

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

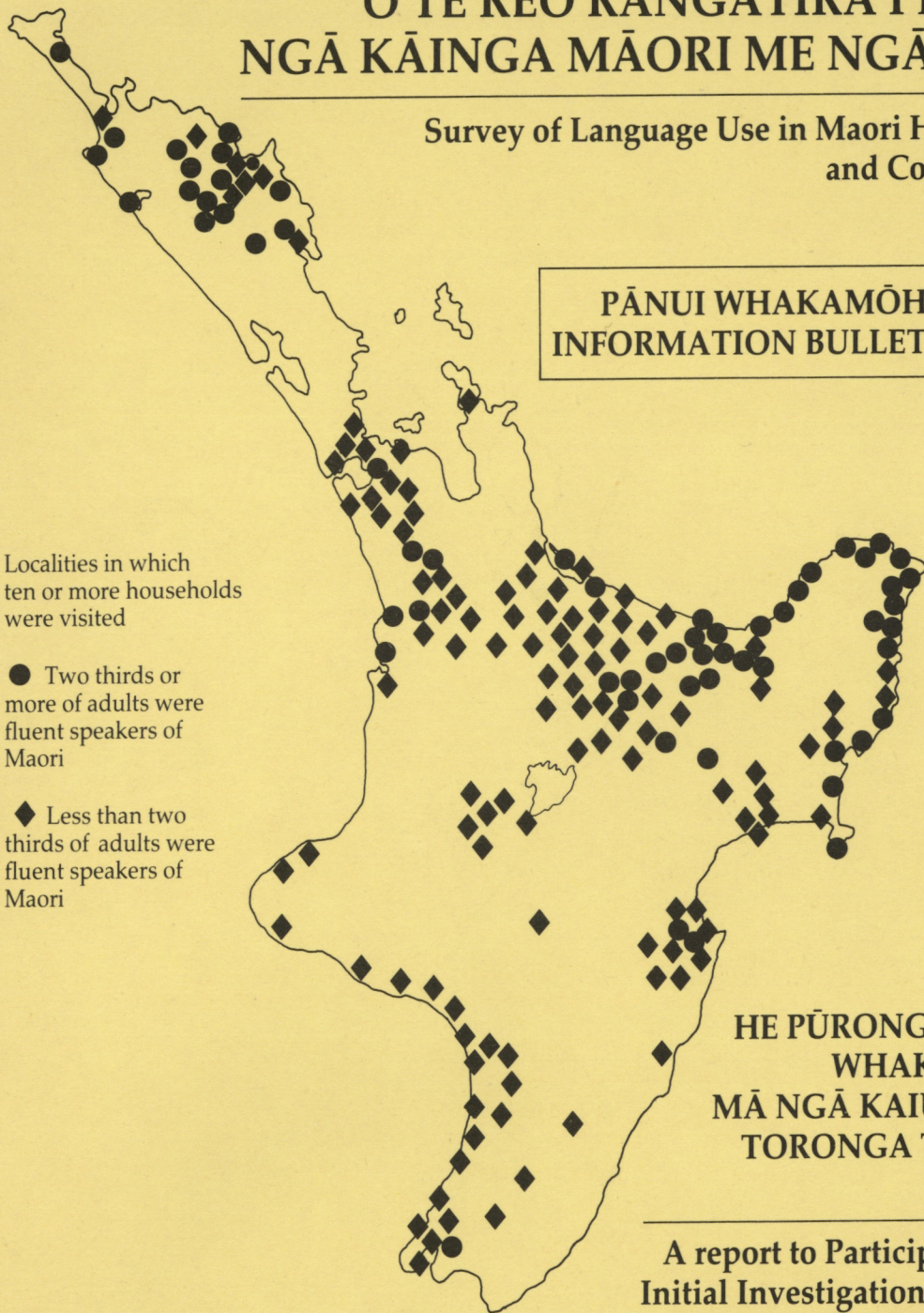
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

