

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

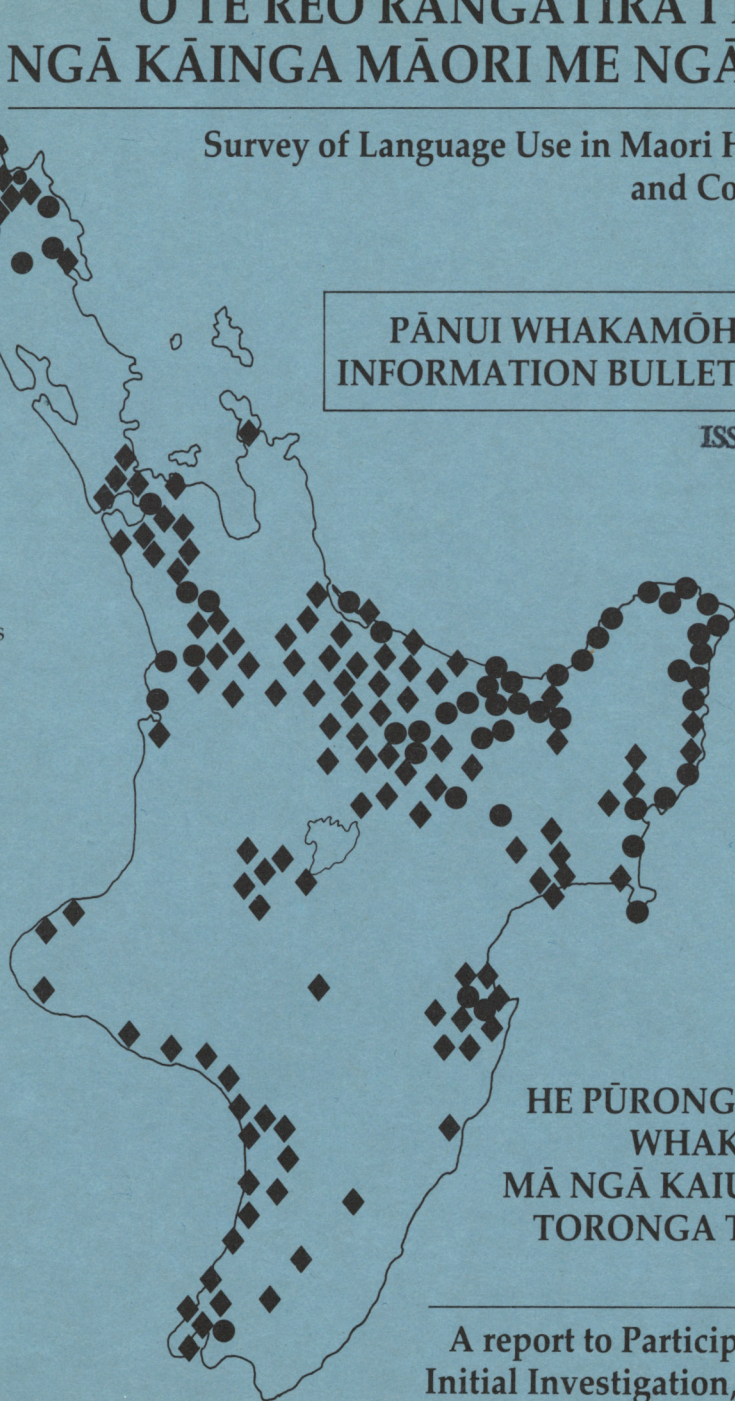
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Localities in which
ten or more households
were visited

