

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

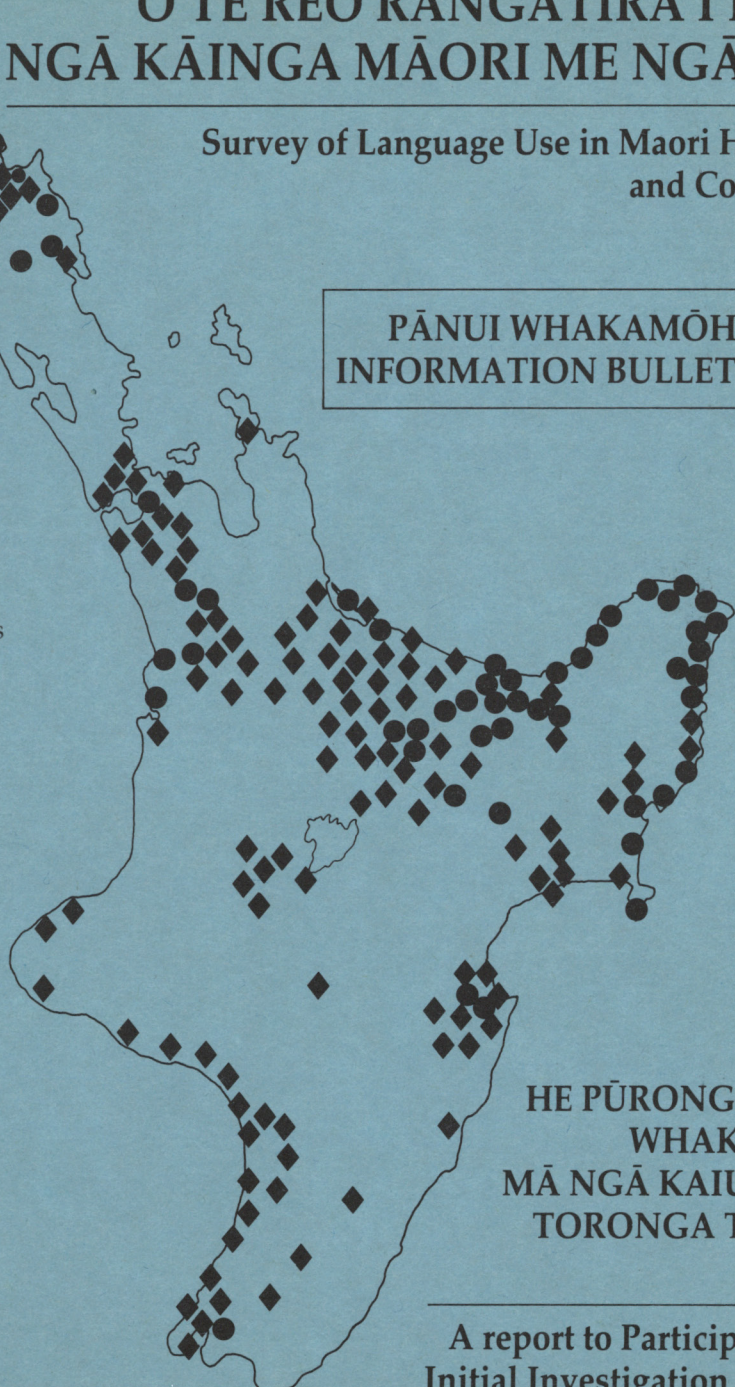
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Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

