

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

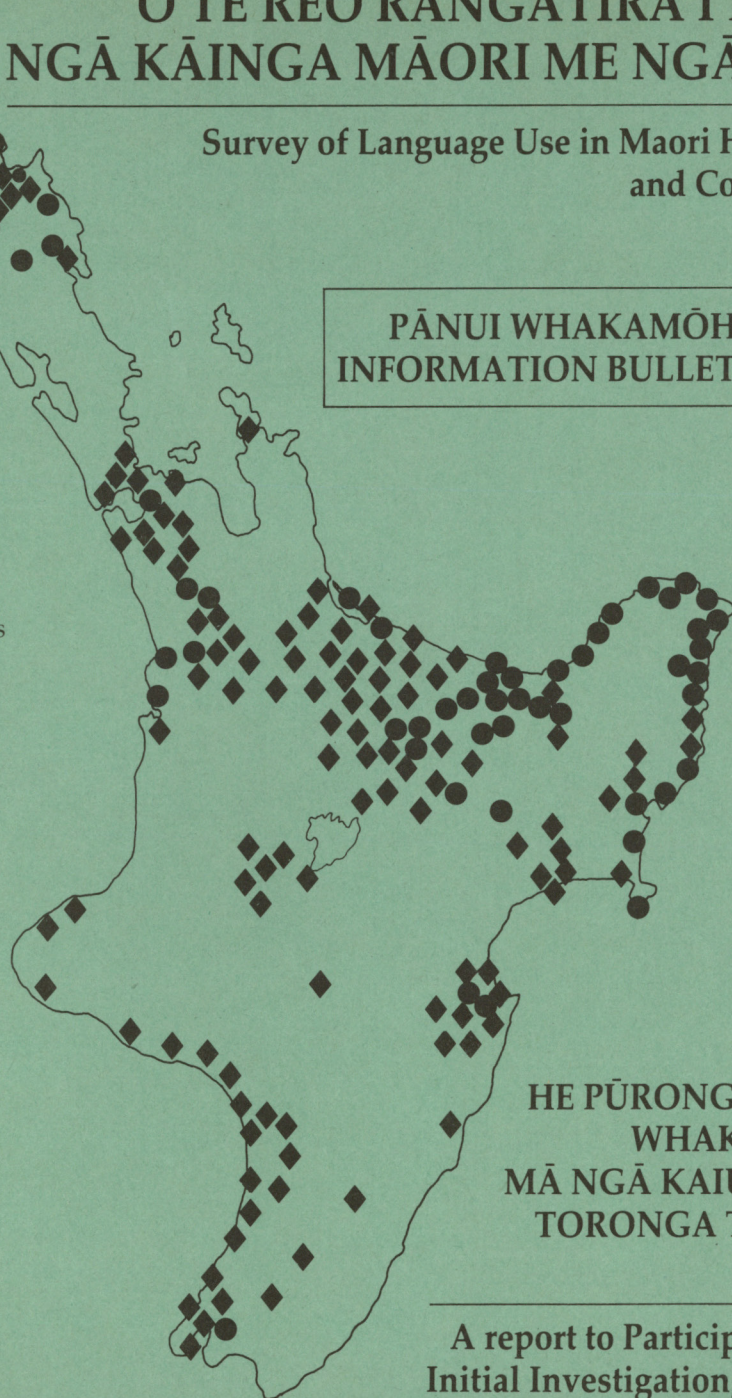
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Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

