

# 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

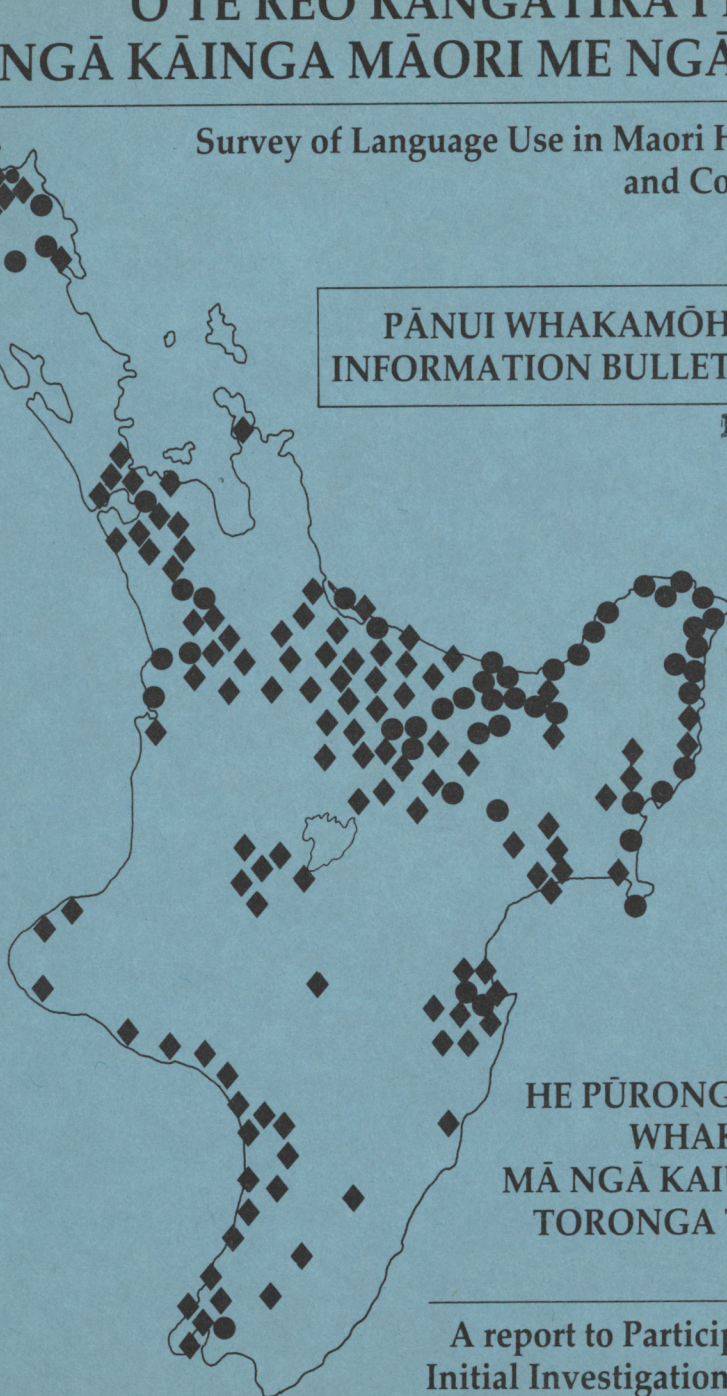
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Localities in which  
ten or more households  
were visited

