

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

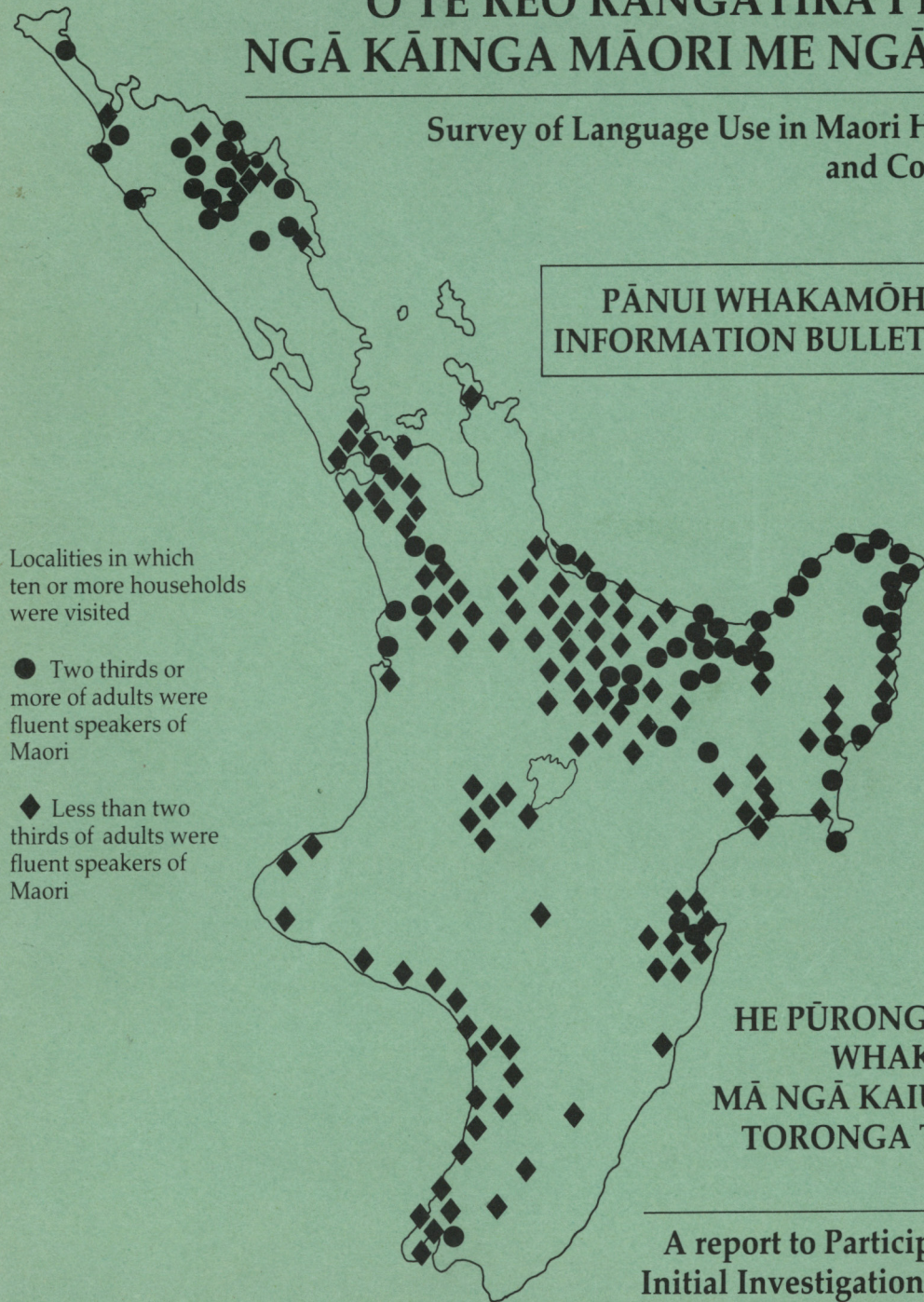
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