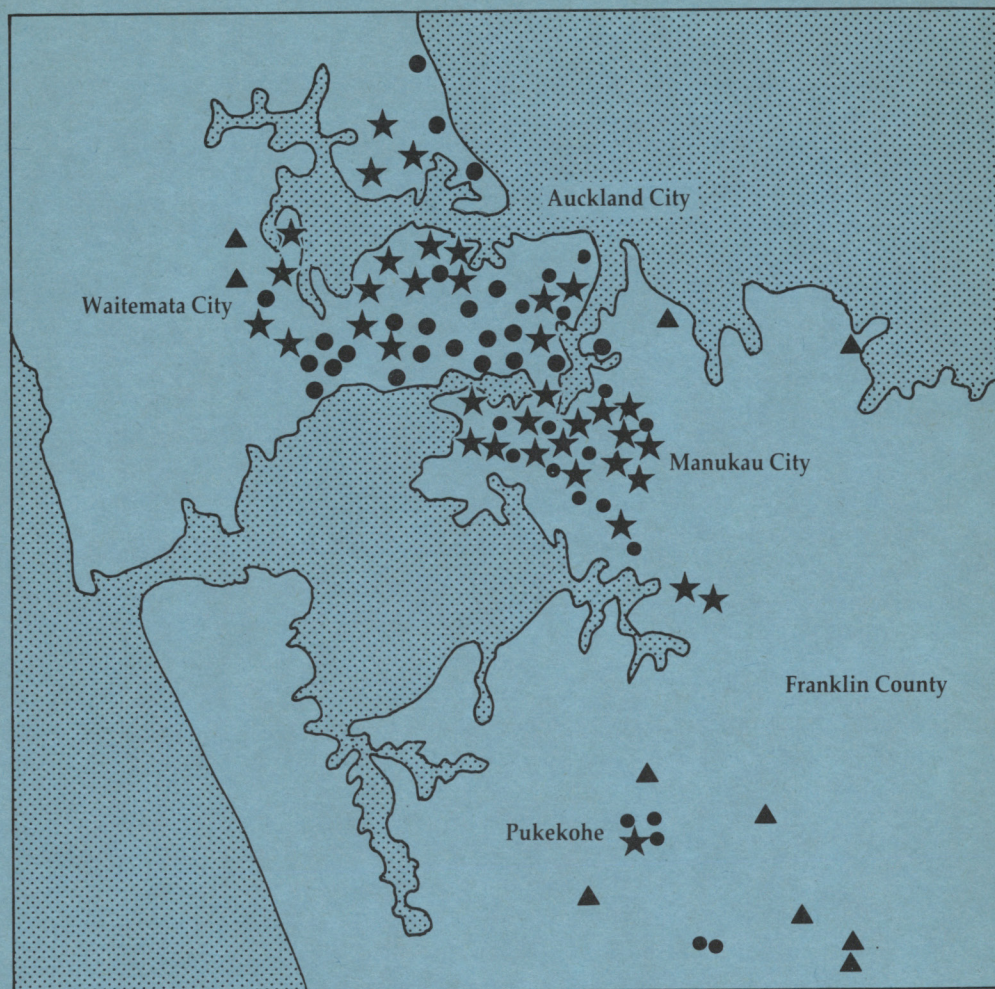
● Two thirds or
more of adults were
fluent speakers of
Maori

◆ 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



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 ▲.

THE MAORI LANGUAGE IN MANUREWA

This report is a summary of the information collected in Manurewa during the NZCER Maori language survey of North Island communities in the 1970s. Other parts of Manukau City and adjacent South Auckland districts were visited during the survey, and the results of the research in these areas have been published in separate reports in this series: Otara (Report no. 19); Papatoetoe, Mangere and Otahuhu (no. 95); Pakuranga, Howick and Umupuia (no. 106); and Papakura (no. 60).

Fieldwork took place in Manurewa in August and September 1975, and 104 households were visited. These had a total of 569 people, 551 of whom were of Maori descent. This was about one fifth of the total Maori population of Manurewa at that time. Altogether 22 major iwi were mentioned by the families we visited, but only two were the iwi of ten percent or more of all these people: Ngapuhi, with 256 members (45 percent) and Waikato, with 109 (19 percent). Most of the household heads were immigrants to the Manukau area; only one of the 93 men, and three of the 94 women, had grown up in Manurewa or another South Auckland district.

