

TE TIROHANGA I TE KŌREROTANGA 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

54

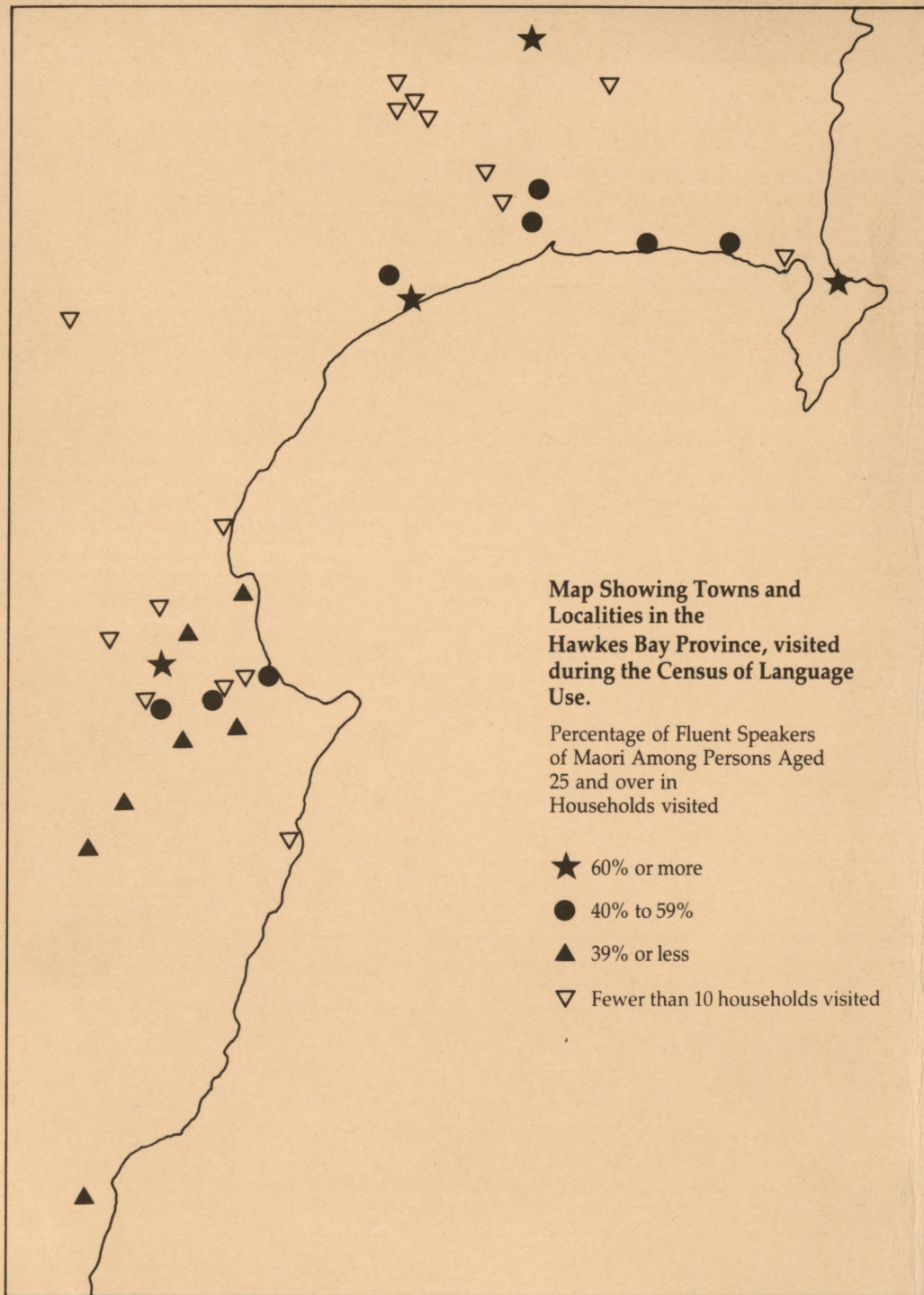
Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

● 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 HAUMOANA

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 20 households in Haumoana in August 1977. The interviewers were Aroha Yates (Te Arawa), Meri Wiki (Ngapuhi), Awhina Ngatai (Ngaiterangi), Merepeka Wharepapa (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Candy Scrimshaw (Ngati Kahungunu) and Arapera Baker (Ngapuhi). Seventeen interviews were carried out in English; the other three were partly or entirely in Maori.

The households surveyed had a total population of 96, and 95 of these people were of Maori descent. This was a third of the Maori population of Haumoana at the time.

RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned seven major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. By far the most, 79 people or 82 percent of the total, belonged to Ngati Kahungunu.

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The table on the next page shows that all fluent speakers of Maori and those who understood the language well were adults over 25. There were few people under 25 who understood more than ordinary greetings, simple orders and words in Maori, and three-quarters of them knew no Maori at all at the time.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN HAUMOANA (1977)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	9	56	12	75	1	13	2	13
25-44	7	30	8	35	7	30	8	35
15-24	0		0		5	22	18	78
2-14	0		0		7	23	24	77
Overall	16	17	20	22	21	23	52	56

Numbers and percentages refer to members of households visited; percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

The Use of Maori Language in the Household

English was the main language for everyday use in most households visited. There were 15 homes with dependent children, and in nine of them people spoke mostly or entirely in English. In four other homes, more English than Maori was spoken, and in one home Maori and English were used equally often. In the remaining household the main language spoken was Maori.

There were five childless households and English was the main language used in four of them. In the remaining household both languages were spoken equally often.

The Maori Language in the Community

English was also the main language spoken in the community. Good speakers of Maori, especially among the kaumatua, preferred to speak in their mother tongue with other friends and neighbours who

spoke the language. However, most people in Haumoana spoke only English, and none of the people under 25 in the homes we visited even understood Maori well enough to follow people talking in that language.

Maori was still regarded as the proper language for ceremonies on the marae. (However, most people talked in English when the ceremonies were over.) The Maori language also had an important part to play in certain religious services in the area, and was used in the saying of grace in many homes.

If any two members of the Maori community met unexpectedly, the chances were about one in 25 that they could understand each other in Maori. If both people were adults over 25 the chances were one in five, but it was unlikely that people under 25 would be able to speak in Maori with each other.

Attitudes towards the Language

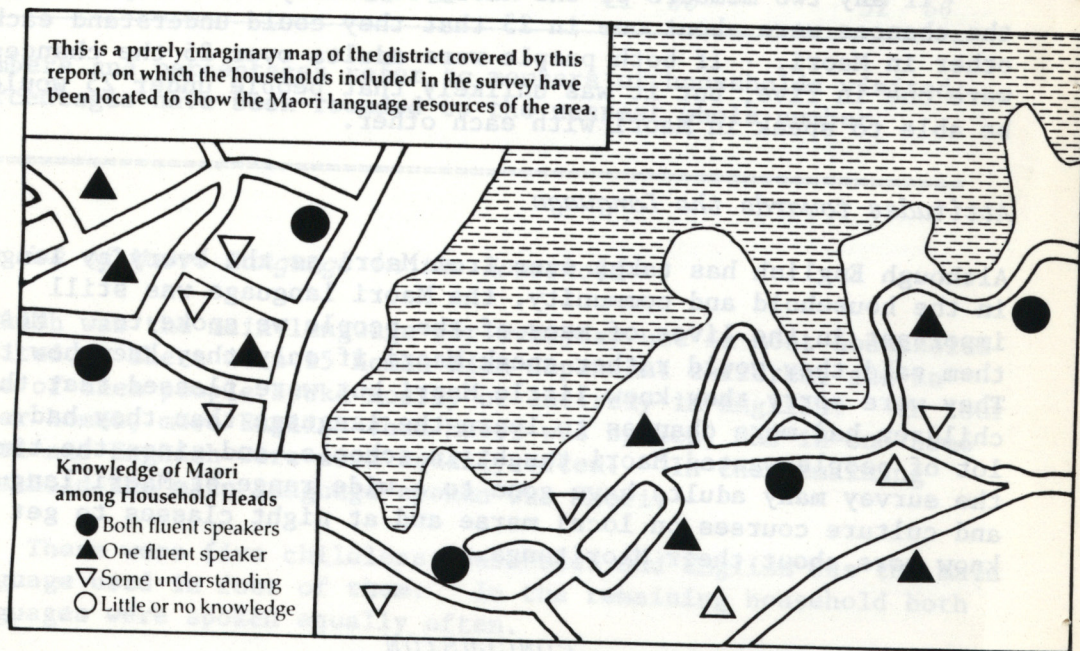
Although English has taken over from Maori as the everyday language in the household and community, the Maori language was still important in the lives of many of the people we spoke to. Most of them said they would rather speak Maori if only they knew how to. They were sorry they knew little Maori but were pleased that their children had more chances to learn the language than they had. A lot of people wanted Maori taught in schools, and since the time of the survey many adults have gone to a wide range of Maori language and culture courses on local marae and at night classes to get to know more about their Maoritanga.