1

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

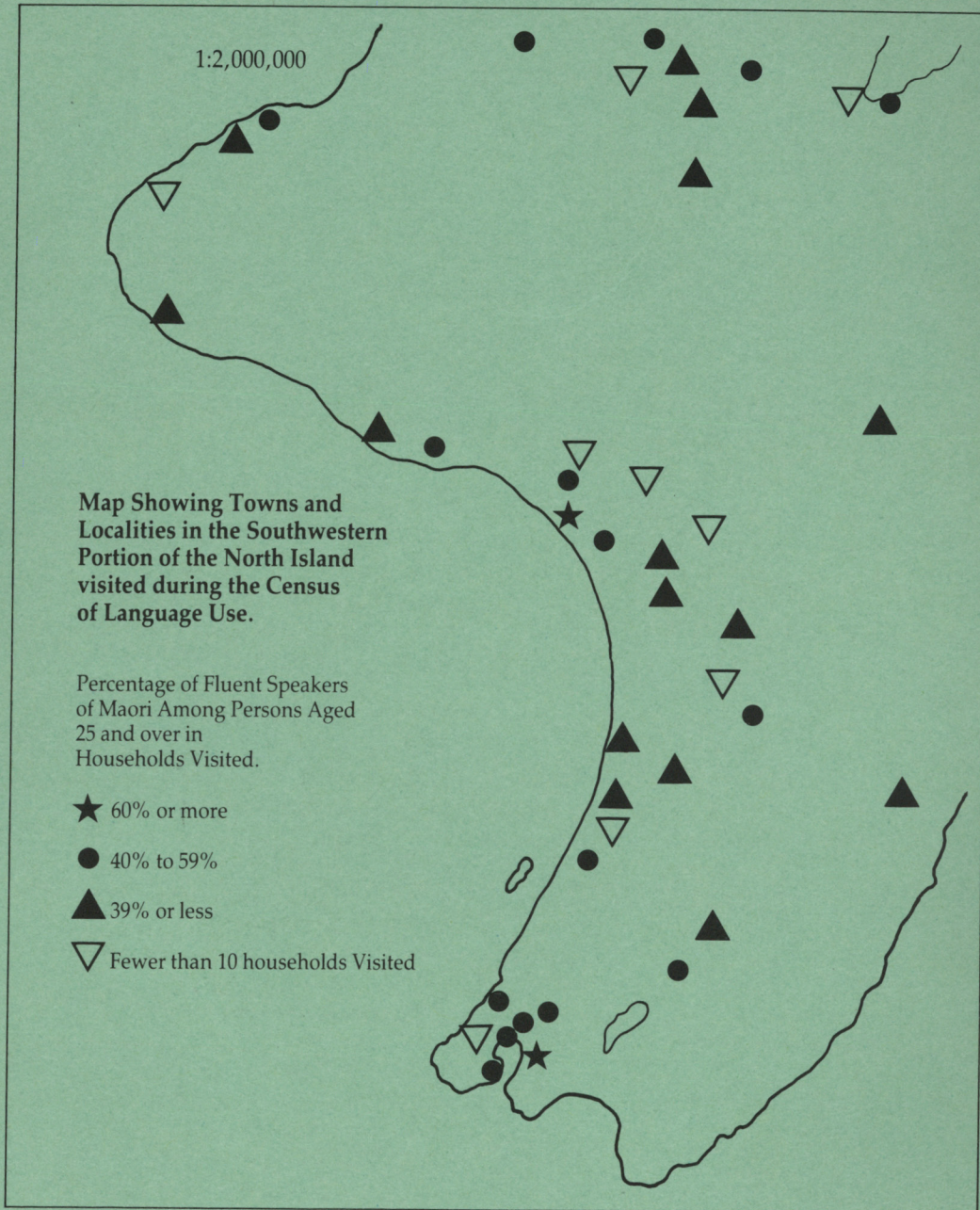
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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



people in the highest educational category...
 The survey...
 Andrew Hobbs...
 Hamilton...
 interviews...
 English...
 for one...
 out to...
 results on...
 members

Background Information

Altogether 43 households were visited, and 51 household heads were interviewed. There were 205 people included in the survey. This was just over 70 percent of the Maori population of Waverley at that time.

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN WAVERLEY

These people represented a total of 18 major iwi. However, Mrs Ratu, with 95 members, accounting for almost 50 percent of the population.

