

# 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

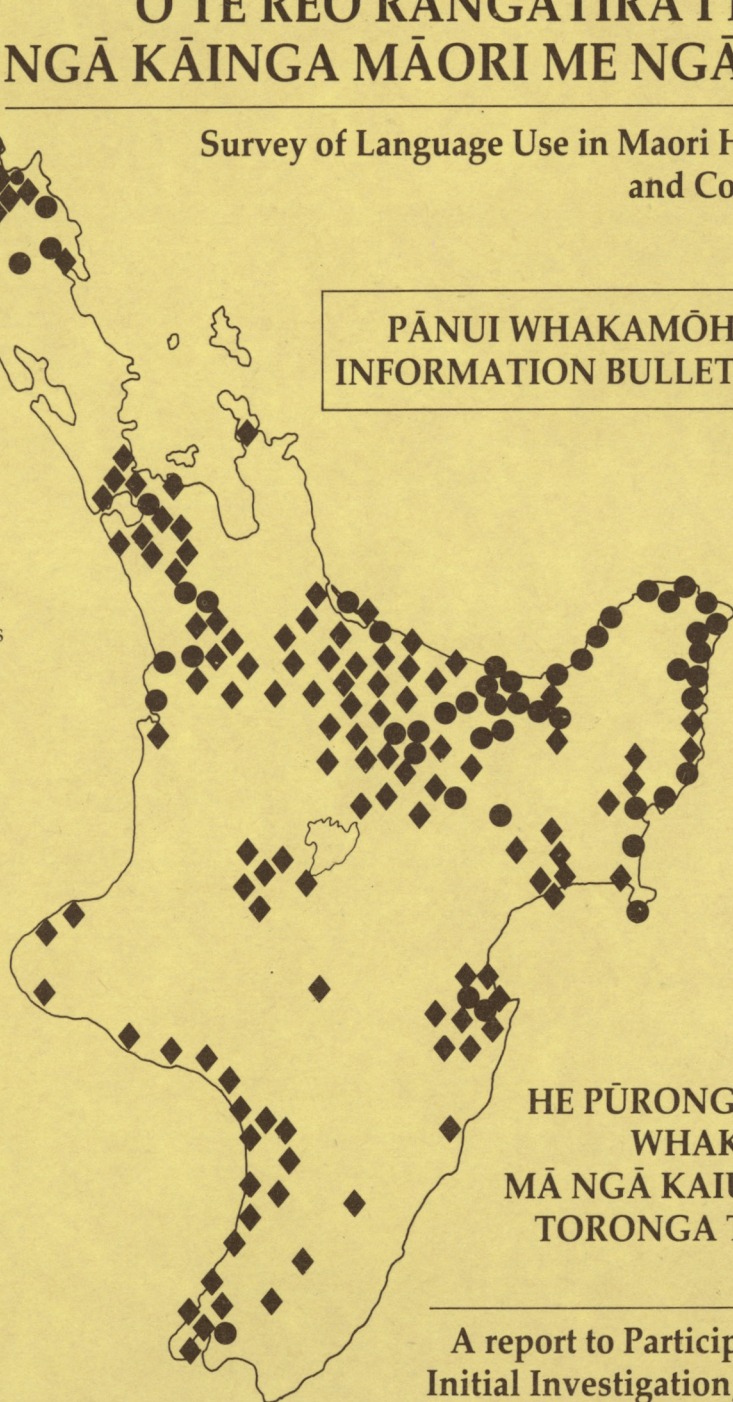
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO  
INFORMATION BULLETIN