The interviewers were Peter and Iriaka Wensor (Ngapuhi), Shannon Wetere (Waikato), Kahu Waititi (Te Whanau Apanui & Ngapuhi), Audrey Cooper (Waikato), May Adlam (Ngapuhi), Candice Scrimshaw (Ngati Kahungunu), and Rowena Kingi (Ngati Awa). Twenty-six interviews were in Maori, 20 in Maori and English, and the rest in English (except for one question, which was always in Maori). The fieldwork was supervised by Peter Ranby and Richard Benton.

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Knowledge of Spoken Maori in Manurewa (1975)

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Fluent Speakers</i>	<i>Understand Easily</i>	<i>Limited Understanding</i>	<i>No Knowledge</i>
45 years & over	39 (81%)	42 (88%)	4 (8%)	2 (4%)
25-44 yrs	62 (46%)	80 (59%)	29 (21%)	26 (19%)
15-24 yrs	6 (7%)	22 (25%)	27 (31%)	39 (44%)
2-14 yrs	6 (2%)	26 (9%)	96 (34%)	164 (57%)
Overall	113 (21%)	170 (31%)	156 (28%)	321 (41%)

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

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Results of the Linguistic Survey

Ability to Speak and Understand Maori

As in many other places we visited, most of the older people included in the Manurewa survey were fluent speakers of Maori. However, less than half those aged between 25 and 44 could speak Maori well (although about three-fifths could follow a conversation in Maori without much trouble). Among younger adults and children there were very few fluent speakers, although about a quarter of the 15 to 24 age group and a tenth of the children under 15 had a good understanding of spoken Maori. A high proportion of the younger people, however, were said to have little or no knowledge of the language. The general picture is presented in the table at the top of the page.

Exactly half of the 110 household heads we interviewed in Manurewa had Maori as their first language, and 12 others had learned Maori and English together as infants. Quite a few of these native-speakers of Maori (34 of the 67) had also learned to write in Maori before they could write in English; 4 had learned to write in both languages at about the same time. Among the older generation (in the districts of Northland, the Waikato and other areas where they grew up), many were taught to read and write in Maori by members of their families at home; few had the opportunity to do this at school.

Use of the Maori Language in the Household

Although English was the main language used in most homes when all the family was together, more than half the 83 families which had dependent children used Maori at least some of the time: three used Maori and English about equally, 44 used Maori once in a while, and 36 said they used English only. There were also four families we visited in Manurewa where Maori was the main language all the time; none of these, however, had children under 18 living at home. Five people we interviewed said they spoke Maori more often than English to their children, and 15 spoke Maori some of the time; however, only three said their children would usually answer them in Maori, and ten had children who sometimes spoke Maori to them; the other seven, as well as the 71 parents who used only English when talking to their children, would expect replies only in English.

So even in families which still used Maori at least occasionally, it was generally taken for granted that when younger people could understand what was being said in Maori, they themselves would speak English. Two-way conversations in Maori were restricted mainly to the parental and grandparental generations. Visitors were likely to be spoken to

in Maori in half the homes included in the survey. One of the reasons for the dominance of English in the homes was that only a minority of families with young children (21 out of 83) had two Maori-speaking parents; another 35 such families had one parent fluent in Maori, 19 had at least one parent who knew a little Maori, and only 8 had no parent with even a slight knowledge of the language.

Maori Language in the Community

Although individual families were at a disadvantage, the Maori language resources of the Maori community as a whole were still extensive, as the diagram on page 5 illustrates, since most families either had a fluent speaker among their members, or lived near another family which did. The problem was how to make use of these resources to enable the language to flourish, especially in a community where only 13 percent of the population was Maori, and so the need to use English a great deal of the time was unavoidable for most people. This of course was one of the reasons why even in those families where adults still used Maori often, the children were more likely to speak only English. As one of the younger people we spoke to said, "English is easier and quicker" -- it had become that way because it was the language you had to use most of the time in Manurewa, whether you wanted to or not. The end result was, as one man, originally from Pamapurua, put it "te nuinga o nga Maori ki konei, hore kau ratou e mohio ana ki te korero Maori".