34

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

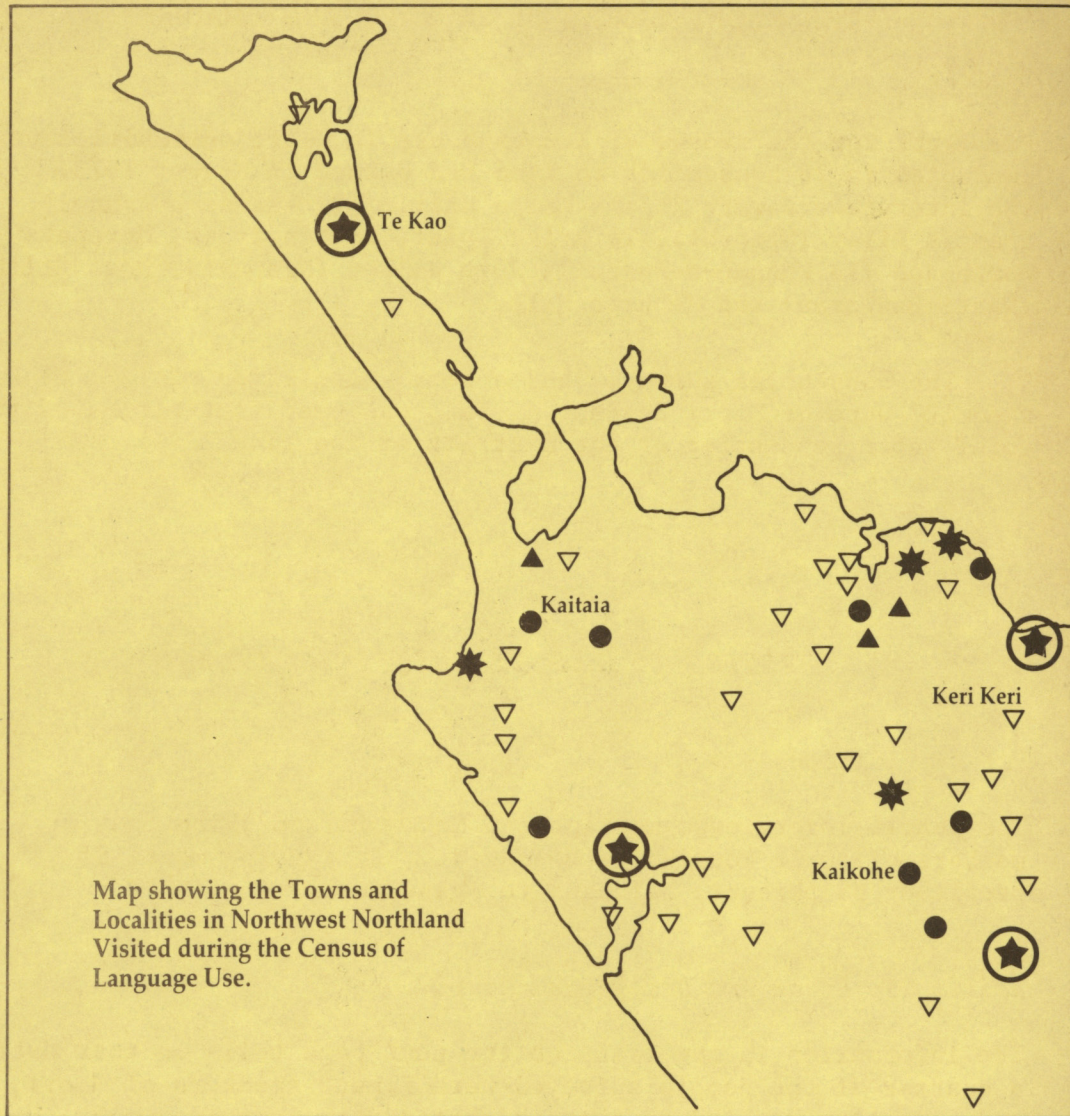
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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 KAEO AND OMAUNU

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities was conducted in 26 households in Kaero and Omaunu in August 1973. The interviewers were Ripeka Koopu Martin (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Francis Riley (Ngapuhi), Te Ariki Tyler, Reuben Tyler, Merepeka Wharepapa (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Joan Walker (Ngapuhi), Ross Smith (Ngati Hangarau) and Rebecca Hill.

