

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

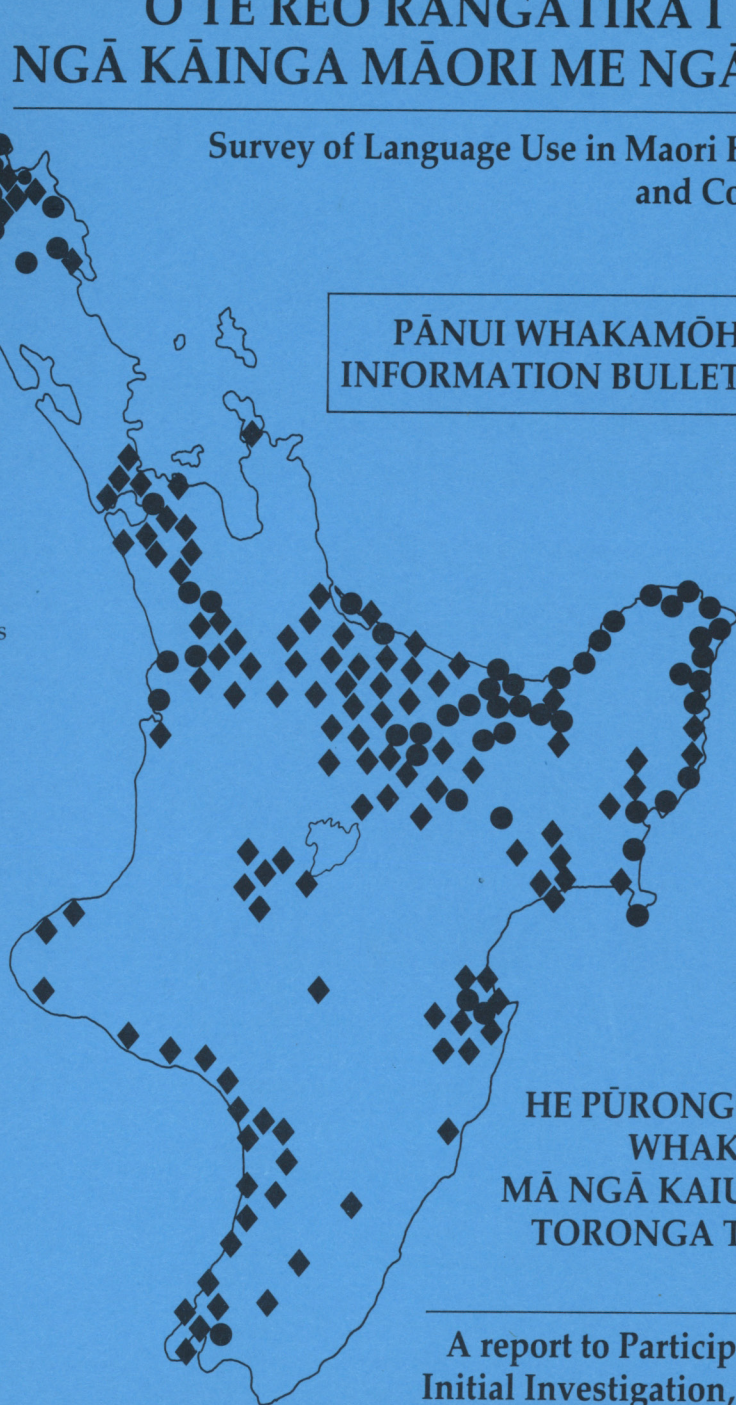
PĀNUI WHAKAMŌHIO
INFORMATION BULLETIN

84

Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

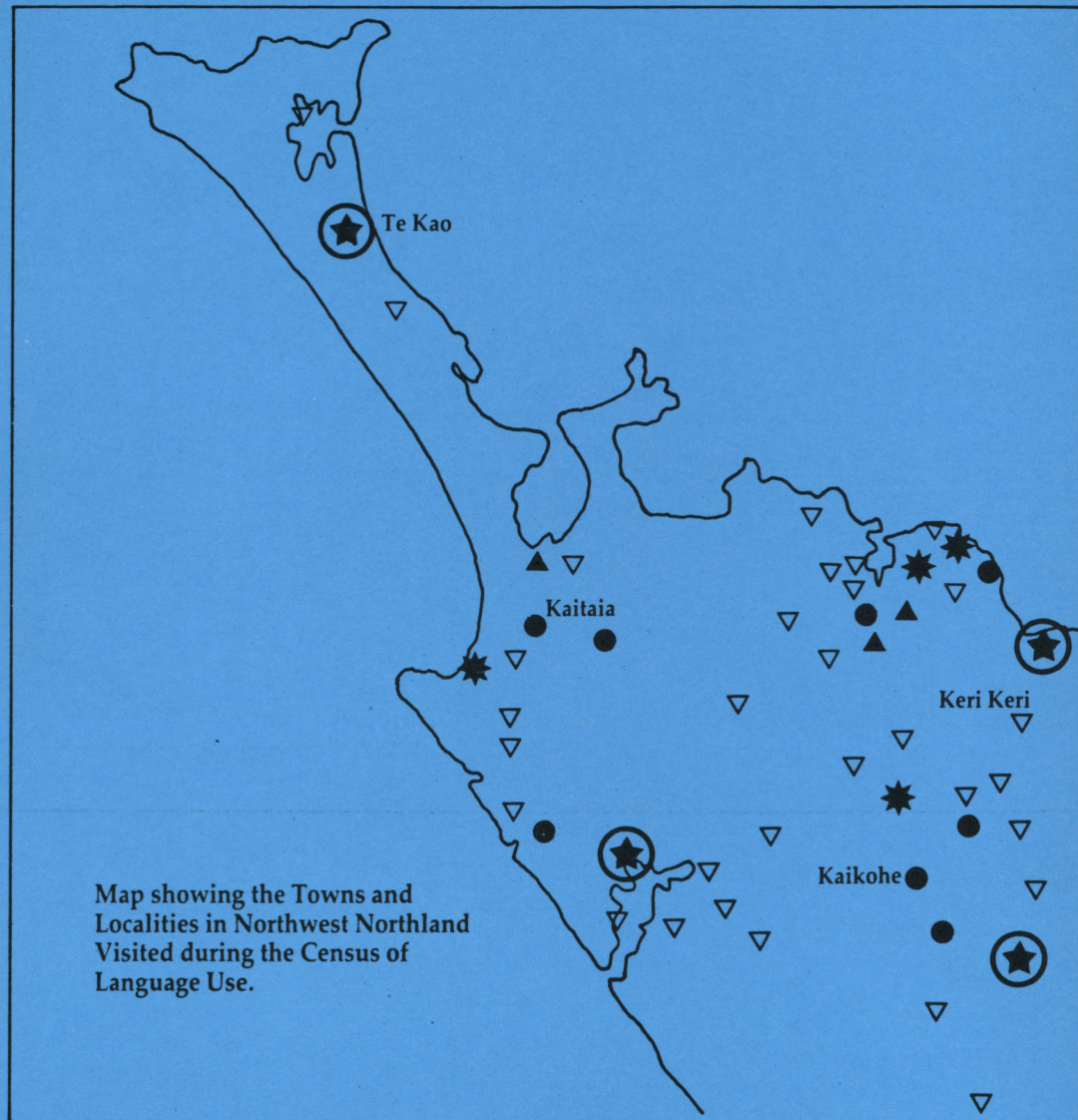
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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 the Towns and Localities in Northwest Northland Visited during the Census of Language Use.

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 RURAL WHANGAROA

This report covers all the localities in Whangaroa County, except for Kaeo and Omaunu, which were visited during the census of language use in Maori households and communities in August and September 1973. Altogether 68 households, with 329 people (roughly 60 percent of the Maori population at the time) were visited in these districts: Matauri Bay (9 households), Akatere (2), Kahoe (2), Totara North (2), Mangapa (1), Pupuke (14), Otangaroa (4), Waitaruke (5), Mahinepua (3), Te Ngaere (4), Wainui (7), Matangirau (9), and Otoroa (6). (Another 26 families were visited in Kaeo and Omaunu; the results of the survey in these districts have been published in a previous bulletin, no.34 in this series).

The interviewers were Francis Riley (Ngapuhi), Merepeka Wharepapa (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Ani Hona Bosch (Ngapuhi), Ripeka Koopu (Te Whanau-a-Apanui), Ross Smith (Ngati Hangarau), Rebecca Hill, Peter Ranby, Te Ariki Tyler, and Reuben Tyler. Forty-four interviews were carried out in Maori and twenty-four were in English.

Iwi Affiliation

Although a total of ten major iwi were represented in the families we visited, 276 of the 320 people of Maori ancestry belonged to Ngapuhi (more than four-fifths of the total). Other iwi mentioned included Ngati Kahu and Te Aupouri.

KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN RURAL WHANGAROA (1973)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers		Understand Easily		Limited Understanding		No Knowledge	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
45 & over	67	87	70	91	5	6	2	3
25-44	32	64	42	84	7	14	1	2
15-24	5	12	22	52	10	24	10	24
2-14	7	5	47	32	49	34	50	34
Overall	111	36	181	57	71	23	63	20

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

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RESULTS OF THE LINGUISTIC SURVEY

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

As you can see from the table above, about four out of five people in these districts had some understanding of Maori at the time of the survey. Most of the older people were fluent speakers, and there were few adults who could not understand Maori easily. However, many children had been brought up to speak only English: about a third of the school-age children were said by their parents to know no Maori at all, one third had a limited understanding, and the rest (mainly older children) could understand Maori easily, although only a few could speak it well.

There was not very much difference between the various districts as to who could speak Maori, especially where the adults were concerned. In Waitaruke, however, all 11 children under 15 in the families we visited were said to be able to understand Maori easily (although only one of them could speak Maori well), whereas in Otoroa parents said that 10 of the 16 children had no knowledge of Maori at all. In Matangirau, also, about three-fifths of the children (11 out of 18) were said to know no Maori. There were two children who could speak Maori well in Pupuke (out of 22), and three (out of 12) in Otangaroa.

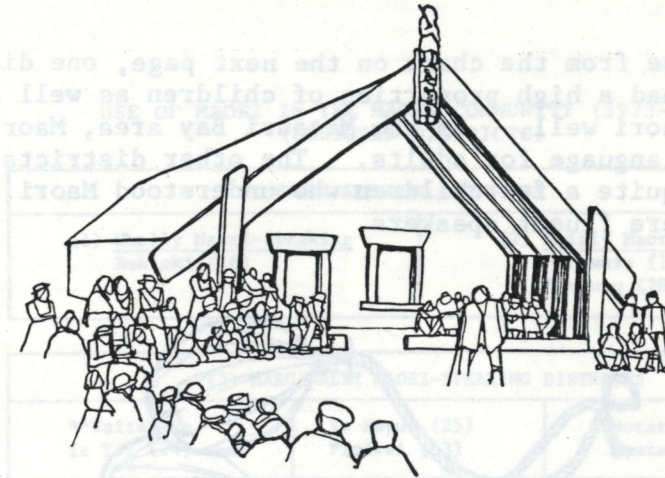
Use of the Maori Language in the Home

Overall, in homes where there were children under 15 years of age, English was likely to be the main language. There were 44 of these households: Maori was spoken most of the time in seven of them (16 percent), and English and Maori about evenly in 11 (25 percent). Maori was used quite often in another 11 homes, and once in a while in ten. There were only five homes (11 percent) where the parents said the children would never hear Maori spoken.

In childless homes, Maori was used much more often - in 12 of the 24 it was the main language, and was used at least as often as English in four others. In the other eight homes, Maori was used occasionally in six, and only English was spoken in two.

There was hardly any difference between the various districts as far as the use of Maori in the home was concerned. Most children would have heard Maori spoken at home at least some of the time. The homes where Maori was used most of the time, and where children were most likely to be spoken to in Maori, were in Waitaruke (2), the Wainui/Mahinepua area (2), Otoroa (2), Waitaruke (2), and Matauri Bay (1). In most other homes, Maori was most often spoken only by adults to each other, and children were usually spoken to in English. Most children spoke English to each other and to their parents, even when they had a fairly good understanding of Maori.

