

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

17

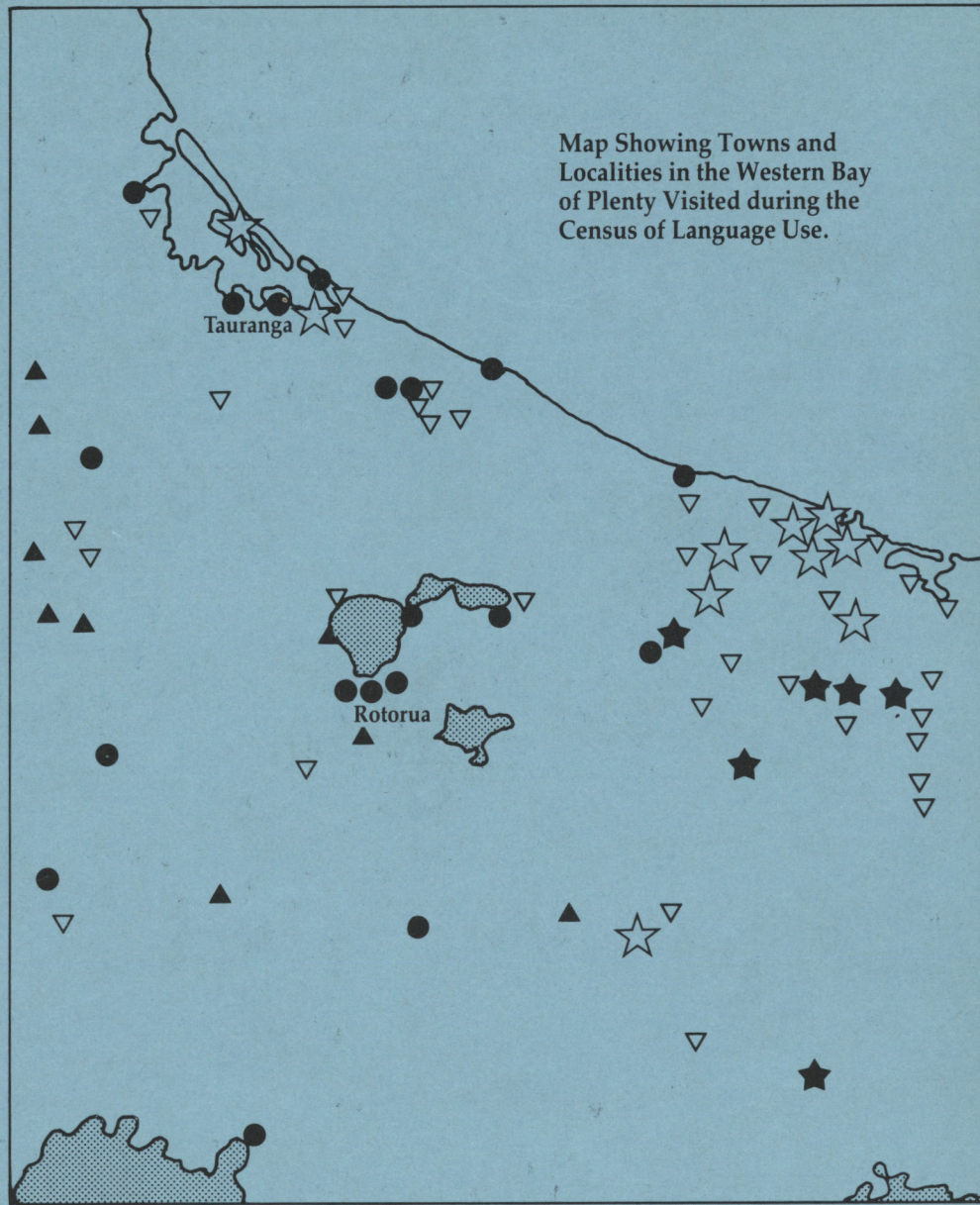
Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

● 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.

- ★ 90% or more
- ☆ 66% to 89%
- 46% to 65%
- ▲ 45% or less
- ▽ Fewer than 10 households visited

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN THE TAWERA DISTRICT

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities was conducted in 24 households in Ngahina and Owihakatoro in January 1974. The interviewers were Carol Milne (Ngapuhi), Maku Potae (Ngati Porou), Peter and Iriaka Wensor (Ngapuhi), Helen O'Donoghue, Yvonne Siggleko (Ngaiterangi), Willie Martin (Ngati Manawa/Te Aupouri), Joe Rua (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Ripeka Koopu Martin (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), and Meremaihi Williams Koopu (Ngati Awa). Four interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the rest were in English.