CONCLUSION

In 1977 all good speakers of Maori in Haumoana and those who understood the language well were adults over 25. Three-quarters of the people under 25 did not understand Maori at all. English was the main language for everyday use in the household and the community,

while Maori was heard mainly in ceremonies on the marae carried out by kaumatua.

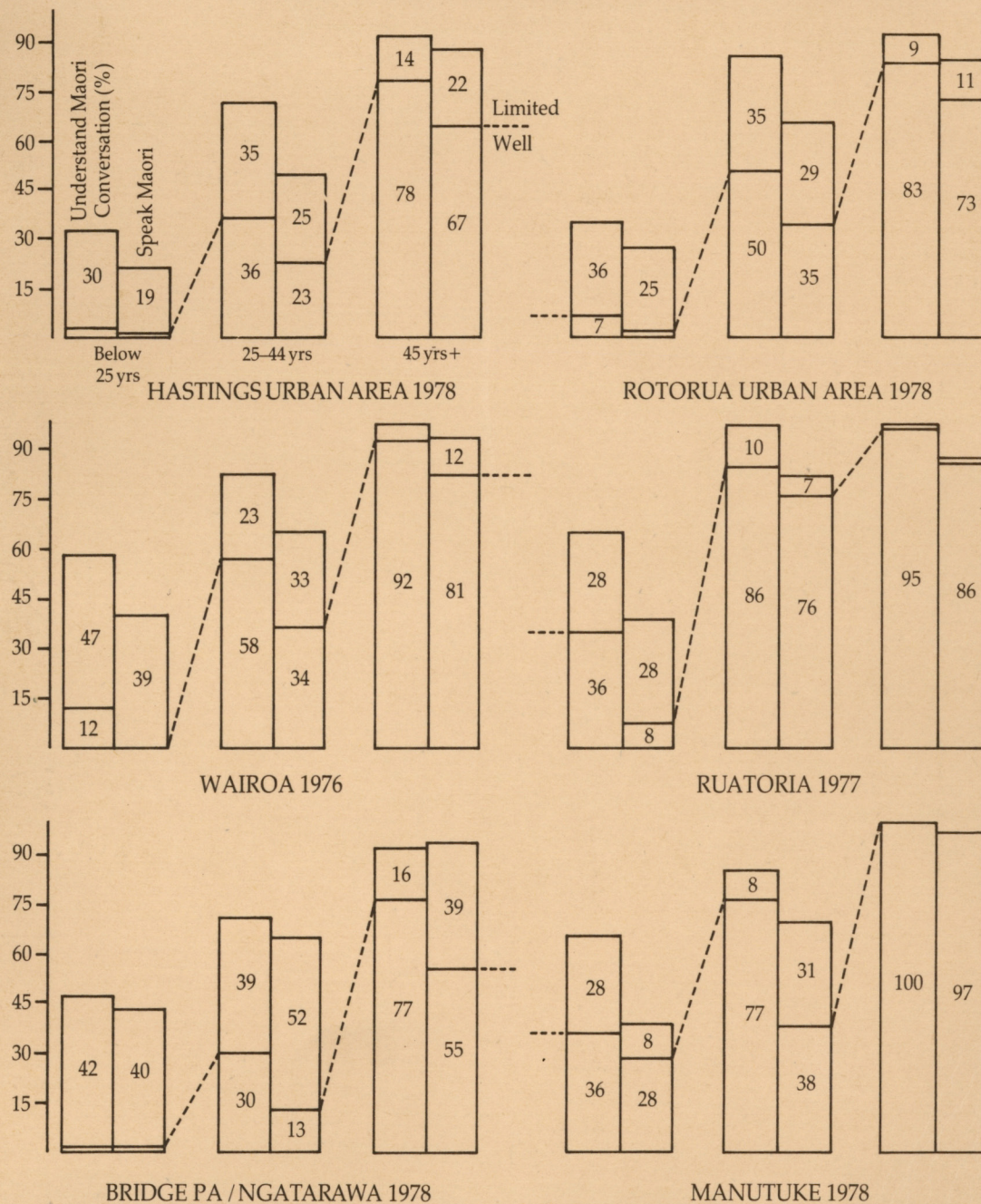
Since this time many people have tried hard to bring back the language in Haumoana. For example, the Takitimu Maori Language Board has started Maori courses in the community, for people under 25, and these have been very successful. Local elders are teaching young people all about ceremonies on the marae, as well as whaikorero and karanga, haka, waiata and Maori arts and crafts. It is now quite common in Haumoana to hear some of the younger people speaking Maori in the home and community.



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.