

# 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

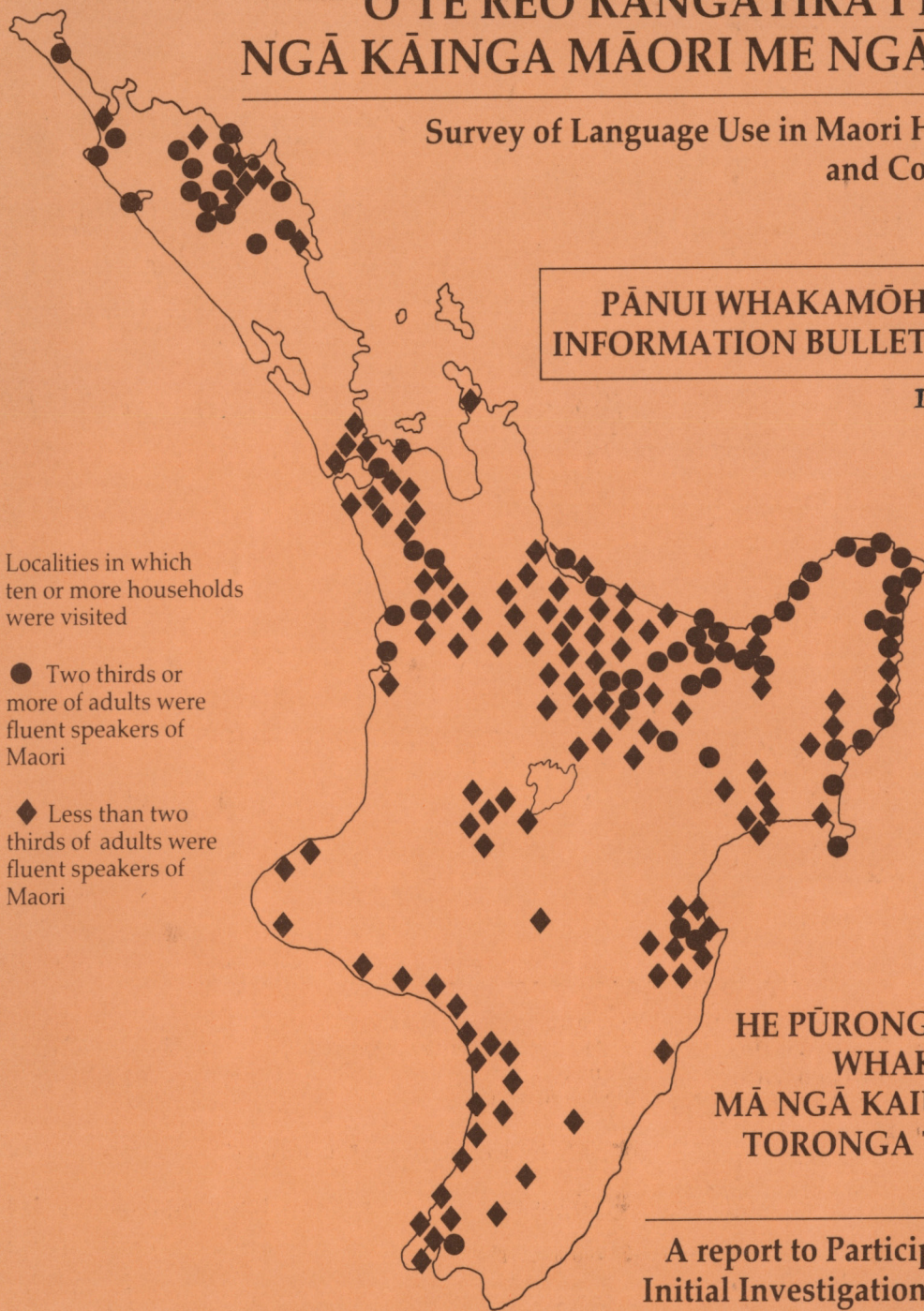
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Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

● 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



Map showing Towns and Localities of the Waikato Region of the North Island visited during the Census of Language use

Percentage of Fluent Speakers of Maori Among Persons Aged 25 and over in Households visited

- ★ 70% or more
- ◆ 55% to 69%
- 40% to 54%
- ▼ Less than 40%
- Fewer than 10 households visited

## THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN HOROTIU

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities took place in 9 households in Horotiu in February 1977. The interviewers were Phillip Hawera (Tuhoe), Raiha Smith (Ngati Kahungunu) and Tawini Rangihau (Tuhoe). Seven interviews were carried out in English; the remainder were partly in Maori and partly in English.