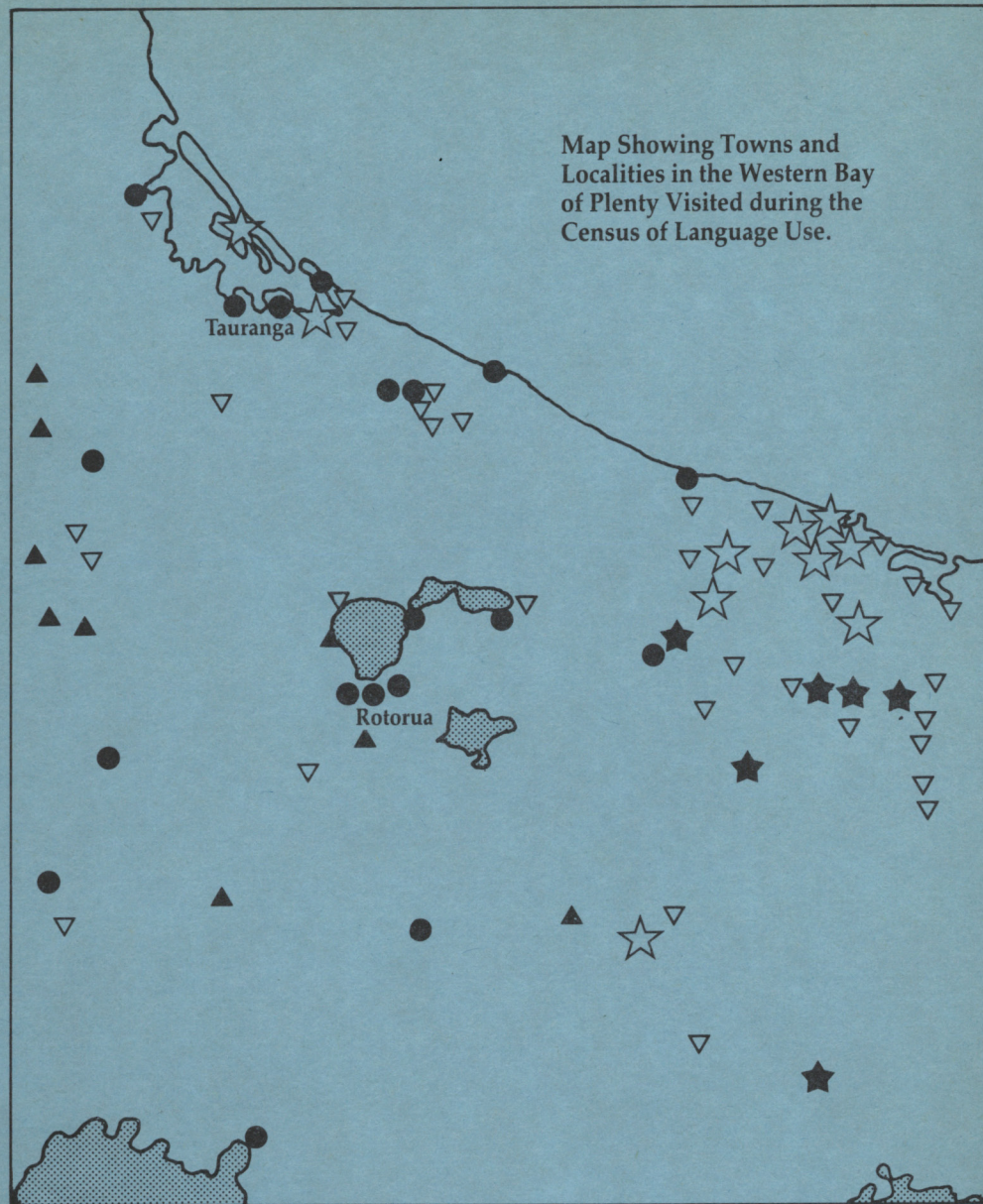
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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



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

The Maori Language in Tauranga City, Mount Maunganui and District

Fieldwork for the census of language use in Maori communities in Tauranga City and surrounding district in August and September of 1976.

The interviewers were Joe Harawira (Ngati Awa/Ngaiterangi), Dennis Hanson (Ngapuhi), Tony Magner (Maniapoto), Caroline O'Callaghan (Ngaiterangi), Tawini Rangihau (Tuhoe), Judith Brown Hawera (Waikato), Phillip Hawera (Tuhoe/Ngaiterangi/Ngati Awa), Kahu Waititi (Te Whanau-a-Apanui/Ngapuhi), and John Ranby.

Sixty households were visited in Tauranga and Bethlehem with a total population of 328, 317 of whom were of Maori descent. (This was about seven percent of the total Maori population of the area at that time). Another 42 households in Mount Maunganui, 23 in Matapihi, and seven in Te Maunga and Waitao were also visited. These had a total population of 366, 361 of Maori descent - nearly one fifth of the total Maori population of these areas at that time.

Eight interviews were carried out entirely in Maori, 19 in both Maori and English and the remaining 109 entirely in English.

Results of the Linguistic Survey

Iwi Affiliation

Our informants mentioned a total of over 20 major iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged. The largest iwi mentioned overall, by far, was Ngaiterangi with 343 members (or about half of the people included in the survey). Three-quarters of the members of the families we visited in Matapihi were from Ngaiterangi; about a fifth also had Ngati Awa affiliations.



Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table shows that the majority of the people who could speak and understand Maori well in our survey, were over the age of 45. Very few people under 25 had a good understanding of spoken Maori - only three people under 15 (all in Tauranga City) could speak Maori well.

