

REVIEW OF U.S. LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE TTPI

by

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The islands of Micronesia were historically the first of the island groups in the Pacific to have their territories claimed by a European country. They have also been claimed by more foreign powers than any other island group in the Pacific: Spain, Germany, Japan, and the United States. With each of these different colonial governments came a different governing language, each of which left its mark on the indigenous languages, vocabulary, idioms, and in the case of Chamorro, grammatical constructions. Each successive colonial government also brought its own language policy to the islands.

In 1968 Gregory Trifonovitch wrote a comprehensive paper on the language policies of Micronesia, which was published in 1971. In that paper, he gave an overview of language policies in Micronesia for the period up to World War II, and a detailed account of the American period up to 1968. This paper will therefore simply highlight some of the major features of the earlier period, and then focus on the events of the past decade which relate to language practices and policies.

Basic geographical and linguistic data for the area are provided by Table 1. By any standards the islands are small, as are their

TABLE 1

PRINCIPAL LANGUAGES OF MICRONESIA

<u>LANGUAGE</u>	<u>NUMBER OF SPEAKERS</u> (approximate)
Marshallese	31,000
Ponapean	20,000
Kosraean	5,500
Trukese	38,000
Yapese	5,200
Palauan	12,000
Chamorro (excluding Guam)	11,500
Saipanese Carolinian	3,500
Woleaian	650
Ulithian	720
Mokilese	600
Pingalapese	600
Ngatikese	800
Nukuoro	800
Kapingamarangi	1,000

populations. They are also remote, from each other as well as from any continent. These are probably the principal reasons why they still linger as the last remaining Trust Territory in the world today. The other eleven trust territories established under United Nations charter after World War II were terminated years ago. On the other hand, it was probably Micronesia's smallness and remoteness that saved them from being inundated by colonizers, as was the case in Hawaii, New Zealand, New Caledonia, and to a lesser extent, the other Pacific islands.

Spain established a colonial government on Guam as early as 1668, and her influence was spread, mainly, through the Roman Catholic Church, to the rest of the Marianas and to other parts of Micronesia, especially Ponape. Active colonial rule, however, did not come to most of Micronesia until 1898 when Germany "bought" Micronesia from Spain, the same year that the United States annexed Eastern Samoa, Hawaii, Guam and the Philippines.

OVERVIEW OF THE PERIOD UP TO WORLD WAR II

Prior to the German period of rule, language policies were never articulated, only practiced. Whatever schooling the mission stations offered was in Spanish, which was also the language of government, such as it was in Micronesia. The Spanish government had no schools except on Guam.

Under the German administration (1898-1914) a mission school was established on Kosrae (formerly Kusaie), where English was taught, and a communications school on Yap, where the languages used were English and German. But there was little or no effort on the part of the colonial government to develop education for the Micronesians other than those modest efforts of the Protestant missionaries from Germany and North America.

The relatively brief period of German rule, coming at a time when Germany was beset with internal problems and preoccupied with her immediate neighbors, hindered the development of a colonial system. Aside from the production of copra, little effort was made to exploit the islands. Consequently, very little was done to develop manpower or institutions, such as schools. Under the German administration, Micronesia never quite made it as a colonial enterprise. The indigenous people and their languages were pretty much left alone.

When the Japanese took control of Micronesia, by Mandate of the League of Nations in 1920, their purpose was to colonize, exploit, and fortify. To accomplish these ends, hundreds (and later thousands) of Japanese nationals moved to the islands to carry out the overseas work of private companies as well as the government. Schools were established in all major centers for the children of Japanese expatriates. Sons of favored Micronesian families were also allowed to attend at least the first three years of instruction; long enough to become functionally fluent and literate in Japanese. A Japanese carpentry school for native

boys was established in Palau, with all instruction in the colonial language.

