



Te Puni Kōkiri
REALISING MĀORI POTENTIAL

MĀTAURANGA / KNOWLEDGE

Te Oranga o te Reo Māori
i te Rohe o Te Taitokerau 2006
*The Health of the Māori Language
in Te Taitokerau 2006*



Ko tōku reo, tōku ohooho; tōku reo, tōku mapihi
maurea; tōku reo, tōku whakakai marihi.

*My language is my inspiration, my special gift,
my precious treasure.*

REALISING MĀORI POTENTIAL



The framework above identifies three key enablers that are fundamental to Māori achieving Te Ira Tangata (improved life quality) and realising their potential. All our written information has been organised within these three key enablers or Te Ira Tangata.

1	Mātauranga – Building of knowledge and skills. This area acknowledges the importance of knowledge to building confidence and identity, growing skills and talents and generating innovation and creativity. Knowledge and skills are considered as a key enabler of Māori potential as they underpin choice and the power to act to improve life quality.
2	Whakamana – Strengthening of leadership and decision-making.
3	Rawa – Development and use of resources.
4	Te Ira Tangata – The quality of life to realise potential.

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FOREWORD

E ngā iwi o te motu, tēnā koutou i ngā tini āhuatanga o te wā. Ka tangi, ka mihi ki te hunga kua whetūrangitia me tēnei taonga kua whakarērea iho mai ki a tātau. Tēnei ka tāpae atu nei i ngā hua o ngā rangahau a Te Puni Kōkiri i roto i ngā tau hei whiriwhiri, hei wānanga mā tātau, e takoto mai ai he huarahi whakamua mō tō tātau reo.

Te Puni Kōkiri's strategic outcome is Māori succeeding as Māori. This outcome highlights the importance of Māori achieving social and economic success within the context of a flourishing culture and secure identity. The Māori language is a critical component of the Māori culture.

"Ko te reo Māori te mauri o te mana Māori".¹

This report presents the results of an extensive research programme into the health of the Māori language that has been undertaken by Te Puni Kōkiri over several years. One of eight regional reports, this report highlights strong gains in the knowledge and use of the Māori language among Māori people, and the status of the Māori language within communities.

These gains provide real momentum in the journey towards achieving the vision and goals of the Māori Language Strategy. That vision is:

By 2028, the Māori language will be widely spoken by Māori. In particular, the Māori language will be in common use within Māori whānau, homes and communities. All New Zealanders will appreciate the value of the Māori language to New Zealand society.²

We have established a strong foundation for the revitalisation of the Māori language. There is, of course, more work ahead of us, and we need to coordinate our efforts to ensure we are doing the right things in the right way, at the right time. I am confident that this report provides a strong basis for ongoing planning and implementation of Māori language programmes to support the vision of the Māori Language Strategy. Kia kaha ki a tātau.



Leith Comer
Chief Executive

1. See Sir James Henare in Waitangi Tribunal, 1987.
2. Te Puni Kōkiri and Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, 2003, p. 5.

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report investigates the health of the Māori language in Te Taitokerau in 2006. For the purposes of this report, Te Taitokerau is defined as the Northland Region encompassing the Far North, Whāngarei and Kaipara District Councils.

This is one of eight reports on the health of the Māori language at a regional level. The aim of the report is to provide an overview of language health for policy makers and language planners, to allow communities to better understand the issues around the use and revitalisation of the Māori language as the basis for their own planning and development.

INFORMATION SOURCES

This report draws on data from a variety of sources¹, including:

- the 2001 and the 2006 censuses of Population and Dwellings;
- the 2001 and the 2006 surveys of the Health of the Māori Language;
- education statistics from the Ministry of Education;
- national research on the Māori language; and
- local knowledge of language issues and initiatives.

Much of the data used to create this report is previously unpublished data from the 2006 Census and 2006 Health of the Māori Language Survey (HML 2006 Survey). Data tables for further analysis can be provided by Te Puni Kōkiri on request.

REPORT STRUCTURE

This report is divided into five main sections;

- a brief history of the Māori language in Te Taitokerau;
- Māori language knowledge and proficiency in the region;
- use of the Māori language within the whānau;
- the provision of Māori language services; and
- summary and conclusion.

Responsibility for the findings expressed in this report lie solely with the Māori Language and Broadcasting Team within Te Puni Kōkiri. The team welcomes discussion on any aspect of this report.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE MĀORI LANGUAGE IN TE TAITOKERAU

This section provides a brief history of the Māori language specific to the Te Taitokerau region. This section has been largely reproduced from earlier Te Puni Kōkiri research that was undertaken in conjunction with local iwi. Updated information was received from recent engagement with local communities. For a fuller New Zealand history of Māori language changes, refer to 'The Health of the Māori Language in 2006'.

During the first decades of the 20th century the vast majority of Māori in Te Taitokerau lived in rural settlements that were largely autonomous. Te Reo was the principal language used almost exclusively in Māori homes, as it had been in all previous generations.

It was only in schools that English became a principal language in Te Taitokerau before the 1940s. Within schools, Māori children were specifically taught English grammar, vocabulary, spelling and diction. By the 1930s the use of English in schools was widely supported by Māori communities and national leaders, as it was seen as an essential tool to progress in economic life. At this stage, however, no one predicted the loss of the Māori language from the Māori home environment.

Through the 1940s to the 1960s Māori communities undertook a radical transformation – from isolated communities, to connected communities. Many Māori people moved to more urban areas, encouraged by public policy to pursue employment and housing opportunities in towns and cities. As the Māori population urbanised, integrative policies ensured Māori did not cluster together exclusively, but rather settled alongside Pākehā New Zealanders which – perhaps unconsciously – prevented the continuation of Māori speech patterns. That is, despite the fact that virtually all Māori adults could speak Māori, during this period they tended to stop transmitting the language to their children (although they still spoke it amongst themselves).

From the 1970s researchers and Government first began to comprehend the loss of the Māori language within Māori communities. Efforts by Māori, more recently supported by Government, have subsequently sought to arrest the decline in the use of the language. Nationally, the Māori language is now recognised as a treasure.

Today a few community pockets remain where Māori is still spoken in most households and in community fora, commonly those whānau households involved in immersion education. However, these families are scattered throughout communities and are often isolated from each other.² The Māori language remains important in Te Taitokerau but is not the dominant language spoken throughout.³

Recent efforts to revitalise te reo Māori in Te Taitokerau have been carried out by small groups operating within their communities and focus mainly on Māori language education, broadcasting (iwi radio and television) and arts. The need for a more coordinated approach is apparent. The idea of a leadership group mandated to lead Māori language development has been initiated and a Charitable Trust, Te Reo o Te Taitokerau, has been established. Alongside the development of Te Hiku o Te Ika's reo strategy there is now a greater likelihood of a coordinated approach as the document provides practical ideas that whānau, hapū, iwi and organisations can initiate and develop.