About a quarter of the under 15 year olds had at least some knowledge of Maori, (except in Te Maunga where we did not come across anyone under 25 who had any knowledge of Maori) and a slightly higher proportion of 15-24 year olds had some knowledge of Maori. Very few people over 45 had absolutely no understanding of Maori.

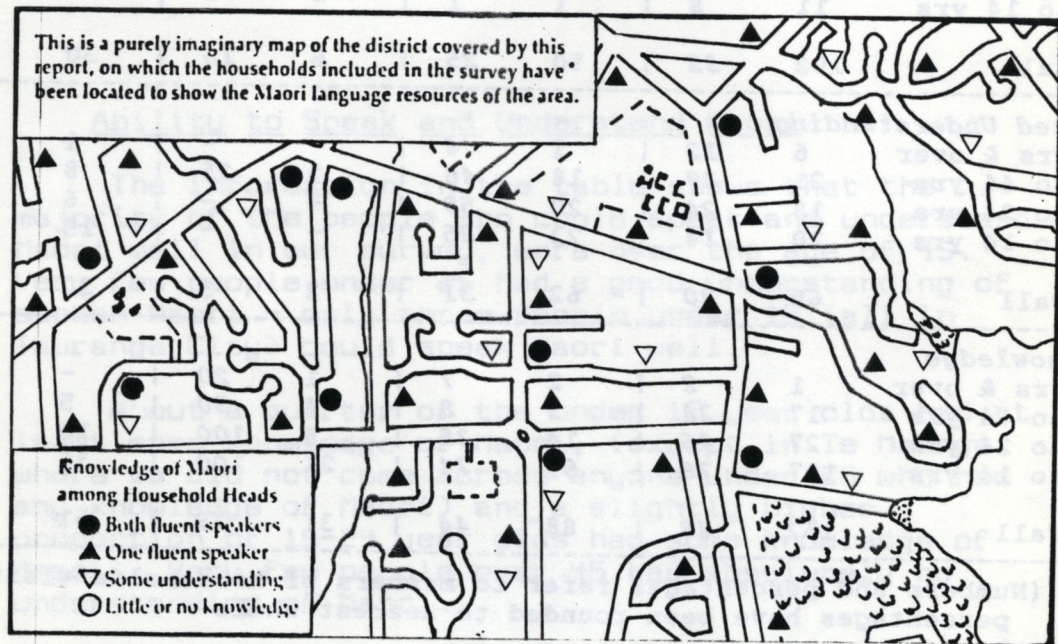
KNOWLEDGE OF SPOKEN MAORI IN TAURANGA CITY MOUNT MAUNGANUI, TE MAUNGA AND MATAPIHI 1976

	Tauranga C		Mt Maunganui		Te Maunga		Matapihi	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Fluent Speakers								
45 yrs & over	37	74	23	82	4	80	19	95
25 to 44 yrs	21	29	12	31	1	13	9	41
15 to 24 yrs	4	7	4	10	-	-	1	6
2 to 14 yrs	3	2	0	0	-	-	-	0
Overall	65	21	39	20	5	13	29	26
Understand Easily								
45 yrs & over	43	86	25	89	4	80	19	95
25 to 44 yrs	34	147	18	46	2	25	9	41
15 to 24 yrs	14	24	6	15	-	-	2	11
2 to 14 yrs	11	8	1	1	-	-	-	1
Overall	102	32	50	25	6	15	30	27
Limited Understanding								
45 yrs & over	6	12	1	4	-	-	1	5
25 to 44 yrs	21	29	18	46	2	25	8	36
15 to 24 yrs	18	24	20	50	-	-	6	33
2 to 14 yrs	20	14	23	25	-	-	15	29
Overall	65	20	62	31	2	5	30	27
No Knowledge								
45 yrs & over	1	2	2	7	1	20	-	-
25 to 44 yrs	17	24	3	8	4	50	5	22
15 to 24 yrs	27	46	14	35	5	100	10	56
2 to 14 yrs	107	78	69	74	21	100	36	71
Overall	152	48	88	44	31	79	51	46

