

# 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

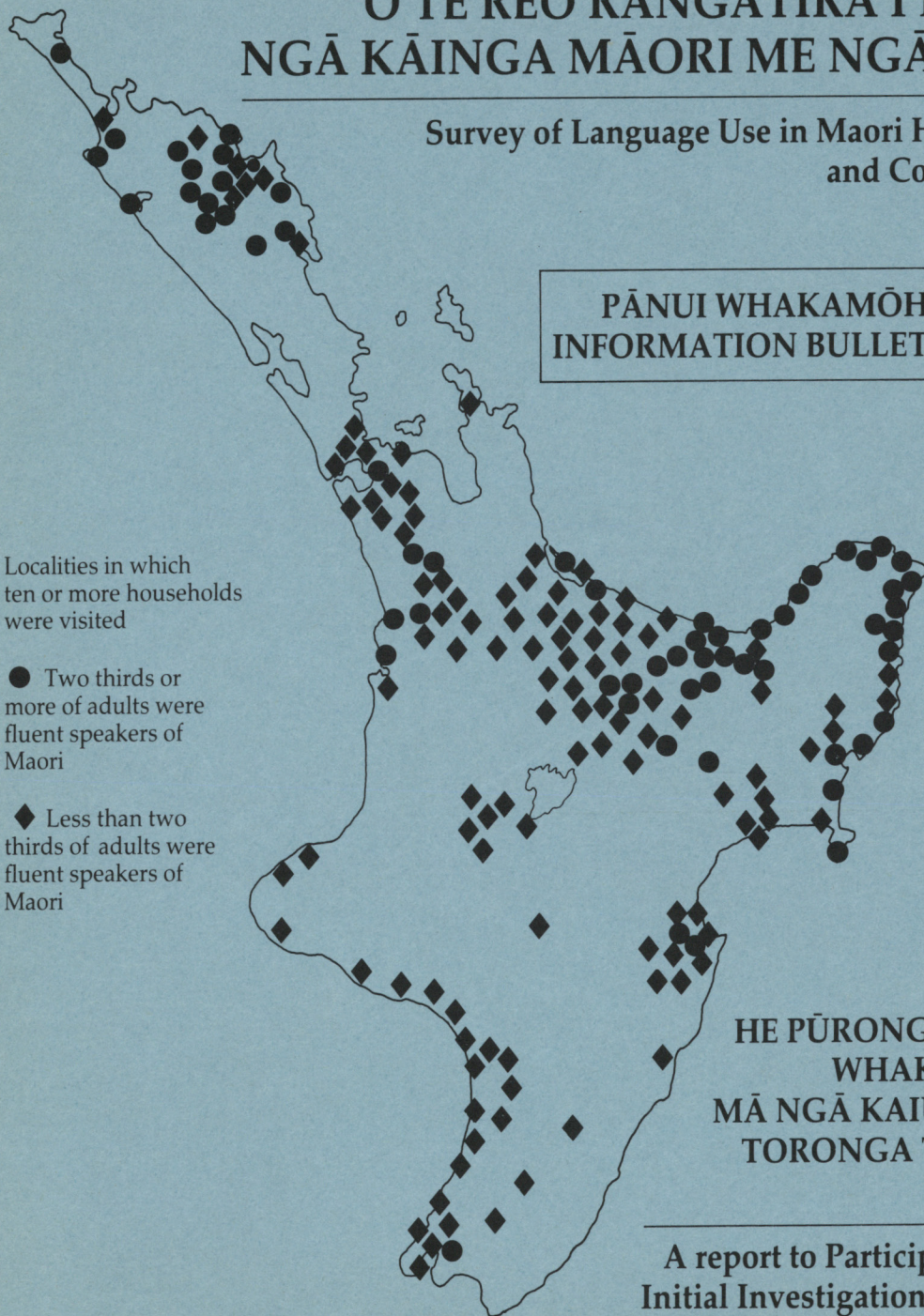
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO  
INFORMATION BULLETIN

38

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 WAIMANA

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities was conducted in 28 households in Waimana in January 1974. The interviewers were Broncho Te Kiri (Tuhoe), Maku Potae (Ngati Porou), Ripeka Koopu Martin (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Carol Hindmarsh Ngawati (Ngati Porou), Jenny Watson, Helen O'Donoghue, Joan Walker (Ngapuhi), Lynda West and Yvonne Siggileko (Ngai Terangi). Twenty-one interviews were carried out in English; the rest were partly or entirely in Maori.