The households surveyed had a total population of 139, of whom 127 were of Maori descent. This was over four-fifths of 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. By far the most, 95 people or 68 percent, belonged to Ngapuhi.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The information in the table on the next page tells us that nearly a quarter of the people surveyed were fluent speakers of Maori, and more than a third of them understood the language well. Half of them - most of whom were under 15 - could not understand when Maori was being spoken.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN KAEO AND OMAUNU (1973)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	13	62	14	67	5	24	2	9
25-44	15	50	19	64	4	13	7	23
15-24	2	14	5	36	2	14	7	50
2-14	0		10	14	10	14	57	72
Overall	30	22	48	35	21	15	67	50

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

Use Of Maori Language In The Household

There was only 1 childless household visited and the couple there spoke equally in Maori and English with each other and visitors.

There were 26 households with dependent children, and, in 8 of them, people spoke about everyday things entirely in English. Some Maori was spoken in 15 other homes, but it was mainly between the parents and visitors - English was the main language. In 2 households Maori and English were used equally, and in the one remaining household people spoke mostly in Maori.

The Maori Language In The Community

More than half the adults over 25 were able to speak Maori fluently. Most people over 45 preferred to speak Maori, while other adults, most of the time, used more English than Maori with

their neighbours and friends. English was the main language spoken with children and young adults. Several people spoke only English. It is not surprising that they were children of parents who had been punished for speaking Maori at school.

The Maori language was widely used in a number of different ceremonies on the marae (for example, pohiri, whaikorero, waiata), and in different religious services in the community.

If any two people met unexpectedly, the chances that they could talk in Maori would be about 1 in 5. If both people were adults over 25, the chances would be much brighter - about 1 in 3.

Attitudes Towards The Language

Although several people did not trust the linguistic survey (and some interviewers), most people told us that they believed that Maori is so important that it should be kept alive. Some people thought that teaching Maori in schools would help to do this, while others believed it had to be spoken and learned in the home. A few families, who knew that Maori was being spoken less and less in the community, were doing their bit by speaking the language more often at home and elsewhere than they used to.

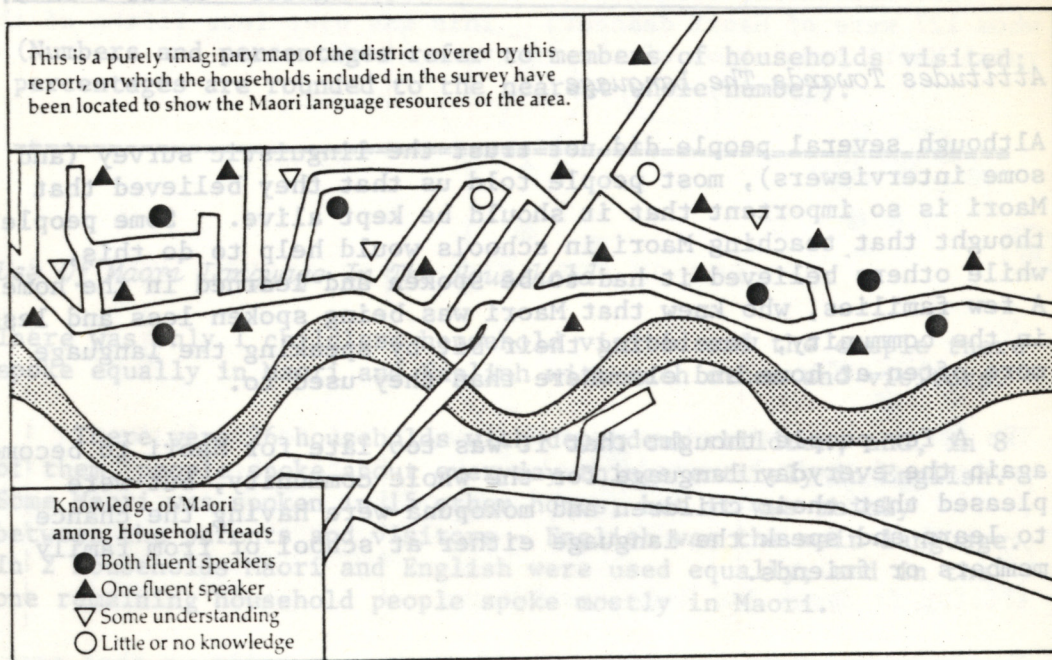
A few people thought that it was too late for Maori to become again the everyday language for the whole community, but were pleased that their children and mokopuna were having the chance to learn and speak the language either at school or from family members or friends.