28

Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

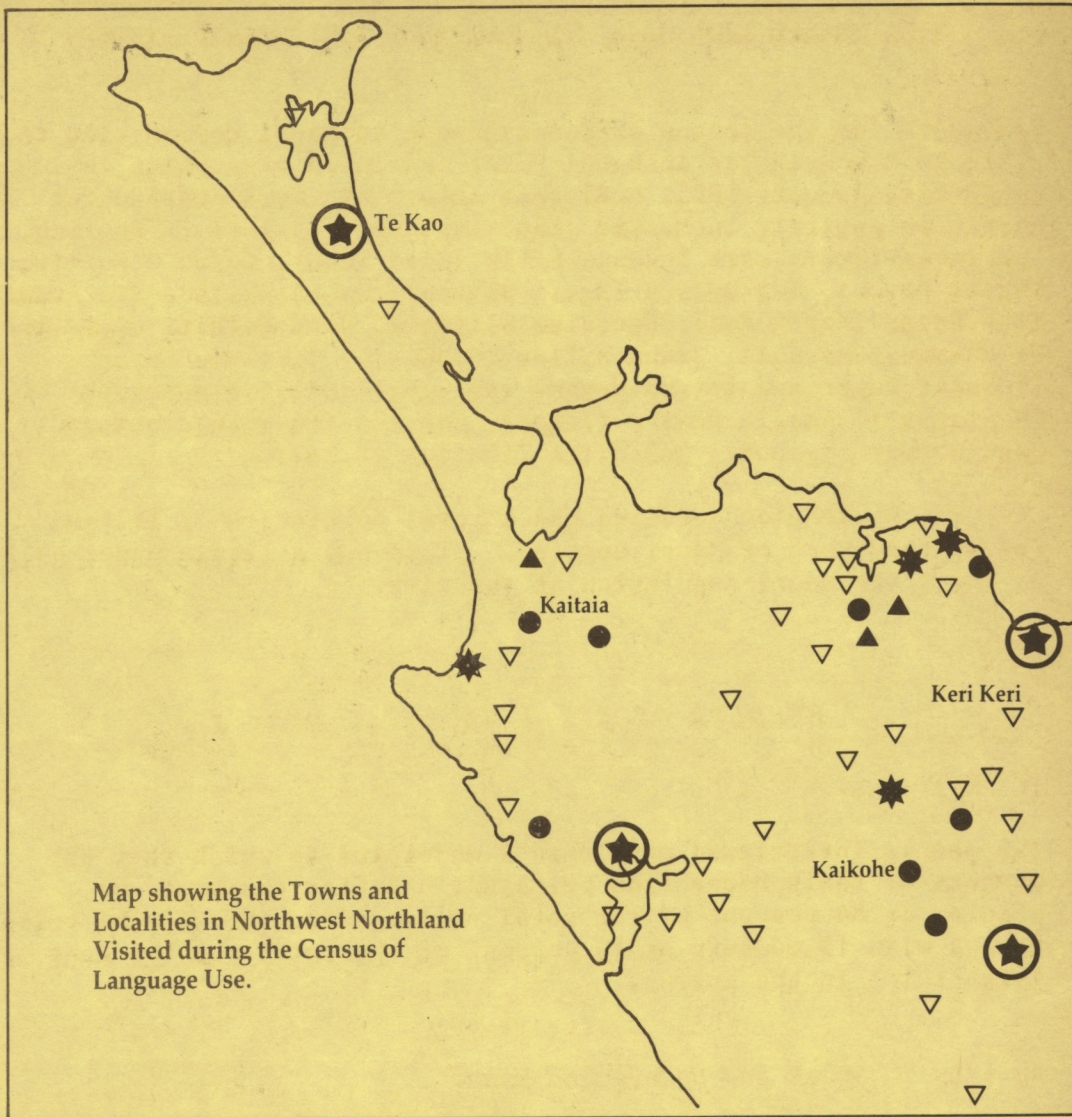
● Two thirds or  
more of adults were  
fluent speakers of  
Maori

◆ 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%
- 60% to 75%
- ▲ Less than 60%
- ▽ Fewer than 7 households visited

## THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN PANGURU AND RANGI POINT

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 2 households in Rangi Point and in 23 households in Panguru in January 1975. Sixteen interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the remainder (9) were in English. The interviewers were Suzanne Hills (Ngai Tahu), Lorna O'Sullivan (Ngati Porou), Awa Hudson (Ngati Whatua), Mahia Wallace (Te Arawa), Tira Pryor (Ngati Awa), Lorraine Williams, Kahu Waititi (Ngapuhi/Te Whanau-a-Apanui), John Miller (Ngapuhi), Titihuia Pryor (Tuhoe), Peter and Iriaka Wensor (Ngapuhi), Gillian Moerkerk (Maniapoto), Ameria Ponika (Tuhoe), Joe Rua (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Joan Walker (Ngapuhi) and Hiiti Tientjes (Tuhoe).

The households surveyed had a total population of 111 and 110 of them were of Maori descent. This was a little under half of the total Maori population at the time.

### RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

#### *Iwi Affiliation*

The people interviewed mentioned 4 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. By far the most, 93 people or 84 percent of the total, belonged to the Ngapuhi tribe. Rarawa with 15 members or 14 percent of the total was the next largest iwi in the survey.

