

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

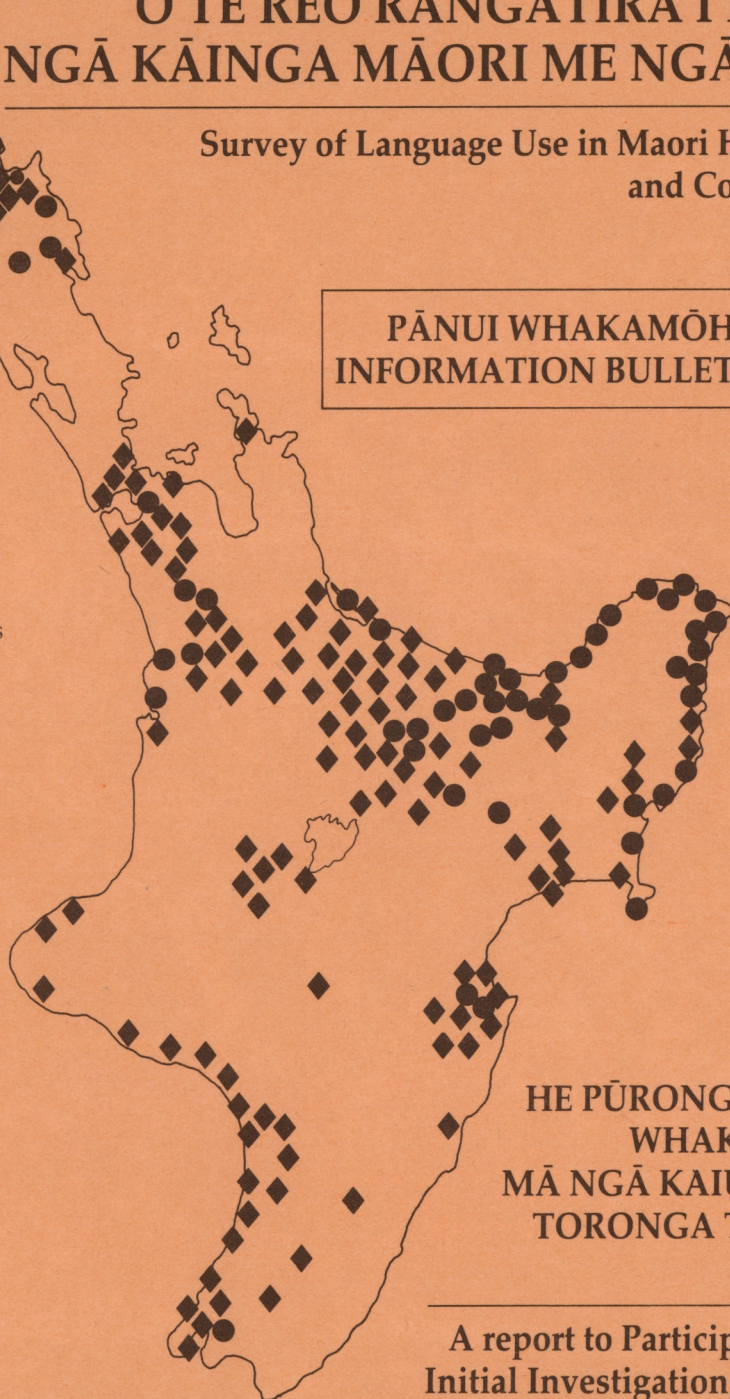
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

30

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

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN TE ARAROA AND VICINITY

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities was conducted in 33 households in Te Araroa (18 households), Karakatuwhero (3), Horoera (5), and Whakaangi (8) in April and May 1978. The interviewers were Hiria Tumoana (Tuhoe), Sharon Moerkerk (Waikato), Hera Henare (Ngati Porou/Ngapuhi), Alan Hawea (Ngati Awa) and Kuini Wano (Tuhoe). Seven interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori, the majority (26) were in English.

The households surveyed had a total population of 156; 153 of these people were of Maori descent. This was about two-thirds of the total Maori population of these districts at the time.