People had struggled against the English tide in several ways, but most, in the end, had found themselves overwhelmed. One old lady from Motukaraka said that she had found it difficult to teach her grandchildren Maori as it was "a battle against the school" (where everything was still in

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.



English). She gave an example as to how before she moved to Manurewa she had brought up a grandchild to speak Maori, but when he went back to his family he forgot everything. A young couple (who were not fluent speakers themselves) had a similar experience. Their daughter had lived with her grandparents (near Kaikohe) when she was very young, and "couldn't understand a word of English" until they brought her home; now she had "lost her Maori tongue".

Even adults had found that the lack of opportunity to use and hear Maori regularly had affected their own command of the language, particularly if they had come to Auckland as teenagers or young adults. Several native-speakers of Maori said they were no longer fluent in the language. Others had found their children or their families resisted attempts to use the language at home; one man from Gisborne said he tried to teach his wife (whose father was a fluent speaker) but "she got sick of it", while a woman who went to night classes to improve her fluency said that her husband "doesn't believe in today's Maori language", and had given up, although she wanted her children to be able to speak Maori. One person had come to the conclusion that it was impractical to revive Maori now "because of the Pakeha influence". She said that she and her husband were an example of this -- they both knew how to speak Maori, but it was too much of an effort now to use it all the time. However another told us that her neighbor was helping her to speak the Maori language fluently once again.

Although most of the people we spoke to did not mention any antagonism towards the language on the part of other people in Manurewa or the Auckland area generally, an older woman, originally from Te Iringa, said that when she was working at Greenlane Hospital she used to be "told off" for speaking to

Maori "even to Maori patients!" She thought that because in the past people had been frightened that Maori would get in the way of English and prevented children from learning, parents now have trouble teaching them. Our interviewers had an experience like this lady's in Greenlane in one of the homes they visited. The elderly mother of the person they were interviewing was there at the time, and the interviewer "spoke to her in Maori because she was very old"; however, the interviewer reported that the other person "said I had bad manners to speak Maori to her mother in front of her. She couldn't understand us during our little conversation".

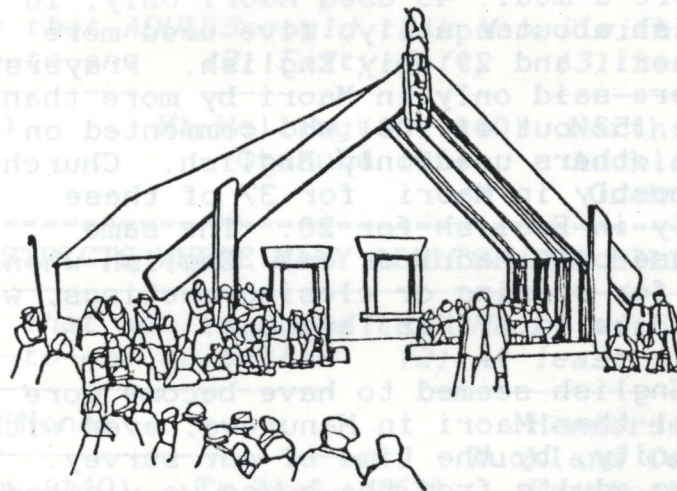
In the past, schools had been a major force in promoting English within the Maori community, although this was starting to change at the time of the survey. People's attitudes to issues surrounding the teaching of the Maori language in schools are discussed in the next section of this report. Their own personal experiences at school (mainly in Northland and the Waikato) had not been particularly encouraging, in many cases, where the use of the Maori language was concerned. Of the 99 people who talked about their school experiences, 30 had been punished physically for speaking Maori at school, 16 said they had been given other punishments (ranging from being "told off" to being "made to sit in a corner all day"), and 5 others said there had been rules against speaking Maori. These were mostly older people. Of the rest, only five had received encouragement or a positive response to their use of Maori at school, and 43, many of whom could not speak Maori anyway, said Maori was neither encouraged nor discouraged during their school days.

