

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

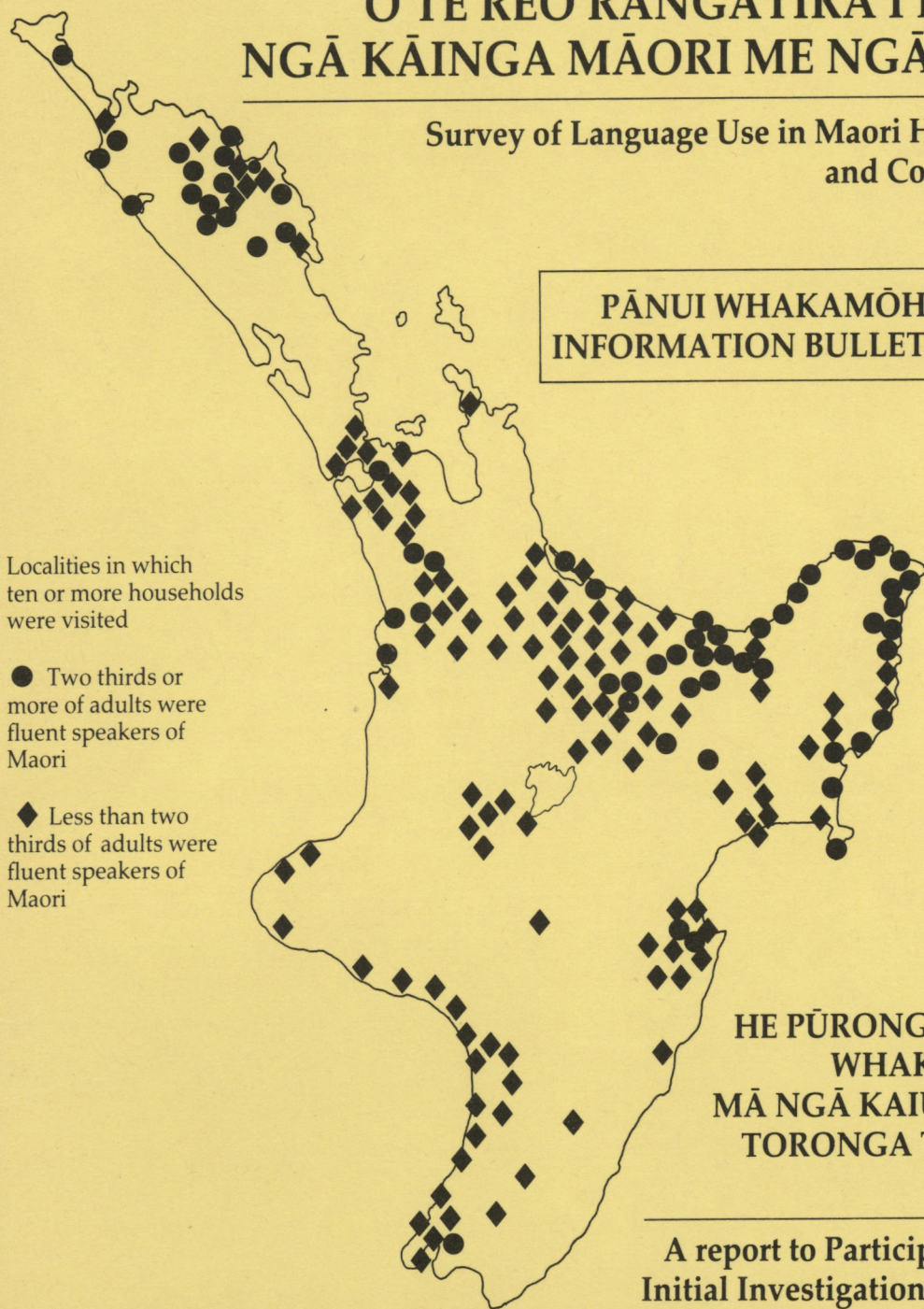
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