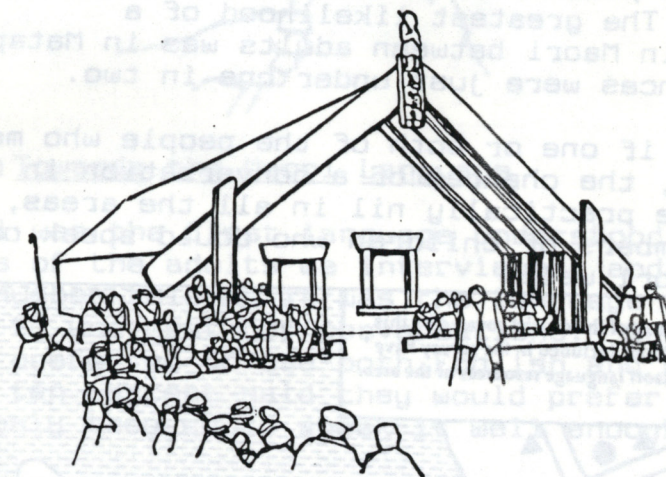
(Numbers and percentages refer to members of households visited; percentages have been rounded to nearest whole number).

The Use of the Maori Language in the Household

English was the main language used in nearly all the households we visited. Of the 101 households with dependent children included in our survey, all used English as their main or only language for everyday conversation. In 15 of the 21 childless households we visited English was also used most of the time, Maori was the main language in three, Maori and English were used about equally in one household, and Maori was used to visitors by two people who lived alone.



TAURANGA CITY

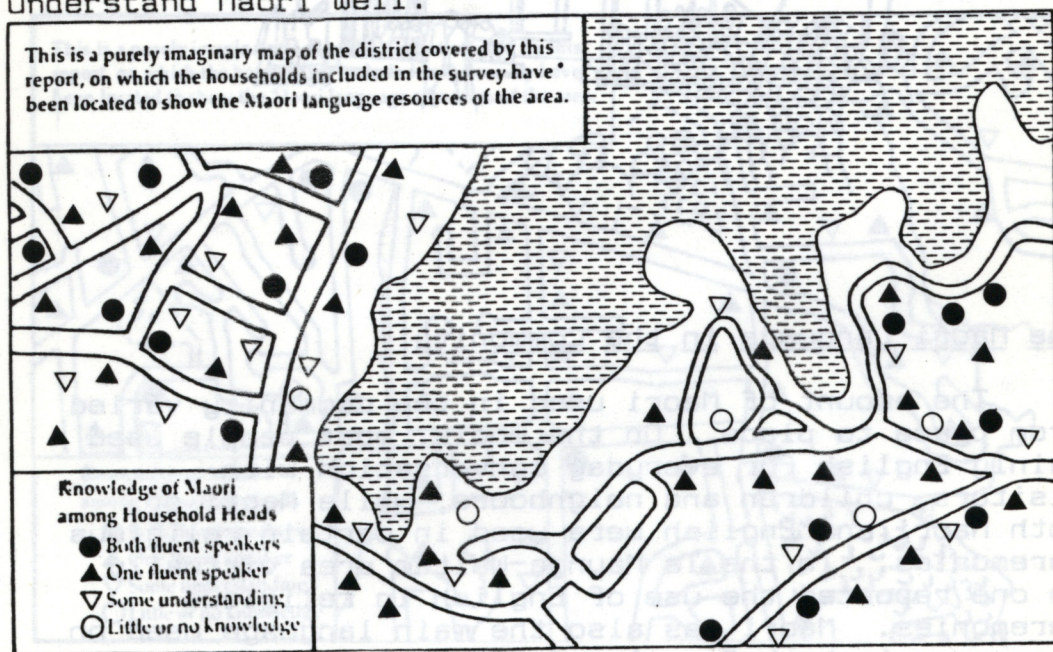


The Maori Language in the Community

The amount of Maori used in the community varied from place to place. On the whole, most people used mainly English for everyday conversation with visitors, children and neighbours, while Maori or both Maori and English were used in certain religious ceremonies. In the Te Maunga-Waitao area virtually no one reported the use of English in religious ceremonies. Maori was also the main language used on the marae in both formal and informal situations.

The chances of two adults included in our survey who met unexpectedly being able to talk to each other in Maori varied from area to area. Te Maunga-Waitao was the area where a conversation in Maori was least likely to take place - the chances being just under one in five. The greatest likelihood of a conversation in Maori between adults was in Matapihi where the chances were just under one in two.

However, if one or both of the people who met were children, the chances of a conversation in Maori happening were practically nil in all the areas, due to the low numbers of children who could speak or understand Maori well.



MOUNT MAUNGANUI, TE MAUNGA and MATAPIHI.