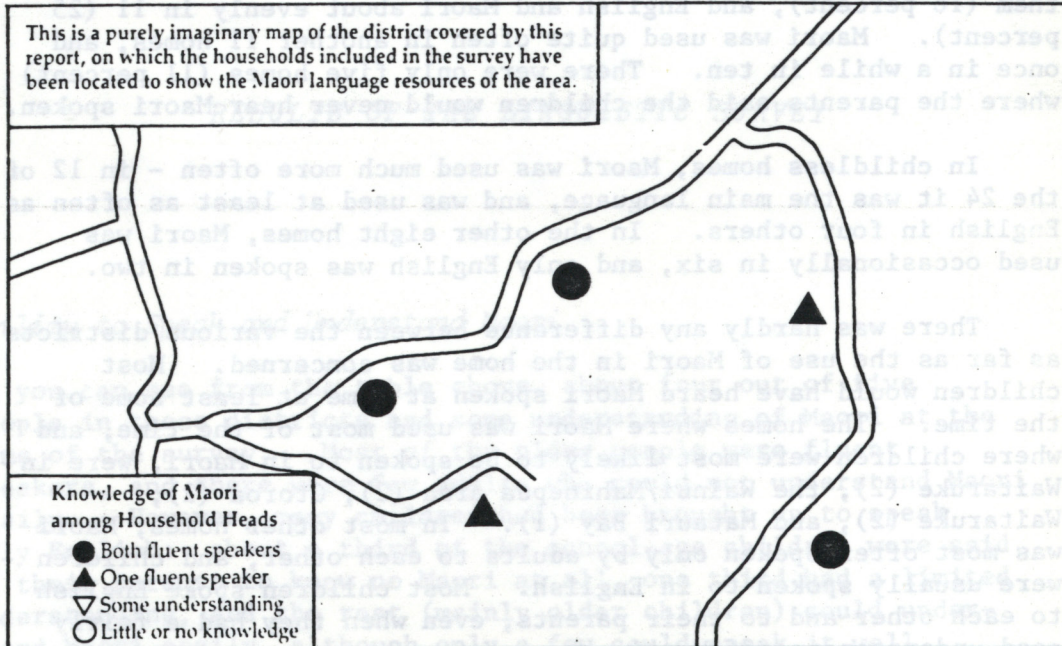
Most parents, however, had learned Maori as their first language. A few (about one in ten) said they had learned English and Maori together before they went to school, and about the same number (mostly younger parents) had learned English first at home. Many parents were now sorry that they had not been able to teach their own children Maori - some said they had tried, but their children took little interest in the language once they found out that English was the main language at school, in the towns, and on radio and TV. Some grandparents were making real efforts to teach Maori to their mokopuna, and younger adults from several districts were improving their own knowledge of Maori by taking every opportunity to listen and talk to older people.



The Maori Language in the Community

Among adults, Maori was still widely spoken in Whangaroa County in the 1970s. Although even those people who spoke mostly Maori to their own children were likely to speak English (or a mixture of Maori and English) to other people's children, people in country districts used Maori more often than English with neighbours, and also spoke Maori to most visitors. Those who worked away from their farms had to use more English, particularly those who worked in town (Kaeo).

Maori was still used widely in religious services, although English was likely to be the language for sermons. Maori, however, was used much more than English in saying grace, in prayers for the sick, and in prayers at the opening and closing of meetings. On the marae, most formal speeches were made entirely in Maori, although some English was likely to be used if non-Maoris were present. A few younger adults said that if they had to speak at a tangi or similar occasion they would have to use mostly English, although none of their kaumatua would do this. For chatting on the marae, younger people would often use a mixture of Maori and English, although most people thought that the kaumatua would speak Maori rather than English even when relaxing.



WAITARUKE

As you can see from the chart on the next page, one district, Waitaruke, still had a high proportion of children as well as adults who knew Maori well. In the Matauri Bay area, Maori was already mainly a language for adults. The other districts were in between, with quite a few children who understood Maori, and many adults who were fluent speakers.



Attitudes towards the Maori Language

More than half the adults we interviewed said that they preferred to speak Maori; a little less than a third liked English and Maori equally well, and about one in six (mostly in the 20 to 30 age group) preferred English. However, even some of the older people found it easier to read and write in English - about half of all adults preferred English for this purpose, a third Maori, and the rest liked both languages equally well.

There were several reasons for people who found it easier to speak Maori still preferring to read and write in English. An obvious reason was that there is much more reading matter available in English - the only books in Maori most people had were bibles and prayerbooks. Experiences at school also played a part in this - few of the older people had been to high school (where they might have had some formal practice in reading and writing Maori), and almost everyone had started off learning to read and write in English, and had used only English for these purposes throughout their childhood.

USE OF MAORI IN THE MAORI COMMUNITY (1973-79)
(SELECTED DISTRICTS)

MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS	
(1) <u>Wholly Maori-Speaking</u> Ruatoki (16)	(2) <u>Mainly Maori-Speaking</u> Matawaia (14) Panguru (28)

(3) MARGINALLY MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS		
**Waitaruke Te Tii (24)	Te Hapua (25) Pipiwai (53)	Motatau (23) Ruatahuna (18)

