

Federated States of Micronesia

Language Policy



FSM Division of Education
Attn: FSM Language Policy
P.O. Box PS 87
Palikir Station
Pohnpei, FM 96941

Forward

The Federated States of Micronesia Language Policy has grown out of deep concern over the impact on language and culture caused by changes in our economy and society and over the need to preserve and expand those languages and cultures. It has also grown out of the concern over our children having the communications and thinking skills needed to compete in the broader regional and world economy.

The development of the FSM Language Policy has been a National effort. Information has been collected from all levels of Micronesian society. Extensive research has also been conducted on language acquisition and the impact of language loss or shift on culture and values.

The FSM Language Policy addresses issues related to local Micronesian language, English and other languages of international importance. High competence in at least one Micronesian language and English is the ultimate goal of this policy. To promote unity and assist in development of a National Identity, the policy also recommends that children should have an opportunity to learn a Micronesian language other than their first language.

Education's theme during the 1st FSM National Economic Summit was "Education - Underpinning Economic Growth". The policy continues on that theme and takes an active look at how language and culture underpins education and the role of language in economic and social development.

A number of individuals and groups need to be recognized for the development of this policy. Principal writer and researcher was Jimmy Hicks of the FSM National Department of Education Staff. Tony Tawerilmang with the assistance of Callistus Legdesog developed the conceptual paper which was designed to generate discussion on issues. Jimmy Hicks, Weldis Welley and Oliver Joseph of the FSM NDOE visited each State to both gather information for the Language Policy Development and returned to the States to report back and gather feedback on the Language Policy in its draft form. Advice and assistance has always been available from Dr. Mary Spencer, Director of the Micronesian Language Institute (MLI) and currently Dean of the UOG College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Marilyn Salas of the Micronesian Multicultural Education Research Center (MERC), Dean James L. Craig of the UOG College of Education and Dr. Rita Inos of the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL). Special acknowledgment needs to be made of the participants in the FSM Language Policy Development Workshop held in January 1997 in Palikir, Pohnpei. Without the discussions, decisions, and setting of direction made during that workshop, this Language Policy could not have been developed. For more information contact:

FSM Division of Education
Attn: FSM Language Policy
P.O. Box PS 87
Palikir Station
Pohnpei, FM 96941

Phone: 691.320.2609; Fax: 691.320.5500; and/or email: jhicks@mail.fm

Funding for the development of the FSM Language Policy were in part provided by U.S. Federal Grant funds under the Bilingual Education and Goals 2000 Programs.

FSM Language Policy

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	1
INTRODUCTION	2
TABLE - FSM LANGUAGE POLICY - COMPONENTS	3
ORIENTATION OF LANGUAGE POLICY	4
LANGUAGE POLICY DEVELOPMENT	4
MAJOR FINDINGS	5
<i>Local Languages</i>	5
<i>English</i>	6
<i>Other International Languages</i>	7
<i>Language Acquisition</i>	7
STRATEGIES FOR THE FSM LANGUAGE POLICY	7
LEGISLATION.....	8
IMPLEMENTATION PLANS	8
COMPONENTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	8
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FSM LANGUAGE POLICY	8
NATIONAL LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL INSTITUTE.....	10
STANDARDS, ASSESSMENT, CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	11
MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT	13
<i>Principles of Materials Development</i>	14
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.....	16
<i>Table - Technical Assistance and Training Needs to Support Language Policy</i>	16
PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM	18
WORKPLACE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT.....	19
RESEARCH, EVALUATION AND REPORTING	20
TECHNOLOGY	21
BENCHMARKS	22
IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS	23
STATE LANGUAGE POLICY COMPONENT	23
CONCLUSION	24

Federated States of Micronesia Language Policy

The language policy of the Federated States of Micronesia is to enhance the economic growth and social development of the Nation through recognition of language as the carrier of the values and cultures that make us unique as a people and as the medium through which we communicate across the FSM and with the world.

Abstract

The FSM Language Policy is to assist in developing our multi-lingual society to be highly competent in our local languages and in English and other international languages. It is a joint effort between the National and State governments with important components assigned to both areas. The goal is to sustain, reinforce, and expand our local languages and to provide the foundation skills for acquisition of English and other international languages. The FSM Language Policy recognizes that the traditions, values and customs that make us unique as a people are conveyed through our local languages. The FSM Language Policy also recognizes that English and other international languages are the medium that assist in uniting the Nation and are our means of contact with the outside world. However, there are two factors which we must be aware of: (1) trends show a decrease in utilizing local vocabulary and using local languages to convey new thoughts and ideas and (2) English competency in the FSM is below international norms and should be improved. We lack adequately trained staff and appropriate materials for instruction and general language development in local languages. English is being taught as a first language when it is actually used as a second language, foreign language, or international language. Also, English materials in current use do not emphasize the FSM productive sectors (agriculture, marine & tourism) nor do they portray our traditions, values and customs.

*The FSM Language Policy is designed to provide a framework at the National level and support the States with linguistics issues and in developing curriculum and instructional materials. Key components: **National** - develop general principles for language use across the Nation; coordinate development of standards for local languages and revision of English standards; promote collaboration and cooperation in improving language skills and competence; establishment of a National Language and Cultural Institute to provide technical assistance in (1) linguistics, (2) frameworks for materials development and staff development, (3) provide a research base for improving languages skills; and (4) develop standards for local languages, English and other international languages; **State** - (1) set up of State Language Commissions; (2) curriculum and materials development (not only by education but the broader community and governmental structure), and (3) providing a trained staff knowledgeable in language basics and current theories of language acquisition.*

Increased levels of language ability can provide the foundation for implementing the policy directives of the National and State Economic Summits for economic growth and social development.

