

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

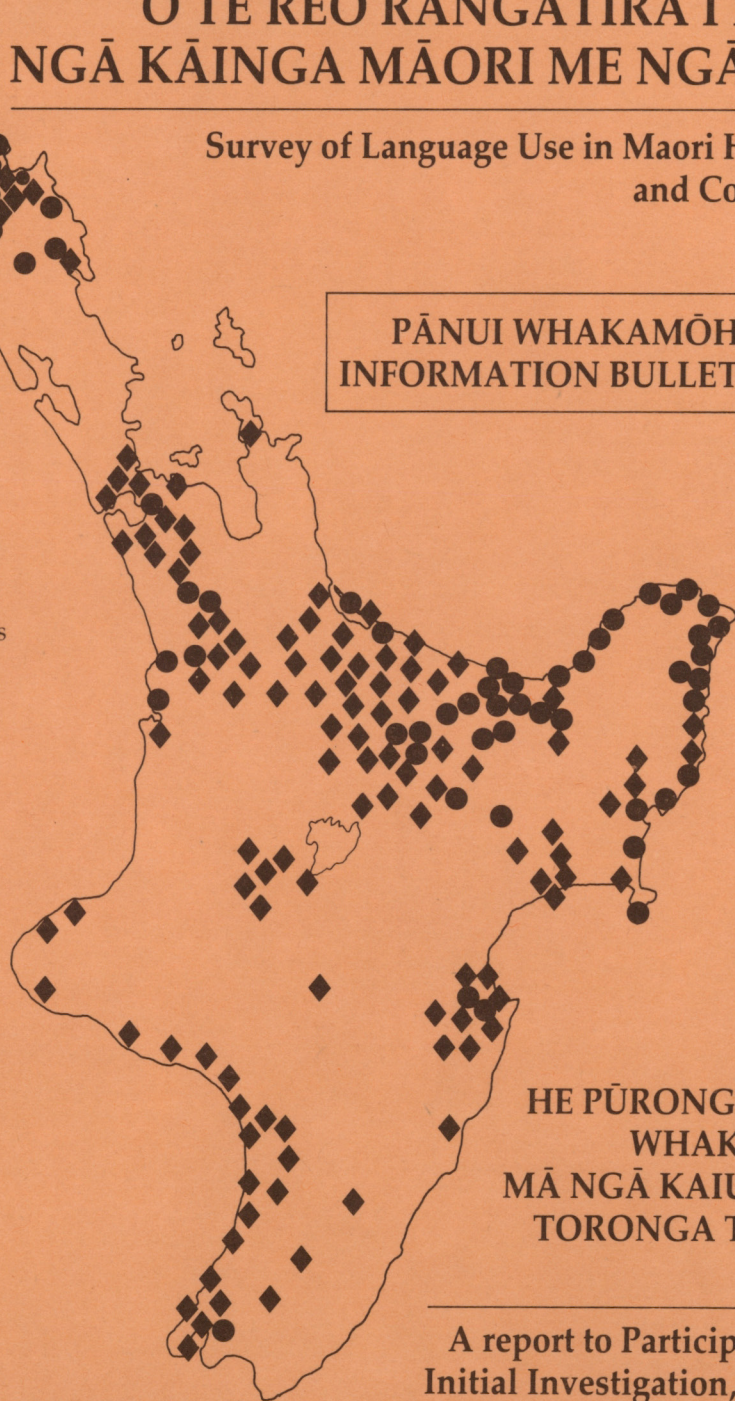
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