#### *Ability To Speak And Understand Maori*

As can be seen from the table on the next page, more than half the people surveyed spoke Maori fluently, and more than three-quarters of them, 88 percent, easily understood the language. In many other areas surveyed, only adults and kaumatua knew Maori, but

here the signs for the future of the language are good. A little less than a third of the school age children spoke Maori fluently, but over three-quarters of them had a good understanding of the language.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN PANGURU AND RANGI POINT (1975)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	26	84	31	100	0		0	
25-44	15	94	15	94	1	6	0	
15-24	7	50	12	86	2	14	0	
2-14	14	30	37	79	8	17	2	4
Overall	62	58	95	88	11	10	2	2

(Numbers and percentages refer to those people interviewed; percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number).

Use Of Maori Language In The Household

There were 17 households with dependent children visited, and in 3 of them people spoke only or mostly Maori as they went about their everyday affairs. Both Maori and English were spoken equally in 6 households, and, while some Maori was used in the rest of the 8 households, English was the main language spoken. In 5 of the 8 childless households, people spoke entirely or mostly in Maori, while, in 2 others, they spoke Maori and English for an equal amount of time. English was mostly spoken in the remaining childless household.

The Maori Language In The Community

Maori was the main language spoken by adults in many different social settings in the community. It was usually spoken with Maori neighbours, friends and workmates while English was spoken with Pakeha and other non-Maori speakers. The Maori language had an important part to play in ceremonies on the local marae and in church services or private prayer. Several very elderly people spoke Maori in all meetings with other members of the community.

If any two individuals were to meet unexpectedly, the chances that they could talk with each other in Maori would be 1 in 2. If they were both adults, there would be a 100 percent chance that they could talk in Maori. If both persons were under 14 the chances would be a lot less - about 1 in 5.

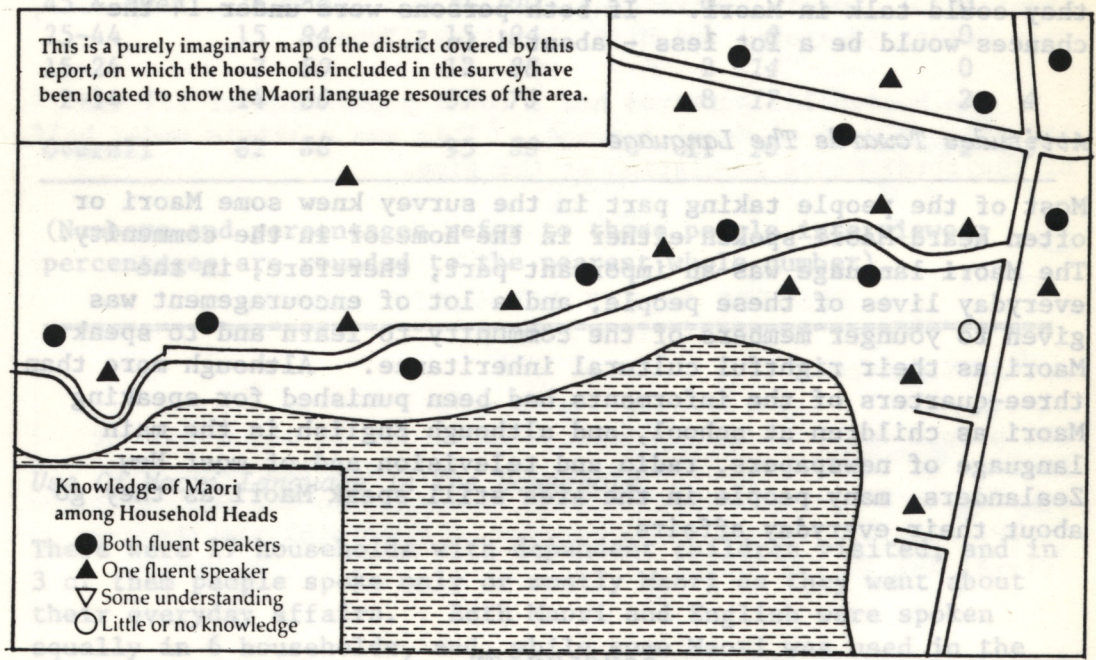
Attitudes Towards The Language

Most of the people taking part in the survey knew some Maori or often heard Maori spoken either in the home or in the community. The Maori language was an important part, therefore, in the everyday lives of these people, and a lot of encouragement was given to younger members of the community to learn and to speak Maori as their rightful cultural inheritance. Although more than three-quarters of the informants had been punished for speaking Maori as children at school, and although English is the main language of newspapers, radio and television and of most New Zealanders, many people in the area still speak Maori as they go about their everyday affairs.