The Japanese government actually viewed Micronesia as an extension of the motherland, and therefore extended its domestic policies eastward into the ever-expanding horizon of the rising sun. The Japanese language would follow the flag. Anyone wishing to deal with the Japanese in Micronesia had to do it in the Emperor's tongue. A surprisingly large number of Micronesians—mostly males—did just that.

Although there are no published records of the number of Micronesians who attended Japanese schools, the percentage could not have been high. Most schools were in urban centers; most Micronesians lived "in the bush." Yet, Japanese became a widely used lingua Franca throughout Micronesia, and is still used by men fifty years and older when communicating with other Micronesians from different language groups. They also communicate with an increasing number of Japanese travellers in Micronesia. A smaller number of Micronesian women, most of whom were employed as domestics by the Japanese, also learned to speak the language quite well.

Aside from one series of linguistic descriptions in the 1920s by Tanaka and Matsuoka (and a later one by Izui), the Japanese showed no recognition of Micronesian languages. For the Japanese businessman, bureaucrat, field laborer, or soldier, Micronesia was under the same flag as Honshu, and therefore, should be treated linguistically the same.

THE UNITED STATES TRUSTEESHIP

When the Americans first occupied Micronesia in 1944, they became immediately aware of the importance of language. Initial communication with Micronesians was made possible only through the services of the nisei (American-born children of immigrant Japanese parents) who were serving in the Armed Forces. A few Micronesians who had learned English while attending mission schools in Kosrae and the Marshalls became interpreters. (Some went on to choice places in the early United States Administration.)

Immediately after the surrender of Japan, the United States Navy became the first American administrative organ for Micronesia under the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement in 1947. One of the Navy's first moves was to set up an interpreter's school on Guam, to which it sent young men who had been identified one way or another as being "linguistically gifted," meaning they had shown an eagerness to "get ahead" and some ability to learn English.

Although the Navy showed no intention of using any Micronesian language as the language of the administration, they did commission a serious linguistic and anthropological survey known as CIMA (Coordinated Investigation of Micronesian Anthropology). Some of the members of this team are among the best known Pacific scholars today.

Except where noted, the following discussion of the early TTPI does not include the Northern Mariana Islands, except Rota, which alone among

the islands of the new Commonwealth, came under the administration of the TTPI during the 1950s. The islands of Saipan, Tinian, and the smaller northern islands continued under military administration, complete with strict security regulations due to the operations of the Central Intelligence Agency which used the islands as a training base for Nationalist Chinese being prepared to invade the mainland. The schools on Saipan followed the American curriculum provided by the Navy administration.

Since the United Nations Charter for the TTPI stipulated that English would be taught as a subject in the earliest grades of the Trust Territory schools, and was to be the medium of instruction as early as possible, the Navy began to implement the policy early on. However, the emphasis on English was not meant to exclude the fostering of indigenous languages. Indeed, Section 3.01 of the Supplement of the Navy's 1951 Interim Regulation states:

"Instruction in the English Language for all pupils is a prime necessity. The emphasis on English shall not discourage instruction in the several indigenous languages and dialects."

What this policy meant in theory was that English would be used in schools where an English-speaking teacher was available; the indigenous language would be used elsewhere. What it meant in practice was that the Micronesian languages were used as the medium of instruction in virtually all schools outside of the district centers where the only English-speaking teachers were found.

In 1951 the responsibility for the TTPI was transferred from the Department of Navy to the Department of Interior, where it is still administered today. During the first decade of civilian administration, using Micronesian languages as the medium of instruction, was widely supported in the revisions of the policy which were made possible through the efforts of the first civilian Director of Education, Dr. Robert E. Gibson. Dr Gibson was a rare visionary whose thinking was at least twenty years ahead of his time.

With deep understanding of the problems inherent in rapid social change, and the role that education plays in that process, Dr. Gibson formed a six-man committee (three from the University of Hawaii and three from the TTPI) consisting of two linguists, two anthropologists, and two fellow educators, whose job was to make policy recommendations to the High Commissioner. Not surprisingly, their report supported Gibson's position that early childhood education should be in the child's first language, and that English would be taught as a subject of study, but only after the following conditions were met.