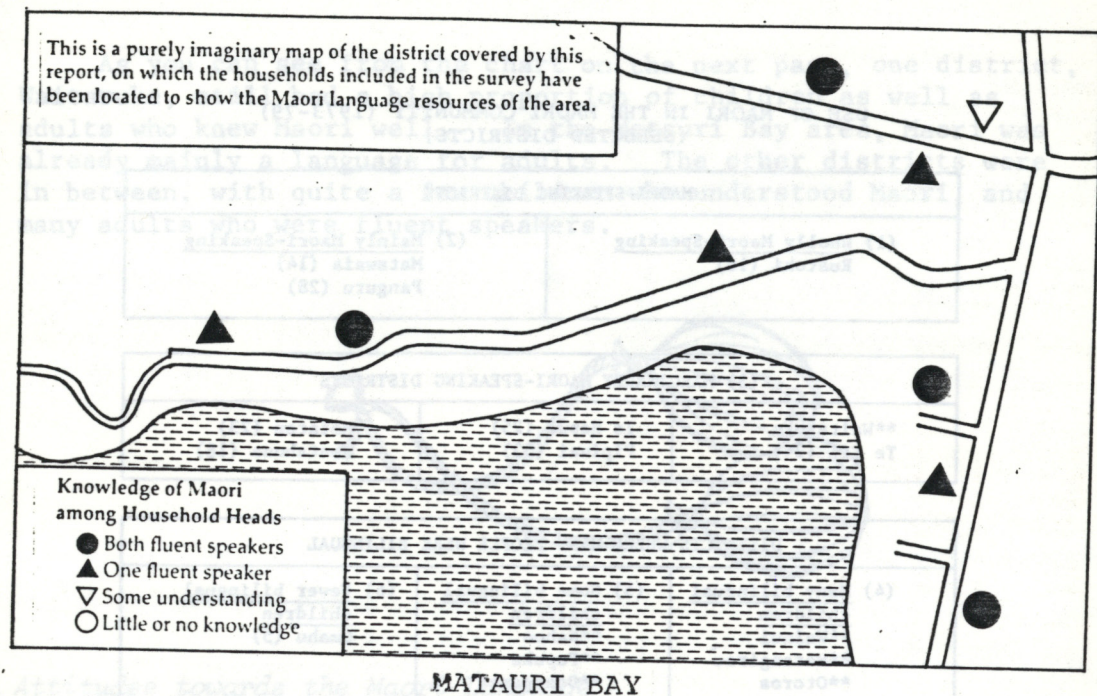
DISTRICTS WHERE MANY PEOPLE WERE BILINGUAL		
(4) <u>Many bilingual children</u> **Wainui **Matangirau **Otoroa	(5) <u>Some bilingual children</u> **Kahoe **Pupuke **Otangaroa	(6) <u>Fewer bilingual children</u> Omahu (5)

DISTRICTS WHERE MANY ADULTS WERE BILINGUAL	
(7) <u>Most adults could speak Maori</u> **Matauri Waihaha (36)	(8) <u>Most adults could understand Maori</u> Gisborne City (35) Matakana Island (64)

DISTRICTS WHERE MAORI-SPEAKERS WERE A MINORITY		
(9) <u>Most homes had a Maori-Speaking head</u> Whangarei (15) Kaeo/Omaunu (34)	(10) <u>About half the homes had a Maori-Speaking head</u> Karetu (49) Rotorua (33)	(11) <u>A few homes had a Maori-Speaking head</u> Paki Paki (8) Masterton (74)

**Districts included in this report.

(For other districts, the report number is also shown).