Many of the native speakers had certainly suffered as children for failing to observe the "English only" convention at the schools they went to. One 52 year old man from Raukokore recalled having to drink quinine to cure him of this bad

habit. Others received more conventional punishment. One person from Omanaia (in his 30s at the time of the interview) had been rapped over the knuckles with a ruler; a contemporary from Wainui had fared worse: "We were strapped very hard for speaking Maori in the school grounds". Forty years earlier a man from Pamapurua had a similar experience: "we were bruised from the strapping the teacher gave us". A man in his fifties from Te Ahuahu remarked "Ae, he kino nga mahita kura i taua taima". One of his contemporaries from Waima made a similar observation, but another disagreed, saying "it was the children's fault for speaking bad at school". Someone from Te Kawa had the same opinion: "Maori kids were very wrong for speaking their own language at school".

Right or wrong, not all Maori speakers had fared badly. A musician in this early thirties, who had grown up in Pokeno, said "Pai ke nga mahita ki a au". Another, aged 45, who had grown up in Pukekohe, also remarked that the teachers were good to him, even though he spoke Maori. An elderly man from Te Kuiti also had no problems at school; he described his teachers as "tino pai". Instead, he had to be careful at home, because his parents did not like him to speak English, and he was afraid they would hit him if they heard him using that language. One 37 year old Auckland, however, felt that in her time schools "didn't actually encourage Maoris to be educated or have anything to do with Maoritanga". Times had obviously changed, as many parents were now looking to the schools to help revive the Maori language, and several of those we interviewed were actively involved in school programmes and after-school classes. One man from Waihopo saw this as a fulfillment of a childhood prophecy -- he had been punished for speaking Maori, but "I also said to the teacher, one day our language would be taught in school".

(The school experiences of Maori-speakers in various parts of Northland and Greater Auckland are set out and discussed in much more detail in a paper, "Abandoning the Titanic? Some implications of Maori perceptions of educational and social influences on the maintenance and use of the Maori language", by Nena Benton, available from Te Wahanga Maori, NZCER.)



The marae was the one area where Maori was still supreme, at least on formal occasions. Of the 108 people we asked about this, 107 agreed that Maori was the only language that their kaumatua would use on the marae, and 100 of them said that their kaumatua would probably speak only Maori even when chatting in a marae setting (the others thought both Maori and English would be used). As for themselves, 59 of the 62 who spoke on the marae would also use only Maori for whaikorero, two said they would use both Maori and English, and one said that he would speak mostly in English. Naturally,

everyone was able to chat on the marae; 62 said they would speak mainly Maori even in an informal marae setting, 13 would use Maori and English about equally, and 33 would speak English most or all of the time.

The other area of community life where Maori was still stronger than English was the religious sphere. Of the 93 people who at least occasionally said grace before a meal, 43 used Maori only, 16 Maori and English about equally, five used more English than Maori, and 29 only English. Prayers for the sick were said only in Maori by more than half the people (52 out of 100) who commented on this; 30 of the others used only English. Church services were mostly in Maori for 37 of these people, and only in English for 20. The same numbers would use only Maori or only English when saying prayers for opening or closing meetings, with the remaining 43 using either language.

Overall, English seemed to have become more generally useful than Maori in Manurewa, even within the Maori community, by the time of our survey. The chances that two adults from the homes we visited would be able to talk in Maori to each other if the met accidentally were a little better than one in three. The chances for children doing this were about one in 500 -- in other words, very remote -- but for successful communication in Maori between someone under 25 and someone that age or older meeting unexpectedly the odds were a bit better, about one in eight, if the older person did most of the actual talking. As the chart on the next page shows, the situation in Manurewa was quite typical of metropolitan Auckland districts as far as knowledge of Maori in the community was concerned. Maori speakers in all of them had to face similar difficulties in their struggle to hand the language on to future generations.