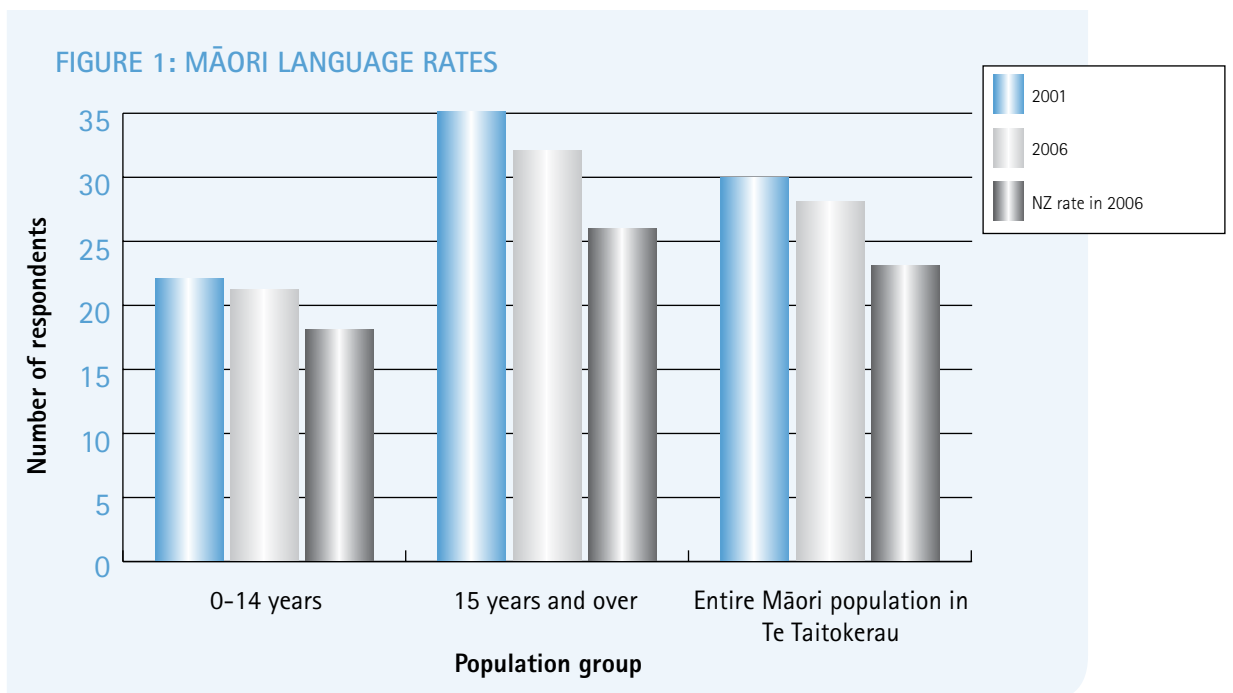
MĀORI LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE AND PROFICIENCY IN TE TAITOKERAU

This section of the report provides an overview of Māori language statistics for this region including numbers of Māori language speakers and Māori language proficiency levels.

THE NUMBER OF MĀORI SPEAKERS

Information from the Census of Population and Dwellings

In the 2006 Census, 43,527 people living in Te Taitokerau identified as Māori, with 12,141 of these people saying they were able to converse in Māori 'about a lot of everyday things'⁴. This results in a Māori language rate of 28%. This is above the national rate of 23%. For adults (people aged over 15) the Māori language rate is 32%, or 8,900 people within the Māori adult population of 27,900 in Te Taitokerau.



Source: HML 2006 Survey.

Figure 1 shows the Māori language rate has fallen since 2001. The information available suggests this reflects two demographic trends. First, there is a gradual passing of an older generation of Māori adults that has significantly higher proportions of Māori language speakers than other generations (the language rate of those aged over 55 is about double that of each of the younger generations). Second, the Māori population is youthful (the median age in 2006 was 22 years). Because most Māori learn the Māori language as adults, the younger average-age of the Māori population will have the effect of reducing the overall Māori language rate.

Information from the Health of the Māori Language Survey

Te Puni Kōkiri commissioned two surveys investigating the health of the Māori Language, undertaken in 2001 and 2006. The HML surveys provide another means of measuring the number



of Māori adults with Māori language skills. The surveys investigated proficiency in the Māori language in more depth than the Census, by considering speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills, and also a combination of these skills, on a proficiency scale. The surveys also investigated how people acquired their Māori language skills, and when and where they use these skills.⁵ As the Census and the HML surveys provide information on different aspects of the health of the Māori language, both are drawn upon in this section.

The HML 2006 Survey found 16% (around 4,500) of Māori adults in Te Taitokerau have high levels of Māori language speaking proficiency. A further 13% (3,600 people) are able to speak Māori 'fairly well'. For the repeat of the Census question on conversational abilities, the survey found the Māori language rate was 32% (8,900 adults). The abilities of children and young people were not measured in the survey, so differences between the 2006 Census and HML 2006 Survey data can only be considered for the adult population.

The reason there are differences in measuring the number of Māori adults with Māori language skills is that both the HML surveys and the Census are based on individuals assessing their own language abilities, and at different times people have different views on their Māori language skills. A key factor that is likely to have influenced people in assessing their skills is the different approaches used to collect data for the Census and the HML surveys.

The HML surveys involved face-to-face interviews, in either Māori or English, specifically focusing on Māori language competencies. The Census involved people completing a questionnaire on their own, and did not investigate Māori language in detail. Also, the Census question was general in nature and more open to different interpretations. Due to these differences, it is likely the HML surveys provide a more accurate picture of the number of people with strong competencies in the Māori language, while the Census captures a wider group of people with some level of conversational Māori language skills.

Overall then, the range of Māori language speakers is between 16% and 32% for Māori adults in Te Taitokerau, with the lower end of this range being perhaps a more accurate indicator of strong proficiency.

Age Groupings

Census data from 2006 shows there are significant differences in the proportion of Māori language speakers across age groups. For people aged up to fifty-five, the Māori speaking rate is 25%, whereas for those fifty-five or older the rate is 51%.

While having the highest proportion of speakers, the older generation is a smaller group – 5,490 people with 2,787 Māori language speakers (which is 23% of all Māori speakers in the region). Because of this there are actually a larger number of Māori speakers in each of the younger age groupings, as is shown in Table 1.


TABLE 1: MĀORI WITH MĀORI LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES BY AGE

Age grouping	No. of people with Māori language competencies	Total population size	Māori language rate	Proportion of all Māori with Māori language competencies
0 - 14	3,210	15,582	21%	26%
15 - 34	2,985	11,841	25%	25%
35 - 54	3,159	10,617	30%	26%
55+	2,787	5,490	51%	23%

Source: Census 2006.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the age profile of Māori language speakers is gradually changing. In particular, since 2001, the percentage of speakers in the 55 or above age group has fallen by 6 percentage points (from 57% to 51%), reflecting the passing on of older native speakers and the passage of people with lower levels of Māori language proficiency into this age group.

Gender

Māori women are slightly more likely to speak Māori than Māori men, with 54% of Māori language speakers being women in Te Taitokerau. There is little change from this pattern throughout the age groups.

Iwi Kāinga

Māori speakers in Te Taitokerau associate with a wide variety of iwi. Table 2 lists the ten iwi residing in Te Taitokerau with the highest te reo Māori conversant populations.

TABLE 2: IWI AFFILIATIONS OF MĀORI SPEAKERS

Iwi affiliation	Able to converse in Māori
Ngāpuhi	7,419
Te Rārawa	1,674
Ngāti Whātua	1,044
Te Aupōuri	927
Ngāti Kahu	927
Ngāti Kurī	642
Ngāti Wai	579
Ngāti Porou	579
Waikato	405
Ngāti Maniapoto	348

Source: Census 2006.



Iwi Affiliations

Another way of looking at te reo speakers for the iwi of Te Taitokerau is to consider the number of speakers belonging to an iwi from Te Taitokerau that reside across the entire country, as shown in Table 3. Because many people affiliate with more than one iwi, some speakers will be included in a number of iwi groupings.