FSM Language Policy

Introduction

The Federated States of Micronesia's Language Policy is to provide policy guidance and direction needed to promote the development and expansion of our local languages and cultures and to improve the acquisition of English and other international languages. The Language Policy has both National and State Components (see table on next page). The national component is directed at providing the framework of standards and assessment, technical assistance, research, and processes for materials development in local languages and English. These issues cross state boundaries. The State components will set the curriculum and deliver instruction to students and training of teachers. Additional State activities will be to standardize spelling systems, develop and/or revise reference grammars and dictionaries and develop instructional grammars and dictionaries.

The 1996 FSM Economic Summit (and following State Economic Summits) has set a vision for the economic growth and social development of the Nation. That vision sees economic growth that promotes (and does not hinder) social development. To this end, the FSM Educational System has developed a strategic plan that sets forth its role in implementation of the policy directives of the FSM Economic Summits. One portion of the educational strategic plan is the establishment of a FSM Language Policy. The Mission, Priorities and Guiding Principles of the plan that affect language policy are attached in the appendix. Of vital importance for language policy is implementation of the first two priorities:

I. Language Development: (a) Implement comprehensive language and culture programs to promote the acquisition of primary language skills in local languages and the understanding and appreciation of the values and customs that make us unique as a people. (b) Develop literacy in English and other international languages using the cognitive skills developed in first languages.

II. Skills and Competencies: Provide students with a sound basic education that will:

- by the end of the eighth grade provide students with: basic skills [*reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, speaking and listening*]; thinking skills [*thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn, and reasoning*]; and personal qualities [*individual and group responsibilities, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity*].
- by the end of the twelfth grade provide students with substantial progress in acquiring increased competencies to productively use: resources [*allocating time, money, materials, space, and staff*]; interpersonal skills [*working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading negotiating, and working well with other people from culturally diverse backgrounds*]; information [*acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, and using computers to process information*]; systems [*understanding social, organization, and technological systems, monitoring and correcting performance, and design or improving systems*]; technology [*selecting equipment and tools applying technology to specific tasks and maintaining and troubleshooting technologies*].

FSM Language Policy

Table - FSM Language Policy - Components		
National Component	Common Needs Across States	Possible State Components
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guiding principles/recommendations for improving language use in the FSM in first languages and English • Designate official language(s) • Develop programs for technical assistance in linguistics (reference grammars and dictionaries and development of school grammars and dictionaries), process design for materials development, and research and development • Develop standards and assessment for first language acquisition and acquisition of English and other international languages which are second or foreign languages in the FSM • Determine need for FSM languages requirement from COM-FSM • Seek funding (internal and external) for program implementation • Assist with public information campaign for improving language competence in the FSM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance needs in development/revision of reference grammars and dictionaries, innovative process for materials development, and research and development • Need for local language materials for instruction in students first language • Need for English materials which emphasize the local values, culture and tradition and promote productive sectors and develop role models for students • Need for sharing of instructional and support materials in local languages across the FSM • Need for sharing of instructional and support materials in English which promote the FSM productive sectors • Need for public education on trends and patterns in language usage, how language(s) is best acquired in both first and second languages and languages role in economic growth and social development • Need to seek funding (internal and external) for program implementation • Develop and deliver staff training programs in English as a second or foreign language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guiding principles - recommendations for improving language use in the State • Designate official State language(s) • Set up State Language Commission(s) • Determine official spelling systems • Develop curriculum and instructional materials for local language(s) and English • Develop local language high school graduation requirements • Develop local language requirements for entrance into high school • Determine patterns and trends in language usage in the State - research & development • Develop and deliver staff training programs in local language(s) • Develop and deliver staff training programs in English as a second or foreign language • Develop and deliver public information campaigns in the State on language policy, research in language acquisition, need for standards in spelling and grammar, etc.

FSM Language Policy

The education system feels that its primary role lies in developing basic skills, thinking skills and personal qualities of our future workforce. These skills and personal qualities need to reflect local values, traditions and culture and promote a sustainable economy and social structure. This development must be based upon the foundation of our language, values, attitudes and cultures that make us unique as a people.

An education MegaConference met in November 1996. It brought together individuals from all segments of the education, legislative, and business communities to discuss how education must respond to the National and State Economic Summits. One of the major findings was that language and culture are important factors in the economic growth of the Nation and also vitally important to solving the social problems facing the Nation. It was prioritized that the development of a National Language Policy in 1996 would lay the framework for the development of more detailed State Language Policies in 1997. The MegaConference strongly supported the belief that we must develop a sustainable economy in a manner which is consistent with our ever evolving cultures and values.

Orientation of Language Policy

Different approaches can be taken in language policy development. Language can be seen as a right, a problem, or as a resource. The FSM has chosen to view the language issue as a major resource in the economic growth and social development of the Nation. A major question both the MegaConference and FSM Strategic Plan wishes to have addressed is: **How can language and culture issues be a driving force in improving the quality of life of our citizens both from financial and social standpoints?**

Language improvement is needed for all students. Special attention needs to be given to ensure that appropriate instruction and materials are available in first language for disabled children and other groups needing specialized assistance.

Language Policy Development

A basic principle in the development of our FSM Language Policy is that the expertise needed for the development of the policy is present in the FSM. What is needed is to develop the process that will harness that expertise and direct the implementation efforts.

Mr. Tony Tawerilmang of Yap State, due to his participation in the PALI Project, academic study, and extension work in language issues with the BEAM Project at the University of Guam was contracted to develop a concept paper on the issues composing development of the FSM National Language Policy. The concept paper (see appendix) was designed not to answer questions, but to raise the issues that needed to be discussed and agreed upon.

FSM Language Policy

Site visits were made to all FSM States to meet with key individuals which included Governors, Lt. Governors, Chief Justices, Members of the State Legislatures, Education Staff, Community Leaders, and others in each of the four States. The site visits were in preparation for gathering together individuals from across the FSM to develop a FSM National Language Policy. This gathering, hosted by the FSM National Department of Education, was held the week of January 20 - 24, 1997 at the National campus of the College of Micronesia - FSM in Palikir, Pohnpei. A list of participants in the workshop is included in the appendix.