- "1. a problem in communication is recognized by the people;
2. a knowledge of English is found to be a solution to that problem;
3. pupils have learned to read and write in the mother tongue;

4. teachers who can teach English are available. English shall then be taught as a foreign language" (Gibson 1961:2-3)

Although Gibson's policies were later denounced as conservative, preservationist, and "zoo-theory" oriented, they served as the basis for a sound and stable language policy throughout the decade, during which numerous primary readers were produced for all of the major languages of Micronesia. It was an admittedly conservationist policy, reflecting Dr. Gibson's belief that the earliest years of formal schooling should enable the child to relate his educational experiences to his own family, community, and natural surroundings, and that the proper medium for doing this is the language of the child and his world. In Gibson's view the use of a foreign language (in this case, English) could only serve to increase the gap between the schools and the communities they served.

The Gibson policy had implications for language use in other parts of the government as well. Public notices, print and broadcast, were mostly in Micronesian languages. All oral communication in government offices, except that conducted with the American civil servants, was in vernacular languages. Local government councils conducted their business, oral and written, in the local languages. In virtually all corners of the society, Micronesian languages were used and recognized as the languages most appropriate for the times.

PRESSURE FOR AN ENGLISH ONLY POLICY

This policy was abruptly halted in the early 1960s when it was determined by the TTPI headquarters, on orders from Washington, that schools should follow an "English only" policy:

"During the year under review a major and far-reaching policy was the adoption of a new policy establishing English as the medium of instruction at the elementary school level in contrast to the former policy which held that all instruction should be conducted in the vernacular" (Fifteenth Annual Report to the United Nations on the Administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands).

The motivation for this policy change was never publicly articulated. Certainly, the great majority of Micronesian parents wanted their children to be taught English in the sincere belief that this would enable them to climb the proverbial ladder of success. Community leaders likewise believed that English-language schools would offer the best education for Micronesia. No doubt, most of the high level American bureaucrats, both in Washington and Saipan (where the headquarters of the TTPI has been located since 1962), also believed that a complete education in English, beginning as early as possible, was the best thing they could offer. If it was good for the States, it must be good for the territories.

Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for the policy change was the evolving political picture in the Pacific during the early 1960s, when

the colonies of the region began the move towards becoming independent, sovereign states. The United Nations committee of Twenty-four on Decolonization had also been established in 1960 to ensure that self-determination would come to all corners of the Pacific, including the tiny islands of the TTPI. "Self-determination" was added to the political vocabularies of many Pacific islanders during the course of the decade.

In the eyes of the new United States' administration under John F. Kennedy, there was no time to waste. The Trust Territory arrangement could not last forever. In fact, it was already under critical scrutiny in the United Nations as well as in the rest of the Pacific. Sooner or later the Micronesians would have to choose their own political status by some form of popular vote. In the eyes of top-level administrators, an American school curriculum in the English language was the best method of preparing Micronesians for eventual self-determination.

In spite of the pressures for an English-only policy, certain amendments were made by the Department of Education in order to render the policy more in keeping with the realities of the situation. In a 1961 memorandum, Dr. Gibson (1961b), seeing the beginnings of the headlong rush towards Americanization in Micronesia, attached the following qualifications to the policy:

"English shall be taught where there are teachers who are qualified to teach it, and every effort will be made by this administration to provide the teachers.

English shall be used as the medium of instruction after it has been taught using the 'oral approach' and when both pupils and teachers are ready to profit from this method."

The pressures for an English-only curriculum did not subside. Parents wanted it. Micronesian leaders wanted it. Most of the Trust Territory administrators wanted it, and so did Washington officials who were more concerned with the political aspects of the education program than with sound educational practices or the preservation of cultures. This attitude was stated with great clarity in the report of the Solomon Committee, a secret report commissioned by President Kennedy in his search for advice on how to deal with the far-flung, poorly understood islands of the TTPI.