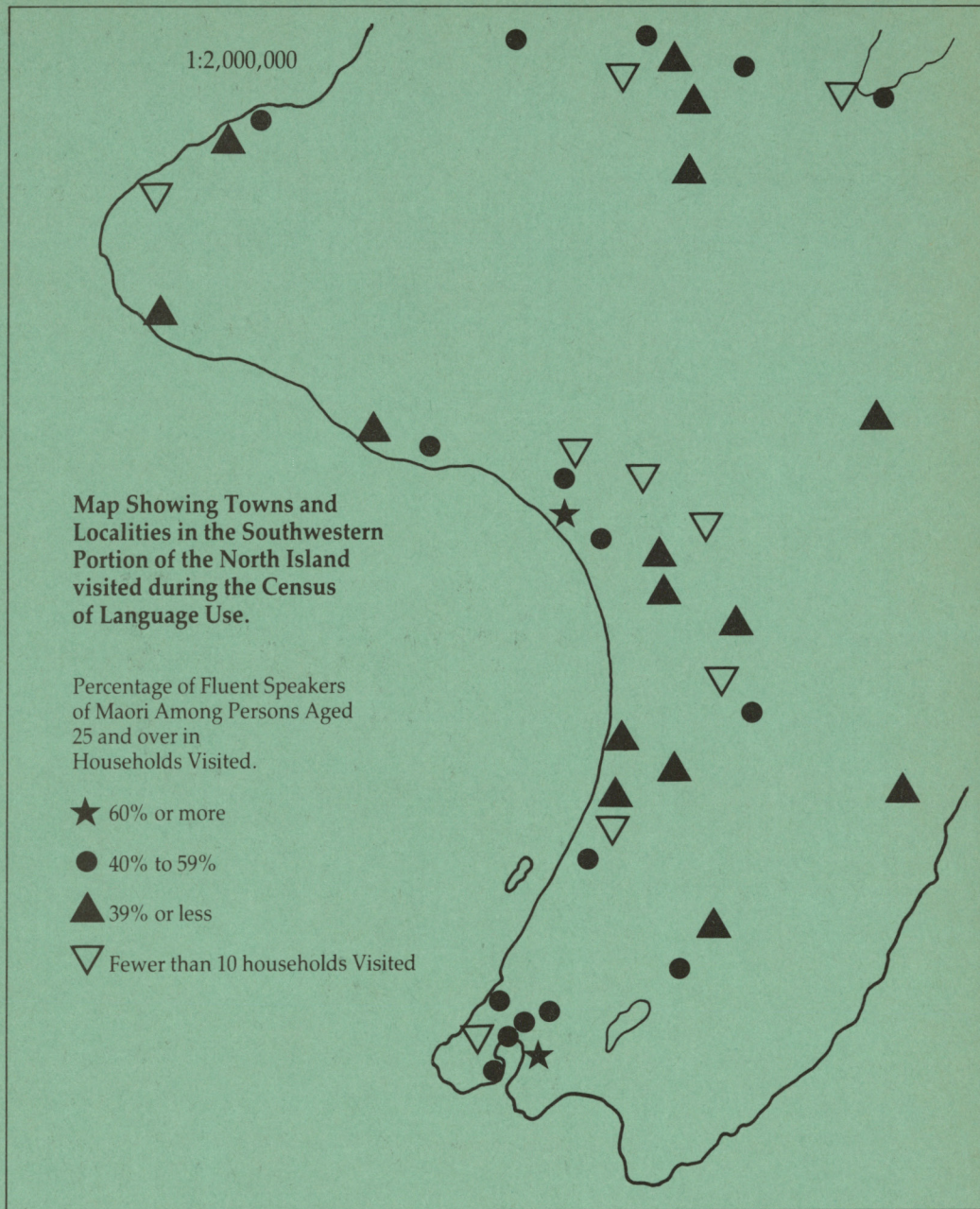
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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

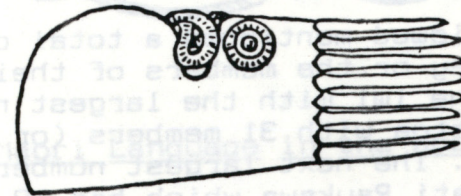


THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN SHANNON

Fieldwork for the survey of language use in Maori communities was carried out in 20 households in Shannon in July 1978. The interviewers were Hiria Tumoana (Tuhoe) and Sharon Moerkerk (Maniapoto).

The households visited had a total population of 108, 102 of whom were of Maori descent. This was just over a quarter of Shannon's total Maori population at that time.

One interview was carried out in both Maori and English and the rest were all in English.