TABLE 3: TE REO SPEAKERS AFFILIATING WITH NGĀ IWĪ O TE TAITOKERAU

Iwi affiliation	Able to converse in Māori	Total	Māori language rate
Te Tai Tokerau/Tāmaki-makaurau (Northland/Auckland) Region	855	2,565	33%
Te Aupōuri	3,033	9,333	32%
Ngāti Kahu	2,520	8,313	30%
Ngāti Kuri	1,809	5,757	31%
Ngāpuhi	28,461	122,214	23%
Ngāpuhi ki Whaingaroa-Ngāti Kahu ki Whaingaroa	591	1,746	34%
Te Rārawa	4,809	14,892	32%
Ngāi Takoto	249	771	32%
Ngāti Wai	1,344	4,869	28%

Source: Census 2006.

Prominence of the Māori Language

The Māori language is still very much a language of a small minority within the entire population of Te Taitokerau. Census 2006 data shows only 9% of the region's total population have conversational abilities in Māori language. This is comprised of the 12,141 speakers who are Māori, together with another 1,317 non-Māori who can converse in Māori, giving a total of 13,458, within a regional population of 148,440.

TABLE 4: NUMBERS OF MĀORI SPEAKERS

	Able to speak the Māori language	Total population	% of speakers in population
Māori	12,141	43,527	28%
Non-Māori	1,317	104,913	1%
Total	13,458	140,440	9%

Source: Census 2006.



Regional Variances

There are regional variances in the Māori language rate. Census 2006 data shows that the proportions of Māori speakers are generally highest in the northern regions. Te Taitokerau has the second highest Māori language rate of the eight regions.

TABLE 5: TE REO SPEAKERS BY TE PUNI KŌKIRI REGIONS

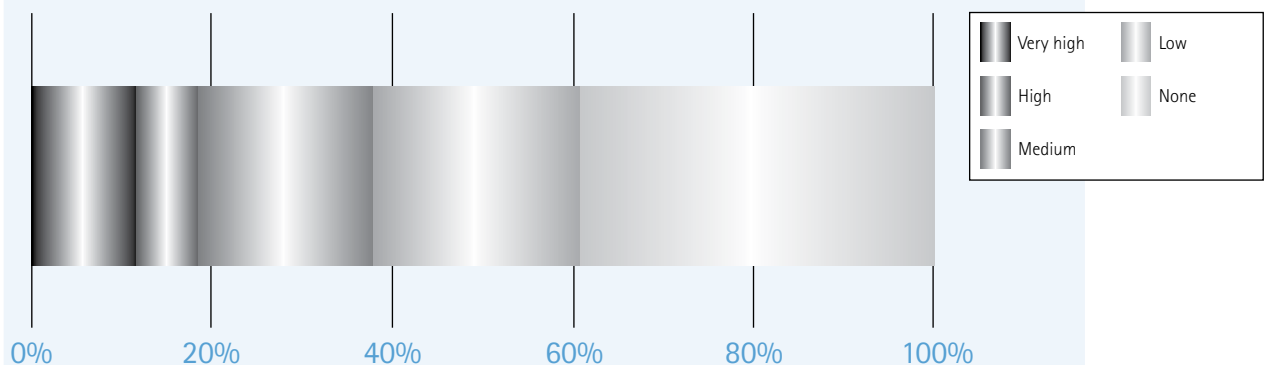
	Able to speak Māori	Total Māori population	% of speakers in population
Te Taitokerau	12,100	43,500	28%
Tāmaki-Makau-Rau	27,900	140,000	20%
Wairariki	22,900	76,000	30%
Waikato	16,400	65,400	25%
Te Tairāwhiti / Tākitimu	16,500	62,300	26%
Te Taihauāuru	11,300	48,500	23%
Te Upoko o Te Ika / Te Tau Ihu	14,600	67,300	22%
Te Waipounamu	9,900	62,300	16%

Source: Census 2006.

MĀORI LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

While 2006 Census data provides an overall picture of the number of Māori language speakers, and their characteristics, the HML 2006 Survey complements this by looking at proficiency levels in the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, together with a derived overall proficiency rating. Of the Māori adult population, approximately 10,500 have an overall proficiency level in Māori language ranging from medium to very high.⁶

FIGURE 2: OVERALL PROFICIENCY LEVELS OF MĀORI ADULTS



Source: HML 2006 Survey.



When proficiency levels in the region were considered by age grouping, it was found that 20% of those with high proficiency were aged fifty-five or over, even though this age group only makes up 8% of the adult Māori speaking population. This means that, on average, younger adults are not as proficient as older adults in Māori language. Their language skills will need to be developed in order to maintain the quality of language in the region over coming decades.

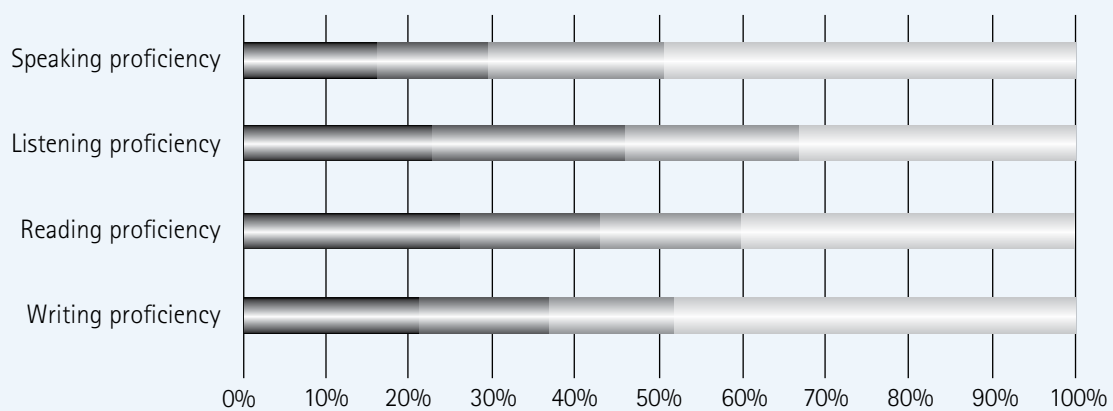
Types of Language Skills

There are four types of language skills: speaking; writing; reading; and listening. Speaking and writing can be described as active skills, while reading and listening can be described as passive skills.

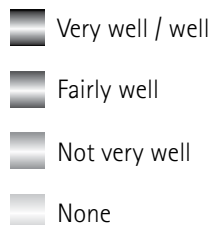
While the skill types are connected, often language proficiency is considered only in terms of speaking proficiency. It is useful to consider the other skills, however, as passive skills (reading and listening) can often be stronger than active skills (speaking and writing). As can be seen in Figure 3, this is the case in Te Taitokerau – where there are more people able to listen and read in Māori language than able to speak or write it. The HML 2006 Survey also brings these individual skills together to gauge 'overall proficiency' – rather than just relying on speaking or conversational abilities, which are often used as indicators of overall ability.

The finding that higher levels of passive skills exist suggests there is likely to be a level of latent Māori language ability in the region – people who comprehend the Māori language but are perhaps not able to easily express themselves in the language. This may be due to childhood exposure to the language, and/or opportunities to maintain or develop passive skills through listening to Māori television and radio, which is discussed further in another section of this report. It is possible these passive skills could be ignited to increase speaking proficiency levels in the region. This is an issue for language planners to consider when looking to develop Māori language proficiency in Te Taitokerau.

FIGURE 3: MĀORI LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS IN 2006



Source: HML 2006 Survey.