Following is the FSM National Language Policy:

Major Findings

Local Languages

Local language use in the FSM is still strong. However, there are a number of disturbing trends that if not changed may seriously affect our languages and cultures. A few examples:

- A serious loss of vocabulary is occurring. Many of our youth are unable to name common plants and animals,
- A large number of loan words are heard in the language. Often two or more English words will be heard in a single sentence. English is used for new concepts, but is also being used for common words such as open and close,
- Counting systems are no longer used or understood. For example, Pohnpei has approximately 26 different counting systems. Today it is common to hear either a single system or the English numbering system being used,
- Less use is being made of honorific terms and words which show the relationships among speakers,
- A growing number of parents are using English only in their homes to promote language acquisition in English,
- Use of high languages is in decline. One chief on obtaining a high position remarked that he had lost 70 to 80% of his friends because they could not communicate with him in the proper language,
- To explain new concepts many individuals resort to English. The reason seems to be that the concepts are difficult to express in our local languages, and
- Our patterns of first language acquisition have changed in much of our Nation. No longer do our youth learn language by listening to their elders conveying the history, legends, and myths of our islands. It should also be remembered that these legends, myths and fables

FSM Language Policy

conveyed much of our traditional values and cultures so youth were learning far more than just language.

These examples, of which many others could be set forth, indicate a trend which has been seen in other island Nations. Hawaii and Guam are examples of where substantial elements of their language and culture have been lost - possibility never to be regained. A point needs to be made - we have few objective measures of the level of language usage compared to our fathers and mothers and grandparents against which to judge language growth or decline.

While some of our languages have reference grammars and dictionaries, we do not have instructional dictionaries or grammars appropriate for various age groups. Lack of locally developed materials is also a major problem. There is not an adequate body of materials to make the transition from purely a oral language to the oral/written languages required for our languages to grow. We have also found that our teachers do not have an adequate understanding of their own languages grammar and structure to teach them properly.

An additional finding was that while most state curriculum call for local language instruction at the early grades with a transition to English at later grades, these curriculum/instructional requirements are not being met. Local languages have not been the object of instruction, but simply used as a medium of instruction. Consequently, cognitive skills are not being developed in the first languages of our children. Much of this problem can be traced to lack of trained staff and lack of dictionaries, grammars and reading materials in local languages.

English

There are a number of findings on English usage. One, English is the primary means of communication across our islands and with the external world. However, English is the first language of only 2% of the FSM population. However, English is not used the same by different groups in the FSM. Three primary uses can be seen for English. One, English serves as an international language for the communication by our businessmen, leaders and students with the external world. Second, English serves as a second language as we communicate among ourselves across our diverse islands and cultures. Third, English is used as a foreign language in many of our remote schools and islands - primarily as the medium of instruction in the school system.

A second major finding is related to the level of competence in English. Even through the largest single segment of our instructional time is devoted to English instruction at all grades levels, our 7th grade students are reading at a 2nd grade level when compared against their international peer group. Our 12th graders, on the average, have a reading level five to seven years behind their international peer

FSM Language Policy

group. Our students also have performed poorly on international tests of English such as TOEFL.

In recent years, a trend has been seen in FSM schools where textbooks and methodologies in language arts are shifting towards teaching English as if it was the first language of students.

A review of available English materials shows they may not be appropriate for instructional purposes. The settings, role model portrayal, language use, and topical issues were found to be inappropriate for instruction at early grades in the FSM. The materials themselves convey a different set of values and attitudes from what we feel should be emphasized in our early education system.

The COM-FSM system is planning for implementation of a local language program including local language competence in their graduation requirements. However, at the current time, only a non credit Pohnpeian language course is being taught. The University of Guam is presently offering Pohnpeian and Chuukese courses.

Other International Languages

Japanese is the other international language being taught in the FSM. Courses are offered in Japanese at COM-FSM and some of the high schools in the FSM. Efforts need to be made to increase the number of students and the number of international languages being taught in the FSM.

Language Acquisition

Current research on language acquisition indicates the most effective means of second language acquisition is to develop cognitive skills in the first language and transfer those skills to second and third languages. Currently, this preferred method faces difficulty due to the lack of trained staff and lack of materials.

There are a number of myths about second language acquisition. The basic fact is that learning a second language is a complex activity. Learners have to devote significant time and intellectual effort if learners are to obtain the high competence in multiply languages recommended in this policy.

Strategies for the FSM Language Policy

The FSM Language Policy has two main strategies for implementation: (a) legislation at both the National and State levels and (b) implementation plans also at the National and State levels which are aligned with the FSM Education Strategic Plan.

FSM Language Policy

Legislation

To achieve maximum effectiveness and to assure accountability, key elements of Language Policy at both the National and State levels should be developed as legislation.

The legislation should be based on the belief that the National role is to help develop plans, provide technical assistance, set standards and seek additional financial and human assistance. The National legislation and plan also takes into account that instruction is delivered at the State level. Components of the legislation are: statement of purpose, findings on current use of languages, trends, and competence levels, establish English as the official language of the FSM, guiding principles for development and enhancement of local languages, establishment of a National Language and Cultural Institute, development of standards and assessment instruments, and establish reporting requirements to Congress.

State legislation might include similar contents, but would also deal with the issue of language commissions, standard spelling and representation systems, teacher training, materials development, and other issues.

Implementation Plans

Implementation plans for both National and State levels will detail action steps and benchmarks for implementation efforts for the FSM Language Policy.

Components of the Implementation Plan

Guiding Principles for FSM Language Policy

The following are general guidelines for design and implementation of the FSM Language Policy.