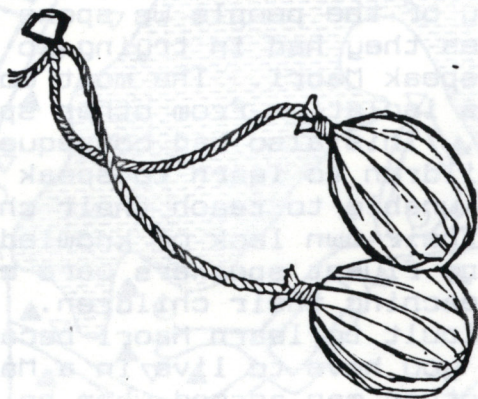


Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Maori was the first language understood by about two fifths of the adults we interviewed, and about the same number told us it was the language they preferred to use most for conversations. One fifth said they preferred to use both English and Maori and a further ten percent said they would prefer to use Maori if only they could speak it well enough.

However, many of the people we spoke to told us of the difficulties they had in trying to maintain their ability to speak Maori. The most common reason given for this was isolation from other speakers of Maori in the area. This also had consequences for the ability of children to learn to speak Maori. Many parents were unable to teach their children Maori because of their own lack of knowledge, but even those who were fluent speakers were encountering difficulties in teaching their children. As one man said, "It is difficult to learn Maori because to learn it properly you have to live in a Maori environment." Another man agreed when he said, "What choice do we have now? The life-style is Western and so is the language."

Many people mentioned the influence of television as being a barrier to their children learning Maori. Consequently, there was a great deal of support for the teaching of Maori in schools. Opinions varied as to how this should be implemented, with some people saying it should be optional and others saying it should be compulsory for all New Zealanders to learn Maori. One woman said learning foreign languages such as Japanese is ridiculous as the Maori have been here a lot longer. Some people said children should begin learning Maori before school, others said they should wait until secondary school. One person said that if everyone knew Maori it would help promote understanding and tolerance and hence harmony. Another said that Maori in schools would be good for building confidence, in both children and parents, that schools have something to offer and are just as much for Maori families as for other people.

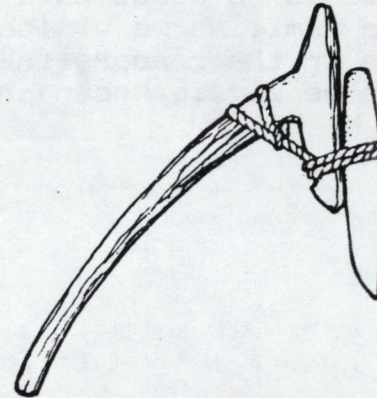


About one third of the people spoken to said they had experienced some form of punishment at school for speaking Maori. This had stopped some of them from using Maori but it did not seem to have made many of them decide not to encourage their own children to speak Maori. On the contrary, the majority of people wanted their children to learn and many also wanted to learn or relearn the language themselves. A few people told us they had been strapped at school for speaking Maori but at the same time had been made to learn action songs.

However, not everyone held these opinions. Some were indifferent to the teaching of the Maori language, others were too busy just trying to survive to worry about learning Maori. One woman did not encourage her children to learn Maori because she couldn't speak it herself, and others actively discouraged their children saying that there was no benefit in speaking Maori in a "English world." A few people told us they now regretted not teaching their children Maori.

It seemed though, that the majority of people we spoke to, felt that the Maori language was an essential part of their existence, identity and whole way of life. Several people expressed the feeling that a knowledge of Maori was necessary to participate fully and feel at home in hui, tangi and other occasions, and to be accepted by elders. As one person said:

"Maori is important as a means of communication with elders. They have more respect for you when you can talk Maori well; even if you have all the material things or educational qualifications, you won't be acknowledged until you know your Maori."



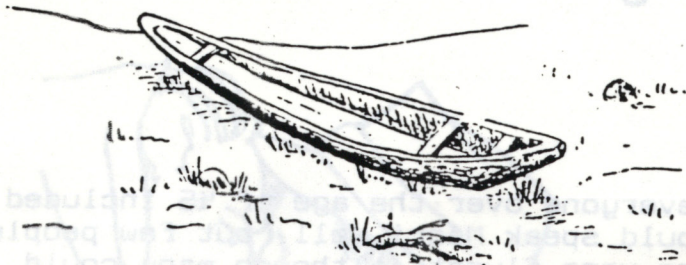
Conclusion

Nearly everyone over the age of 45 included in our survey could speak Maori well, but few people under that age were fluent, although many could understand it. Although it varied from area to area on the whole only a small number of under 15 year olds had any knowledge at all of Maori.