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

MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS &
MARGINALLY MAORI-SPEAKING DISTRICTS

(None)

DISTRICTS WHERE AT LEAST ONE CHILD IN FIVE
UNDERSTOOD MAORI EASILY

Chances that ADULTS could talk Maori with each other:
(1) Two-to-one (2) Fifty-fifty (3) Less than even

(None)	Mt Wellington (140)	North Shore (101)
	Otahuhu (95)	Auckland W. (140)
		Onehunga (140)

DISTRICTS WHERE MANY ADULTS WERE BILINGUAL

Chances that adults could talk Maori with each other:
(1) Two-to-one or better (2) At least fifty-fifty

(None)		Henderson (99)
		Auckland Central (140)
Mt Eden (140)	Te Atatu (62)	Papatoetoe (95)
Mt Roskill (140)		Auckland East (140)

DISTRICTS WHERE MAORI-SPEAKERS WERE A MINORITY

Proportion of families with a Maori-speaking head:
(1) Two-thirds (2) About half (3) Not many

Glenfield (101)	Kelston (99)	(none)
Otara (19)	Massey (99)	
Mangere (95)	Orakei (140)	
** Manurewa	Mt. Albert (140)	
Papakura (60)	Pakuranga (106)	

** Included in this report; () Other report numbers.

Attitudes Towards the Maori Language

The cultural and religious significance of Maori was emphasised by one of the people we spoke to, a 37 year old woman who had grown up in Otiria. She told us that 11 of her children had been baptized by a Maori minister, and the service was also conducted in Maori, at the request of her and her husband. She also told us (like some other people) that her own knowledge of Maori had slipped since she left home, and said she felt embarrassed when going on to the marae because she could not understand what the speakers were saying.

This feeling of shyness, shame, regret, inadequacy or loss was mentioned by many people we talked to in Manurewa. Some thought this was just the way things were, and there was nothing you could do about it; one person from Mokau said "The Maori of today are all Pakeha. There isn't much full Maori today, they all got a bit of something -- half something and quarter something else". Others saw the present state of affairs as a challenge: "We can't have the language die out"; "We need to get back our Maori language"; "Maori katoa tatou, no reira me kaha kia mau to tatou nei reo. It's beautiful, this language of ours".

Most of the people who commented on Maori language in the schools were very enthusiastic about what was then a new development. One man thought that having Maori taught in school was "the best thing that ever happened in New Zealand". An elderly couple said that all Pakeha should learn how to speak Maori: "It's not fair that we speak their language but they don't speak ours". Another thought widespread teaching of Maori in the schools would help young Maori people regain their self-confidence. One young man from Whakawhitira said that he felt teaching Maori in schools was an excellent idea because "it was through the education

system that many Maori have come to have difficulty with their language".

Not everyone agreed with this, of course. One person said "Learning Maori in school is irrelevant. What use is it?" He wasn't against teaching the language itself, but thought it was a waste of time trying to teach it "to those who don't want to learn". Two young mothers had said they thought that it was unfair to their children to affiliate them to any particular iwi. One of these, who had been brought up in Auckland, said that her mother (who was Maori) felt that "Maori should not be spoken and that English was the language". The other, who had grown up in Motukaraka, said that Maori should never be taught in school, because it would violate Maori custom; it was too tapu to be in all schools. This same person said that she and others of her generation were not fluent Maori speakers because "the Pakeha has taken over our country". The same line of thinking was behind the remark of a person from Whatuwhiwhi, who believed that the marae was the only place where Maoritanga (including Maori language) should be taught.