- a Micronesia will become a multilingual society with high competence (read, write and the ability to converse) in local languages, English, and other international languages.
- b Our languages convey our values, cultures and traditions.

FSM Language Policy

- c Our languages areas still strong [however there are trends which indicate language shift and loss], but they must expand and grow if they are to remain strong.
- 1) Students should have an opportunity to study and improve upon their local language at elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels of education in the FSM.
 - 2) All local languages need reference grammars and dictionaries.
 - 3) Student grammars and dictionaries must be developed at appropriate grade levels.
 - 4) Local languages must expand to allow new concepts and thoughts to be expressed.
 - 5) Baseline indicators must be established to measure language competence and improvement.
 - 6) Assessment instruments and evaluation processes must be established for local languages.
 - 7) Instructional materials, general reading and content specific information should be available in local languages and convey information important to economic and social development of the Nation.
- d Local language should be the foundation for developing thinking and learning skills. Acquisition of English and other languages should build upon the basic (reading, writing, arithmetic & mathematics) and thinking skills learning in the primary language of the student. Note that research shows that a solid foundation in the primary language improves academic achievement in a second language.
- e Competence in the primary State language should be an entry requirement into high school and should be incorporated into high school entrance tests. Major FSM languages should be offered for study at the College of Micronesia - Federated States of Micronesia.
- f Students should be introduced to English through materials that are relevant to Micronesia students and convey content information important to the economic and social development of the Nation. The materials might be locally developed, adapted from newspapers and magazines, South Pacific materials, government or private pamphlets and reports, or other materials that are relevant to the economic, political, and social development of the FSM.
- g Valid assessment instruments and evaluation processes for English and other international languages must be developed or adopted and the results be the basis for instructional program design, implementation and planning activities.
- h English and other international languages are used as international languages, second languages, and foreign languages in the FSM. Instructional strategies and materials should be appropriate to the language needs and usage of students.

FSM Language Policy

Note: while English is the official language of the Federated States of Micronesia it is the first language of less than 1% of FSM citizens.

- i The primary language of the community should be both the medium and object of instruction in the elementary school. If the local language is not the primary state language, the primary State language should be taught in the school as a second language. Transition into English should be based on cognitive skills developed in students primary and/or State language.
- j Instruction in second, third and other languages should be based on standards and curriculum frameworks that follow sound research on language acquisition and set a basis for assessments and reporting.
- k Language maintenance and expansion cannot be addressed only by the school system. The school system must work in partnership with the community, other government departments and sectors, and traditional systems in the maintenance and expansion of local languages and developing high competence in English and other international languages. Public education must address the issues of language acquisition and the link between language and economic growth and language, culture and traditions and social problems and development.
- l Other governmental agencies, community organizations, and businesses should be encouraged to help build a body of knowledge in print, video, & oral medium in local languages and in English appropriate for the FSM.
- m Teaching staff should be provided training in and demonstrate competence in the language being taught [local languages, English, Japanese, Chinese, etc.) and be provided with training in appropriate teaching strategies and methods for first and second language acquisition.

National Language and Cultural Institute

To promote development in growth of FSM languages, it has been agreed that a FSM National Language and Cultural Institute (NLCI) should be established. The NLCI would be located at the Palikir campus of COM-FSM and jointly support by the FSM National Department of Education, COM-FSM and the State Departments of Education. The core funding for the NLCI would be provided by the FSM Congress with additional funding sought from sources both within and without the FSM. Costs associated with running the institute can be found in the appendix. The institute is envisioned as containing a small group of core employees. However, bringing in local and outside experts on a short-term basis could assist individual projects.

A review of past bilingual programs indicated many programs such as the PALI, PALM, BEPM, BEAM, and other projects were very successful as individual projects, but have

FSM Language Policy

had only minor impact on the FSM education system as a whole. The basic issue has been the lack of comprehensive systems where short term or directed projects are connected into overall language development and planning.

PALI developed reference grammars and dictionaries in Pohnpeian, Kosraean, Yapese, Ulithian, Woleian, Mokilese, Nukuoran, and Kapingamarangian. For Chuukese a dictionary (but the dictionary is not in the standard orthography) has been developed and a reference grammar (work has continued on the Chuukese grammar by H. Shugita and Kimeuo Kimiuo) and is expected to be completed this year. PALM developed local materials in numerous languages and trained staff in the materials development process, BETM provided an opportunity for Micronesians to gain BA degrees with an emphasis in bilingual education, BEAM provided high quality technical assistance to Micronesian States. However, once external funding for these programs expired, the programs implementation efforts also stopped. All dictionaries and grammars are in need of revision and expansion.

Early efforts of the institute would be directed towards laying out an operational plan for the next 3-5 year. One project to receive high prioritization is the development/revision of referenced grammars and dictionaries. This effort will provide a base for development of grammars and dictionaries to be used at various levels of the education system. Linguist assistance is needed. A process design and technical assistance for materials development is also vital. Development of local materials for instruction is necessary if instruction is to be delivered in local languages. Current research information on language acquisition and instructional delivery methods are critical if instruction is to be effective.

Further, a depository is also needed which will actively seek out information on languages and cultures in the FSM. The NLCI would work in coordination with the Pacific Center of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at COM-FSM to ensure materials and information for program design and implementation at the school and community levels.

Information and research are also needed on how Pacific Islanders acquire language skills. The NLCI should first concentrate on determining what is the best knowledge available concerning how Pacific Islanders acquire language skills. Second, would be the development of a research agenda in the area.

A position paper on the NLCI with estimated costs for setup and operation are included in the appendix.

Standards, Assessment, Curriculum & Instruction

The National role is to coordinate the development of standards and assessment instruments and reporting across the FSM. The States role is to develop curriculum and deliver instruction.