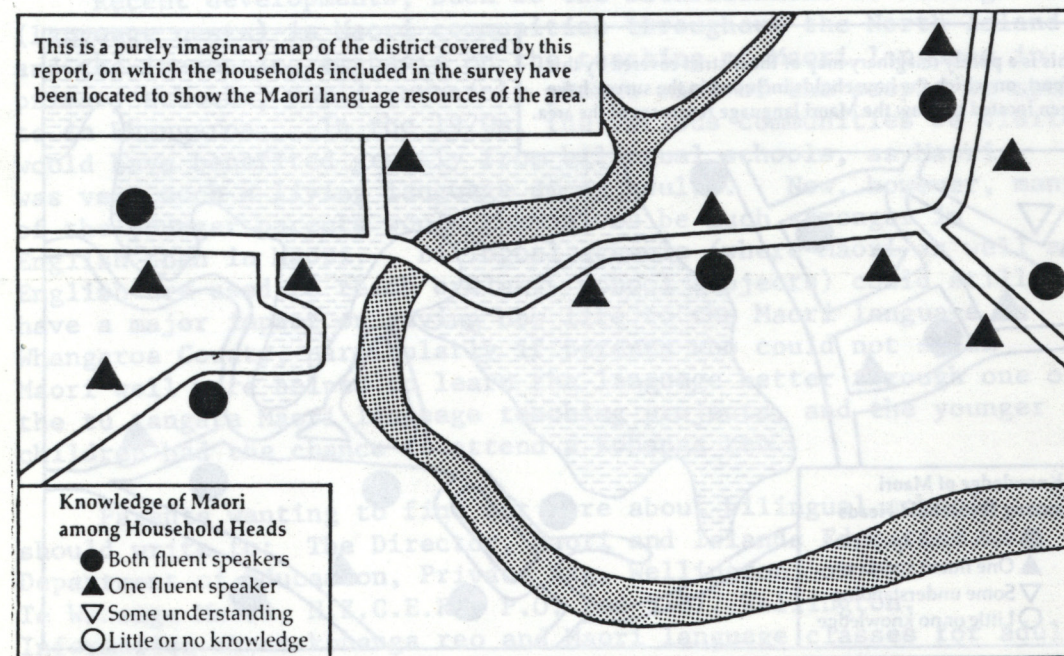


People from all districts said that they would like to see Maori taught more widely at school. Many had gone to school at a time when the Maori language was thought to be an obstacle to learning (one parent told us she had deliberately brought her children up to speak only English, because she was frightened that if they spoke Maori this would have a bad effect on their English at school). People in Waitaruke seemed to have had fairly pleasant experiences at school as far as using Maori went, but older people in some other places said that they had been forbidden to speak Maori. (An elderly teacher in Waitaruke recalled being reprimanded by an inspector in the 1920's because she and the other nuns were permitting children to speak Maori in the playground).

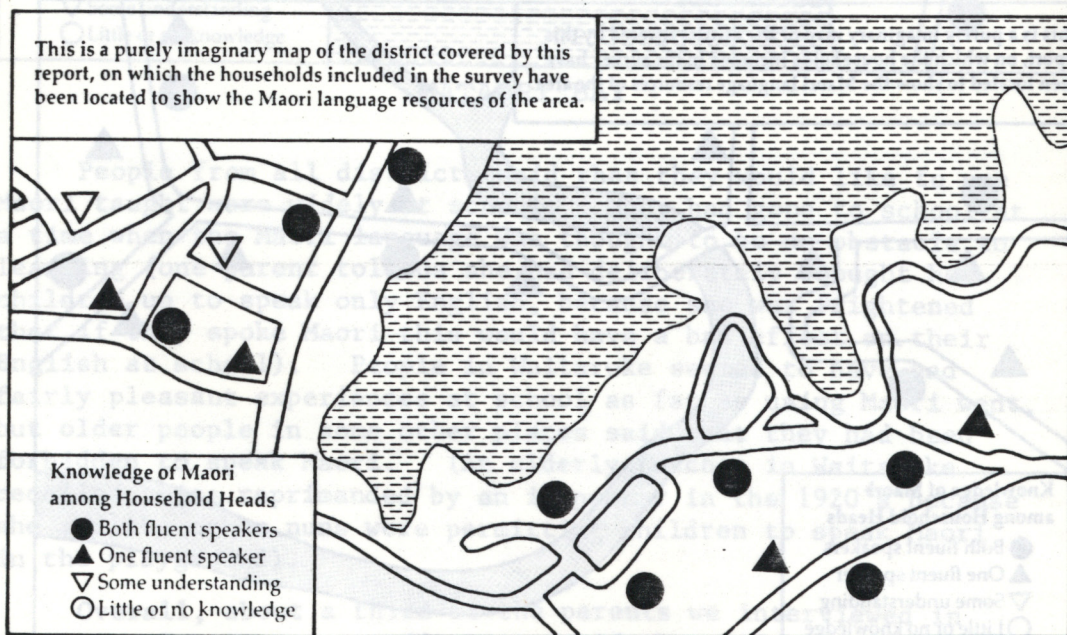
Overall, about a third of the parents we interviewed in Whangaroa County country districts said they had been beaten at school for being caught speaking Maori, and a slightly smaller proportion had been punished in some other way. One of the

punishments was digging blackberries, and one person told us that as a boy he had established a thriving business, digging up blackberries in his spare time. He kept a "blackberry bank" and sold plants for a penny or two each to his mates so they could avoid serving their sentences personally!