Waverley was the last community to be visited in the first phase of the NZCER Maori language survey. Most of the fieldwork in this survey, which covered almost all the main areas of Maori population in the North Island, took place between August 1973 and August 1978. However, in August 1979 the Maori Unit of NZCER was asked to look at the feasibility of a bilingual education project centred at St Michael's School, in Waverley, and it was decided to conduct a survey of Maori language use in the town, asking the same questions that had been used previously.

Some of the information gained was included in a leaflet with the same title as this report, and more was included in a section of the 28 page report on the bilingual education project: *A Catholic Education in Maori and English: Comments on a Possible Bilingual Education Project at St. Michael's School, Waverley*. Both of these were produced and distributed within a few months of the fieldwork's being completed. This new report includes all the information in the earlier ones, as well as additional material from the survey which was not available when they were prepared.

The interviewers were Tawini Rangihau (Tuhoe), Andrew Robb, Ian Maxwell (Ngai Tai) and Arapeta Hamilton (Ngati Raukawa & Ngapuhi). Eight interviews took place in Maori, eight in Maori and English, and the rest were all in English (except for one question which everyone was asked in Maori).

Background Information

Altogether 42 households were visited, and 51 household heads were interviewed. There were 205 people included in the survey, 191 of whom were of Maori ancestry. This was just over 70 percent of the Maori population of Waverley at that time. These people represented a total of 18 major iwi. However, Nga Rauru, with 95 members, accounted for almost half the population, and Wainuiarua (with 32) was the only other iwi claimed by more than ten percent of the people in the families we visited. About three-quarters of the people included in the survey (151 in all) belonged to an iwi from the Wanganui/Taranaki region.

Most of the adult members of the Maori community in Waverley were comparative newcomers to the town itself -- only seven percent of male household heads and fourteen percent of female had lived in Waverley all their lives, and almost half of each group had lived longer outside the district than in Waverley. On the other hand, just over half the oldest children in the households we visited had been born in Waverley, and about four-fifths of the youngest children had lived in Waverley all their lives. At the time of the survey, 44 percent of the Maori population in the town was younger than 15 years of age.

The socioeconomic status of the household heads included in the survey fitted the national pattern for Maori communities. There were a handful of

people in the highest educated, most affluent category, but the greatest number (21 of the 40 male household heads included in the survey) had occupations in level 6 of the Elley-Irving Scale, that is, the least well-paying jobs, with few educational or training requirements. Most families (35 of the 42) were "nuclear", consisting of two parents with one or more children, with no other members.

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

As the table at the top of the next page shows, most of the fluent speakers of Maori in Waverley were over 45 years of age at the time of our survey. No children under the age of 15 were able to speak Maori fluently, although even in this age group the majority (about two-thirds) had at least a slight knowledge of the language.

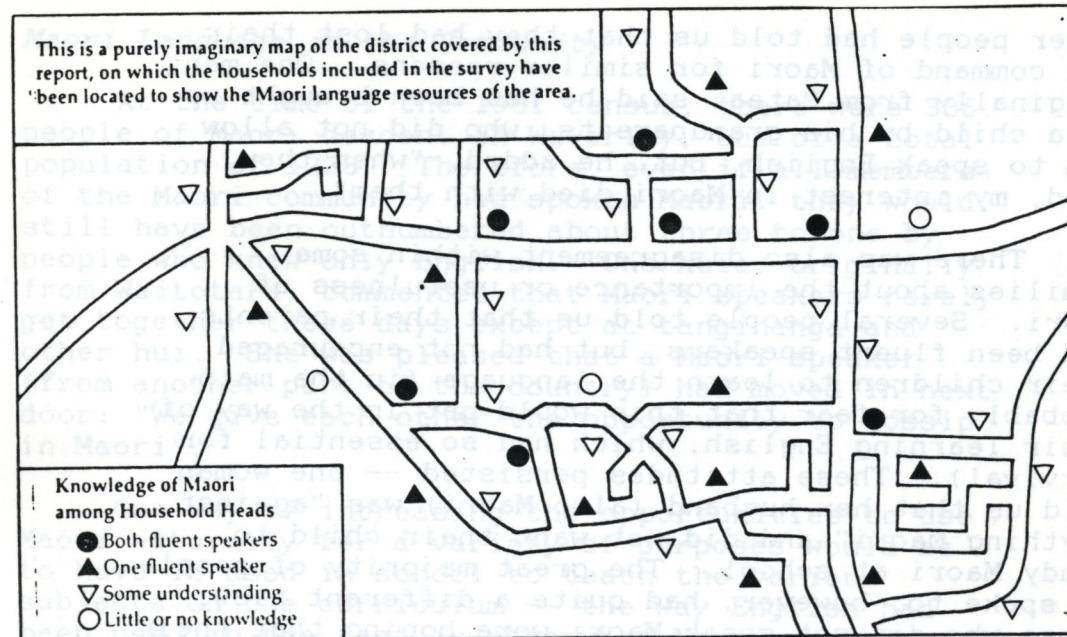
A close look at the ages of people with a good knowledge of Maori reveals that, for the present Maori residents of Waverley, a critical period was reached about the end of World War II. The percentage of fluent speakers begins to dip below 71 percent at the 35 to 39 age group, and declines very rapidly in each younger age bracket. The 71 percent mark is critical, as it is the level below which one can no longer expect to meet a Maori speaker at least as often as someone who cannot speak Maori. We will come back to this point a little later in this report.

