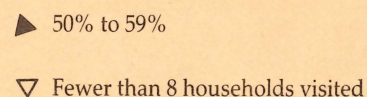
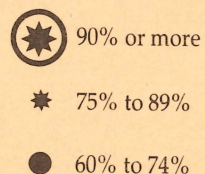


HE PŪRONGORONGO
WHAKAMŌHIO
MĀ NGĀ KAIURU KI TE
TORONGA TUATAHI,
1973–1978

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.



THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN WAIHAHA

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities was conducted in 12 households in Waihaha in January 1974. The interviewers were Judith Brown Hawera (Waikato), Evelyn Te Uira (Waikato), Dora Pryor (Tuhoe) and Susan Rikihana (Tuhoe). Four interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the remainder were in English.

The households surveyed had a total population of 68, and 66 of these were of Maori descent. This was more than two-thirds of the total Maori population of Waihaha at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned 2 main iwi to which they or members of their households belonged - Ngapuhi and Ngati Porou. Easily the most, 59 people or 87 percent of the total, belonged to Ngapuhi.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The information in the table on the next page, tells us that a quarter of the people surveyed could speak Maori fluently. (Most of them were over the age of 25.) Nearly a third of all the people in Waihaha could easily understand people talking in Maori, but most of the school-age and pre-school children knew very little Maori, or none at all.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN WAIHAHA (1974)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	12	86	13	93	1	7	0	
25-44	3	50	5	83	0		1	17
15-24	2	10	2	10	9	43	10	47
2-14	0		0		3	13	21	87
Overall	17	27	20	31	13	20	32	49

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

Use Of Maori Language In The Household

There were 8 homes with dependent children visited, and in 5 of them people spoke mostly or entirely in English. In three others both Maori and English were spoken for an equal amount of time.

In the 4 households without children, the kaumatua living there spoke Maori all the time, with each other and with Maori-speaking visitors.

The Maori Language In The Community

While English was the main language spoken in the community, Maori was still widely used by the kaumatua with each other and other adults. English was the main language used with shopkeepers, teachers, neighbours and friends, and also with children.

Maori was still used for important ceremonies on the marae, and in many different kinds of hui.

If any two adults from the homes we visited in Waihaha met unexpectedly, the chances that they would be able to talk in Maori would be high - more than 2 to 1. For the community as a whole, though, if two people were to meet unexpectedly, the chances were about 10 to 1 that they would speak to each other in English.

Attitudes Towards The Language

Although English seems to have taken the place of Maori as the main language in Waihaha, Maori was the language that the kaumatua of the area preferred to speak. Some of them talked about the loss of the language, especially among younger people. The widespread use of English on television, radio and in newspapers (and in the community itself), has made people worried about the future of Maori. Several families knew that the language was being spoken less and less, and were now speaking Maori and teaching it to their children and mokopuna. But some people said that it was already too late for this to make any difference.

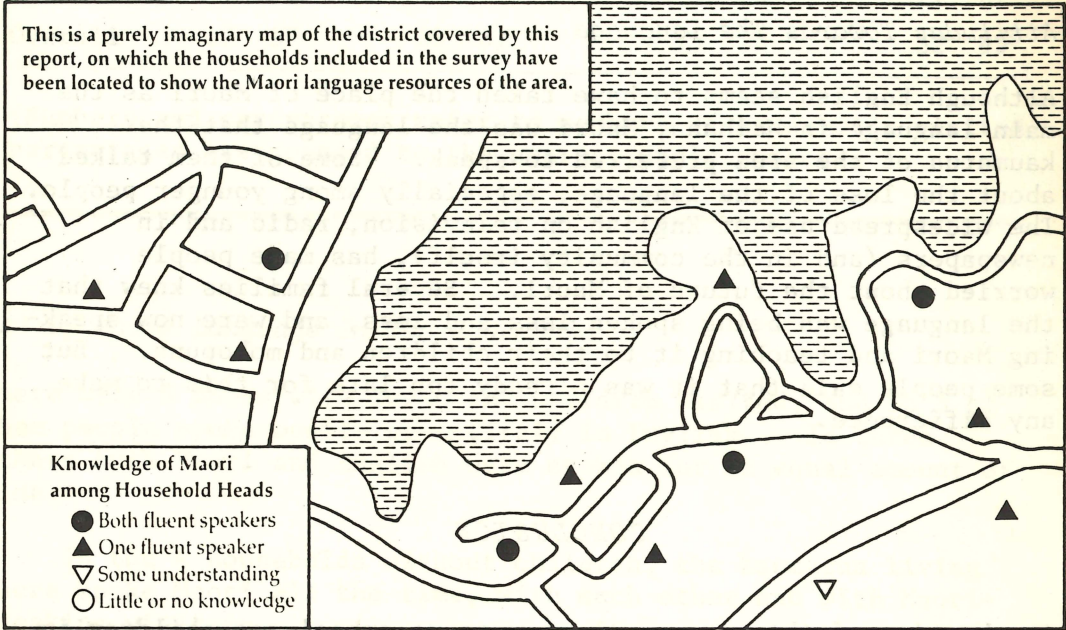
CONCLUSION

At the time of the survey, there were no school-age children in Waihaha who could speak Maori well or understand it easily. More than three-quarters of this age group knew practically nothing of the language, while half the people under 24 knew little more. It was the kaumatua over the age of 45 who had the most knowledge of Maori.