The households surveyed had a total population of 137, and 136 of them were of Maori descent. This was about three-fifths of the Maori population of the district at the time.

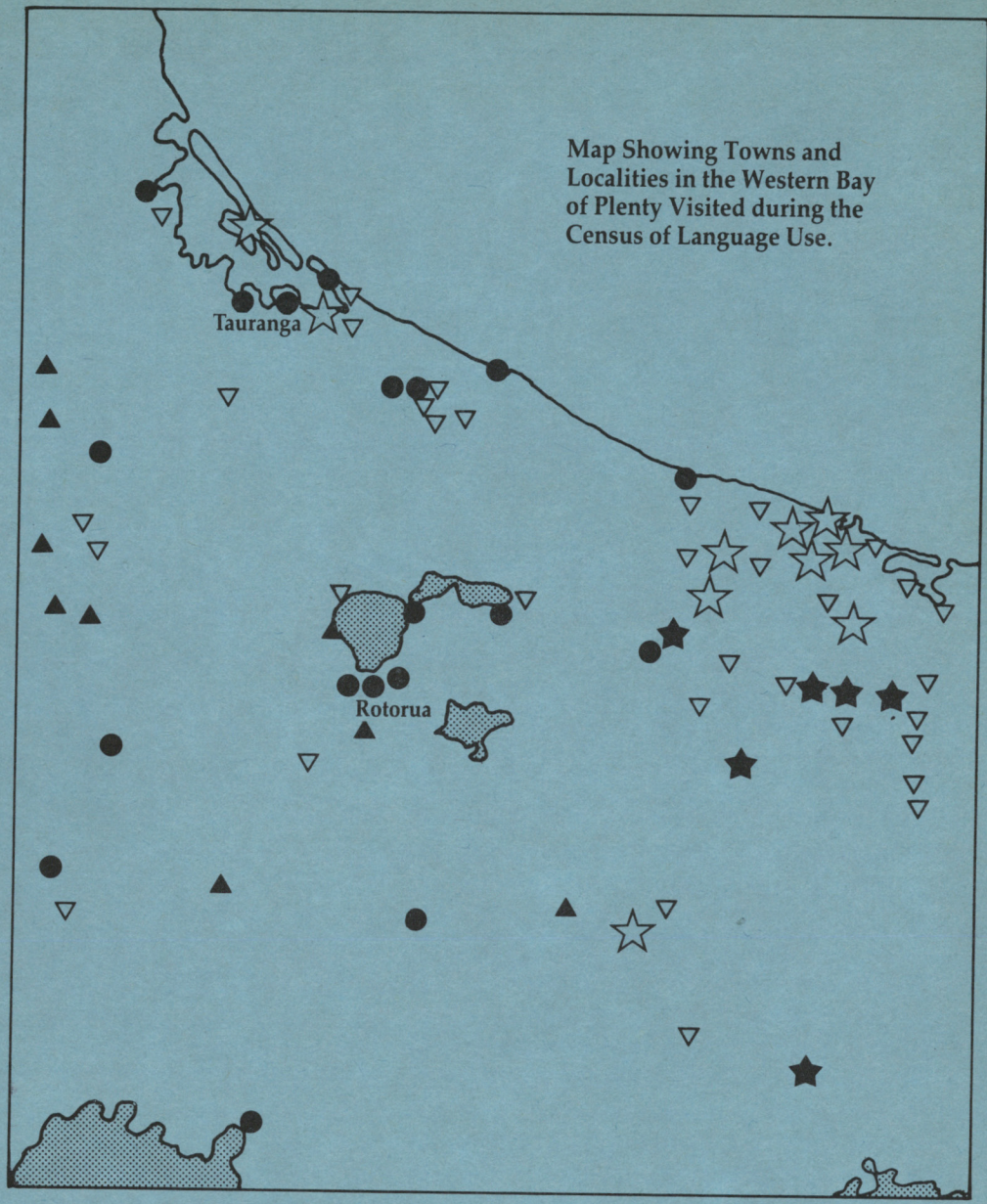
RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

*Iwi Affiliation*

The people interviewed mentioned 6 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. Easily the most of them, 124 people or 91 percent of the total, belonged to Tuhoe.