The Solomon Report, which was concealed from the public for nearly a decade, got straight to the point. Not only should English be the sole medium of instruction, the schools should also teach "patriotic songs and rituals" of the United States. Such efforts were admittedly designed to ensure a vote favorable to the United States when the time came for a plebiscite.

As educators in Micronesia know only too well, such a policy was easier to draft than to implement. The available manpower was simply not there. The great majority of the teachers were Micronesians whose English skills were limited. Although the three trained linguists in the Department of Education worked long and hard at providing in-service training sessions, there were simply not enough fluent English speakers

to carry out the English-only policy. As a result, the policy was followed in schools where English speakers were available, usually in the district centers. Otherwise, it was ignored.

In an effort to correct the deficiency, the Trust Territory government in 1963 (the year of Dr. Gibson's retirement), embarked on the Accelerated Teacher Program. With additional appropriated funds, the administration launched a massive, ill-conceived building program to provide genuine, first-class American housing, complete with refrigerators, freezers, and washers and dryers, for more than one hundred new American teacher families. These teachers and their families were to be posted outside the district centers, some on very remote atolls. Some teachers lasted for the full two-year contract. Many did not. The frustrations and loneliness of Pacific island life was more than most of the American educators, recruited directly from the mainland United States, could bear.

Undaunted by the failure of the Accelerated Teacher Program, the Administration in Washington next turned to the United States Peace Corps to supply its manpower needs. The idea was proposed to President Kennedy shortly before his assassination in 1963, but was ruled out on the grounds that it was perceived as a competition between two federal agencies. The idea was seized upon by President Johnson, however, as the answer to the problem of getting Micronesians to read, write, talk and think American. By the end of 1966, more than 600 Peace Corps volunteers were scattered from one end of Micronesia to the other, the great

majority of them hastily-trained teachers of English.

Under these conditions, policies again began to change. Trifonovitch (1971:1079) reports that, after lengthy consultation with Dr. George Pittman, an English language specialist from the South Pacific Commission, the Department of Education

"... reaffirmed its policies on teaching English in schools by issuing an administrative directive to all the districts stating that 'English shall become the general language for communication and instruction in the Trust Territory.'"

In another major effort to implement this policy, the Department of Education called on various experts from the burgeoning new field of Teaching English as a Second (Foreign) Language (TESL/TEFL). In addition to Dr. Pittman, "experts" were brought in from the University of Hawaii to conduct workshops, courses, and institutes in the philosophy and pedagogy of this presumably specialized field. Micronesian and contracted American teachers were sent abroad for special courses. The classrooms of Micronesia became inundated with ESL books from the South Pacific Commission, Dade County Florida (materials for Cuban immigrants), and various other parts of the United States which produced texts for TESL. The push for spoken English became stronger than ever before; the echoes of the voices of thousands of island children in villages throughout Micronesia, shouting in confused unison, "This is a pencil! That is a book!" were deafening testimony.

For the remainder of the 1960s, as Trifonovitch has documented, the emphasis continued to be on the teaching of English in the schools, a practice which effectively set the policies for language use in general. English was still the official language of the TTPI, and more and more of the snowballing army of Micronesian bureaucrats and politicians began to use it in their work and, for some, in their homes.

GROWING INTEREST IN THE VERNACULARS

Even though the Peace Corps was sent to Micronesia to promote the teaching and use of English, it was probably the Peace Corps volunteers who triggered off a major shift in attitude with respect to the indigenous languages of Micronesia. Prior to the Peace Corps, the only foreigners to learn Micronesian languages were the durable missionaries, and an occasional odd-ball educator. The sound of a "white" man speaking a "brown" language was indeed rare. When the first volunteers stepped off the plane in Micronesia babbling long rehearsed strings of Micronesian syllables (hastily and superficially acquired during a three month training stint in Hawaii or Key West Florida), the Micronesians were impressed, not so much by the fact that these young people could speak the languages, however haltingly, but that they wanted to. It was the ultimate form of flattery which no doubt caused some Micronesians to begin to see their own languages in an entirely new light.