48

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

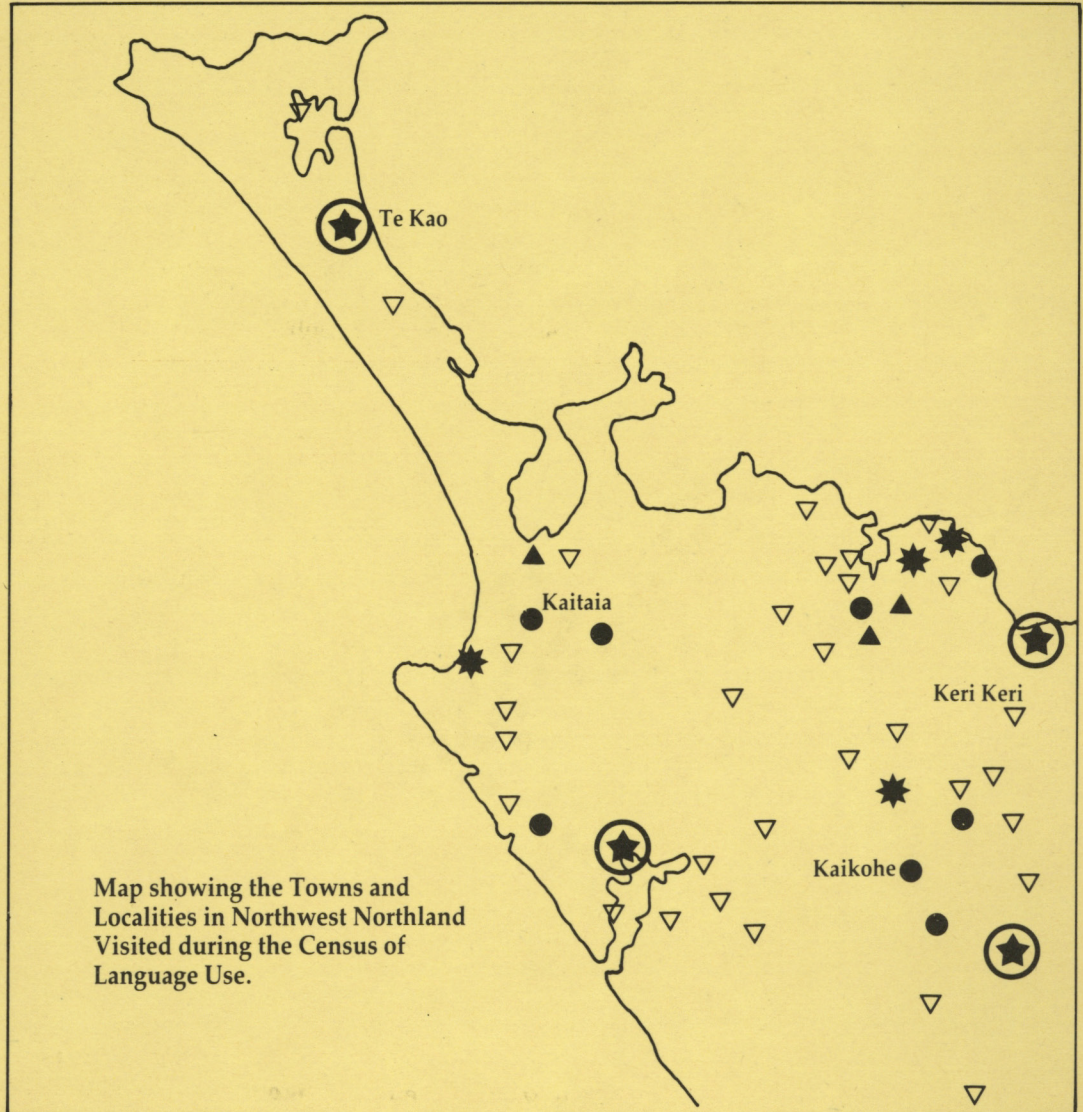
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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%
- ☆ 76% to 85%
- 60% to 75%
- ▲ Less than 60%
- ▽ Fewer than 7 households visited

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN WAITANGI

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 11 households in Waitangi (Paihia) in January 1975. The interviewers were Rena Tito (Ngati Whatua), Titihua Pryor (Tuhoe), Dora Pryor (Tuhoe), Helen Gillespie and Lorraine Williams. Six interviews were carried out partly or entirely in Maori; the rest were in English.

The households surveyed had a combined population of 39, and all of them were of Maori descent. This was about half the Maori population of the Waitangi settlement at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned 3 major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. Thirty-five people, or nearly everybody, belonged to Ngapuhi.