Most people who expressed an opinion on this topic, nevertheless, were very much in favour of Maori being taught in school, and some were actually doing this themselves. Even those who wanted Maori taught, however, were not always happy about the kind of Maori which existing school efforts were using. One man from Te Iringa said that "we should have classical Maori". Another, from Omanaia, asked "Why can't we stick to the one Maori language?" He noted that "every tribe and area speaks differently", and thought that these differences would have to be overcome if progress was to be made. Others were concerned about the way Maori had been kept out of many areas of modern life; one man from Pukekohe, for example, noted that Maori was not used for teaching trades.

Conclusion

As in most parts of metropolitan Auckland, Maori in Manurewa had become basically an adult language at the time of the survey, although there were very few Maori families who had no contact whatever with the language. A great many of the people we spoke to were concerned at the possibility that the language might disappear, and some were directly involved in activities to make sure that this did not happen. Some had sent their children to live with Maori-speaking grandparents so they could learn Maori, but this had been disappointing, in that the children's command of Maori disappeared once they returned home. The kohanga reo movement, which was started about six years after this survey took place, was a way of tackling this problem, by providing a support for this kind of language learning close to home. A kohanga reo was opened in a community centre in Manurewa in September 1983, and another in a private home in May 1984. By the middle of 1985 these had 38 children attending them -- a very small number, but probably far more than the number of pre-school children in Manurewa who were learning to speak Maori fluently ten years earlier.

The kohanga reo themselves have run into the same problem that individual families were facing at the time of our survey: very often, once the children leave the kohanga, they find that English is the only language that most people know (including the children they play with at school), their interest in Maori quickly lessens, and soon they have lost most of their hard won facility with the language. Parents and the Maori community have been trying to work out solutions to these problems. In some areas, bilingual schools have been set up; the first of these was established in Ruatoki, in

the Bay of Plenty, in 1976, but even twelve years later none had been set up in the Auckland urban areas. Another approach has been to have bilingual or Maori-language groups or classes within ordinary schools. Several of these have been set up in Auckland, but again there is the problem that most children in these schools still know very little Maori, and so the language of the playground will be English.

This would not matter so much if children could hear Maori spoken a lot of the time in other places, but, unfortunately, the other great influences on language development outside the family, such as radio and television, are still basically monolingual. Parents who want their children to become well educated and fluent Maori speakers have become very conscious of these obstacles in their way, and this has led to demands for much more Maori language on radio and television, and also to the setting up of *kaupapa Maori* schools. It is difficult to see how the Maori language can survive as an everyday language if these demands are not met. As a language for ceremonies and greetings, it is in far less danger.

On the national scene, there have been at least two developments which would encourage those Maori parents and grandparents in Manurewa who value the language. One was the decision of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1986 to uphold the claim of Nga Kaiwhakapumau i te Reo that the education system was being operated in breach of the Treaty, and that Maori should be fully recognized as an official language of the country. The consequences of this decision are still being worked out. The other development has been the passing of the Maori Language Act in 1987, which has made Maori an official language of New Zealand, and set up a Commission for the Maori Language to advise the government on how to promote the wider use of Maori.

This body could turn out to be a powerful force for ensuring that Maori concern about the language is heard and acted upon positively by all government agencies. The Commission also has the job of taking steps to modernize the language, so that the worries some of the people in Manurewa and elsewhere had about the inability of Maori speakers to use the language in teaching and discussing technical matters will be overcome.

On the local scene, many of the people we interviewed in Manurewa would have been greatly encouraged by the decision of the Manukau City Council to declare Maori an official language of Manukau City, some years before the New Zealand Parliament followed this lead and made the same declaration for the nation. There is still a long way to go, but the Maori residents of Manurewa have much more support for their efforts to maintain and develop their language in 1988 than they had when this survey took place 13 years earlier. It is to be hoped that when the state of the Maori language in Manurewa is examined in the year 2001, all the developments of the period between 1975 and 1988 will have led to a real renaissance, and the decline which the table on page 2 of this report illustrates will have been replaced by an equally spectacular revival.