FSM Language Policy

Agreement has been reached that a revision of the existing FSM National Minimum Standards is necessary to develop standards for local language acquisition that emphasizes cognitive development in first language. Development and sequencing for acquisition of English would be based on transfer of these skills from the local (first) language.

The timeline for revision of current standards is as follows: (1) States are undertaking an internal review of current standards and in coordination with the NDOE doing a literature search for development/revision of the standards; (2) a National workshop was convened in June 1997 to kick off the process of standards review and development. Included in this effort are also development of culture standards and standards for the FSM productive sectors (agriculture, marine (fisheries), and tourism); (3) work at the State level during July, August and early September 1997 to obtain community input; and (4) a follow up workshop at the end of September 1997.

Language arts standards development in the FSM has been heavily influenced by U.S. mainstream language arts standards. The U.S. model largely takes a monolingual approach to standards. The FSM is a multilingual society with the specific desire to maintain and advance that multilingual nature. In the review, revision, and/or adoption of standards for the FSM, U.S. ESL and Foreign Language Standards need to be taken into account. Additionally, language standards and patterns of instruction in European and South Pacific Nations where multiply languages are in common use need to be considered as models for the FSM.

Review, development or adoption of language assessment procedures is of primary importance. Language assessment procedures which hold potential for the FSM include: structured interviews for students; reading comprehension rating scales based on retelling, character description, plot description. Fact or procedures list, cloze testing; portfolios. Teacher assessments might include: performance assessments and ratings, specific knowledge of grade and advanced vocabulary or vocabulary for specific production sectors, knowledge and skill in language instruction, teaching strategies and assessment.

In line with overall education reform in the FSM, program and project evaluation needs to be based on student learning and achievement. Assessment of the impact of language policy in the FSM needs to be firmly based on its impact in developing high competence in both local language and English. Included in the appendix are the Principles for Assessment and Evaluation from the FSM Strategic Plan for Improvement of Education. It is recommended that both National and State language assessment program and projects and inclass assessment of students be based on these principles.

To assist in assessment at both the State and Nation level, the FSM National Department of Education in cooperation with the Micronesian Language Institute at the University of Guam will provide training in assessment of reading and writing in local languages in August - September 1997. The model will be to train a cadre of State based educators who will administer the assessment by December 1997. The assessments will provide baseline data for impact of programs and projects on local language competence. The

FSM Language Policy

assessment program is recommended to be included in the FSM National Standardized Testing (NST) Program each Spring.

Developing or aligning curriculum in line with the standards will largely be a job for individual State Department's of Education. The FSM National Department of Education and National Language and Cultural Institute will provide technical assistance in this area.

For instructional purposes, a two tract system is recommended to accommodate both local language instruction and English. For example, 1st graders would move directly into reading and writing in local languages while oral English would be introduced. The skills developed for the reading and writing in local languages would form the basis for teaching English reading and writing. A gradual transition into English as the medium of instruction should be made with primary emphasis on English at the upper elementary and high school levels. However, students should have an opportunity to continue writing in their local languages and expanding their competence to express complex thoughts and ideas through the 12th grade.

It is also recommended that students have a opportunity to learn other Micronesian languages certainly at the secondary and post secondary levels in the FSM and perhaps at the elementary level.

Materials Development

Lack of materials - instructional, general reading and grammars, etc. - has severely hampered instruction in local languages. Additionally, many of our English materials are not appropriate for our island setting.

One principle we feel is valid is that the content of materials can greatly influence the attitudes and values of our youth. Materials content can be a positive or negative influence on development of values and attitudes, decisions on appropriate careers [even what should be considered a career], and conveying the worth of items and ideas. Today, our children are faced with instructional materials which do not emphasize our cultural heritage, do not promote the development of role models from our local communities, and do not emphasize the productive sectors [agriculture, marine, tourism and commerce and industry] as seen in the policy directives of the Economic Summits.

Massive materials development needs to take place in local languages and in English. Particularly at the early grades, students should be exposed to quality English materials that convey the values, attitudes and content which is important to our development.

The primary role of materials development will occur at the State level. However, there are a number of areas where coordination and assistance of the FSM NDOE and NLCI can be beneficial. One is development and training in the process of materials development. There is a need to greatly expand the concept of who is a materials developer. Processes can be used in which our teachers and students both become

FSM Language Policy

developers of materials. We can also greatly expand the use of newspaper and magazine articles. Also use can be made of pamphlets, reports and publications by government agencies and business in the FSM. This approach would also allow “real world” reading to be incorporated into instruction. An additional resource can be the local language instructional courses to be developed by COM-FSM. The student developed papers and documents can be a valuable resource. Curriculum writers in the State could devote a portion of their time editing of external documents for use in the school system. Research and coordination of research efforts can also play a major role in speeding up the process of materials development. Using technology, research efforts at the National or State level can be shared across the Nation. Additionally, the sharing of materials developed in local languages and in English among the FSM States would provide a mechanism for getting more materials available for instruction. The U.S. Peace Corps local language materials and instructional methods could also be a significant resource in language materials development.

The FSM NDOE in cooperation with the States and the NLCI will compile a listing of quality but inexpensive printing agencies both within and outside of the U.S.

Principles of Materials Development

The following are recommended as Principles for Materials Development and usage in the FSM:

- a Reference grammars and dictionaries should be available in local languages.
- b Instructional dictionaries and grammars should be available in local languages for use at appropriate grade levels. Initial emphasis is recommended to be development of dictionaries.
- c Children should have materials in their local languages for study in school.
- d Children’s introduction to English and other international languages should be through materials which are appropriate for students age, cultural setting, and in line with economic and social realities in the FSM.
- e Materials should be developed in local languages and English to:
 - 1) promote Micronesian customs, beliefs, and values,
 - 2) promote the development of community role models,
 - 3) provide content information on the productive sectors (agriculture, marine, and tourism), and,
 - 4) promote development of National and State identifies.
 - 5) give age appropriate materials for students instructional use.