31

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

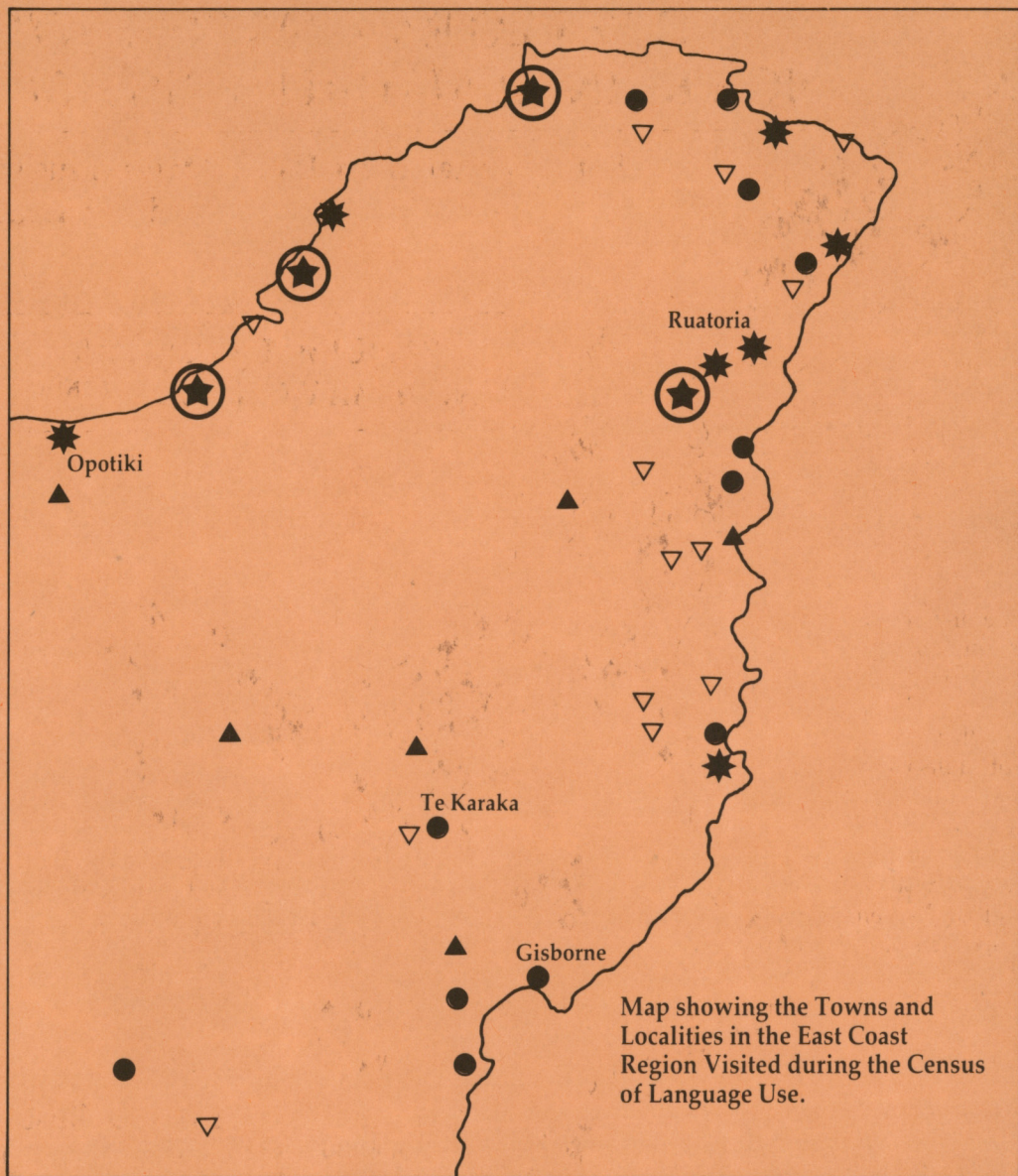
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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.

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

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN HICKS BAY

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities was conducted in 15 households in April 1978. The interviewers were Sharon Moerkerk (Maniapoto), Hiria Tumoana (Tuhoe) and Kuini Wano (Tuhoe). Three interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the rest were in English.

The households surveyed had a total population of 78, just over half the total Maori population of the district at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned 6 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. However, by far the most of them, 77 people or 91 percent, belonged to Ngati Porou.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The information in the table shows that all the fluent speakers of Maori were adults over the age of 25. Nearly two-thirds of the people in the survey understood the language with ease, and, although no school-age children spoke Maori fluently, half of them understood the language well.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN HICKS BAY (1978)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	17	94	17	94	1	6	0	
25-44	4	36	7	64	1	9	3	27
15-24	0		8	62	2	15	3	23
2-14	0		17	50	6	18	11	32
Overall	21	28	49	65	10	13	17	22

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

The Use Of Maori Language In The Household

English was becoming the main language spoken in households with dependent children. There were 13 such homes visited, and people spoke entirely in English in three of them. While Maori was sometimes spoken in eight others, English was the main language used. In one home, people spoke both Maori and English equally, and communication was mostly in Maori in one other.