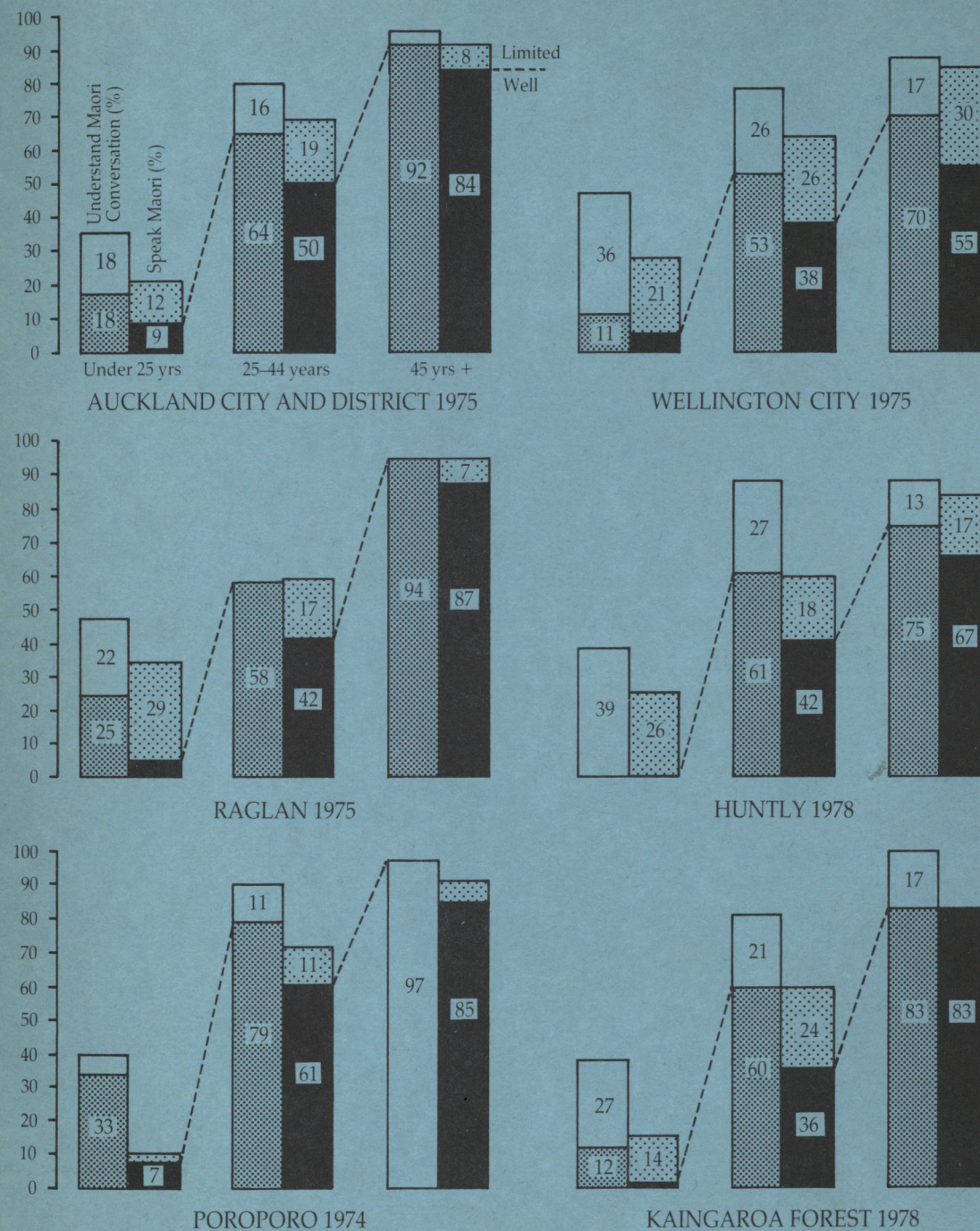


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Knowledge of Maori Language by Age Groups in Selected Areas at the Time of the Linguistic Census



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.