*Ability To Speak And Understand Maori*

The information in the table on the next page shows us that Maori was spoken fluently by nearly half the total number of people surveyed, including almost all the adults. Most older children were also able to speak Maori. About half the children under the age of 15 could understand Maori easily, but not many were used to speaking the language, and some of them knew very little Maori.



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

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN WAIMANA (1974)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	25	100	25	100	0		0	
25-44	21	96	22	100	0		0	
15-24	10	53	15	79	2	11	2	11
2-14	3	5	29	47	12	19	21	34
Overall	59	47	91	71	14	11	23	18

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

*The Use Of Maori Language In The Household*

There were 22 households with dependent children visited, and in two of them English was the only language spoken. Maori was the main language spoken in seven homes, but English was used more often than Maori in the others.

There were six childless households visited, and Maori was the main language spoken amongst the people there or with visitors.

*The Maori Language In The Community*

In the community, Maori was spoken mainly by adults and kaumatua. These older people often talked in Maori with neighbours, friends

and workmates. (However, they also spoke English well, and would use it if the person they were speaking to knew hardly any Maori). The younger people usually spoke English amongst themselves, and, when they were spoken to in Maori, many of them would reply in English.

The Maori language played an important part in ceremonies on the marae and in certain religious services, especially in the Ringatu and Presbyterian churches.

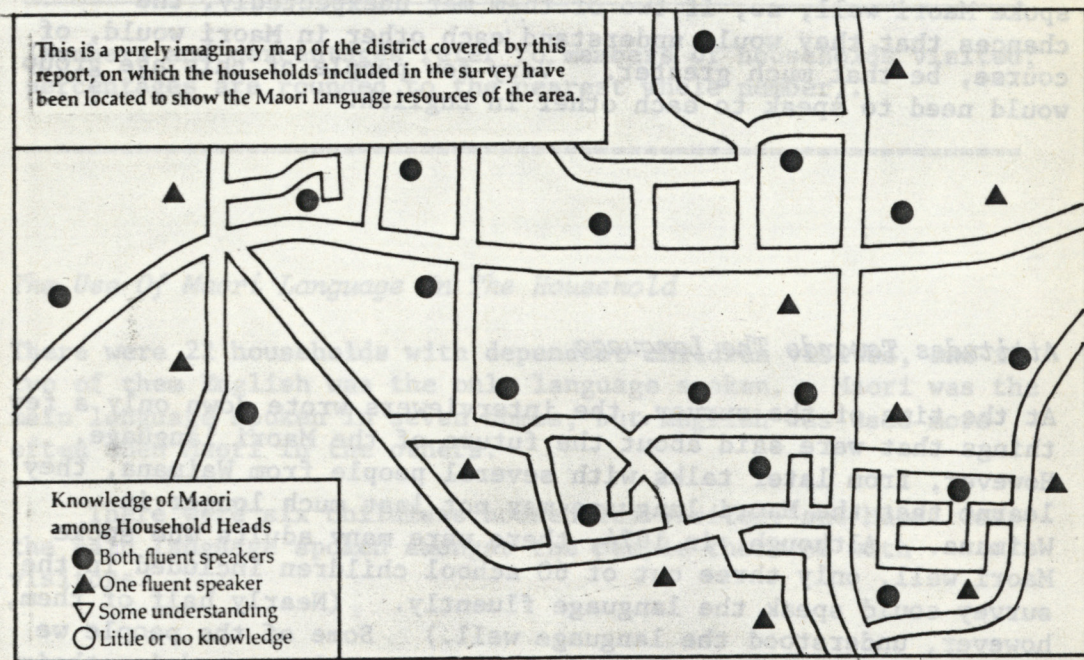
If any two members of the Maori community of Waimana were to meet unexpectedly, there was 1 chance in 3 that they would understand each other in Maori. Nearly everybody over 25 years old spoke Maori well, so, if two of them met unexpectedly, the chances that they would understand each other in Maori would, of course, be that much greater. Very few people of this age group would need to speak to each other in English.

*Attitudes Towards The Language*

At the time of the survey, the interviewers wrote down only a few things that were said about the future of the Maori language. However, from later talks with several people from Waimana, they learnt that the Maori language may not last much longer in Waimana. Although, in 1974, there were many adults who spoke Maori well, only three out of 60 school children included in the survey could speak the language fluently. (Nearly half of them, however, understood the language well.) Some of the people we spoke to after the survey said that many people were doing their best to encourage their children to speak Maori so that it will survive as a living language in Waimana, and not just as a language for special occasions.