Although policies did not change very much until the middle of the 1970s, attitudes did. The Peace Corps experience involved a sizeable number of Micronesians in basic linguistic analysis and experiences. Scores of young Micronesians became aware of the orderly grammatical complexities of their languages through trying to teach them to mono-lingual Americans. The dog-eared mimeographed Peace Corps language texts found their way into many Micronesian households where they became objects of considerable interest, amusement, and pride. Children and adults took great delight in the distortions of the staccato beats of Palauan syllables as they trailed from the drawling tongue of an American Southerner. On the other hand, Micronesians were duly impressed by the way a few of the volunteers came to sound like native speakers, a source of intense jealousy on the part of some of the veteran missionaries.

No doubt, the Peace Corps language experience marked the beginning of the changes in attitudes of Micronesians toward their own languages. Thus, when the educational programs in Micronesian languages, provided by the United States Bilingual Education Act, were made available in the later 1970s, they were all well received by the population at large, and by government leaders.

The language policies and practices of the 1970s began to reflect changes from those of the previous decade, changes which were also going on in the United States among minority groups. Ethnicity, with all of its political overtone's, began to rear its head.

In 1970, the Congress of Micronesia passed a resolution directing the

Department of Education to make use of Micronesian Languages and Cultures in the schools. This resolution set the stage for policy changes. However, the changes have not been uniform, with each new emerging political entity forming its own government and set of policies. Language policies, where they have been formulated, are often vague and inconsistent with actual practices. In all cases where policy statements have been made, they focus on the language of education, assuming the appropriate language for the media, law, and government will somehow be used.

INTRODUCTION OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Although the formal articulation of new policies was not forthcoming, practical changes were taking place. With financial support from the United States federal government, a pilot project in bilingual education was begun on tiny Rota Island in the Marianas in which the Chamorro language was the subject matter as well as the medium of instruction in the lower primary grades (K-3). By 1975 there was at least one such bilingual education program in every district of the TTPI. It was these programs that marked the beginning of the return to the old practice of using the vernacular languages of Micronesia in the government schools even prior to stated changes in policies.

At one of the last conferences of educators from the TTPI, held on Truk March 8-11, 1975, the following statement was issued:

"In the face of the rapid cultural change taking place throughout the Trust Territory, Micronesians feel that their children are losing many traditional values and skills and that they are learning and understanding less and less of their own heritage.

Realizing this, however, and recognizing that their children spend a significant number of waking hours in school, parents, Parent Teacher Associations, Parent/Community Advisory Councils, and legislators have all strongly expressed a desire for the educational system to shoulder part of the responsibility for teaching children about their cultural and linguistic heritage.

Educators, too, both from within and from outside of the Trust Territory, are in agreement that study of Micronesian languages and cultures should be included as a formal part of the school curriculum. (1975:89)"

At another Micronesian-wide meeting held in Saipan in 1978, after the breakup of the TTPI was well along its course, the statement from the Truk meeting was strongly reiterated. Bilingual education, which meant the use of vernacular languages in the primary grades, had gained acceptance at least by the various departments of education. Still, there were no changes in government policies, other than to approve of the use of Micronesian languages in the expanding, well-funded bilingual programs.

What this means in practice is that the Micronesian languages are taught and used in the lower primary grades in those schools included in the bilingual programs. The number of schools participating in the program varies from one part of Micronesia to another. The extent to which Micronesian languages are taught depends largely on the availability of text materials and the inclinations of the individual teachers. Throughout Micronesia, many teachers and educational administrators are ambivalent about teaching in the indigenous languages in the schools, while others strongly support it. The absence of firm language policies seems to encourage these divergent attitudes and practices.