=====
Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Waverley (1979)
 =====

Age Group	Fluent Speakers	Understand Easily	Limited Understanding	No Knowledge
45 years & over	21 (78%)	25 (93%)	0 (...)	2 (7%)
25-44 yrs	9 (18%)	20 (39%)	17 (33%)	14 (27%)
15-24 yrs	1 (3%)	3 (9%)	21 (62%)	10 (29%)
2-14 yrs	0 (...)	0 (...)	55 (63%)	32 (37%)
Overall	31 (16%)	48 (24%)	93 (47%)	58 (29%)

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

Seventeen of the fifty adults we interviewed had Maori as their first language, and another five learned Maori and English together. Most had learned to read and write through English, however, although seven had learned in Maori at home before they went to school, and one other learned to read and write in Maori and English at about the same time. At the time of the survey, very few pre-school children had any knowledge of Maori, and much of what the school-age children knew may have been the result of the Maori language programmes that had been established in Waverley's three schools. With adults, however, it was different. Their knowledge of Maori was mostly acquired from their own families and the Maori communities where they had been brought up, and so it was a direct inheritance from a past when Maori was widely spoken.



WAVERLEY

Use of the Maori Language in the Household

In most homes English was said to be spoken much more often than Maori. However there was still a significant proportion of the adult community who had a good knowledge of the language, and these people were spread throughout the township, so that, as the diagram at the top of this page illustrates, just under half the families had at least one member who was fluent in Maori, and most household heads knew at least a little Maori.

One Maori-speaking couple told us that they had started off speaking Maori to their children, but over the years had given up, as the children became much more proficient in English because there was no support for the language outside the home. Several

other people had told us that they had lost their own command of Maori for similar reasons. One man, originally from Patea, said he had been brought up as a child by his grandparents, who did not allow him to speak English. But, he added, "when they died, my interest in Maori died with them".

There was also disagreement within some families about the importance or usefulness of Maori. Several people told us that their parents had been fluent speakers, but had not encouraged their children to learn the language (in the main probably for fear that this would get in the way of their learning English, which had so essential for survival). These attitudes persisted -- one woman told us that her husband (also Maori) was "against anything Maori" and did not want their child to study Maori at school. The great majority of people we spoke to, however, had quite a different view; those who did not speak Maori were hoping that their children would be able to learn more than them, and many Maori-speakers were trying to encourage their children to take an interest in the language, despite the difficulties involved.

Of the 37 families who still had dependent children living at home, three spoke both Maori and English when all the family was together, 17 mostly English, and the other 17 used English all the time. There were six families where Maori was spoken by parents to children some of the time, but the children were more likely to answer in English on these occasions, according to their parents. One family was more likely to speak Maori than English with their regular visitors, and 11 others used Maori about as often as English with such people. However, in the majority of homes, Maori had definitely become a language for "special occasions", if it was used at all.