### CONCLUSION

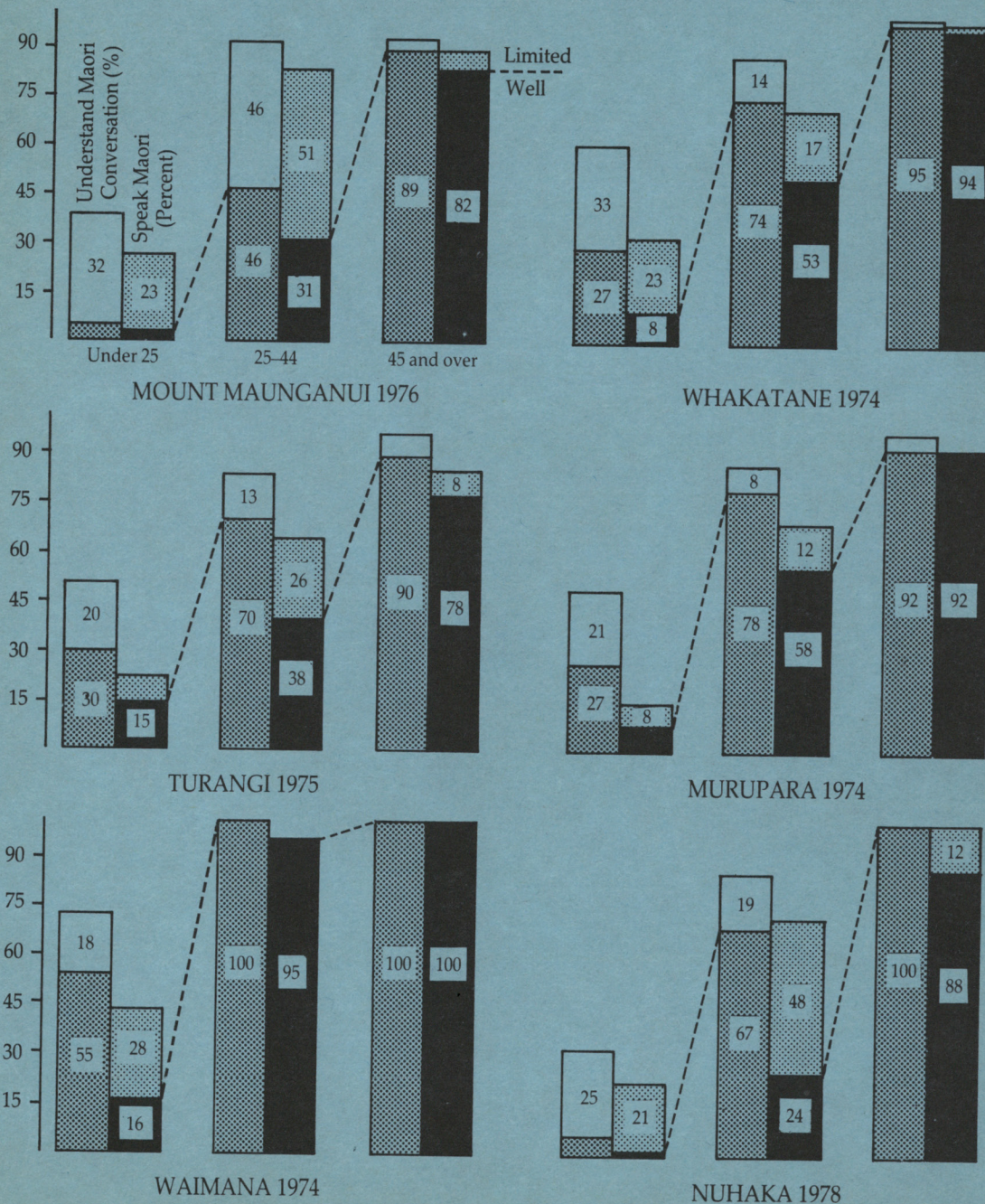
To summarise: in Waimana in 1974 the Maori language was widely spoken in the home and community, mainly by adults and kaumatua. However, there was a lot of English spoken in households with children, while a third of the school children had no understanding of Maori at the time. This is not a good sign as far as the future of the language in Waimana is concerned. However, more recent visits have shown that the people are awake to the danger, and that parents, elders and teachers are doing their best to revive the mana of Maori as the language for everyday use.



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.