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Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Shannon (1978)

Age Group	Fluent Speakers	Understand Easily	Limited Understanding	No Knowledge
45 years & over	3 (25%)	9 (75%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)
25-44 yrs	3 (14%)	7 (33%)	3 (14%)	11 (52%)
15-24 yrs	0 (0%)	1 (7%)	7 (47%)	7 (47%)
2-14 yrs	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (18%)	46 (82%)
Overall	6 (6%)	17 (16%)	22 (21%)	65 (63%)

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

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Results of the Linguistic Survey

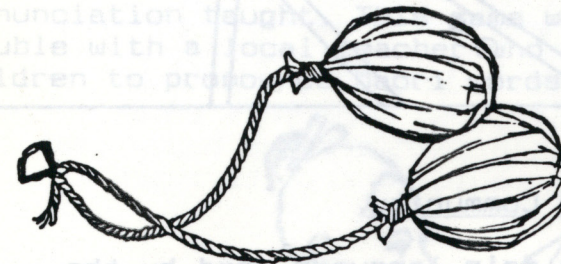
Iwi Affiliation

The people we interviewed mentioned a total of eight major iwi to which they or the members of their household belonged. The iwi with the largest number of members was Tuwharetoa with 31 members (or 29 percent of the total). The next largest number of people belonged to Ngati Raukawa which had 18 members (17 percent) while Waikato and Ngapuhi each had 16 members (15 percent).

Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

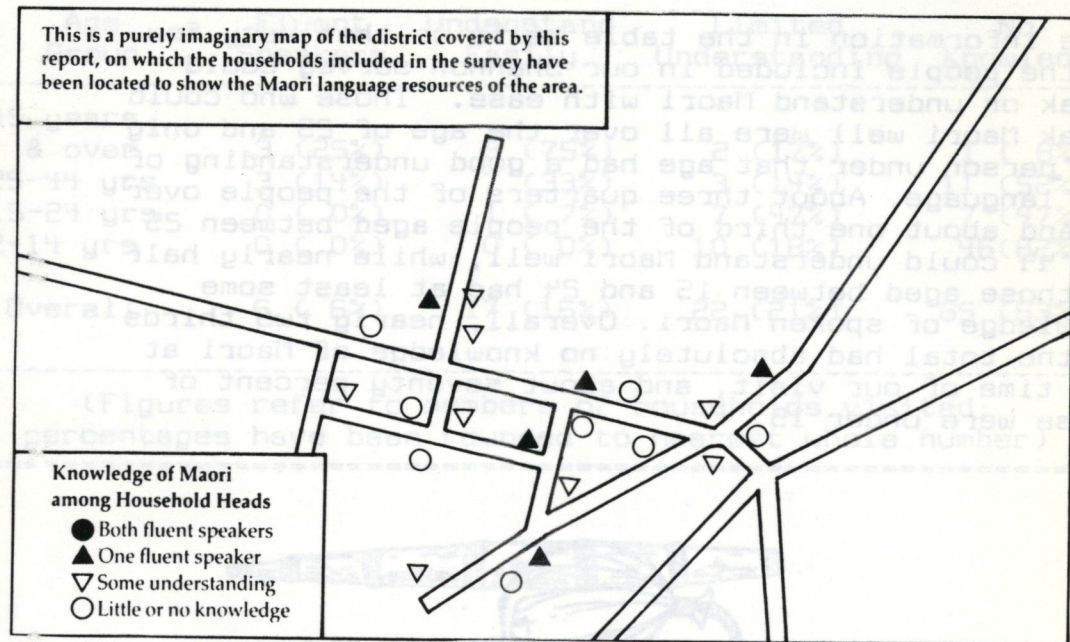
Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

The information in the table tells us that very few of the people included in our Shannon survey could speak or understand Maori with ease. Those who could speak Maori well were all over the age of 25 and only one person under that age had a good understanding of the language. About three quarters of the people over 45 and about one third of the people aged between 25 and 44 could understand Maori well, while nearly half of those aged between 15 and 24 had at least some knowledge of spoken Maori. Overall, nearly two thirds of the total had absolutely no knowledge of Maori at the time of our visit, and about seventy percent of those were under 15.



Use of the Maori Language in the Household

In all of the homes we visited, which included 19 households with dependent children and one childless home, English was the only language used amongst family members for everyday conversations.