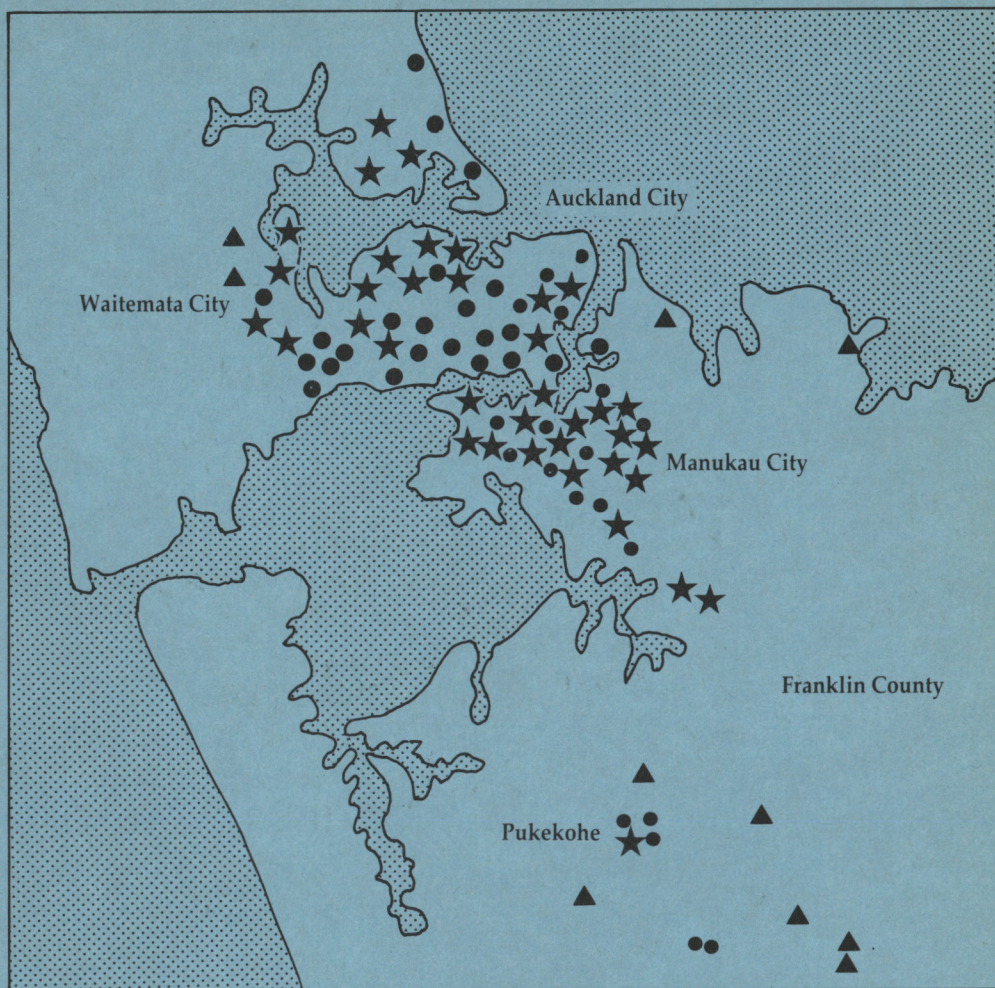
● Two thirds or  
more of adults were  
fluent speakers of  
Maori

◆ 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



### Maori Speakers in the Greater Auckland Area

This map shows the approximate number of people able to understand Maori with ease in the Greater Auckland Area, based on the results of the Socio-Linguistic Survey (1974-76). Each star ★ represents 500 people, and each dot ● a further 100 people. Small towns and rural localities visited in the survey with less than 100 speakers are represented by a triangle ▲.

### Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the two tables tells us that in Pakuranga, Howick and Umupuia, 45-50% of the population under the age of 15 who could understand Maori speak the language well. A majority of people over 45 could speak Maori well, but few people under that age were able to do so. Only five people aged 25-45 had a good knowledge of Maori, and generally had slightly more knowledge of Maori than people younger than 25 years, but it was the over 45 age group which had the most knowledge of Maori (seven of those were under 15).

### The Maori Language in Pakuranga, Howick and Umupuia

Fieldwork for the survey of language use in Maori communities took place in a total of 33 households in Pakuranga and Howick in August 1974, 1975 and January 1976, and in nine households in Umupuia in January 1976.

The interviewers were Maku Potae (Ngati Porou), Kathleen Grace Potae (Tuwharetoa), Shannon Weterere (Waikato), May Adlam (Ngapuhi), Ani Allen (Ngati Awa) and Lorraine Williams.