There were two childless households visited. In one of them, people spoke only Maori, while the only person who lived in the other house spoke Maori to visitors.

The Maori Language In The Community

Three-quarters of the adults over 25 both spoke Maori well and had a good understanding of the language. Maori was, therefore,

spoken a lot by adult neighbours, friends and workmates. (Quite a lot of people, however, nearly always spoke English with other members of the community.) Maori was also used often in religious services, in public and private prayer, and in the saying of grace. Maori also had an important place in hui on the local marae.

If any two members of the community were to meet unexpectedly, the chances were 1 in 5 that they would be able to talk in Maori. If both people were adults, the chances were much greater, about 3 in 5. However, no school-age children could speak Maori well, so there was no chance that any two of them would be able to chat in the language if they met unexpectedly.

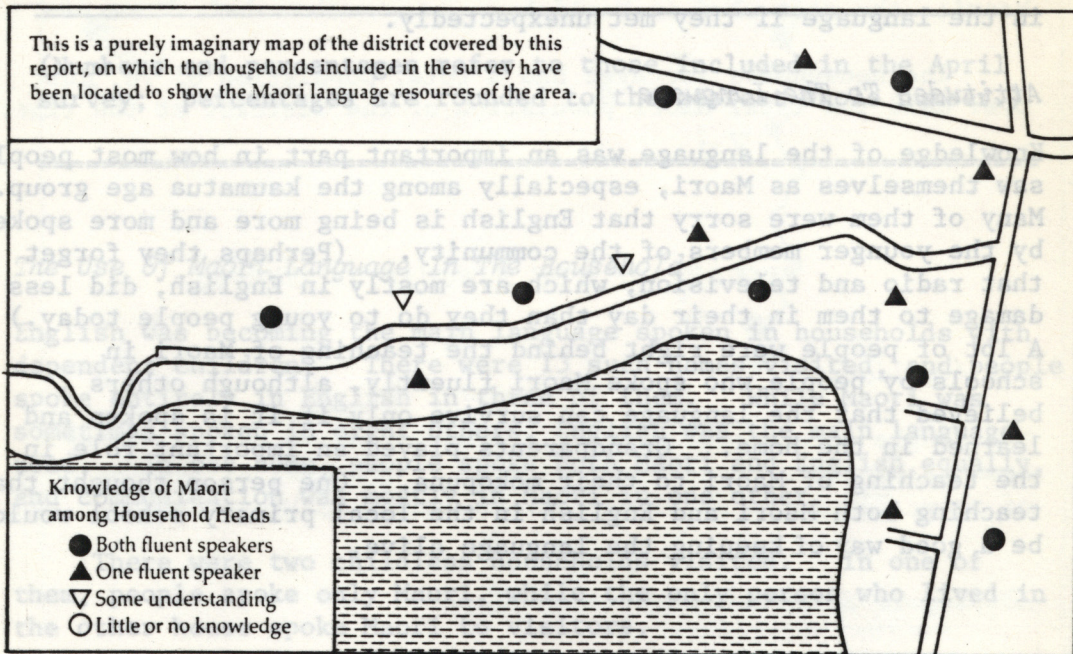
Attitudes To The Language

Knowledge of the language was an important part in how most people saw themselves as Maori, especially among the kaumatua age group. Many of them were sorry that English is being more and more spoken by the younger members of the community. (Perhaps they forget that radio and television, which are mostly in English, did less damage to them in their day than they do to young people today.) A lot of people were right behind the teaching of Maori in schools by people who spoke Maori fluently, although others believed that the language can survive only if it is spoken and learned in the home. Grandparents played an important role in the teaching of Maori to their mokopuna. One person thought that teaching both Maori and English in the local primary school would be a good way of keeping the language alive.