The households surveyed had a total population of 181, and 128 of them were of Maori descent. This was about three-quarters of the total Maori population of the district at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned six main iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. However, by far the most (101, or 84 percent) belonged to the Tuhoe tribe.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The table on page 2 shows that almost all the adults and most of the children in Owihakatoro and Ngahina were able to speak Maori well. Quite a few of the younger children, however, seemed to be able to understand Maori much better than they could speak it.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN TAWERA (1974)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	25	96	25	96	1	4	0	
25-44	14	82	14	82	2	12	1	6
15-24	25	89	25	89	1	4	2	8
2-14	32	68	39	83	2	5	6	14
Overall	96	81	103	87	6	5	9	8

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

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Use Of Maori Language In The Household

Maori was the main language spoken in most of the homes visited. There were 22 households with dependent children, and in 12 of them Maori was used all or most of the time. In 5 households Maori and English were used equally, and in 6 others English was the language spoken most often. There were only 2 childless households included in the survey. In one of them, only Maori was spoken, while in the other household, visitors were spoken to also in Maori.

The Maori Language In The Community

As more than 80 percent of the people were fluent speakers, Maori was the main language used in the community. Most of the adults survey definitely preferred to speak Maori on all social occasions. They were equally at home with English and would speak

it with non-Maori speakers in order not to embarrass them. If two adults in our survey met unexpectedly, the chances that they would be able to talk to each other in Maori would be about 4 in 5. But with children the chances would be about 1 in 2.

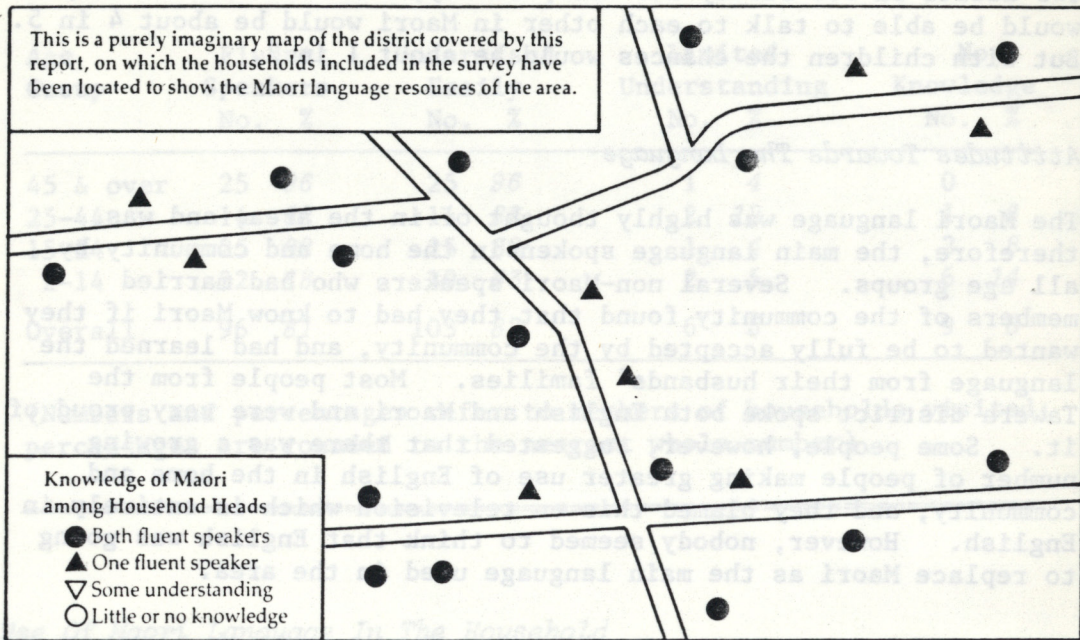
Attitudes Towards The Language

The Maori language was highly thought of in the area, and was, therefore, the main language spoken in the home and community by all age groups. Several non-Maori speakers who had married members of the community found that they had to know Maori if they wanted to be fully accepted by the community, and had learned the language from their husbands' families. Most people from the Tawera district spoke both English and Maori and were very proud of it. Some people, however, suggested that there was a growing number of people making greater use of English in the home and community, and they blamed this on television which is entirely in English. However, nobody seemed to think that English was going to replace Maori as the main language used in the area.