Maori Language in the Community

At the time of the 1981 census, there were 336 people of Maori descent in Waverley, out of a total population of 1233. Therefore, even if all members of the Maori community had spoken Maori, they would still have been outnumbered about three to one by people who knew only English. One kuia, originally from Waitotara, commented that Maori speakers rarely get together these days except at tangihanga and other hui. She was pleased that a Maori-speaker (from another part of the country) had moved in next door: "We give each other the opportunity to gossip in Maori".

One way of increasing the opportunities to use Maori naturally for a variety of purposes would be to have it used in school to teach the various subjects on the curriculum -- the way English had been used in the past in otherwise Maori-speaking communities. It was this method of reviving the language that was being considered when the idea that St Michael's School should become a bilingual school was proposed. English would still have been used at school, but the curriculum would have been arranged in such a way that Maori was the main language for teaching, learning, and playing at least half the time.

One of the aims of a bilingual education project in Waverley would have been to raise the proportion of speakers of Maori in the Maori community, at least in Waverley, beyond the 70 percent mark. This is now undoubtedly the aim of the kohanga reo which was established in the town in 1983. The reason so many parents had themselves lost their fluency in Maori, or found it hard to keep their children interested, was partly because children quickly sense how useful a particular kind of activity is. If your chances of being able to speak Maori to the people you meet are not very

great, there is much less incentive to take a lot of trouble to learn to speak the language well. This also is one of the reasons that, in the late 1980s, many Maori people are calling for a radical change in the educational environment for their children, with the idea of *kaupapa Maori* schools, where the language of the classroom and the playground would be Maori, becoming increasingly attractive.

Several people commented on what they considered to be widespread racism in the community. One woman said that at different times her children had come home from school insisting that they were not Maori because "Maoris were savages", and adding requests for reassurance like: "Yuck, we're not Maoris, are we, Mum?" This particular person described herself as a "battling Maori", and confronted this issue head on. By the time we talked to her, she said her children were now all proud to be Maori. A younger woman commented, however, that "If you speak Maori around here in Waverley you just couldn't get anywhere. Pakehas would just ignore you, until you speak English. If you want to get ahead around here you have to speak English." This woman would not give her children Maori names: she said that they would just be mispronounced as a matter of course.

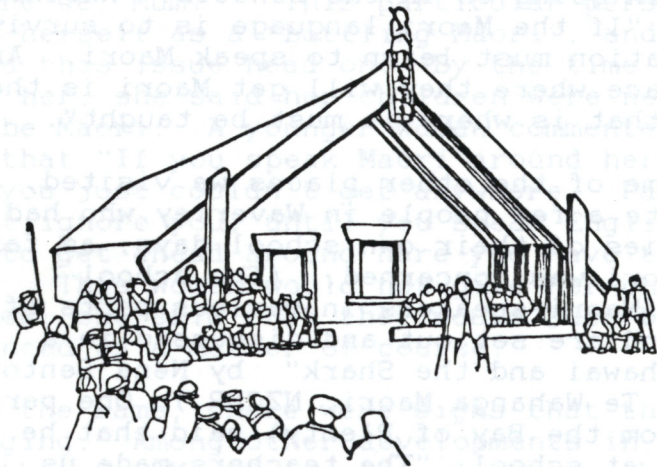
Just the same, there were signs that things were changing. Among other developments in the late 1970s, a thriving Maori language programme had been introduced into the High School, and there were also well-attended night classes for people of all ages. Good work had been done in the primary schools by itinerant teachers of Maori. Most of the families we interviewed were very pleased that there was a possibility that St Michael's might become a bilingual school -- this was seen as the next step in a real revival of Maori language and culture in the community. Unfortunately, St Michael's School had to close because its roll fell when several

large families left the district before the scheme could start. Nevertheless, the interest aroused by this idea and the work that had already been done in the other schools would have helped pave the way for the next step in this process, the establishment of a *kohanga reo* (Te Hungariki) four years later.