LANGUAGE COMMISSIONS AND EDUCATION TASK FORCES

Although the governments of the new political entities of Micronesia have yet to issue language policy statements, they have, in some places, established a language Commission or an Education Task Force to address the question of languages.

Language Commissions were established in Palau and the Northern Marianas. The Palau Commission met three times to discuss and recommend spelling conventions, considered its work done, and disbanded. The Marianas Commission has been inactive since its creation due to vacancies in its membership and, perhaps, lack of interest.

Education Task Forces were established by the Governments of the Marshall Islands, Truk State, and the Federated States of Micronesia. Each of these has met and issued a formal statement regarding the language policy of the individual departments of education.

The Marshall Islands Task Force on Education issued a Progress report dated December 1, 1980, which makes specific mention of language in the curriculum:

"We take great pride in our Marshallese language, skills, and teachings and they should be the basis for our educational system."

The Report goes on to recommend that "instruction and training should be provided to all students in Marshallese language: oral, reading and writing" as one of the basic skills. Advanced studies, as recommended in the Report, should include the Marshallese language.

In Truk State, the Language Arts Curriculum Committee of the Department of Education met on September 16, 1980, and issued some very ambitious statements regarding the position of the Trukese language in the education system of that state. In the minutes of the meeting the following statement appears:

"Trukese Language Arts (based on the new Trukese Orthography) and English Language arts courses will be required from grades 1-12 for the issuance of a high school diploma.

The Committee further recommended that the study of Comparative Trukese Dialects be included as an elective course at the secondary school level.

The recommendations of the Truk Committee appear highly ambitious and probably unrealistic, given the fact that so few materials now exist in Trukese. Another problem is the considerable dispute over which dialect and orthography of Trukese should be the standard.

At the Third States and National Leaders Conference of the FSM, held in Ponape, February 18-21, 1980, the following resolution was passed:

"Language—Be it resolved that English shall be used as the medium of instruction in the schools of the FSM. Each state shall determine the grade level to commence instruction in English."

Implicit, though not stated, in this resolution is the notion that the indigenous Micronesian languages may also be used in the schools. However, such vagueness does not serve as a guideline for policy.

These recent statements regarding language use in education are vague, and, in some instances, too ambitious to permit systematic implementation. The statements were undoubtedly motivated by rising nationalistic feelings and the sincere desire to support, dignify, and preserve the indigenous languages of Micronesia by bringing them into the realm of education. However, they remain weak as policy statements because of their vagueness, and because they remain today as statements awaiting some form of implementation. Still, they are the only

statements of policy, and they address only the question of language in education.

THE CURRENT SITUATION: GOVERNMENT, LAW, AND THE MEDIA

Outside the area of education, language policies are being determined by day to day practices which have been, for the most part, carried over from the Trust Territory government. Some of these important areas of language use will be mentioned here.

All of the new constitutions for the emerging political entities of Micronesia, the Draft Compact of Free Association, the various "subsidiary Agreements," and all statutory laws have been and are drafted first in English, and then translated by untrained Micronesians into the languages of Micronesia by Micronesians who are, however, untrained in legal translation. In cases of disputes over meaning in any of these documents, the English versions "shall be definitive", as states in each of the documents.

The arguments presented in support of English as dominant in language policy include the following:

1. The Constitution must be reviewed by international bodies, and therefore must be written in a "world" language.

2. The Constitution and legislation are drafted with the assistance of expatriate experts who do not understand Micronesian languages.
3. Expatriate judges who preside over Micronesian courts do not understand Micronesian languages.

Throughout Micronesia efforts are being made to distinguish between traditional (custom) law and statutory law as enacted by elected legislative bodies. According to policy, disputes that have in the past been settled by traditional systems of problem resolution will continue to be so handled, with vernacular languages used as the means of communication. Disputes arising from statutory laws will be taken to either a lower court or a high court, depending on the nature of the dispute.

Lower courts may be conducted in vernacular languages, but summarized and recorded in English, in the event of an appeal to a higher court. High court sessions are conducted and recorded in English.