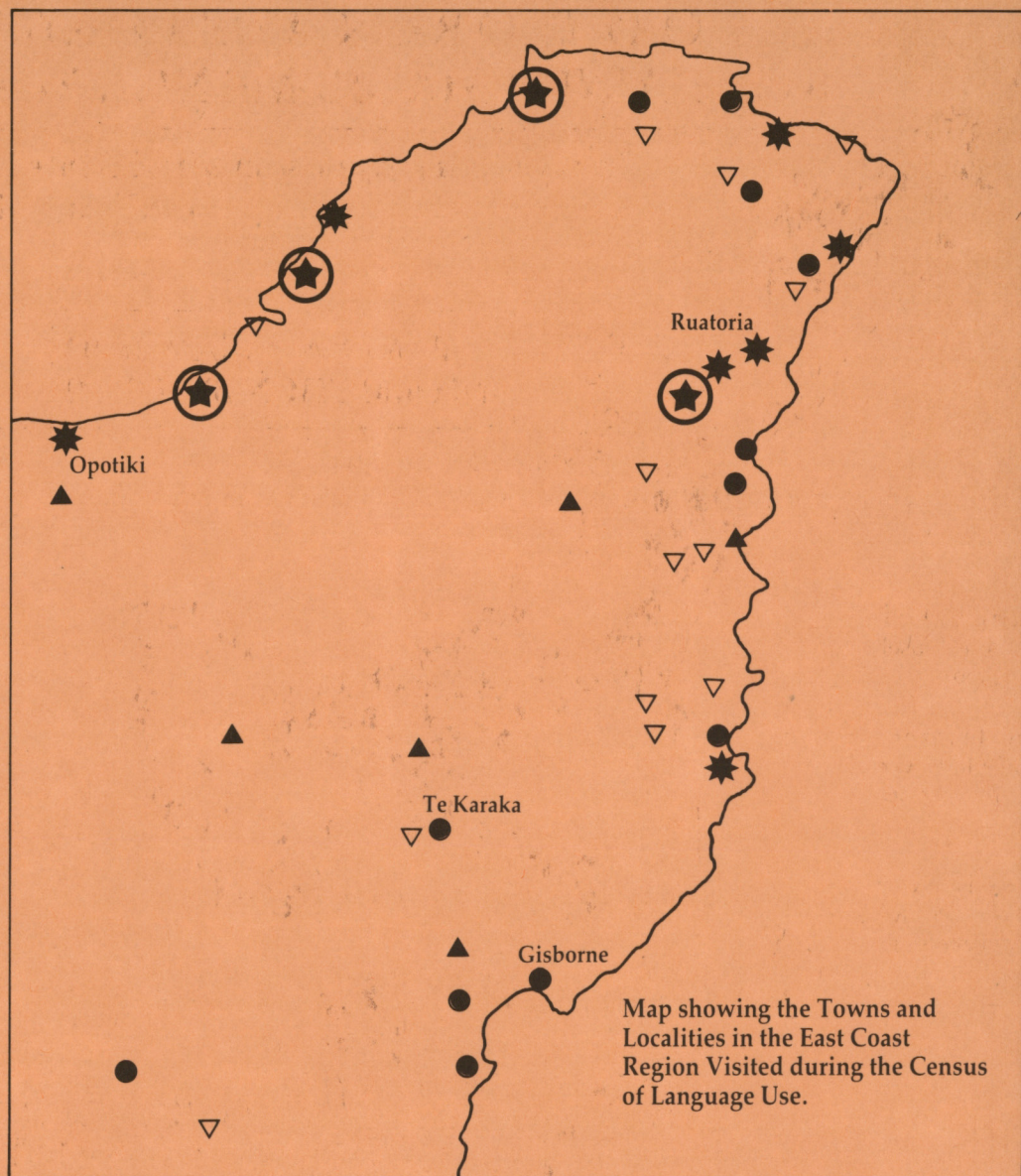
RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned 9 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. However, most of them, 100 people or 64 percent, belonged to Ngati Porou.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The information in the table on the next page tells us that more than a third of the people interviewed could speak Maori fluently, and a little more could understand the language with ease. By far the most of these people were adults over the age of 25 - and this could be very bad for the future of the Maori language in this region.



Percentage of fluent speakers of Maori among persons aged 25 and over in the households visited.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|---|---------------------------------|
| ★ (in a circle) | More than 85% | ▲ | Less than 60% |
| ★ | 76 to 85% | ▽ | Fewer than 8 households visited |
| ● | 60% to 75% | | |

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN TE ARAROA AND VICINITY (1978)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	33	92	34	94	2	6	0	
25-44	15	54	17	61	10	36	1	4
15-24	4	13	7	23	16	52	8	26
2-14	2	4	5	9	32	59	17	32
Overall	54	36	63	42	60	40	26	17

(Numbers and percentages refer to those included in the survey; percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.)

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The Use Of Maori Language In The Household

There were 26 households with dependent children visited, and in three of them people talked about everyday things only or mostly in Maori, while the members of 12 households spoke both Maori and English equally. In ten homes, more English than Maori was spoken, while visitors to the other two were spoken to in Maori. Although most parents talked with each other in Maori, and many used Maori and English with their children, their children are more and more starting to reply in English.

There were seven childless households visited; people spoke only in Maori in one, and equally in Maori and English in one other. The members of three families spoke more English than Maori, while those of the remaining two spoke Maori to visitors.

The Maori Language In The Community

Although a third of the people interviewed spoke mainly English in the community, most of them would rather speak Maori (or Maori and English) with neighbours, friends and workmates. However, the language they chose to speak with another person depended on the age, race and how well that person knew Maori. Most kaumatua, therefore, talked in Maori with each other, in the home and outside it, while people between the ages of 25 and 44 spoke a lot of the time in Maori and English. People under 25 spoke mostly English with each other.

However, Maori was still being used in important religious services in the community and, particularly, in ceremonies during hui on the local marae.

If any two members of the community were to meet unexpectedly, the chances that they would be able to talk with each other in Maori would be about 1 in 7. If both people were adults the chances would be as high as 3 in 5, but if both were school children there would be little chance that they could talk to each other in Maori.