The households included in our Pakuranga/Howick survey had a combined population of 189, 180 of whom were of Maori descent. This was about 12 percent of the area's total Maori population at that time. 32 people were included in our Umupuia survey, 31 of whom were of Maori descent.

Altogether, two interviews were carried out entirely in Maori, four in both Maori and English, and the remaining 37 entirely in English.

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**Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Pakuranga and Howick  
1974)**

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Age Group	Fluent Speakers	Understand Easily	Limited Understanding	No Knowledge
45 years & over	5 (63%)	5 (63%)	1 (13%)	2 (25%)
25-44 yrs	17 (30%)	25 (45%)	12 (21%)	19 (34%)
15-24 yrs	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	2 (8%)	21 (88%)
2-14 yrs	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	0 (0%)	96 (98%)
Overall	23 (12%)	33 (18%)	15 (8%)	138 (74%)

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

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**Results of the Linguistic Survey**

Iwi Affiliation

The people interviewed mentioned a total of 15 iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged. Of these, the largest was Ngapuhi with 84 members, or 38 percent of the total. The second largest iwi was Waikato to which 39 people (18 percent) claimed affiliation. At Umupuia, the people were from six iwi, with Ngati Kahungunu being claimed by about a third, and Ngai Tai by a quarter of the members of the families we visited.

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the two tables tells us that in Pakuranga, Howick and Umupuia we did not come across anyone under the age of 15 who could speak Maori well. In Pakuranga and Howick a majority of people over 45 could speak Maori well but few people under that age were able to do so. Only five people under 25 (out of 121) had any knowledge of Maori at all. Adults between 25 and 44 generally had slightly more knowledge of Maori than people younger than this, but it was the over 45 age group which had the most fluent speakers - they made up less than two percent of those people with no knowledge of Maori.

In Umupuia only eight people had absolutely no knowledge of Maori (seven of those were under 15). Nearly everyone we came across there over the age of 15 could speak or understand Maori well. Once again we did not come across any under 15 year olds who could speak Maori well although could understand with ease.

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**Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Umupuia (1976)**

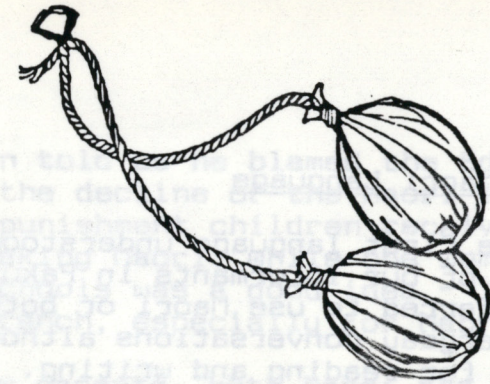
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Age Group	Fluent Speakers	Understand Easily	Limited Understanding	No Knowledge
45 years & over	8 (89%)	8 (89%)	1 (11%)	0 (0%)
25-44 yrs	4 (80%)	4 (80%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)
15-24 yrs	2 (40%)	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	0 (0%)
2-14 yrs	0 (0%)	3 (23%)	3 (23%)	7 (54%)
Overall	14 (44%)	19 (59%)	5 (16%)	8 (25%)