FSM Language Policy

- 6) ensure provision of quality teaching instructions and training for use of materials be considered part of the materials development process.
 - 7) provide content related materials (science, social studies, mathematics) and thematic materials related to agriculture, marine & fisheries, and tourism.
- f Materials should be developed in high quality, attractive formats. Innovative use of information technology might also allow use of “Print on Demand” whereby materials could be printed at the school or classroom level as needed. This approach could also allow adaptation of materials to fit local community conditions or to use local pictures and examples in a State or Nation based text.
- g Materials can be print media, audio/visual, computer based or other means of transferring information.
- h Innovative processes should be used for materials development. Students, teachers, other government agencies, and COM-FSM Students should all be considered as potential writers and materials developers. The FSM NDOE, NLCI and State DOE’s should develop processes for rapid development of high qualities material appropriate to local conditions.
- i Exchange of locally developed materials should be the norm. This would include local language materials for use in other States and English materials developed in any State as use throughout the FSM.
- j Materials should be copyrighted by the organization developing the materials, but for acknowledgment purposes only, not for restricted use.
- k Materials developed by other government agencies, such as R&D, the private sector, religious organizations should be considered for use in the school system with editing and development of teacher materials as needed. Maximum use should be made of newspaper and magazine articles, government and business pamphlets and reports, and other “real world” reading materials as the basis of instructional materials.
- l Textbooks and other materials used in schools should be reviewed for their appropriateness not only in skills development, but also for values and content information.

The National Language and Cultural Institute in cooperation with the Pacific Collection of the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at COM-FSM Palikir Campus, will become a depository for locally developed materials and for materials used in the classrooms of the FSM. Its mandate in this area will be to actively seek out materials in local languages and English, not only from the education sectors, but from other public and private organizations as well.

FSM Language Policy

Training & Technical Assistance

The background support provided by training and technical assistance is vital to successful implementation of the FSM Language Policy.

Table - Technical Assistance and Training Needs to Support Language Policy		
Area	Technical Assistance Needed	Training Needed
Linguistics - Local Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Linguistic assistance for development of reference grammars and dictionaries and school instructional grammars and dictionaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training in linguistic issues ◆ Training in local languages grammar ◆ Training in use of dictionaries to promote standard spelling.
Linguistics - English & Other International languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Research on second language acquisition for Pacific Islanders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training on research finding
Materials development - Local Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Development and monitoring of processes for materials development ◆ Content assistance for productive sectors materials development (seek assistance from R&D, Commerce and Businesses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training of staff in materials development processes ◆ Training in content issues related to productive sectors ◆ Writing clinics that give structure and support for a wide variety of language genre (eg. poetry, biography, journalism, textbook design, anthologies, mystery, etc.)
Materials development - English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Design and development of materials for English instruction which promote the productive sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training in use of locally developed English materials ◆ Writing clinics that give structure and support for a wide variety of language genre (eg. poetry, biography, journalism, textbook design, anthologies, mystery, etc.)
Instruction - Local Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Research on appropriate methods of first language acquisition and study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training in instructional techniques for local language instruction
Instruction - English/Other International languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Research on second and foreign language acquisition of Pacific islanders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Training in ESL and EFL techniques
Public Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Design of National and State public education programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ How to effectively delivery public education programs
Standards, Assessment and Curriculum development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Assistance in development of standards for local languages and English and other international languages ◆ Assistance in development of assessment tools for local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Overview of standards and assessment techniques ◆ Training in assessment of local language competence of teachers and students ◆ Overview of curriculum for

FSM Language Policy

	languages ◆ Assistance in development of curriculum	teachers and other staff
Making things happen	◆ Research and design for implementation of programs and projects in Micronesia	◆ Training of local staff

A training of trainers is the preferred model for most training that requires outside consultants and assistance. The need is to maximize use of local staff for conducting research, providing technical assistance, delivering training and public education programs.

The need for local technical assistance providers is very high. Since the termination of the PALI and other U.S. federal education projects in bilingual education, there have been few or no Micronesians studying linguistics or other related areas. We recommend inclusion of these areas in the priority listing for the FSM graduation scholarship program. We would also recommend for the FSM to actively seek individuals who are interested in these areas. Training opportunities should be actively sought through foreign assistance programs.

The use of technology for providing technical assistance and training is vital to the FSM. Given the vast distances separating our islands, especially for our remote islands and schools, and the lack of an adequate infrastructure, we must be creative and seek cost effective means to delivery technical assistance and training to the school and classroom levels in the FSM. Technology must also play a role in making technical assistance and training available to specialist, principals, teachers and the community as programs are being implemented. The current technical assistance and training model needs to be expanded. Currently what technical assistance and training is to be provided to principals, teachers, and the community is on a top down model. Information technology can also provide the opportunity for a bottom up model where principals, teachers, and the public actively seek the type of technical assistance and training they need to provide quality instruction to students. Mechanisms to provide access to the Internet and to create a FSM Intranet should also be explored.

It should be noted that there has been concern over lack of impact of training and professional development programs in the past. There has been too little impact for the funds and effort expended. The FSM Strategic Plan for Improvement of Education addresses this issue in some detail. A set of “Principles of Professional Development” was developed as part of the Strategic Plan for Improvement of Education. In general the principles address the following areas: (1) Linked to Overall Planning and Priorities, (2) Relevant, (3) Development in Structure, (4) Local Expertise, (5) Practice Based, (6) Assessment & Evaluation, (7) Follow up and Follow Through, (8) Role of Technology and What We Can Learn from Industry, (9) Rewards and Incentives, (10) Self-Directed Improvement, (11) Equity in Accessing Needed Training. The most important point to realize is that for language and related trainings to be effective, there must be major changes in the professional development and training delivery systems. These changes are

FSM Language Policy

detailed in the Principles of Professional Development included in the appendix and also in more detail in the Strategic Plan for Improvement of Education.