Attitudes Towards The Language

The Maori language played an important role in the lives of most people in the survey, particularly the adults who spoke about everyday things in Maori with each other, and often also with their children and mokopuna. However, some people were worried because most of the school-age children, although often spoken to in Maori, were more and more replying in English, even in the home. Several parents said that their children were whakama to speak Maori in case they made errors. A lot of people were right behind the teaching of Maori in schools, especially the plan for teaching in Maori and English, which was being talked about for the local primary school. Those who liked this idea thought a bilingual school in Te Araroa would help make sure that Maori survived as a spoken language.

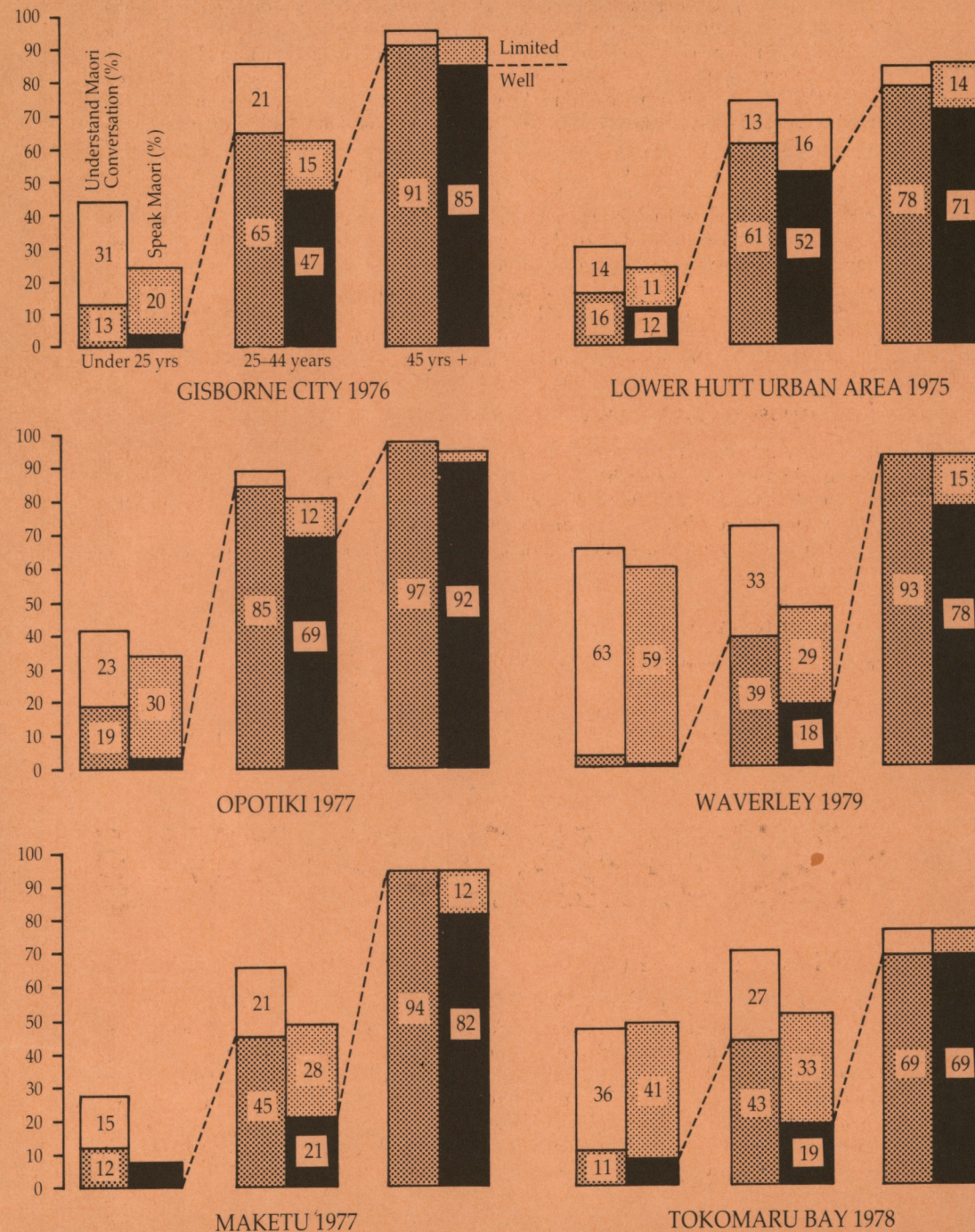
KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN CONCLUSION

The survey has shown that most speakers of Maori, and those who understood the language well, were adults over the age of 25. Two-thirds of the school-age children knew different amounts of Maori, from a little to a lot. However, less than a tenth of them spoke the language well (the survey in nearby Rangitukia showed a similar situation there). These communities have traditionally spoken Maori, but English is more and more playing a greater part in people's lives, because that is the language of newspapers, radio and television, as well as the language of the larger towns and cities that the people visit. Parents and local elders have said how worried they were because fewer and fewer people used Maori in the home and the community. However, the example set by Hiruharama Primary School to stop Maori being lost altogether, by teaching in both Maori and English, is well worth a try in Te Ararua as well.

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.