CONCLUSION

At the time of the linguistic survey, most of the people in Kaeo and Omaunu who both spoke Maori fluently and understood it well were adults over the age of 25. There were no school-age

children in Kaeo then who spoke Maori well, and nearly three-quarters of them did not understand it at all. This is partly due to the fact that English is the language that is mainly used when adults and children talk with each other. Maori seemed to be spoken mainly among the older generation, especially those over 45.

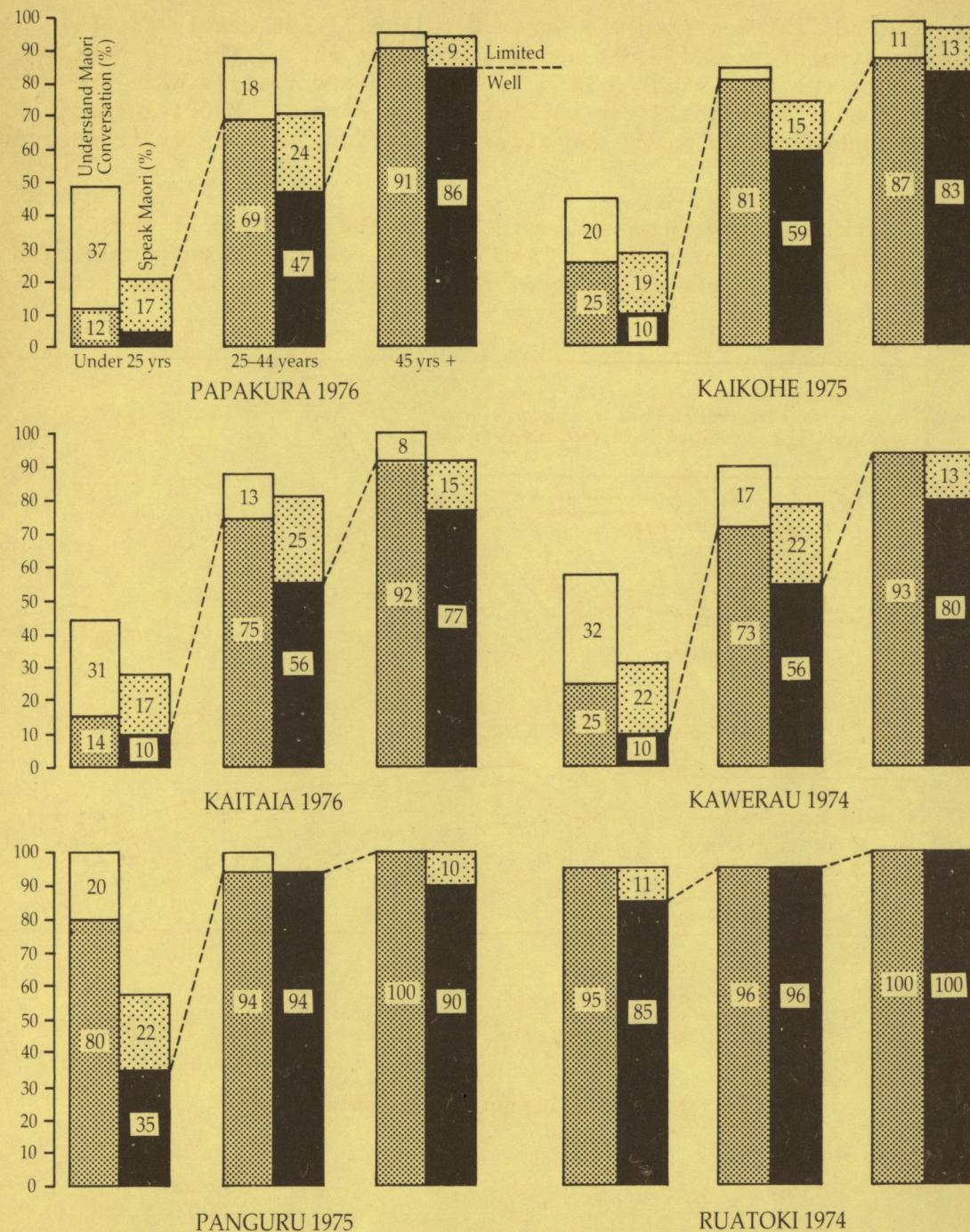
Most people, however, were behind the teaching of the language in schools, and it was good to see that more people were taking part in the teaching of their own children and mokopuna.



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.