Shifts in Māori Language Proficiencies from 2001 to 2006

Data from the HML surveys indicates that from 2001 to 2006 there have been marginal changes in Māori language proficiency levels within Te Taitokerau, as set out in Tables 6 and 7.

TABLE 6: CHANGES IN SPEAKING AND LISTENING PROFICIENCY BETWEEN 2001 AND 2006.

Proficiency level	Percentage of Māori adults ⁷					
	Speaking			Listening		
	2001	2006	Shift	2001	2006	Shift
Well/Very well	17%	16%	-1	25%	23%	-2
Fairly well	15%	13%	-2	22%	23%	+1
Not very well	28%	21%	-7	26%	21%	-5
None	41%	49%	+8	26%	33%	+7

Source: HML 2001 Survey, HML 2006 Survey.

TABLE 7: CHANGES IN READING AND WRITING PROFICIENCY BETWEEN 2001 AND 2006.

Proficiency level	Percentage of Māori adults ⁸					
	Reading			Writing		
	2001	2006	Shift	2001	2006	Shift
Well/Very well	19%	27%	+8	16%	21%	+5
Fairly well	19%	17%	-2	17%	16%	-1
Not very well	25%	17%	-8	22%	15%	-7
None	37%	40%	+3	45%	48%	+3

Source: HML 2001 Survey, HML 2006 Survey.

The results indicate that since 2001 there has been:

- a decrease of three percentage points in the number of Māori adults who can speak Māori fairly well, well or very well;
- an decrease of one percentage point in the number of Māori adults who can understand spoken Māori fairly well, well, or very well;
- an increase of six percentage points in the number of Māori adults who can read Māori fairly well, well, or very well; and
- an increase of four percentage points in the number of Māori adults who can write Māori fairly well, well or very well.



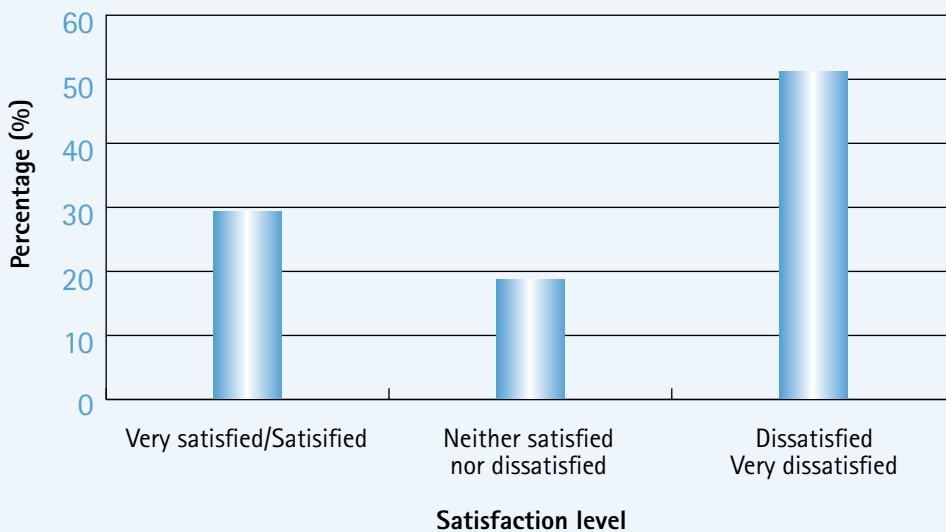
Overall, tables 6 and 7 show marginal shifts across all four language proficiency areas. The greatest increases have been seen in listening and reading proficiency levels (passive language skills).

Satisfaction with Proficiency

The HML 2006 Survey also considered how satisfied people were with their levels of proficiency in the Māori language. Overall, the survey found that 51% of Māori adults were dissatisfied with their level of proficiency. Most of these people had low or very limited Māori language skills - only 14% of those with limited Māori language skills were satisfied with their skills. These findings point to positive attitudes towards the Māori language across the local Māori community. Amongst people who could speak 'fairly well', 46% were dissatisfied with this.

These findings suggest there is likely to be a sizeable pool of people wishing to improve their Māori language skills in the region, including people with very limited skills and people with moderate skills.

FIGURE 4: SATISFACTION OF TOTAL MĀORI ADULTS WITH MĀORI LANGUAGE SKILLS



Source: HML 2006 Survey.

Findings relating to satisfaction with Māori language skills accord with national research on attitudes, values and beliefs about the Māori language. This national research found most Māori (98%) believe more Māori being spoken in the home or at the marae is a good thing, and that many Māori (66%) consider learning the Māori language to be a high priority for them.⁹

These findings indicate a positive disposition toward the Māori language within the Māori community. The challenge ahead for language planners is to continue to create opportunities for people to actively pursue their desire to improve their language skills. It is continually important to ascertain the type of language people wish to learn, for example: conversational or formal.



Another important matter to consider is iwi dialect. Anecdotal evidence suggests that those people who already have Māori language skills place increasing value on knowledge of iwi dialect.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THIS SECTION

- The two measurements (Census and HML 2006 Survey) provide a Māori language rate for Māori adults that ranges from 16% through to 32%, with the lower end perhaps a more accurate indicator of strong proficiency.
- There are significant differences in the proportion of Māori language speakers across age groups. For those people aged up to fifty-five, the Māori speaking rate is 25%, whereas for those people aged fifty-five or over, the rate is 51%. Yet the population of Māori speakers aged over fifty-five is small compared to the population in younger age bands. Older speakers are also more proficient in the Māori language than young adult speakers.
- Since 2001 there have been marginal shifts across all four language proficiency areas. The greatest increases have been seen in listening and reading proficiency levels. In this region, passive skills are stronger in terms of numbers of people and proficiency levels, than active skills (speaking and writing). This indicates a level of latent Māori language ability. To increase speaking proficiency levels in this region, these passive skills will need to be ignited.
- Fifty-one percent of Māori adults are dissatisfied with their level of proficiency in the Māori language and desire to increase their language skill levels.

A reo strategy for the Far North

In 2004, the Far North Education Council coordinated a hui to determine the direction of te reo in Te Hiku o Te Ika. This hui highlighted the need for language revitalisation efforts to be strategic, concerted and driven. One outcome of this hui was the development of a 25 year strategy, 'Te Whakatupuranga i Te Reo Māori'. The strategy sets out long term goals and strategies for the first five years. Each of the five strategies focuses on a different kaupapa: schools and the early childhood sector; teachers and tutors of te reo Māori; marae; increasing the use of te reo Māori; and, leadership and coordination. Intended as a resource document, the strategy describes practical ideas for projects and sets out ways that different organisations can contribute towards the goals. It also provides an environmental scan of the state of te reo Māori in the Far North.

MĀORI LANGUAGE WITHIN THE WHĀNAU

This section of the report looks at the use of te reo Māori at a whānau level. It describes the use of the language by the Māori speaking population in the home and in the community.

Language use is an important aspect in understanding the health of the language. International research on language revitalisation suggests that for minority languages like Māori to survive, intergenerational transmission is required. Intergenerational transmission is the passing on of Māori language skills from generation to generation through regular and normal use within families.¹⁰

MĀORI HOUSEHOLDS

Census 2006 data shows that the Māori population of Te Taitokerau lives within 15,954 households. Many people, 58%, live in households comprising of one whānau with adults and children in the household¹¹. A further 37% live in households with adults only, either as couples, sole occupants, or groups of adults (e.g. flatmates).¹² Around 6% of Māori live in households comprising multiple whānau¹³.