Ability To Speak And Understand Maori

The table on the next page shows that over half the people spoke Maori well and nearly two-thirds of them understood the language well. While most of the good speakers were adults over 25, nearly half the school-age children spoke Maori well. About one-fifth of the people surveyed did not understand the language at all.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN WAITANGI (1975)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	11	85	12	92	1	8	0	
25-44	4	57	5	72	1	14	1	14
15-24	0		1	33	1	33	1	33
2-14	6	46	6	43	2	14	6	43
Overall	21	58	24	65	5	14	8	22

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

The Maori Language In The Household

Maori was the main language for everyday use in most households visited. There were five homes with dependent children, and in two of them people spoke mostly in Maori. One family spoke Maori and English for an equal amount of time, while in the others more English than Maori was spoken.

There were six childless households visited and the members of two of them spoke entirely or mostly in Maori amongst each other or with visitors. In three families both Maori and English were used equally often while in the other household more English than Maori was spoken.

The Maori Language In The Community

Maori was spoken by many people in the community, especially adult neighbours, friends and workmates. A lot of people

said that the language they used in the community depended upon the race, age and ability in Maori of the person they were speaking to. This was why most Pakeha were usually spoken to in English as were many young Maori persons, especially school-age children. Kaumatua over the age of 45 usually spoke Maori with each other and to other speakers of Maori.

The Maori language still had an important use in ceremonies and hui on the marae and in other gatherings such as weddings and birthdays. Certain religious services, and private and family prayer were in Maori also.

If any two members of the Waitangi community met unexpectedly the chances would be about one in three that they could understand each other in Maori. If both people were adults over 25 the chances would be about three in five, while there was one chance in five that any two school-age children could understand each other in Maori.

Attitudes Towards The Language

Several of the people we spoke to said that they wanted Maori taught in schools as a definite way of holding on to the language. However, they believed that it should be the Ngapuhi dialect that was taught. If another tribal dialect was taught, it would confuse their children and make it difficult for them to speak with their parents and kaumatua.

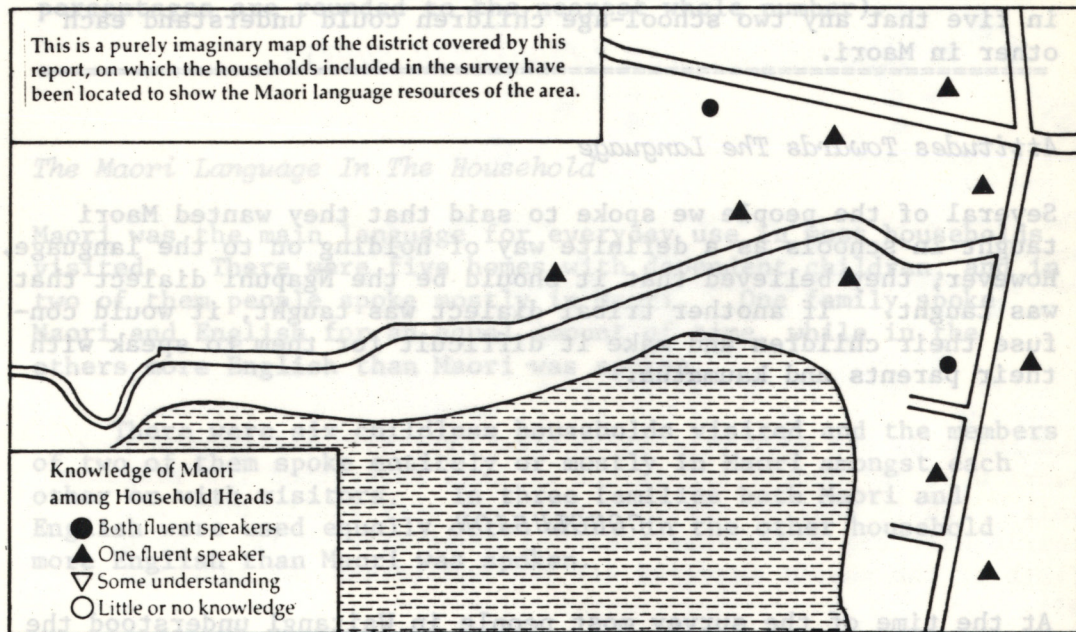
CONCLUSION

At the time of the survey most people in Waitangi understood the Maori language well, including more than a third of the children under 15. Three-quarters of the adults over 25 spoke Maori well and they were the people most likely to use the language with workmates, neighbours and friends in the community.

Both Maori and English were spoken in most households visited, although some people said their children usually replied in English when spoken to in Maori. Also, more than a third of the people under 25 did not understand Maori well at the time of the survey.