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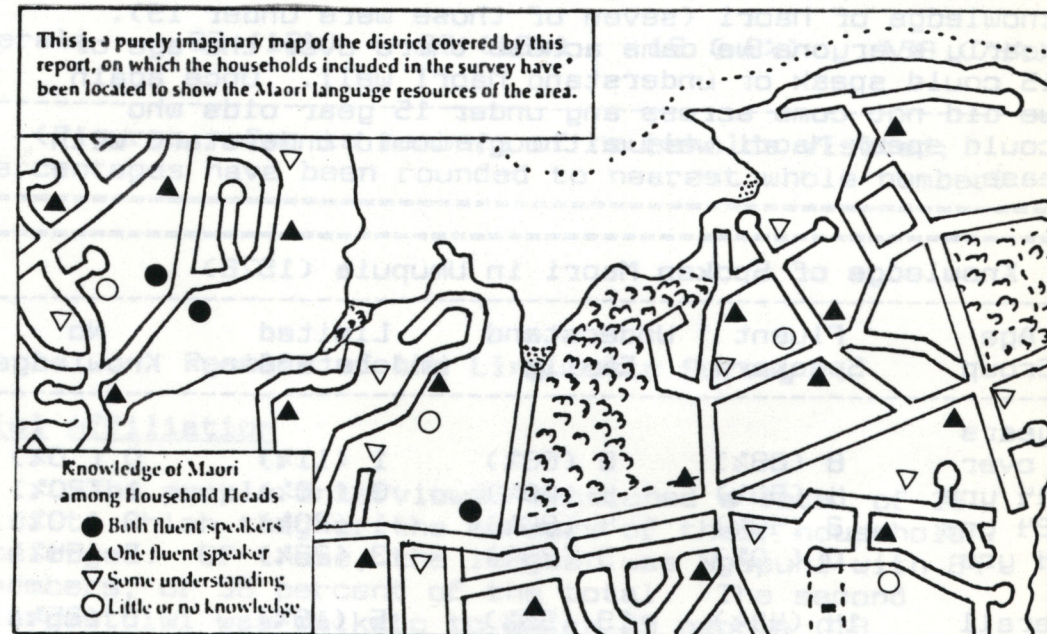
(Figures refer to members of households visited;  
percentages have been rounded to nearest whole number)

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### Use of Maori Language in the Household

English or mostly English was used in all of the 32 households with dependent children in Pakuranga and Howick, while Maori was used in the one childless household. In Umupuia, we visited five households with dependent children and English was used exclusively in only one of these. One household used Maori and English equally, and the remaining three used mainly English with some Maori. Two of the four childless households used Maori with visitors while the other two used mainly English.



PAKURANGA and HOWICK.

### The Maori Language in the Community

In Pakuranga and Howick, nearly everyone we spoke to reported using English when talking with their children, and also with neighbours. Just under half told us they use both Maori and English with their visitors.

However, Maori or both Maori and English was much more likely to be used in certain religious ceremonies and also on the marae in formal situations, such as whaikorero, and informal chatting.

In Umupuia nearly everyone used English with their children, but most people used some Maori when talking with neighbours and everyone we spoke to used Maori at least some of the time when talking to visitors. Maori or both Maori and English was also the main language used in religious ceremonies and on the marae.

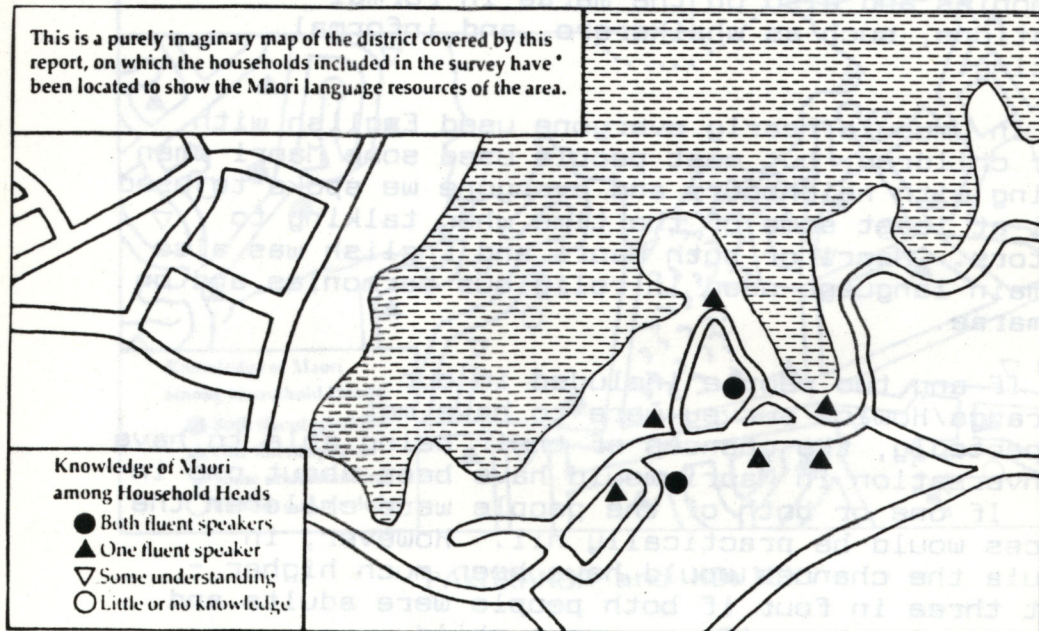
If any two people included in our Pakuranga/Howick survey were to have met unexpectedly, the chances of their being able to have a conversation in Maori would have been about one in six. If one or both of the people were children the chances would be practically nil. However, in Umupuia the chances would have been much higher - about three in four if both people were adults and about one in three if one was a child.