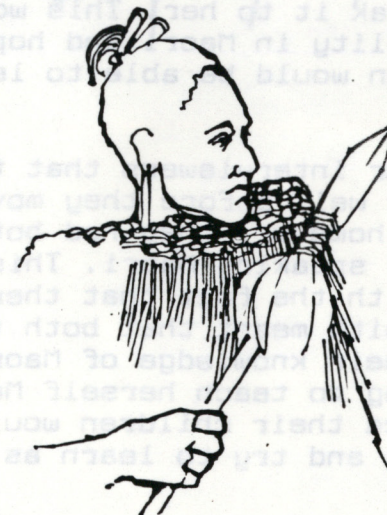
Maori Language in the Community

English was also the main language used by the people we spoke to for everyday communication with neighbours, visitors and children. A few people used some Maori with neighbours and visitors and one person spoke a few words of Maori to their children. Maori tended to be used more in certain religious ceremonies and also on the marae in formal situations such as whaikorero.

Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

Although our interviewers did not come across many people in Shannon who could speak and understand Maori fluently, most people they spoke to were very keen on the idea of learning to speak Maori and especially on the idea of having their children learn.

Because few people were able to teach their children Maori themselves the introduction of the teaching of Maori in schools was strongly supported. As one woman said, "We need more Maori teachers to teach our children our language because our language is dying". Another woman, while very supportive of Maori in schools, commented that the quality of the teaching was very important. In particular, she mentioned the problems of whether teachers would be able to teach different dialects, whether there would be enough teachers who knew Maori and the standard of pronunciation taught. This same woman had already had trouble with a local teacher who had taught her children to pronounce Maori words "like a Pakeha".

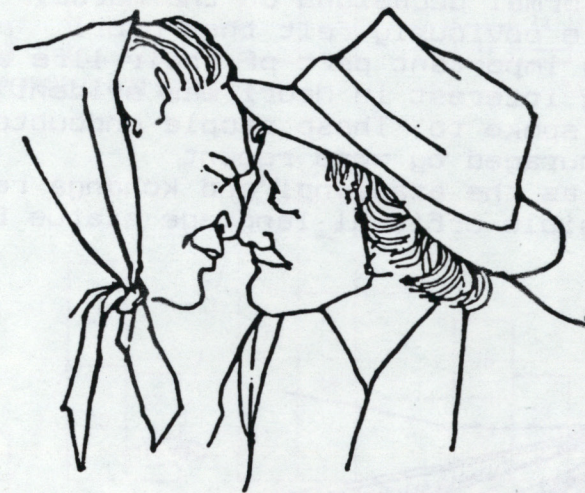




A few people had been able to speak Maori earlier in their lives but had lost their knowledge of it over the years. One such woman had been brought up by her grandparents, until she was eight, who had taught her to speak Maori. However, when she went to live with her parents she forgot what Maori she knew because they did not speak it to her. This woman regretted losing her ability in Maori and hoped that both she and her children would be able to learn it in the near future.

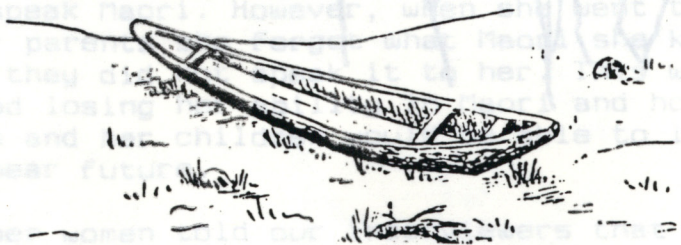
Two other women told our interviewers that they had been able to speak Maori well before they moved to Shannon. Upon arriving, however, they had both been laughed at by locals for speaking Maori. This embarrassment coupled with the fact that there was no one else to talk Maori with meant that both these women soon forgot all their knowledge of Maori. One of these women was trying to teach herself Maori again and they both hoped their children would someday show an interest and try to learn as well.

A large number of people mentioned belonging to a local culture club. For many people this seemed to be the only contact they had with Maori language as several people said they had joined with the expressed hope of "picking up a bit of Maori."



Conclusion

Amongst the families living in Shannon included in the linguistic survey, English was the main language spoken on an everyday basis. We came across very few people who could speak and understand Maori with ease and those who could were mainly over the age of 45. Maori still continued to be used in religious ceremonies and in formal occasions on the marae. However, many people obviously felt that Maori language was a very important part of their life and a growing community interest in Maori was evident from the people we spoke to. These people undoubtedly will have been encouraged by more recent developments, such as the ataarangi and kohanga reo movements, and possible official language status for Maori.