In principle, such an approach to a judiciary system seems plausible. However, it appears that the line dividing the types of cases between traditional and statutory is unclear. For example, disputes involving family relationships and land titles would seem to warrant traditional arbitration, following patterns established through traditional practices. Yet the largest number of cases handled by the courts, and argued (in English) by the lawyers of the Micronesian Legal Service — an agency funded by the United States, have to do with divorce and land disputes.

Clearly, disputes that are traditional in nature are now being resolved in a western court involving American lawyers and judges using the English language. Such practices are likely to continue to undermine any vestiges of Micronesian problem-resolution with regard to regulating Micronesian societies.

The statements on language policy that do exist make no mention of language of the mass media. Practices, however, are fairly uniform, except in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, where English is used in all radio and TV broadcasting, local newspapers, and government publications.

In all the other entities of Micronesia, the following general practices include:

1. Television—All television transmissions are in English. Palau, Yap, the Marshall Islands, and the Northern Marianas have broadcast television. (The Palauan language TV news program was discontinued in spite of its popularity among its Koror viewers).
2. Radio—Local radio programs (mostly music and local events) are broadcast in Micronesian languages. International news programs are broadcast in English, and partially translated into Micronesian languages. Public announcements are broadcast in Micronesian languages and in English.
3. Newspapers—At the present time, there are four newspapers published and circulated in Micronesia. They are: The Marianas Variety, The Commonwealth Examiner, The National Union (for FSM), and The Marshall Islands Journal. Of these, only one, The Marshall Islands

Journal, publishes in any language other than English, aside from occasional public notices. Guam's Pacific Daily News is also distributed sparingly in Micronesia. It recently started a daily comic strip in Chamorro, which has proved to be extremely popular.

4. Public Notices—Public notices issued by the Micronesian governments are, for the most part, printed in the indigenous languages of Micronesia. Public signs pertaining to traffic, restricted areas, and identification of public property are almost entirely in English, except those items bearing the logo of the government of the Marshall Islands.

Clearly, English is the dominant written and spoken language of the public media, with the exception of local radio broadcasting.

CONCLUSION

Current language practices in Micronesia indicate that English is the dominant linguistic force in the very critical areas of education, government, law and the media. In the absence of firm and clear language policies, the position of English will likely become even more dominant and firmly rooted.

The heavy reliance on English as the official language will no doubt further the Americanization of Micronesia at an ever-increasing pace. When education, law, commerce, and government are conducted in an alien language then one can expect alienation of the citizenry to result. The

ultimate consequence of this process is language loss and feelings of alienation, such prevail among Hawaiians, Maoris, and dozens of American Indian groups today.

Throughout Micronesia, English has been given the dominant role during the period of the Trusteeship and at present. The results, measured in terms of the number of fluent speakers, readers, and writers of English are not good. Vernacular languages receive a great deal of lip service. Everyone is supportive of the idea of preserving, respecting, and promoting the use of Micronesian languages. However, aside from those education programs supported by federal Bilingual Education Act funds, the Micronesian languages are being ignored.

Language policy goes far beyond the language of the classrooms. It affects all aspects of the lives of the people, especially those from small populations which are experiencing strenuous and rapid social changes. The absence of policy regarding the position of vernacular languages is likely to encourage the continued growth and dominance of the colonial language in Micronesia, with all of its ramifications.

NOTES

1. This paper discusses the islands of the political group known as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI,) which includes all of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Mariana Islands and excludes Guam. The term Micronesia is used in this paper interchangeably with TTPI. Even though the islands of Kiribati and Nauru are considered part of cultural and geographic Micronesia, they are not included in the discussion here.
2. The Solomon Report was first made public by a Micronesian student at the University of Hawaii who obtained it from a still confidential source.
3. The former TTPI has divided itself into four separate entities: the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas; the Republic of Palau; the Marshall Islands; and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), consisting of the former districts of Ponape, Kosrae, Yap, and Truk.

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