When we were doing our fieldwork, teachers were generally very well disposed towards the Maori language, although it had not yet become an important part of the primary school curriculum. Two people were concerned about the variety of Maori taught at secondary schools: one objected to the "East Coast" Maori in the standard text books, and the other said that she did not want teachers telling her "that Ngapuhi Maori was mongrel Maori" (because it was not the language of the text books). However another person had told us that they were ashamed to speak their own variety of Maori when they first came to Whangaroa from the Bay of Plenty.



Several people said they thought it was important for English to be thoroughly taught, as well as Maori — 'kia kore ano nga tamariki e backward', as one from Otoroa put it. A parent from Matangirau anticipated both the kohanga reo movement, and other developments of the early 1980s, by saying that Maori should be taught in playcentres before the children go to a mixed primary school, and that all teachers should know at least a little Maori. One parent from Pupuke was sure that if Maori were taught at school many more people would speak it as their everyday language. (People from Pupuke seemed to be particularly resentful of the way they had been punished as children for speaking Maori at school — although one parent there thought the punishment was deserved because everyone knew it was against the school rules in those days.)



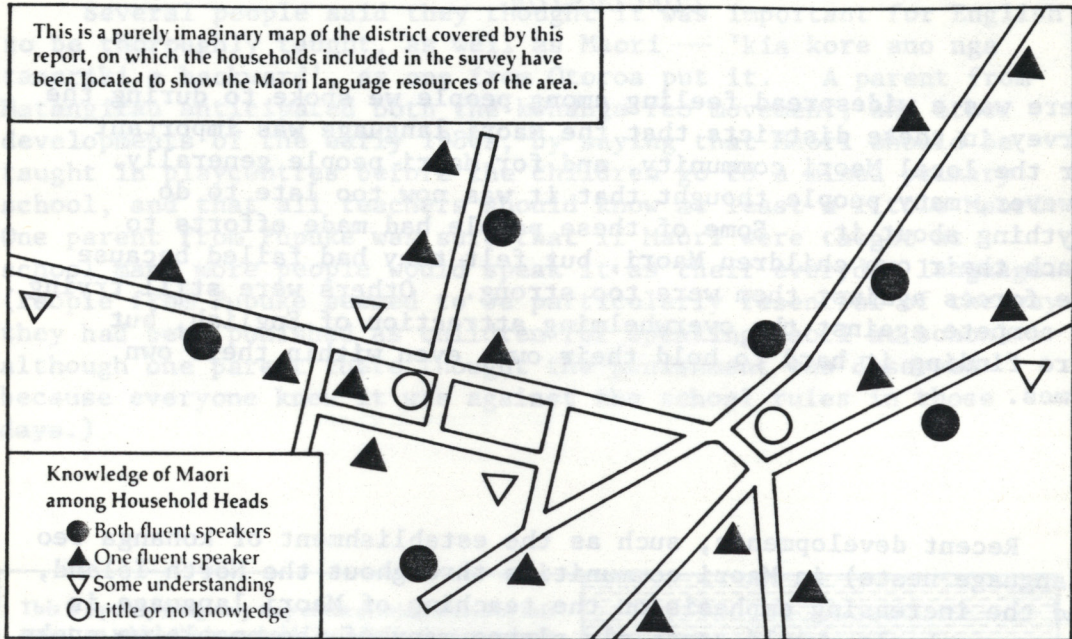
WAINUI AND MAHINEPUA

CONCLUSION

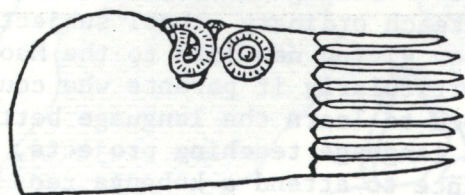
There was a widespread feeling among people we spoke to during the survey in these districts that the Maori language was important for the local Maori community, and for Maori people generally. However, many people thought that it was now too late to do anything about it. Some of these people had made efforts to teach their own children Maori, but felt they had failed because the forces against them were too strong. Others were still trying to compete against the overwhelming attraction of English, but were finding it hard to hold their own, even within their own homes.

Recent developments, such as the establishment of kohanga reo (language nests) in Maori communities throughout the North Island, and the increasing emphasis on the teaching of Maori language in primary schools, would certainly please many of the people we spoke to in Whangaroa. In the 1970s, the various communities we visited would have benefited greatly from bilingual schools, as Maori was very much a living language among adults. Now, however, many of the younger parents would themselves be much stronger in English than in Maori. Bilingual schools (where Maori as well as English are used to teach ordinary school subjects) could still have a major impact on giving new life to the Maori language in Whangaroa County, particularly if parents who could not speak Maori well were helped to learn the language better through one of the tu tangata Maori language teaching projects, and the younger children had the chance to attend a kohanga reo.