The households surveyed had a total population of 52, and 51 of these people were of Maori descent. This was about a quarter of the Maori population of Horotiu at the time.

### RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

#### *Iwi Affiliation*

The people interviewed mentioned six major iwi to which they or members of their households belonged. Waikato with 31 members, or 60 percent of the total, was the largest iwi in the survey. The next largest tribe was Maniapoto with 10 members or a fifth of the total. Ngati Kahungunu was the third largest iwi.

#### *Ability to Speak and Understand Maori*

The table on the next page shows that more than a quarter of the people surveyed spoke Maori well, while almost two-thirds of them understood the language well. Most of these good speakers were adults over 25. None of the school age children spoke Maori, but a third of them understood the language well. A quarter of the people under 25 did not understand Maori at all at that time.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN HOROTIU (1977)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	6	75	7	88	1	12	0	
25-44	3	43	4	57	3	43	0	
15-24	5	33	13	87	1	7	1	7
2-14	0		8	38	5	24	8	38
Overall	14	29	32	63	10	20	9	18

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

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*The Use of Maori Language in the Household*

English was the main language for everyday use in most households visited. There were eight homes with dependent children and in seven of them people spoke mostly or entirely in English. In the remaining household, more English than Maori was used.

There was one childless household and the people there spoke mostly English to each other.

*The Maori Language in the Community*

English was also the main language spoken in the community. Good speakers of Maori, especially kaumatua, would rather speak in their mother tongue with other friends and neighbours who spoke Maori, but most people in Horotiu spoke only English.

The Maori language still remained important, however, in ceremonies on the marae and in certain religious services. Some families also used Maori in private and family prayer and grace.

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

*Attitudes towards the Language*

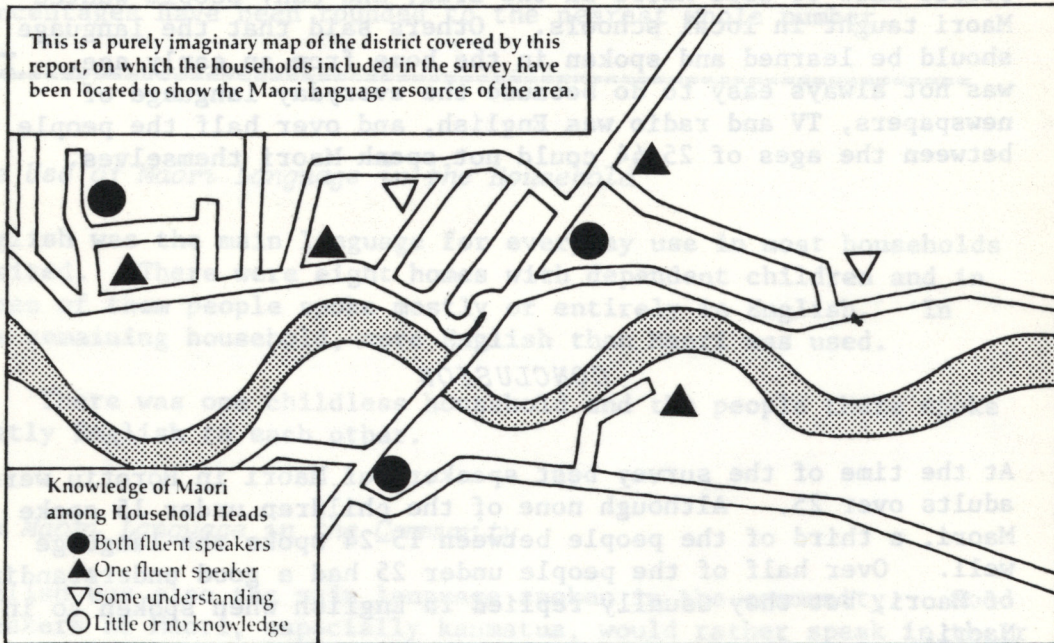
English was spoken more often than Maori in the household and community, but the Maori language is still important in the Maoritanga and lives of many of the people we interviewed. The kaumatua age group were especially worried that fewer and fewer people knew or used Maori in the area, and many people wanted Maori taught in local schools. Others said that the language should be learned and spoken in the home from an early age. This was not always easy to do because the everyday language of newspapers, TV and radio was English, and over half the people between the ages of 25-44 could not speak Maori themselves.