Households with Māori Speakers

Table 8 shows where the Māori speaking population is located within household groupings. As shown, 42% of Māori households have at least one Māori speaker (6,729 of the total 15,954 Māori households). This means that within the remaining 58% (9,225) of Māori households there is no possibility of Māori language use in normal household life.

TABLE 8: MĀORI SPEAKERS IN HOUSEHOLDS

Household type	No. of households with a Māori speaker	Total number of households	% with a Māori speaker
Adults only	2,256	5,859	39%
Single whānau	3,948	9,213	43%
Multiple whānau	525	882	60%
Combined – all household types	6,729	15,954	42%

Source: Census 2006.

Census 2006 data also shows the percentage of Māori speakers who live with other speakers of the Māori language. This is important because in order to maintain the language through regular household use there needs to be at least two people able to converse in Māori within a household. The data shows that for Te Taitokerau, 48% of Māori speakers (9,684 people) do not live with other



Māori language speakers, meaning there is no opportunity for Māori language use in the normal home environment.

Household Compositions

Another way to look for potential opportunities for the intergenerational transmission of Māori language is considering households where there are younger and older speakers of Māori language.¹⁴

Census 2006 data shows that in households with adults and children/young people, 43% (8,355) of adults can speak Māori. Or from another perspective, 34% (5,868) of children or dependants live in a household with at least one adult speaker of Māori. This indicates some children and young people may have an opportunity to acquire the Māori language through intergenerational transmission from parents or other adults.

Table 9 brings together data for whānau households (but excludes adult only households), to show those households with Māori speakers aged 18 and over, and those under 18.

TABLE 9: MIX OF ADULT AND CHILD SPEAKERS OF TE REO MĀORI IN HOUSEHOLDS

	Young people (less than 18) able to speak Māori language in the household	No young people (less than 18) able to speak Māori language in the household
Adult speakers of Māori language in the household	9%	23%
	909	2,310
	households	households
No adult speakers of Māori language in the household	7%	61%
	693	6,183
	households	households

Source: Census 2006.

As shown in Table 9, 9% of these households have both children/young people and adults who are able to speak Māori. Also shown is the finding that in 23% of these households only adults can speak Māori. This may reflect the fact that the adults able to speak the Māori language are not primary care-givers (perhaps grandparents), or that other adults (perhaps spouses) do not speak Māori, making it difficult to use the Māori language in household activities. A further finding in relation to household composition is that 7% of households have children/young people able to speak Māori, but no adults in the household who are able to reciprocate. This shows that some children/young people are learning the Māori language outside of their normal home environment, through formal education. How education provision supports acquisition of the Māori language is discussed in another section of this report.



CHILDHOOD ACQUISITION OF THE MĀORI LANGUAGE

The results of the HML 2006 Survey show there is a link between proficiency in Māori and learning the Māori language in childhood. For those people aged over fifty-five with high proficiency in Māori language, all acquired their language skills in childhood; and for those under fifty-five, 88% with high proficiency acquired their Māori language skills in childhood. Related to this is the finding that nearly all highly proficient speakers acquired their Māori language skills from their parents or other family members, with other inputs (i.e. hui, schooling) being much less influential. These findings again show the importance of intergenerational transmission as the key to language acquisition and quality.

USE OF THE MĀORI LANGUAGE

Speaking Māori in the Home

The HML surveys also looked at who speaks Māori to whom, and how often. This is called the interlocutor relationship. That is, how many Māori people speak to parents, spouses, children, and friends in the Māori language, and how regularly compared to English.

The HML surveys sought to identify three categories of household usage:

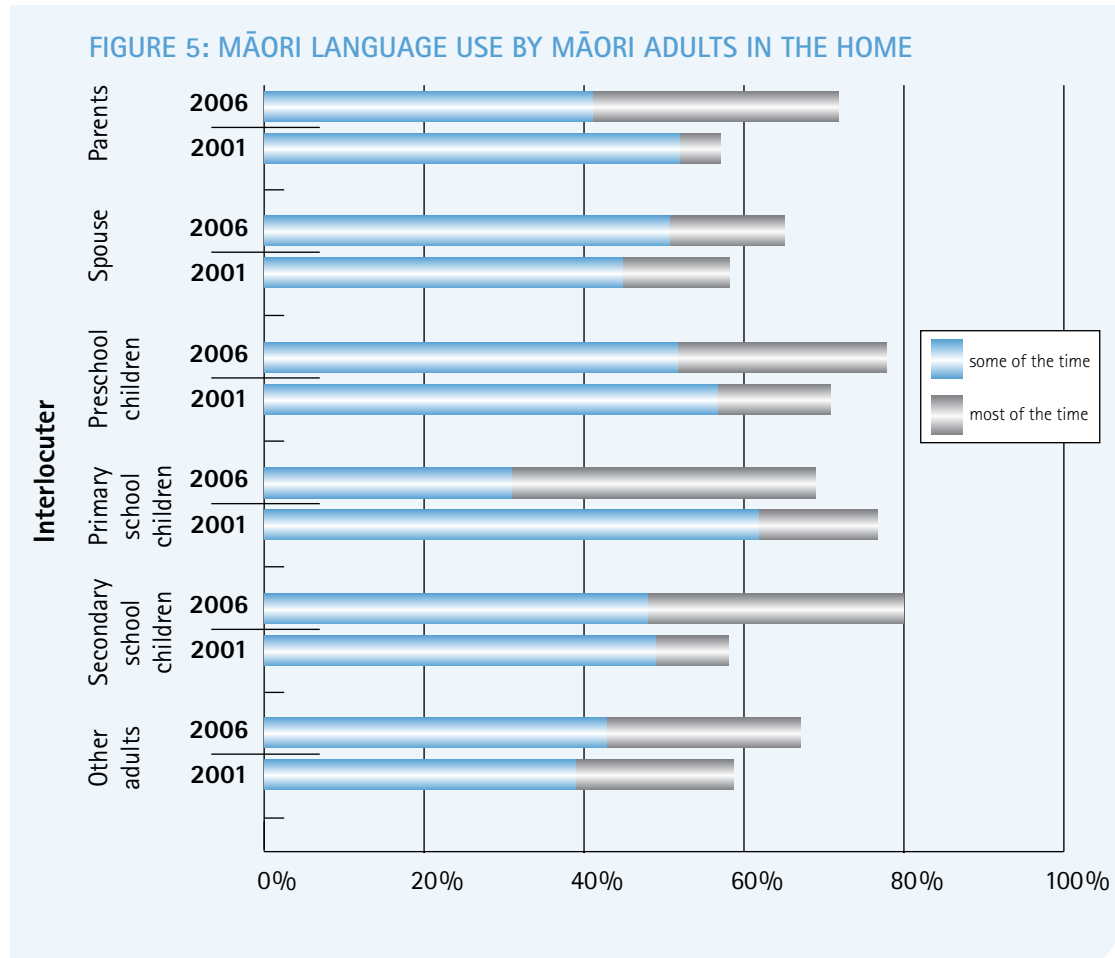
- whānau settings where no Māori language is used with various interlocutors;
- whānau settings where some Māori language is used with various interlocutors (but is not the prevalent household language, and is used in less than 50% of household communications); and
- whānau settings where the Māori language is used in most, (50% or more), or all communications with various interlocutors.