Despite this, many older people continued to speak Maori in everyday situations and it would be hoped that young people would get a chance to hear Maori being spoken. There was certainly a very strong feeling amongst the parents and kaumatua that we spoke to that the Maori language was worth holding onto and much support was given for the idea of young people learning Maori in schools.

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Recent developments like the Ataarangi and Kohanga Reo movements would no doubt have been welcomed by many of the families we visited, and encouraged them greatly in their hopes that the Maori language may once again be widely known and used in the Tauranga area.

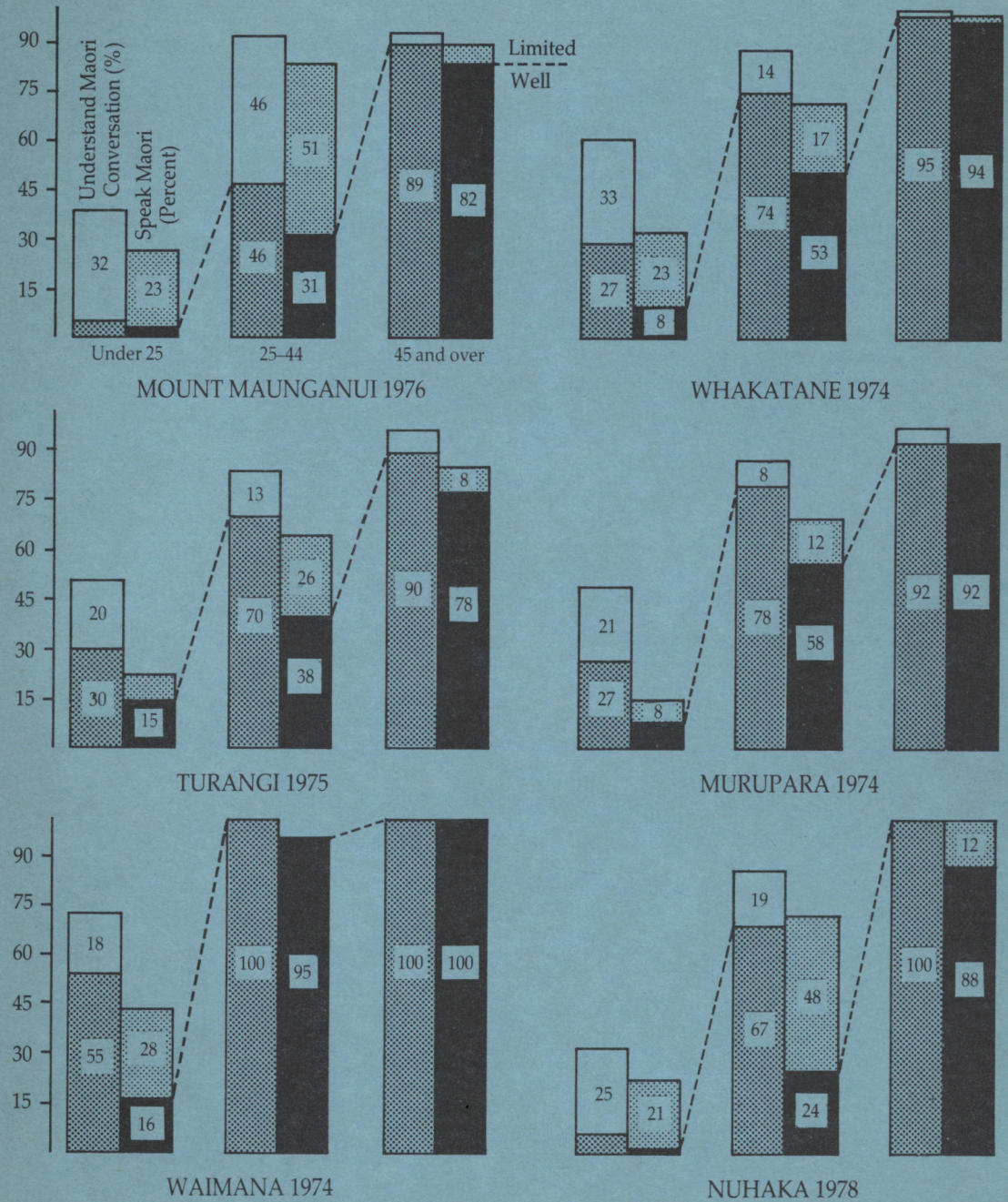


This report was prepared by:

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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.