English was the main language spoken in the home and community, although three-quarters of the adults were able to

talk fluently in Maori. The language, however, was widely used in many ceremonies on the marae, and in certain religious services.

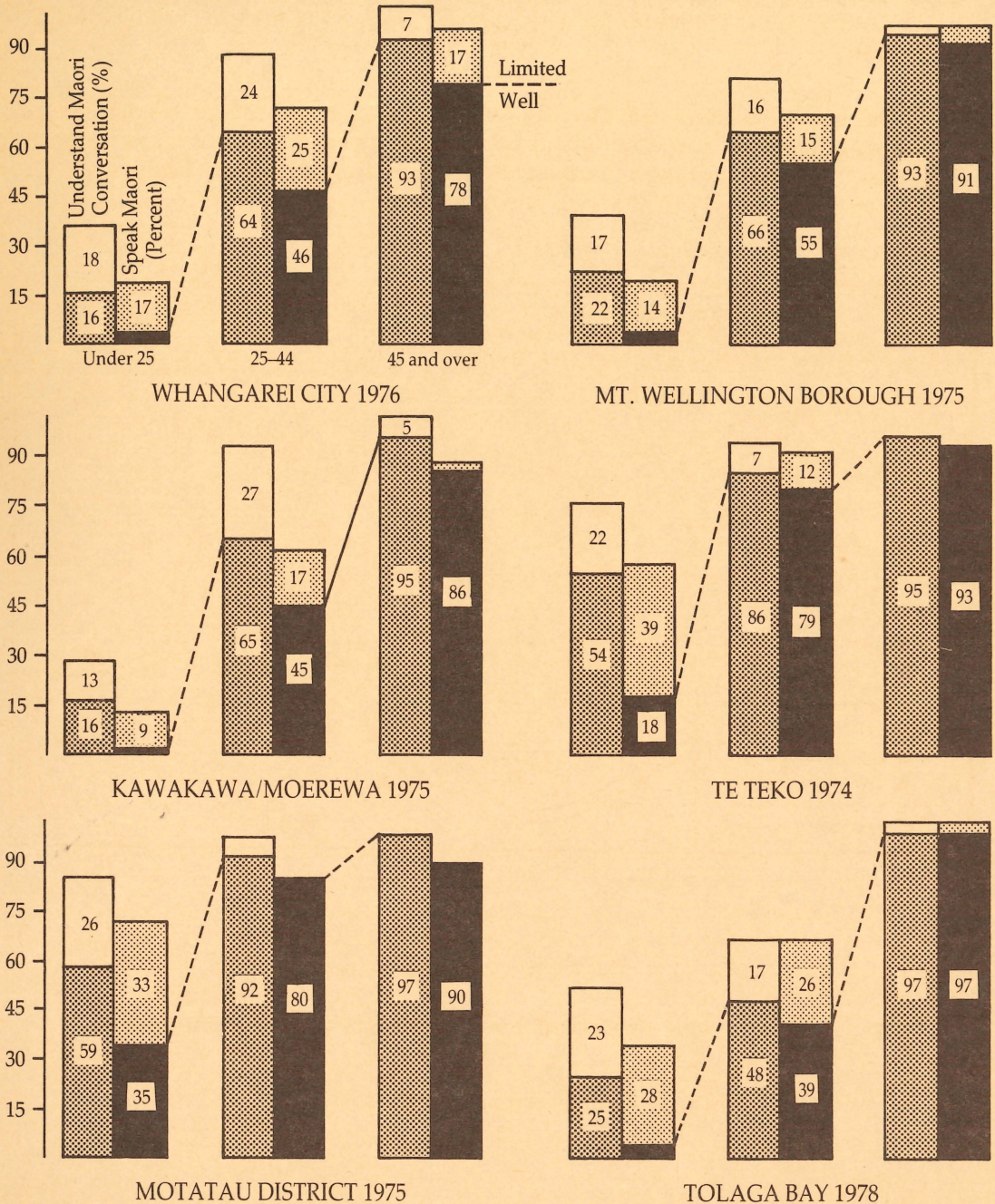
Because so many adults in Waihaha can speak Maori well, a bilingual school for the district would have a good chance of success, if the parents wanted the Maori language to play a large part in their children's education.



This report was prepared by Lee Smith (Ngati Kahungunu).

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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.