## Attitudes to the Maori Language

Maori was the first language understood by nearly two fifths of our informants in Pakuranga and Howick. Half preferred to use Maori or both Maori and English in everyday conversations although most preferred English for reading and writing. In Umupuia, all the people we spoke to said that Maori had been the first language they had understood and most still preferred Maori for conversations.

Many of the people we spoke to expressed concern about the state of the Maori language and commented that they would like their own children to learn to speak Maori. Because of this, there was a great deal of support for the introduction of the teaching of Maori into schools. One woman in her 80s told us she had been a supporter of this all her life.

This is a purely imaginary map of the district covered by this report, on which the households included in the survey have been located to show the Maori language resources of the area.



Another man told us he blamed the Education Department for the decline of the Maori language because of the punishment children received in schools for speaking Maori, while one woman told us that Maori in schools was a good idea - "it will be more use than French, especially for Maori kids."

Quite a few parents, both Maori and non-Maori were planning to learn Maori so they would be able to teach their children, although several reported that their children did not seem very enthusiastic about learning.

Some parents however had decided not to teach their children Maori and now regretted this. One informant told us that when he was a child he had decided that the Maori way of life held no value and "looked up to the Pakeha because of material wealth." Now he too regretted this decision as he lost so much of his knowledge of Maoritanga.

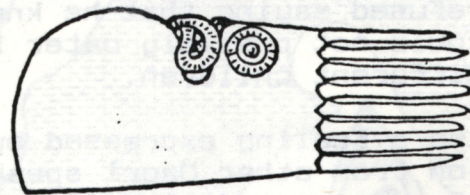
One man who was a fluent speaker of Maori told us that he had been asked by other Maori people in the community if he would teach their children Maori. However, he had refused saying that he knew only his own dialect and could not possibly cater for all the dialects of the different children.

There was also a feeling expressed by some people of isolation from other Maori speakers which led to feelings of sadness and also sometimes a loss of ability in speaking Maori. This isolation was often caused by living in the city although one woman mentioned being married to a person unable to speak Maori also contributed to this sense of separation from the language.

## Conclusion

There was quite a contrast in some ways between the affluent suburbs of Pakuranga and Howick, and the traditional Maori community at Umupuia. However, Maori-speakers in all these places had been affected by their position as a minority in an English-speaking world. The families at Umupuia had managed to hold onto the language for a little longer than the immigrants to Howick and Pakuranga, but even in Umupuia the language had ceased to be the main language of family conversations.

Many of the people we interviewed would have been greatly encouraged by developments since the survey - kohanga reo, ataarangi, and the new emphasis on taha Maori in schools. It is to be hoped that they will be able to make use of these new initiatives to help their children and grandchildren regain a part of their cultural heritage which, when we visited the area, was in grave danger of being lost.