Parents wanting to find out more about bilingual schools should write to: The Director, Maori and Islands Education, Department of Education, Private Bag, Wellington, or to Te Wahanga Maori, N.Z.C.E.R., P.O. Box 3237, Wellington. Information about kohanga reo and Maori language classes for adults should be available from the district office of the Department of Maori Affairs (Private Bag, Whangarei).



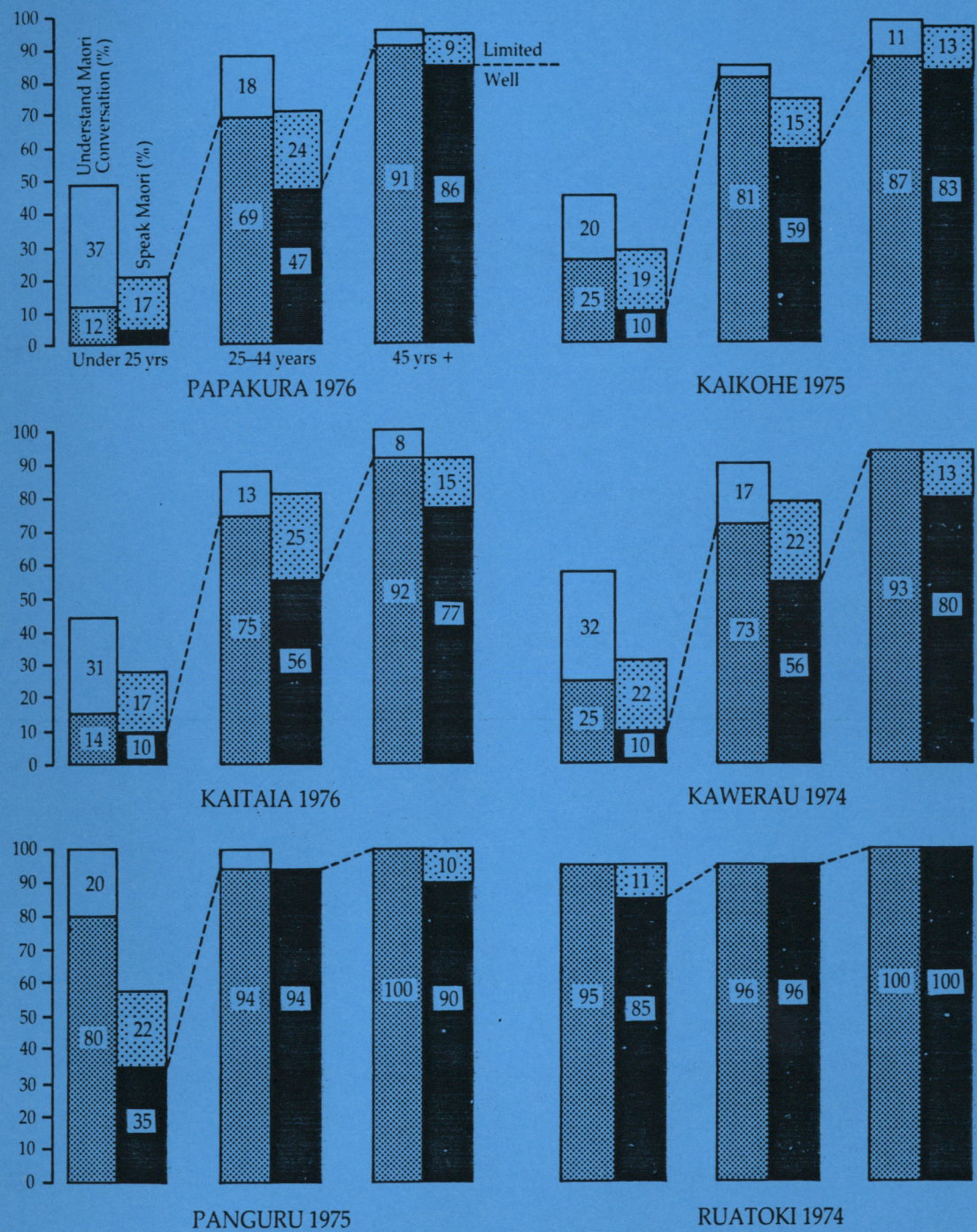
KAEO AND OMAUNU (See Report No. 34)



This report was prepared by Richard Benton, based on information compiled by Sharon Moerkerk.

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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.