CONCLUSION

More than three-quarters of the people surveyed in Ngahina and Owhakatoro spoke Maori well. Maori was the main language spoken in the home, and on most social occasions in the community. While some people said that more and more English in recent times was being spoken, hardly anyone seemed worried that the number of people speaking Maori might be falling. Television was having such a bad effect on the children's ability to speak their own language that there was an attempt to counter it by making Maori the language for teaching and learning in the local primary school. This school became one of only four officially bilingual schools in New Zealand in 1980.

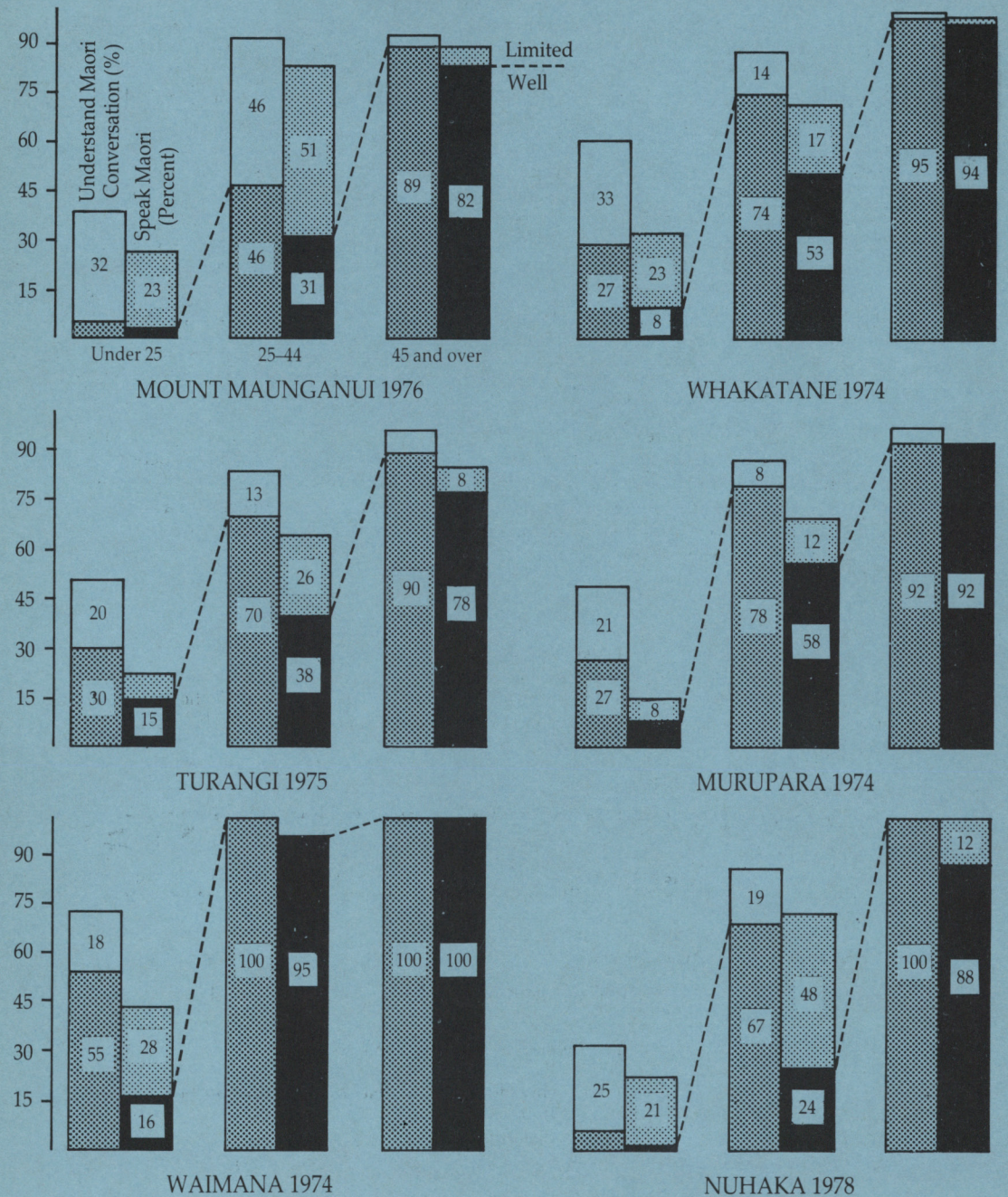
This is a purely imaginary map of the district covered by this report, on which the households included in the survey have been located to show the Maori language resources of the area.



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.