CONCLUSION

The kaumatua and parents in Panguru and Rangī Point have had an important role in keeping Maori alive in these communities. In most households visited, parents spoke Maori among themselves in

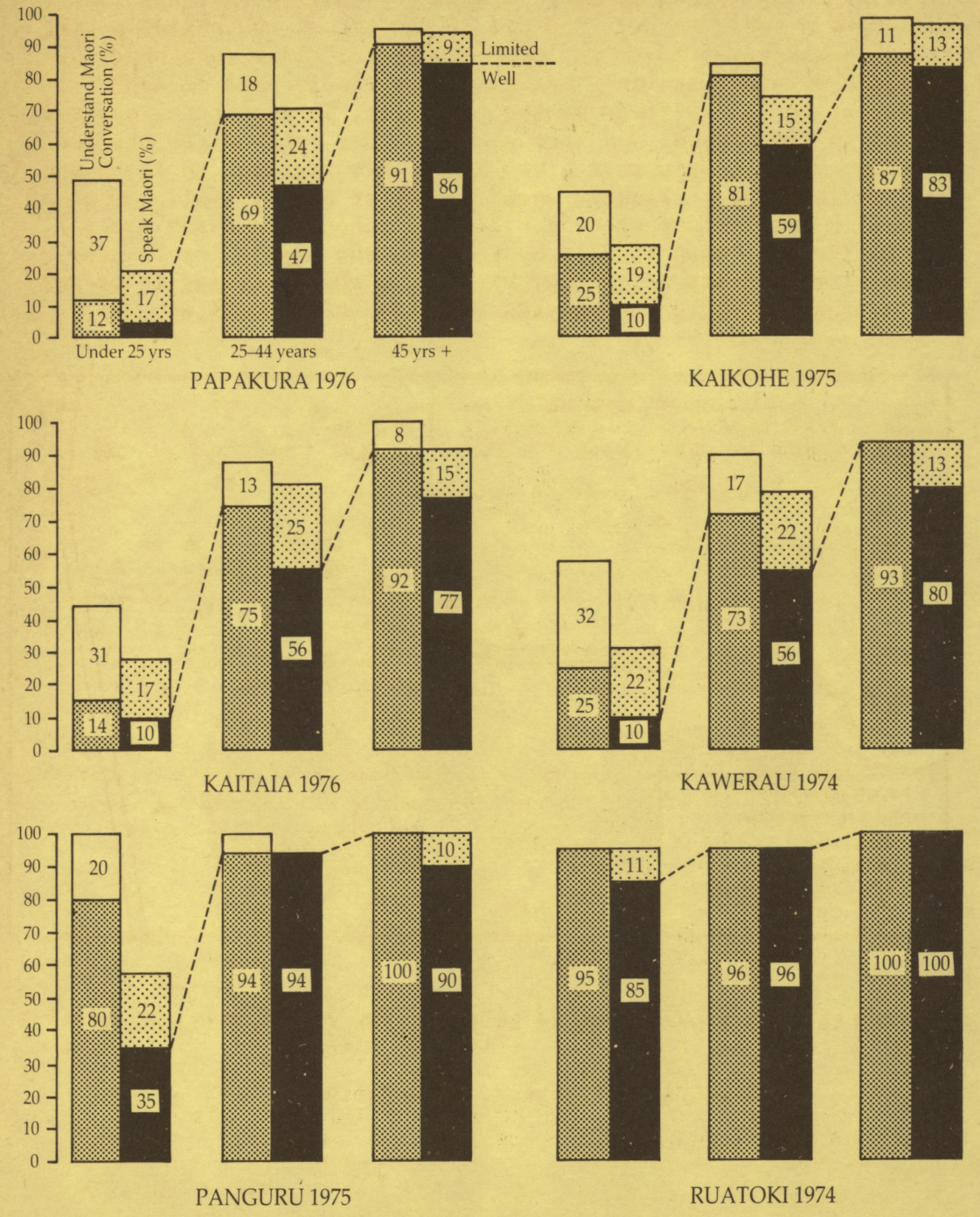
their everyday lives, as well as speaking Maori with their children. Consequently, a third of the school age children were fluent speakers of Maori and over two-thirds had a good understanding of the language. As Maori was widely used in many different social settings in the community, in ceremonies on local marae, in the church, and throughout the day with neighbours and friends, young people were given every encouragement to learn and use the language. Panguru would be one of a very small number of places in New Zealand where a bilingual school, in which Maori and English are used equally by teachers and pupils, would have an excellent chance of success right from the beginning if parents wanted their children to receive this kind of 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.