Public Education Program

The FSM Strategic Education Plan is based upon moving the education system to a result based system. This movement to a results based system has a number of components. One is basing decision on assessments and evaluation. A second is designing programs based on the best understanding of current research in education. This does not mean changing systems due to “fads” within education, but on but on what research says are the best methods for developing children in the education system or for continuing education for all segments of the FSM populace.

To adequately facilitate the development of FSM Language Education Policy a number questions need to be addressed:

- What is the current level of knowledge of first languages in each of the states in the FSM? What assessment tools are available? What trends exist?
- What are the means to develop and expand first languages where an external language(s) are having major impact on local societies?
- What existing programs and models can be found for first and second language acquisition?
- What do historical studies say about the lost of first languages?
- What do historical studies say about the economic and social growth of National or languages where the language is loss or reduced?
- How do you preserve first language knowledge, values and attitudes?
- What is the role of language, culture and traditions in development of a National identity?
- What does research say about the best means of second language acquisition in relation to first languages?
- What languages are of primary importance to the FSM for economic growth?
- What is our level as a Nation in competence in English and other international languages?
- What are public beliefs about language, language acquisition, status of local languages, need for English acquisition? What are the basis of these beliefs?
- How can a National Language Policy/Educational Reform be conveyed to the public?
- How can a National Language Policy/Educational Reform be conveyed to principals and teachers?

FSM Language Policy

- How do we build commitment and support and get individuals and organizations to be accountable for the State of the Education System and levels of language competence?

These are all issues that form the need for a massive public education system. The Public Education Program for the FSM National Language Policy will seek to:

- a) Provide information on the levels of language competence of FSM students in local languages and English,
- b) Provide information on the role of language(s) in economic growth and social development,
- c) Provide research information on the how languages are learned.
- d) Provide information on different methodologies for language instruction.
- e) Provide information on current programs and trends in the school system and community.
- f) Explain the concept of a National Language Policy as a Framework for State language policies.
- g) Explain the need for high competence in local languages and English and need not to place one above the other.

It was agreed that a one time public education program using one method would not be effective. A variety of sites, information sources and presentations will be needed. The FSM National Department of Education in cooperation with the State will develop briefing documents, pamphlets, and handouts and also see the possibility of for development of radio and TV programs.

Sequencing of importance. It was agreed to build the consensus within the school system first. Starting with principals and follow up to teachers. All of the participants of the Language Policy Workshop will participate in developing the understanding and commitment needed for implementation.

The FSM NDOE will work with each State to develop a detailed schedule for the public information program.

Workplace Language Development

There exists a need for upgrading of language capability of the workforce. For example, a tour guide might need training in conversational Japanese or Chinese or hotels might need improvement of basic English ability for waitresses. In most cases the number of participants might be small and the need would be staggered across the year. The most immediate solution is development and expansion of the current English language computer assisted instruction programs at COM-FSM State campuses into workforce language programs. The programs would be primarily self-directed where participants would set the pace under supervision of campus staff. We also fully expect that Internet

FSM Language Policy

distance education language programs will improve as newer video and audio equipment become available for real time training in at least the major world languages. The concepts of just-in-time learning and training on demand should be models for development of workforce training in the FSM. The FSM NDOE and COM-FSM will work together to research alternate language delivery possibilities and seek support from business and the government for funding of the program.

Research, Evaluation and Reporting

Research: Research is to provide the basis for the design of standards, curriculum evaluation, instruction, and reporting programs. A key is that research should determine **what** to report on.

Initial assumptions (to be revised based on research findings):

- First language knowledge provides the basis of second and other language acquisition,
- Teaching methodologies should vary depending on the orientation of language orientation: international language, secondary language, or foreign language,
- Program design and assessment/evaluation should be the basis of research findings,
- A study of best process approach to standards, curriculum, instructional methods, and materials development should be conducted on local languages in the FSM.
- Acquisition of English and other international languages (Japanese, Pidgin, Chinese, Korean, etc.) is a priority of the Nation affecting economic growth and social development. Computer assistance instruction and Internet distance education courses will be explored as the most likely mechanisms for upgrading of the FSM workforce.
- The private sector aspects of languages should be developed. Services such as translation, mediation and other basic language services would be best served through private sector means.
- The Micronesian Language Institute at the University of Guam is a major source of information and technical support for all areas of language policy implementation.

It is recommended that a research agenda be developed for language issues in the FSM. This research agenda should make initial use of the Research and Development (R&D) Cadre present in all FSM States. Assistance should be sought from the Pacific Region Educational Laboratory (PREL), sponsor of the current R&D Cadre, in design, delivery and analysis of the research program. The initial research agenda should be established by September 1997.

FSM Language Policy

A yearly evaluation report on the status of languages, language policy, materials development in local languages and English, staff training and levels of student achievement in local languages and English should be prepared and submitted to the President, Congress and public during November of each year. Emphasis of the report should be on student learning and achievement and gains made in both local language and English competence. The report would be the joint responsibility of the FSM NDOE, COM-FSM and the FSM Language and Cultural Institute and submitted through the Secretary of Education.

Technology

The role of technology in the FSM education system for language acquisition improvement is to:

- a) Improve communications and transfer of information on language issues,
- b) Provide a medium for rapid development, review and completion of instructional materials, grammars and dictionaries, and other needed print or audio/visual materials,
- c) Provide computer assisted instruction to students and the workforce,
- d) Provide a research tool through the Internet, and
- e) Provide a means for improved teacher training through distance education and directed learning by individuals or small groups.

The FSM NDOE will seek to identify sources of funds to place a computer in each of the States for language policy and developmental use and provide funding assistance for Internet connections through FSM Telecommunications. These computers will be networked with the computers being provided to States under the FSM Information Management System Program.