Results of the HML surveys indicate that since 2001 there has been an increase in Māori language use within household settings (see Figure 5). Of particular interest in this region are the increases seen in the amount of Māori language use by adults with their children and with their parents in the home. The greatest increases have been seen in the amount of Māori language use by adults with their children and with their parents in the home, as follows (see Figure 5):

- In 2006, 26% of Māori adults used the Māori language as a significant language of communication with their pre-school children. A further 52% made some use of the Māori language in their interaction with their infants. This is an overall increase of seven percentage points since 2001.
- In 2006, 32% of Māori adults used the Māori language as a significant language of communication with their secondary school-aged children. A further 48% made some use of the Māori language in their interaction with these young people. This is an overall increase of 22 percentage points since 2001.
- In 2006, 31% of Māori adults used the Māori language as a significant language of communication with their parents. A further 41% made some use of the Māori language in their interaction with their parents. This is an overall increase of 15 percentage points since 2001.



These findings are a positive indication in terms of re-establishing intergenerational transmission. However, these interactions need to increase further before the Māori language can be considered a primary means of communication for Māori whānau. Language planners may be interested in investigating the reasons behind the increases described.



Source: HML 2001 Survey, HML 2006 Survey.

Speaking Māori in the Community

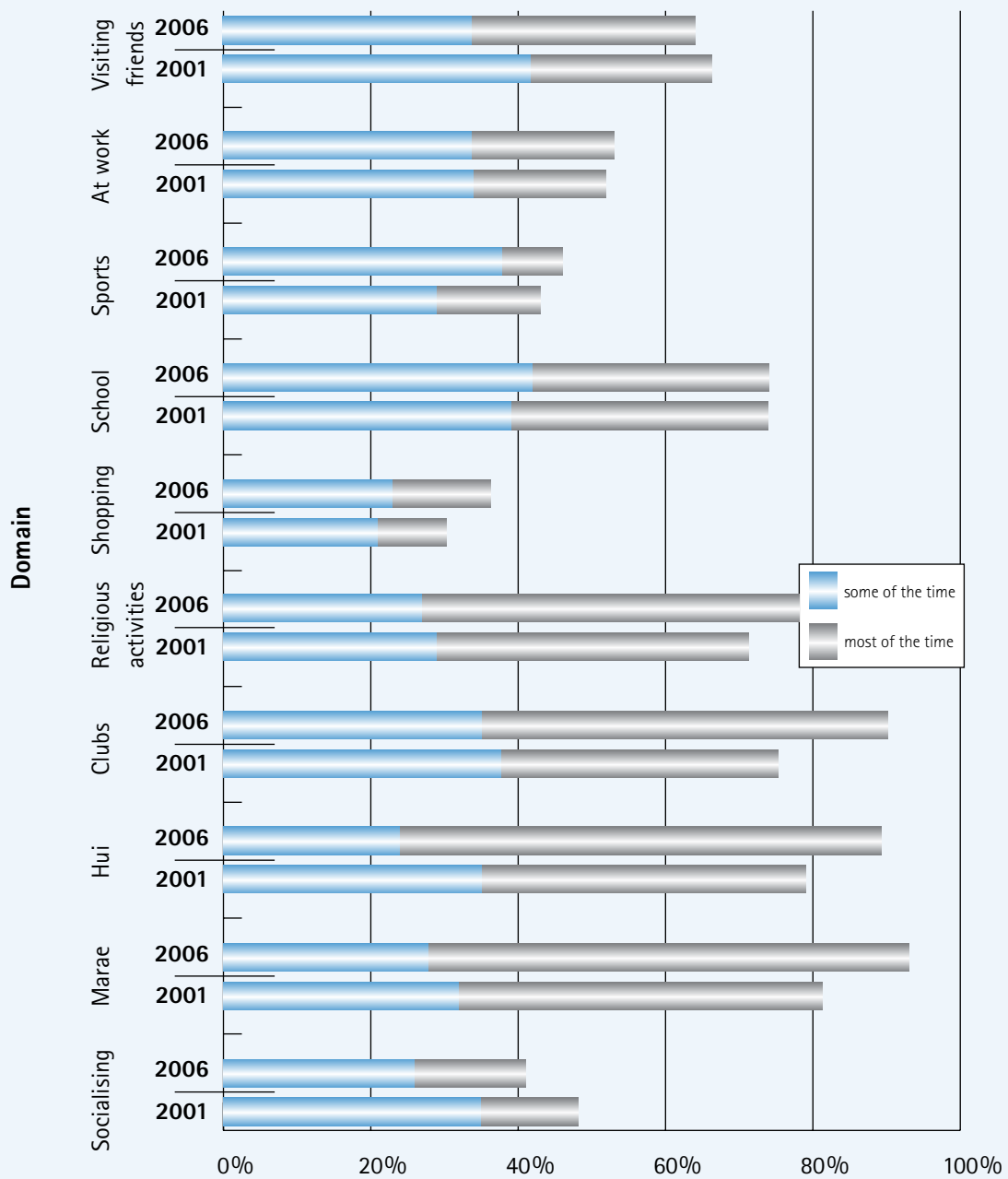
Outside of the home, there have been positive shifts with more Māori language being spoken overall in community domains within Te Taitokerau in 2006 than in 2001 (see Figure 6). As in 2001, results of the HML 2006 Survey indicated high levels of Māori language usage in domains where Māori cultural and protocols are dominant (such as at marae, or during hui, or religious activities). For example, in 2006:

- 51% of people with Māori language abilities taking part in religious activities spoke Māori half or more of the time.
- 65% of people with Māori language abilities participating in meetings or hui spoke Māori half or more of the time.
- 65% of people with Māori language abilities attending other activities at the marae spoke Māori half or more of the time.



In contrast to the activities above, in 2006 fewer people spoke Māori for half or more of the time while shopping (13%), at sports (8%), while socialising (15%), at work (19%), and while visiting relatives, friends or neighbours (30%). This information suggests that the most use of Māori language in community settings is in cultural practices and on formal occasions. More instances of Māori language use outside of these settings are needed until normalisation of the language is achieved.

FIGURE 6: MĀORI LANGUAGE USE OF MĀORI ADULTS BY COMMUNITY DOMAINS



Source: HML 2001 Survey, HML 2006 Survey.



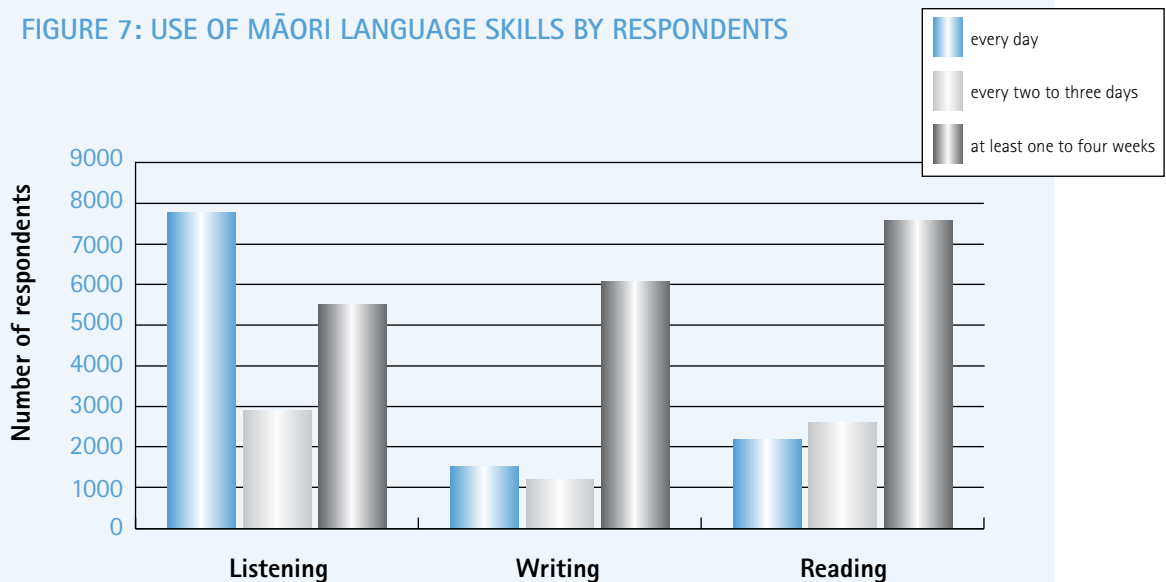
Reading, Writing, and Listening in Māori

Alongside speaking Māori, many people also draw upon their Māori language listening, writing and reading skills on a regular basis.