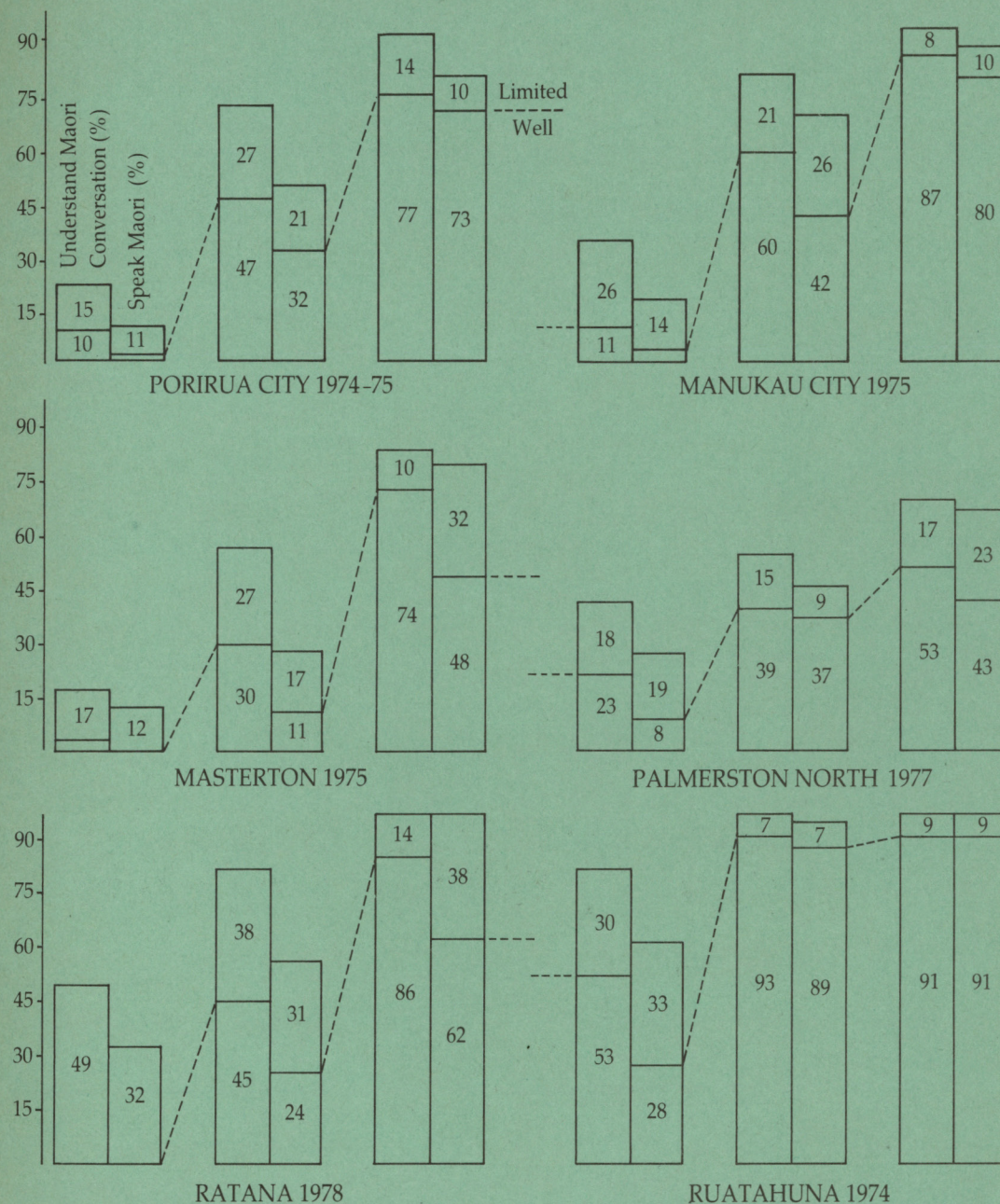


This report was prepared by:

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Knowledge of Maori Language by Age Groups on 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.