The COM-FSM will be requested to explore the uses of technology to improve delivery of distance education to all extension campuses and be requested to look into means of providing distance learning at schools where computers and appropriate telecommunications connections are available.

State DOE's are encouraged to study the possible use of computers and other technology in schools and classrooms and institute programs and projects for their use as funds become available.

We recommend caution in the acquisition and use of technology. As stated in the FSM Strategic Plan for education, use of computers and other technology and its placement in the school system should be program driven. We would recommend against technology for technology's sake. Repair, maintenance and training for computers and other technology should be a basic design consideration for all programs and project incorporating technology into the classroom and for support services.

FSM Language Policy

Benchmarks

Date	Activity	Comments
April 1995	Initial Workshop on Human Resources Development in Micronesia Study - Phase 2 report	The HRD Study provides a review of the current state of the FSM educational system.
September 1995	Second Workshop on Human Resources Development in Micronesia Study - Phase 2 report	The HRD Study phase 2 report provided specific recommendation on principles for reform in the FSM and possible projects and programs
November 1995	FSM National Economic Summit	Set the vision of the Nation for economic growth and social devilment and provided policy directives on how to achieve that vision
1996	State Economic Summits	Endorsed the overall goals of the National Summit and provided priorities for State activities
March 1996	FSM Education MegaConference	Developed possible education responses on how to implement the policy directives of the Economic Summits
November 1996	FSM Education Strategic Plan Writing Session	Turned the discussion into a strategic plan - emphasis on language, culture and their role as a foundation for development of basic skills, thinking skills and personal qualities
January 1997	FSM Language Policy Workshop	Design and planning for development and implementation of FSM Language Policy
February - July 1997	Initial public education program at National and State levels on FSM Language Policy	
May 1997 - March 1998	Development of State Language Policies Submission of National Portion of Language Policy to Congress Set up of NLCI Implementation activities for FSM Language Policy	
June 1997	Initial workshop on revision/development of Standards for local languages and English.	
July - September 1997	Follow up work on standards in each State with emphasis on community input	
September 1997	Follow up workshop on Standards revision/development	
November 1997	First Summary Evaluation; Report to Congress and the Public	
December 1997	Complete revisions of standards for local languages and English	
1998 - 2001	Implementation at National and State	

FSM Language Policy

	Levels of FSM Language Policy	
--	-------------------------------	--

Implementation Process

Two elements form the core of the implementation process. The first element can be broken into a number of planning and implementation activities: (1) an initial public education campaign on language, language use and trends and current research, (2) passage of legislation at the National and State levels, and (3) development and implementing of National and State level sectorial plans (National Language and Cultural Institute, Standards and Assessment, Materials Development, Technical Assistance and Training, etc.). A number of these activities will overlap.

The second element is an active evaluation and reporting program. The key to results based system of education is that decisions are made based on objective data and research. For the FSM Language Policy, this may include, setting baseline data for local language competence, determination of additional measures for evaluation of English competence (the FSM Strategic Plan recommends immediate use of the FSM National Standardized Tests (NST) with research into other assessment instruments for use in the FSM). Clear goals based on student achievement in local languages and English must be established and be the primary basis for evaluation of program success.

Both the Nation and State DOE's must make periodic reports to the public. The FSM NDOE will prepare a yearly report each November based on input from the States and evaluation data. Additional reports and research findings will be presented as the need arises. The FSM Language and Cultural Institute will set up a regular publication series as part of its operational plan.

State Language Policy Component

The States are where implementation occurs. Programs, projects, public information needs, materials development, training and technical assistance needs vary from State to State. States must design legislation and implementation plans that fit local needs. Possible State level components for language policy development can include.

- Develop guiding principles - recommendations for improving language use in the State
- Designate official State language(s)
- Set up State Language Commission(s)
- Determine official spelling systems
- Develop curriculum and instructional materials for local language(s) and English
- Develop local language high school graduation requirements

FSM Language Policy

- Develop local language requirements for entrance into high school
- Determine patterns and trends in language usage in the State - research & development
- Develop and deliver staff training programs in local language(s)
- Develop and deliver staff training programs in English as a second, foreign or international language
- Develop and deliver public information campaigns in the State on language policy, research in language acquisition, need for standards in spelling and grammar, etc.
- Other activities which promote the development of local languages and cultures and improve competence in English and other international languages.

State level implementation activities will vary from State to State and may even vary within States with different languages and cultural groups. The common thread is our desire for obtaining high local language and English competence for our children and preserving, strengthening and expanding our values and cultures to accommodate the changing economic, political and social dimensions in our lives and in the lives of our children.

Conclusion

Language is our link with our children, family, community, and the world. Our local languages define our culture, beliefs and identities as Micronesians. English and other international languages are our mechanisms for communicating across of various island groups and a major vehicle for economic growth and development. The goals of our FSM Language Policy is to develop a multi-lingual society which will provide the foundation for individual growth and the mechanism for National and State economic growth and social development.

Appendix:

- a FSM Language Policy Legislation: National Component**
- b Guiding Principles for FSM Language Policy**
- c Mission, Priorities & Guiding Principles of the Educational System - FSM Strategic Plan for Improvement of Education**
 - 1) Mission, Priorities & Guiding Principles of the Educational System - FSM Strategic Plan for Improvement of Education**
 - 2) Principles of Professional Development**

FSM Language Policy

- 3) Principles for Assessment and Evaluation
- 4) Principles for Materials Development

- d **National Language Policy in the Federated States of Micronesia : A Conceptual Framework** by Tony Tawerilmang

- e **FSM National Language and Cultural Institute - Position Paper**

- f **Participants of FSM National Language Policy Workshop - January 20 - 24, 1997**

- g **Language Tables from FSM 1994 Census**