Of these language skills, listening is the most frequently used, with an estimated 16,200 people listening to Māori language at least once a month, and of these, 7,800 listening to Māori language every day. This possibly reflects the ease of opportunities to listen to Māori language on national television and local radio.

An estimated 12,400 people read in Māori regularly, although only 2,200 read in Māori language every day. Writing is the least used skill, with only around 8,800 people using this skill at least once a month.

FIGURE 7: USE OF MĀORI LANGUAGE SKILLS BY RESPONDENTS



Source: HML 2006 Survey.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THIS SECTION

- International research on language revitalisation suggests that for minority languages like Māori to survive, intergenerational transmission is required.
- Māori speakers are clustered together and are not spread evenly throughout the Māori population. Forty-two percent of Māori households have at least one Māori language speaker. In nearly half of these households there is only one speaker, limiting the possibility of language use in the home.
- Thirty-four percent of children or dependants live in households where there is at least one adult speaker of te reo, meaning that acquisition through intergenerational transmission is possible.



- For people with Māori language skills, use of te reo Māori in the home has increased overall since 2001, especially in communications between adults and children, and adults and their parents. While this is a positive indicator of the occurrence of intergenerational transmission, communication patterns in the home have not yet reached a level where the Māori language is considered the primary means of communication.
- The use of the Māori language in the community remains most common in cultural domains. The Māori language is not the primary means of communication in other everyday activities within the community setting.

THE PROVISION OF MĀORI LANGUAGE SERVICES

The ability of people to use and develop their Māori language skills depends not just on their desire to do so, but also on the availability of opportunities to access the Māori language. This section of the report looks at provision of the Māori language in Te Taitokerau, and opportunities to learn the language.

MEDIA SOURCES OF MĀORI LANGUAGE

Māori-Medium Radio and Television

The HML 2006 Survey gathered information on Māori-medium radio and television. The survey findings show that access to Māori radio in Te Taitokerau is high, with around 83% of Māori adults in the region having access to a Māori radio station. With the establishment of the Māori Television Service in 2004 and free digitally-based television in 2006, all New Zealand households (with the right receivers) can receive Māori language television. Data from the HML 2006 survey found these services are well used, with an estimated 78% of Māori (with access) listening to Māori radio, and 66% of Māori viewing Māori television programming.

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN THE MĀORI LANGUAGE

Opportunities for Adults

Of the adult Māori population in Te Taitokerau, the HML 2006 Survey found 18% (5,000 people) were learning the Māori language in some form. This is an increase of 6 percentage points since 2001. People were undertaking a wide mix of programmes, from very short programmes of a few hours, to full-time programmes lasting over 12 months. Very few providers offer programmes based on te reo o Te Taitokerau despite the increased desire for local dialectal knowledge.

It is difficult to estimate the number and location of adult opportunities to learn the Māori language because of the variety in provision available. That is, Māori language learning is provided by a mix of formal and informal learning institutions and people. Formal locally-based providers include NorthTec, Te Wānanga o Raukawa (through their Marae-based programme), Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, Te Wānanga o Awanuiārangi and Private Training Establishments.

In addition to these nationally recognised providers, there will also be a number of other organisations and individuals providing Māori language learning opportunities to adults in Te Taitokerau – for example Te Ātaarangi, and marae-based activities funded through the 'Mā Te Reo' fund administered by Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori.

Opportunities for Children

Outside of the whānau, children can learn the Māori language through immersion or bilingual education in early childhood education and through schooling.



In Te Taitokerau there are 58 Māori language immersion early childhood services (mainly kōhanga reo) caring for and educating approximately 900 children (aged from zero to five).¹⁵ There are three less Māori language immersion early childhood services in 2006 than there were in 2001, but 100 more children participating in this type of education.

There are 52 schools (down from 51 schools in 2001) in Te Taitokerau that provide opportunities for students to undertake some of their education through the Māori language. Schools with students learning through the Māori language range from full immersion kura kaupapa Māori where all teachers and children use the Māori language (8 schools), to bilingual classes in mainstream schools, where a minority of students are taught in Māori (44 schools).¹⁶

Schools in Te Taitokerau provide for 3,200 Māori students learning through the Māori language, which is 23% of Māori students in Te Taitokerau. In 2001, 2827 students were learning through the Māori language which was 21% of all Māori students.

Most school students learning in Māori do so for a minority of their time in school. Ministry of Education data shows only 9% of all Māori students (1,200 students) learn in Māori language for over 80% of the time during the regular school year. A further 6% (800 students) learn in the Māori language for 51-80% of their time at school during a regular school year. These 2006 figures are slightly higher than 2001 figures.

Students who learn through the Māori language are also unlikely to do so for every year of their schooling. Learning in the Māori language is more popular in the younger years of schooling. Of those learning Māori, 86% were enrolled in the school year levels 1 – 8 (approximate age ranges of 5 to 12 years). Anecdotal evidence suggests that a shift to English-medium education is due to increased opportunities at secondary level schooling in subject areas and sports, a lack of quality and accessible Māori-medium education pathways in some communities, and is also dependent on the ability of parents to support the level of Māori language required of secondary school-level schooling.

In 'Te Whakatupuranga i Te Reo Māori', parental and whānau attitudes are cited as a major reason for the shift away from Māori language education following kōhanga reo or primary school. The document states that there is a view that English language acquisition and quality of education will suffer if children remain in Māori language education, a result of a lack of understanding of the value and benefits of immersion or bilingual education.

The shift to English-medium education means that while the Māori language is now used for part of formal schooling, it is not used exclusively by whānau and learners – a significant number of Māori language learners will necessarily need to learn through English as well, meaning they will need to be bilingual to succeed in schooling.



KEY FINDINGS FROM THIS SECTION

- The ability of people to develop their Māori language skills depends in part on opportunities to access te reo. The HML 2006 Survey gathered information on Māori radio and television, which shows that access rates and listening rates are high. Nearly all Māori adults have access to Māori radio and television.
- Eighteen percent of Māori adults are learning te reo to some degree. This is a high percentage, and reflects the positive disposition Māori have towards the language.
- There are around 1,300 Māori children attending te reo based early childhood services.
- Schools in the region provide for around 3,200 Māori children learning in te reo to some degree. This is 23% of the Māori student population in the region.