People were strongly supportive of an important place for Maori language in the schools for a variety of reasons: for example, it would help their children take a greater interest in Maori, and it would give them back something of the heritage which had been lost to their parents. One young mother thought that the young children in Waverley were already more fluent in Maori than she was, because of what had been going on in the schools. Another commented that "If the Maori language is to survive, the next generation must learn to speak Maori. And if the only place where they will get Maori is the schools, then that is where it must be taught".

Unlike some of the other places we visited, there were quite a few people in Waverley who had pleasant memories of their own school days, as far as speaking Maori was concerned. (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.) One person (originally from the Bay of Plenty) said that he had to speak Maori at school: "The teachers made us because it was a Maori school". Another, from a Wanganui River settlement, like several other people we interviewed, said "The nuns were really good about Maori things". Some people had not been so fortunate. One person from a Taranaki settlement said "I was punished for using the only Maori words I could speak: 'Porangi Pakeha'!" Another, from a much more distant place, said "Names were taken down on the playground if we were caught speaking Maori. The punishment was to go and get boxes of soil from

the bush with our hands". Many of the people from around Waverley itself did not know how teachers would have reacted if they had spoken Maori at school, because neither they nor their classmates knew enough Maori to be able to use it. A total of 18 out of the 49 people who commented about this had been at schools where Maori was discouraged or forbidden; eight of them had been punished physically for speaking Maori, and another six had received milder punishments. On the other hand, three had been encouraged by their teachers to use the language.



The marae was one place where Maori still had a definite edge on English. Whereas only three of the household heads we interviewed spoke Maori often to their neighbors (and another eight used the language sometimes in this situation), everyone agreed that their kaumatua would use only Maori during a whaikorero on the marae, and most thought that Maori would be the main language used by these people even when chatting to friends at a hui or tangi. Only

eight of the people we spoke to would themselves whaikorero; five of them only in Maori, and three in English. So English had a toe-hold even here, with the younger generation. Of the 46 people who attended Maori gatherings, six said they would chat in Maori most of the time, eight would use Maori and English, and the other 32 would usually speak English alone.

Religious activities were also more likely to have a Maori language component than most others. Just over half the people who commented on the language for prayers for opening and closing meetings (21 out of 40) said that they would use only Maori for this purpose, and another six would use both Maori and English. For saying grace, 15 would use Maori, 5 Maori and English, and 17 only English. Similar proportions favoured Maori or English in prayers for the sick. Religious services were more likely to be bilingual: ten people said the services they attended were mainly in Maori, 18 said Maori and English, and 14 usually went to services that were entirely in English.

As a general language for the whole Maori community, Maori was in a much weaker position in Waverley in 1979 than it was as a ceremonial language. The chances of two people from the families we visited being able to talk in Maori if they were to meet by chance were only slightly better than one in five if both people were over 25. If one were under that age, the chances would have been about one in a hundred. People were obviously well aware of this at the time of the survey, and were looking for ways of ensuring that Maori would not vanish from this part of the country. The danger of that happening was becoming greater as the years passed: the chart on the next page shows the general situation in most of the communities we visited in the Taranaki, Whanganui, Rangitikei and Horowhenua regions during the survey. Waverley was

USE OF MAORI IN THE MAORI COMMUNITY (1973-79)
(SELECTED DISTRICTS FROM TARANAKI TO HOROWHENUA)

MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS &
MARGINALLY MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS

(None)

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

(None)	(None)	Rata (141)
		Palmerston North (89)

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

(None)	Putiki (116)
	Kauangaroa (141)

DISTRICTS WHERE MAORI-SPEAKERS WERE A MINORITY

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

Wanganui	Waitara (75)	Okato (7)
City (116)	New Plymouth (7)	Opunake (66)
Wanganui	Patea (82)	Bulls (141)
River	** Waverley	Marton (141)
Communities	Castlecliffe (116)	Foxton (80)
(116)	Ratana (79)	Poroutawhao (2)
Te Arakura (89)	Taihape (141)	Shannon (121)
	Feilding (136)	Manakau (2)
	Otaki (2)	Kuku (2)

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

quite typical of these districts: Maori had become a language of elderly people as far as ability to use it in everyday situations was concerned, and the dominance of English in schooling, radio, television, and the wider community generally was making the regeneration of the Maori language steadily more difficult to accomplish.

Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Many of the people whom we interviewed in Waverley who could speak Maori, would rather have spoken Maori than English when they had the opportunity. Altogether, 21 preferred Maori for speaking, 11 preferred English, and 18 liked both languages equally. For reading and writing, the position was reversed, largely because most people had less opportunity to read Maori than English, and almost all the writing they had done would have been in English. Just the same, 14 preferred Maori to English for reading, and another 14 liked both Maori and English; 15 preferred to write in Maori, and 13 found both languages much the same.

One kaumatua said that publications in Maori for children to read for enjoyment were urgently needed. He thought that if nothing was done about this, "seminars on the Maori language" were a waste of time. A kuia who had grown up in Waitotara was very concerned about the inability even of Maori young people to pronounce Maori properly. She said that this made her so annoyed that she had stopped trying to teach younger people the language: she left this to her husband, who had more patience. For herself, she thought poor pronunciation "diluted the language", and said that if this couldn't be overcome, "it might be better to leave Maori alone".

Most people, though, thought that the language should not be left alone. Several said they were embarrassed by how little Maori they themselves knew; they wished their parents had taught them more, and wanted their children to be able to learn the language well. One young mother said she was "really mad" at her parents for using only English at home when she was a child. An older person remarked that many of his contemporaries were "becoming lazy in using Maori", but others had become quite active in trying to promote the language.

Conclusion

We were told that Waitotara was the nucleus of Nga Rauru settlement until the 1950s. Waitotara was the only Nga Rauru community to escape the land confiscations following the war in the 1860s. People from all the other kainga in this area, including Waverley, were dispersed then. However, a new kind of confiscation, the government's well-intentioned but culturally destructive policies of resettlement and "development" in the 1950s and sixties, completed what the wars a century earlier had begun, and the Nga Rauru were forced to abandon their one remaining stronghold. Many of these people came to settle in Waverley.

They were not entirely welcome arrivals, and their attempts to establish a community centre for themselves came up against strong opposition. Ironically, by the time tensions had eased sufficiently to make this idea feasible, the interest in such a project had also waned. Nonetheless, we were told that there had been a

number of very encouraging signs that the Maori community in Waverley was gaining a new sense of confidence by the time we were doing our research. For one thing, the secondary school Maori programme had been an unexpected and major innovation. There was a strong possibility that a variety of educational initiatives might not only restore the language to the families of Nga Rauru and other Maori people living in Waverley, but that these might also help build much needed bridges between the Maori and Pakeha communities in the township.

At the time of our survey, the Nga Rauru and other Whanganui/Taranaki people living in Waverley had slightly more fluent Maori-speakers proportionately as a group than immigrants from other tribal areas (17 percent, as against 16 percent for all other Maori people in the families we visited). This meant that the Maori language in Waverley was a heritage still based directly in the district itself, and not something re-imported recently from other parts of Aotearoa.

There is still no guarantee that this heritage will be handed on intact to future generations. However, the people of Waverley now have a number of institutions they can call on for help, which did not exist at the time of the survey. One of these is the Te Kohanga Reo Trust. By 1985 there were 14 children in their second year at Te Hungariki kohanga reo -- this could mean that there are now more young children in Waverley fluent in Maori than at any time during the last 20 or 30 years. These children however will need tremendous support over the next 20 years if they are to be able to use this gift to the full.

Another institution, the Commission for the Maori Language, was established by law in 1987 to help ensure that this support is forthcoming. A few years earlier, a voluntary organization, Nga

Kaiwhakapumau i te Reo, took the initiative in setting up pilot projects in Maori-organized and run local Maori-language radio stations, and also brought a successful case to the Waitangi Tribunal, establishing the right of Maori people under the Treaty of Waitangi to education in Maori, the use of the language in the mass media, and in all aspects of government business. It will be an uphill struggle to persuade governments and the public generally that all these rights should be implemented in full, so, for a few years to come, there will still be a need for the "battling Maoris" to keep up the struggle for the language in Waverley and many other places.

The future cannot blame the present, just as the present cannot blame the past. The hope is always here, but only your fierce caring can fan it into a fire to warm the world.