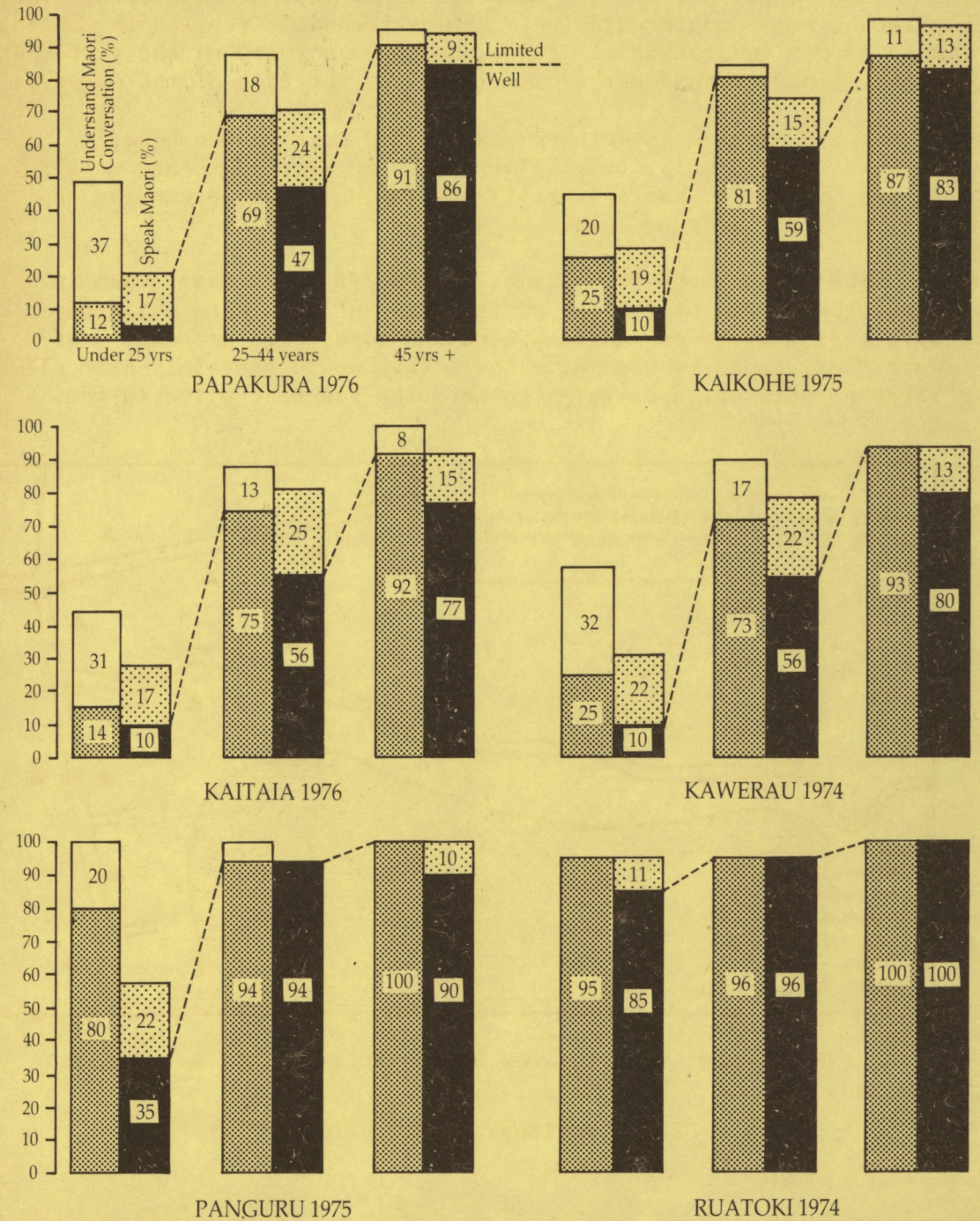
While English is being used more and more in the home, because, for example, television and radio programmes are mostly in that language, Maori is still the language for ceremonies on the marae and in some church services.

The Maori language was much better off in Waitangi than in many other parts of the Bay of Islands, but even here children were beginning to use English more and more, even at home. If more Maori could be used at school, this would certainly help all those parents who are trying to keep the language alive in the home.



This report was prepared by Lee Smith (Ngati Kahungunu).

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.