CONCLUSION

Less than a quarter of the people in the survey knew no Maori at all - most of these were young school children. This meant

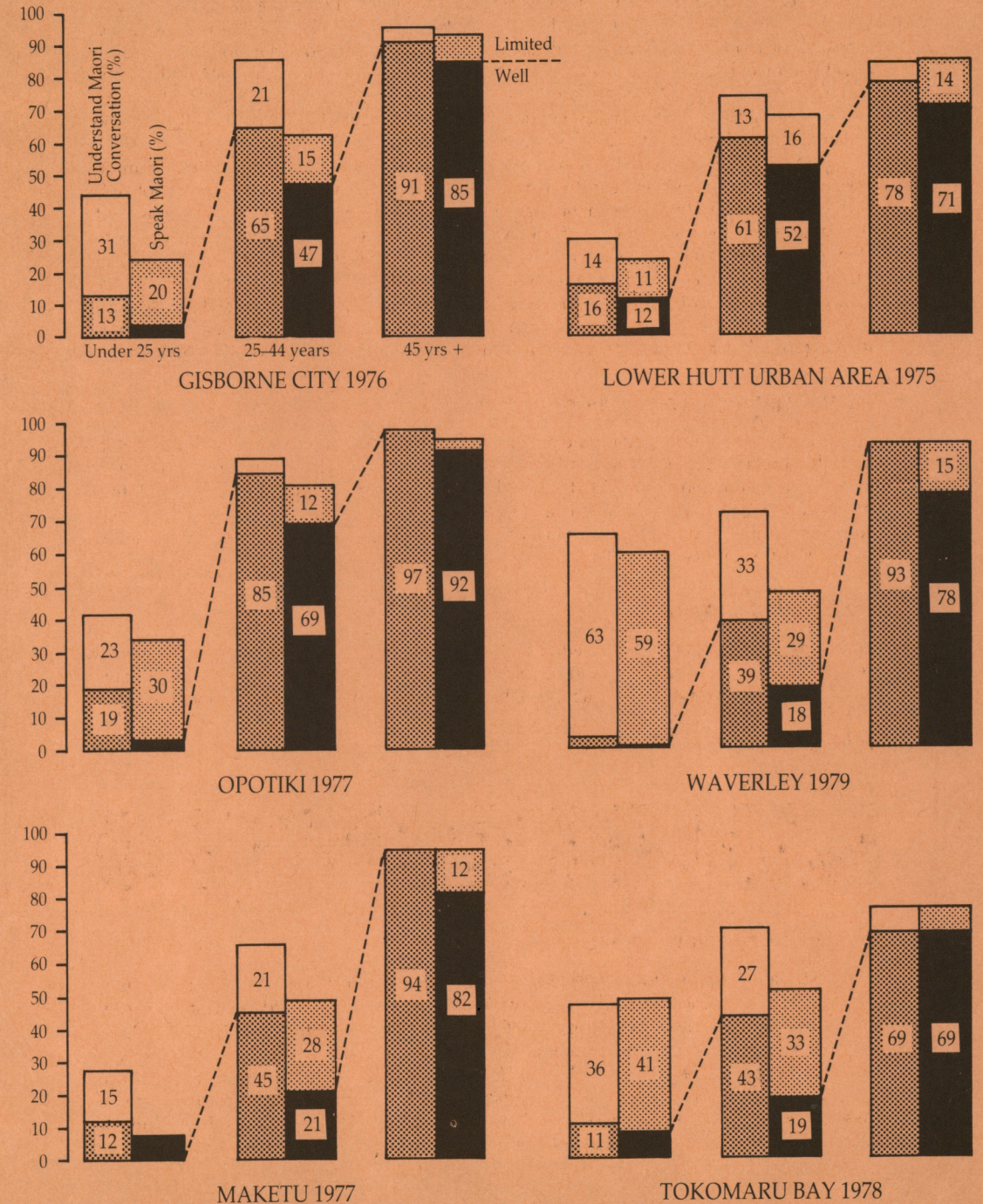
that most of the people in the community knew the language, although only adults over 25 spoke it fluently. Maori was spoken in many different settings in the home and community, and played an important part in ceremonies on the local marae and in certain religious services. Some people worried about the future of Maori in Hicks Bay, for they believed it should remain the language for everyday use and should not be kept just for elders to use for ceremonies on the marae. However, if the local kuia took part in the Maori Affairs Kohanga Reo schemes, this would be a way of building on the Maori that is already being taught in many homes, and also in the community.



This report was prepared by Lee Smith

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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.