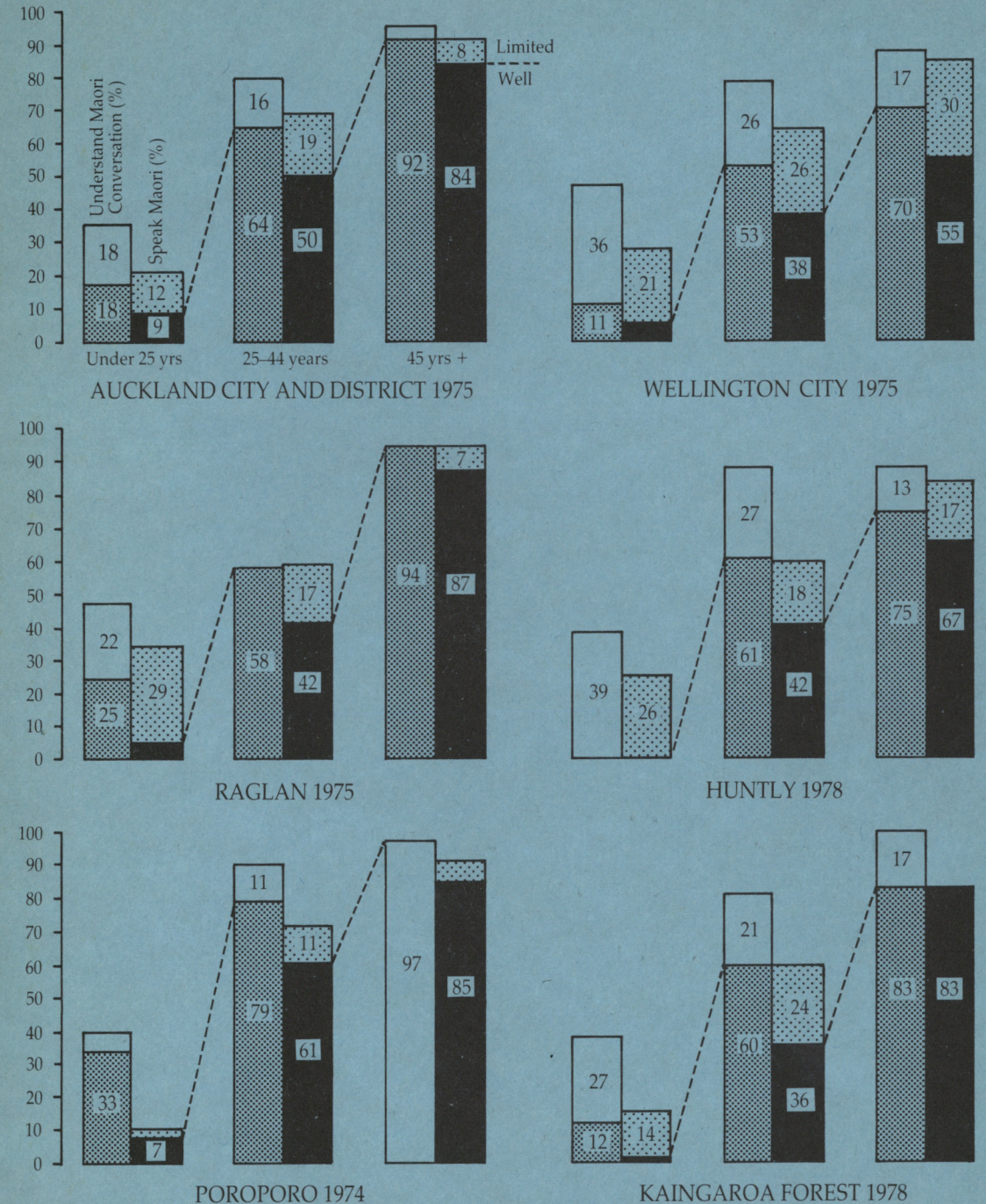


This report was prepared by:

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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.