Whānau Language Development Pilot

Since 2005, Te Ātaarangi has piloted a whānau language development programme called He Kāinga Kōrerorero nationwide. This programme provides mentoring services to whānau to promote and strengthen Māori language. Mentors work with families on a one to one basis as well as through collaborative activities such as sports days. The programme is well established in Kaitia and involves up to ten whānau who have at least one adult te reo speaker and the time and energy to commit to the one year programme. Run by a PouĀrahi (mentor) the programme is made up of whānau household visits and cluster activities. Some of the cluster activities in this region have included participation in local Waitangi Day celebrations and a whānau day at a local park. The PouĀrahi has developed and maintained links with local kōhanga reo, kura kaupapa Māori, Te Rūnanga o Te Rārawa, Taitokerau REAP and a group of kuia and kaumatua. The PouĀrahi facilitates whānau to actualise their desire to develop their Māori language skills by providing local knowledge of learning options and assisting whānau with ways to use te reo Māori within their whānau. As a consequence of involvement in the programme some whānau have joined community based language learning classes and are also participating more in local community events that focus on whānaungatanga and language development. The goal of raising critical awareness of the Māori language and increasing proficiency and use of te reo amongst whānau has been met in Kaitia.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this report is to assess the health of the Māori language in Te Taitokerau in 2006. A variety of research has been drawn upon to provide a composite picture of the Māori language in the region; including Census data, HML survey data, education statistics, observations from national research, and information from language planners and community representatives working in Te Taitokerau. This section of the report summarises the key findings.

MĀORI LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE AND PROFICIENCY

- The two measurements (Census and HML 2006 Survey) provide a Māori language rate for Māori adults that ranges from 16% through to 32%, with the lower end perhaps a more accurate indicator of strong proficiency.
- There are significant differences in the proportion of Māori language speakers across age groups. For those people aged up to fifty-five, the Māori speaking rate is 25%, whereas for those people aged fifty-five or over, the rate is 51%. Yet the population of Māori speakers aged over fifty-five is small compared to the population in younger age bands. Older speakers are also more proficient in the Māori language than young adult speakers.
- Since 2001 there have been marginal shifts in Māori language proficiencies within the Māori population in the region. There are more people in this region who are able to understand and read in te reo than speak or write. This means that there is likely a level of latent Māori language ability in the region. To increase speaking proficiency levels in this region, these passive skills will need to be ignited.
- Fifty-one percent of Māori adults are dissatisfied with their level of proficiency in the Māori language and desire to increase their language skill levels.

These findings suggest that with the inevitable passing of kaumātua who are highly proficient in their tribal dialects, it will be important to capture and archive authentic exemplars of these tribal dialects over the next five years, to create a permanent record for future generations. This issue is on the agenda of those involved in language revitalisation in the Far North, particularly in terms of fulfilling cultural obligations associated with tīkanga of the marae. Undertaking the key actions set out in the language strategy that focus on the marae will be an integral part in addressing this issue.

There are generally positive attitudes towards the Māori language among the people of Te Taitokerau together with relatively high levels of passive Māori language skills (for example, nearly 50% of people can understand Māori 'fairly well' or better). This indicates a latent pool of Māori language ability that could be unlocked.

The challenge for language planners is twofold; it is necessary to raise the critical awareness among whānau about their role in Māori language revitalisation, and strategies they can use to support this; and it is necessary to create opportunities for whānau to practice and use their Māori language skills in 'safe' situations. Evidence suggests that the Kāinga Kōrerorero programme is yielding positive results amongst Taitokerau whānau in this regard.



MĀORI LANGUAGE USE

- International research on language revitalisation suggests that for minority languages like Māori to survive, intergenerational transmission is required.
- Māori speakers are clustered together and are not spread evenly throughout the Māori population. Forty-two percent of Māori households have at least one Māori language speaker. In nearly half of these households there is only one speaker, limiting the possibility of language use in the home.
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- For people with Māori language skills, use of te reo Māori in the home has increased overall since 2001, especially in communications between adults and children, and adults and their parents. While this is a positive indicator of the occurrence of intergenerational transmission, communication patterns in the home have not yet reached a level where the Māori language is considered the primary means of communication.
- The use of the Māori language in the community remains most common in cultural domains. The Māori language is not the primary means of communication in other everyday activities within the community setting.

These findings suggest that ongoing work is required to further stimulate intergenerational transmission among whānau, and community domains where Māori people set the language norms. Given the relatively low starting levels, it will be important to a) promote an incremental approach that values and supports the contributions of all whānau, no matter how small or large; and b) target some key domains and relationships to develop a critical mass of Māori language use. The language strategy provides suggestions on how to increase use of te reo Māori in the Far North that can be used by those involved in language revitalisation.

PROVISION OF MĀORI LANGUAGE SERVICES

- The ability of people to develop their Māori language skills depends in part on opportunities to access te reo. The HML 2006 Survey gathered information on Māori radio and television, which shows that access rates and listening rates are high. Nearly all Māori adults have access to Māori radio and television.
- Eighteen percent of Māori adults are learning te reo to some degree. This is a high percentage, and reflects the positive disposition Māori have towards the language.
- There are around 1,300 Māori children attending te reo based early childhood services.
- Schools in the region provide for around 3,200 Māori children learning in te reo to some degree. This is 23% of the Māori student population in the region.

There is a high level of take-up of Māori language services among the people of Te Taitokerau. Over the next five years, it will be important to ensure that these services are targeted towards, and tailored for, the interests and circumstances of local iwi. There are particular opportunities to promote the use of tribal dialects through these services: this will require service providers to engage and support tribal authorities. The language strategy has a clear education focus that suggests the key actions needed for working with early childhood and schools, and for working with teachers and tutors of te reo Māori.



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ENDNOTES

1. Further information about these information sources is available in The Health of the Māori Language in 2006, www.tpk.govt.nz
2. Taken from a paper written by Patu Hohepa for Te Puni Kōkiri in 2007 on Māori language aspirations and needs of communities and marae in Te Taitokerau.
3. Ibid.
4. Census respondents were asked, "In which language(s) could you have a conversation about a lot of everyday things:
 - English;
 - Māori;
 - Samoan;
 - NZ Sign Language;
 - Other languages.

All Census language data for Māori speakers is derived from this core question. It is also important to note that the data used for this report refers to those people resident in Te Taitokerau on Census night.

5. For more information about the questions and methodology of the survey refer to the reports published in 2002 and 2008 at www.tpk.govt.nz.
6. Overall proficiency is an aggregate of proficiency levels for speaking, reading, writing and listening in Māori.
7. Component percentages do not add up to 100% because of rounding.
8. Ibid.
9. Refer to Te Puni Kōkiri 2006.
10. For example refer to Fishman, J. 1999. *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.
11. Includes sole-parent households.
12. Note a very small number of persons less than 18 are recorded in this group.
13. Component percentages do not add up to 100% because of rounding.
14. For this part of the report children or dependants are those younger than 18 living in a household with adults.
15. There may also be a small number of te reo based early childhood centres in the general stream of providers. Enrolments in early childhood services are not exclusive or full-time, so the 1000 enrolments may actually comprise a smaller group of children and/or a group of children who spend a relatively limited amount of time in kōhanga.
16. The Ministry of Education classifies students according to the amount of te reo immersion education they receive. The categories are:
 - Level 1: 81%-100% in te reo;
 - Level 2: 51% - 80% in te reo;
 - Level 3: 31% - 50% in te reo;
 - Level 4(a): up to 30% in te reo;
 - Level 4(b): at least 3hrs in te reo;
 - Level 5: Less than 3 hours;
 - Level 6: Taha Māori.

In the classifications in this report, students participating in te reo levels 4a and above are included as students learning Māori.





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