CONCLUSION

At the time of the survey best speakers of Maori in Horotiu were adults over 25. Although none of the children under 15 spoke Maori, a third of the people between 15-24 spoke the language well. Over half of the people under 25 had a good understanding of Maori, but they usually replied in English when spoken to in Maori.

English was the main language for everyday use in the home and community, and many of the people we visited were worried that fewer and fewer people used the Maori language. Parents were looking to teachers and tribal elders for help in teaching their children Maori. They see the starting of Maori-speaking

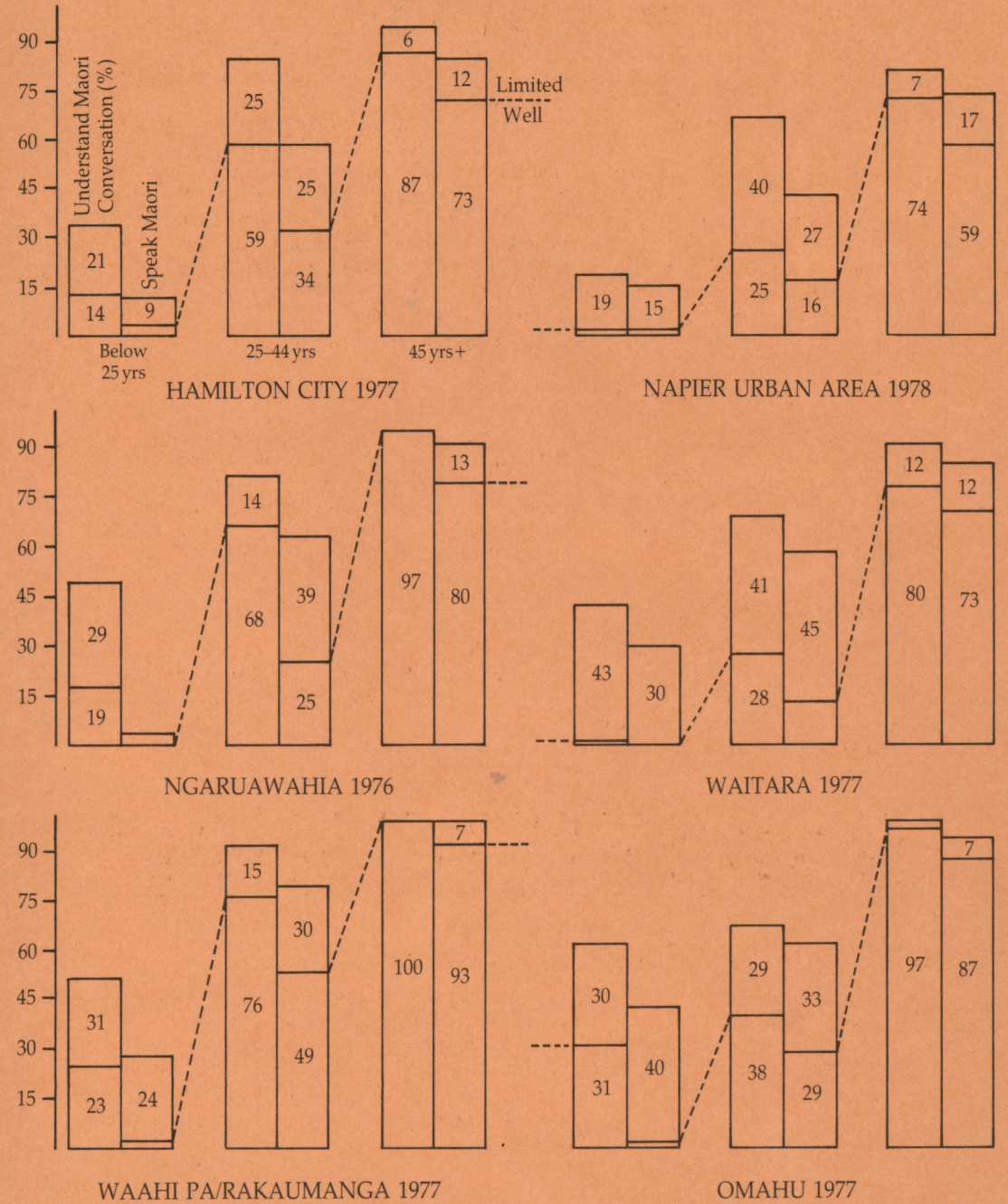
creches (Te Kohanga Reo) and language classes in the community as a real help in holding on to the language in Horotiu. People should get in touch with the Department of Maori Affairs if they want to know more about these programmes.



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.