-Susan Cooper, Silver on the Tree.

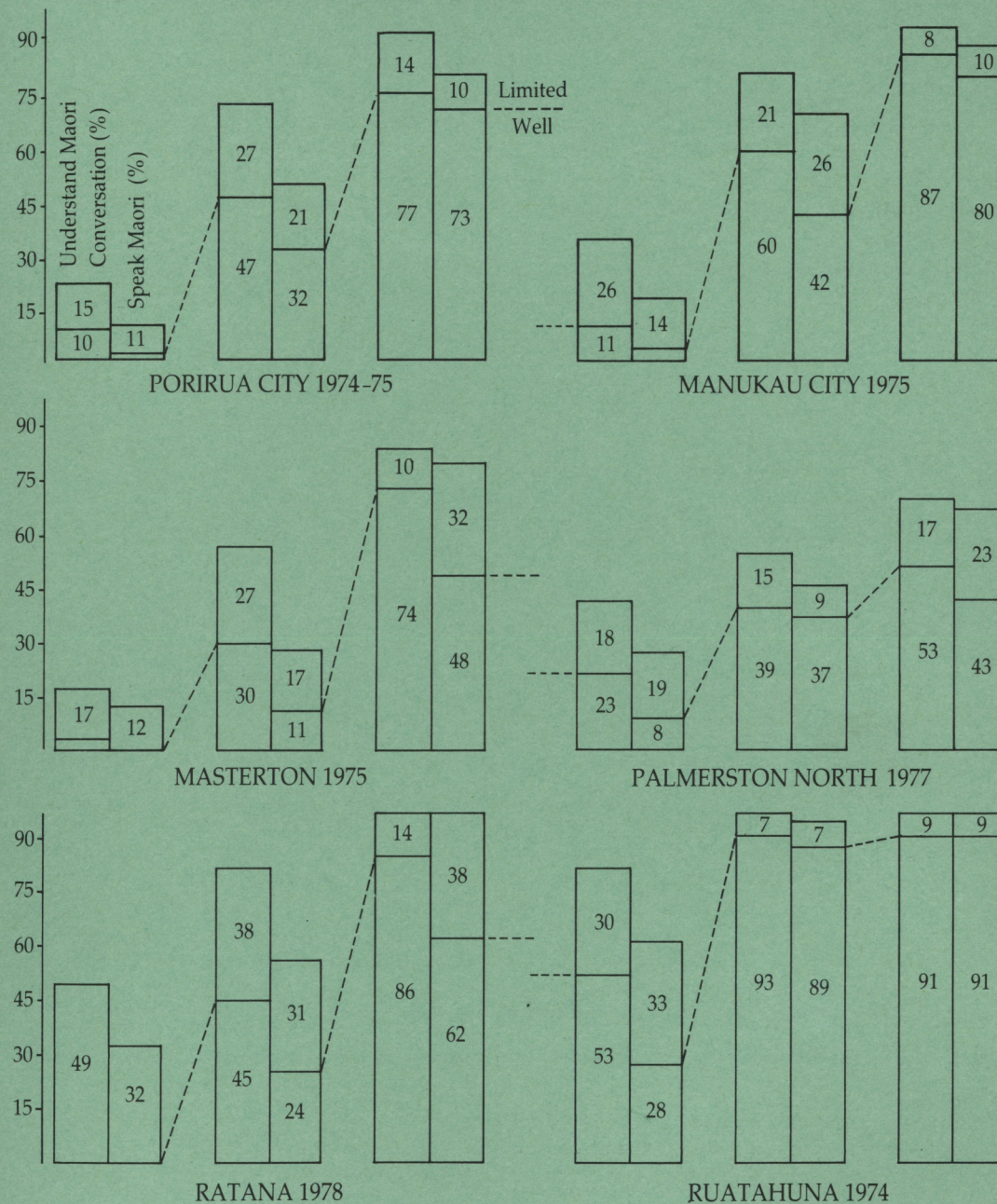


This report was prepared by Richard Benton

Design & Production: Hone Whaanga (Ngati Kahungunu)

(c) Copyright, Te Wahanga Maori, NZCER, Wellington
March 1988 [1]

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.