

7.2.4. VERNACULAR LITERACY IN THE WESTERN AND LOWER SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS PROVINCES: A CASE STUDY OF A MISSION'S INVOLVEMENT

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7.2.4.1. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

As early as 1876, Luigi d'Albertis, the flamboyant, egocentric Italian botanist, had explored right up into the headwaters of the mighty Fly River, but it was not till the turn of the century that the first government outpost in the Western Province (then called 'The Western Division') was established at Daru, on an off-shore island due south of what was known as Kiwai Island, just west of the Fly mouth. The London Missionary Society had commenced work there a little earlier. The language, Kiwai, was reduced to writing by Rev. Baxter Riley, literacy was pursued, and in the 1950s the New Testament was completed, and is currently used by the Kiwai. The London Missionary Society, now part of the group known as the United Church, also moved across into coastal areas of the Western Province, but according to information received from the Education Secretary of the United Church, Papua region, there is no specific vernacular literature currently being provided.

7.2.4.2. INITIAL PROCEDURES

As the Administration penetrated the 600 miles of the Fly River, establishing outposts and permitting missionary activity, the Unevangelised Fields Mission, now known as the Asia Pacific Christian Mission, moved in, and the story of vernacular literacy in the Western Province and Lower Southern Highlands Province has been largely the story of this Mission. As the Mission's stated policy from the outset, in addition to 'evangelisation and education of the national people', was 'the translation of the Holy Scriptures into their mother tongue' (U.F.M. n.d.:5), the analysis of the local language, and the promotion

of vernacular literacy were early priorities in each area. It was recognised that for any person, but especially for a linguistically isolated person, his language is the expression of himself, and the most effective communication is vernacular communication.

Men who by force of circumstances were continually at war and whose central interest in life was head-hunting were not the ideal subjects for a sedentary and seemingly tame pursuit like vernacular literacy. However, one by one, the areas were entered, and after the first months of settling in, the languages were studied and reduced to writing: Gogodala, along the Lower Fly River, and Aramia River (1935), and in the post-war years; Suki, 200 miles up the Fly River on the southern side (1946); Zimakani, near the junction of the Fly and Strickland Rivers and of the Lake Murray area to the north (1948); Aekyom, along the banks of the Ok Mart and extending to the Fly (1952); Yonggom in the Lower Ok Tedi area (1952). With the opening of the first Southern Highlands Administrative post at Lake Kutubu in 1949, the Mission moved in from the south (per seaplane) in 1950, and the local language, Foe, was recorded and the alphabet determined in 1951. As the neighbouring areas were opened up by the Administration, the Huli language of the Tari area to the north-west was given its alphabet (1953), and the Pole language of the Erave River to the south-east (a member of the Kewa group) in 1956. The Mission greatly benefited in that the Summer Institute of Linguistics had conducted its first summer school in Australia in 1950, and two of its students who became early associate staff members had joined the Mission as linguists, and were able to do the initial phonological and grammatical analysis of these three languages, to check the previously completed alphabets, and also to undertake the phonological analysis of the languages in all of the areas subsequently occupied, except for two where the work was being handled by other trained personnel. These various languages were the Sao (Sau) language of the Samberigi or Mt Murray area (1956); the Pa language of the trans-Strickland (1959); the Kaluli (Ologo) language of the Mt Bosavi area (1964); the Ningerum language on the Ok Tedi near the Irian Jaya border (a member of the Ok Family) (1967); the Bedamuni language of the Biami area (1969); and the Kuni language of the Lake Murray area (1970). The alphabets of the Ta:me and Dudi languages (both dialects of Tirio) on the south bank of the Lower Fly River, were checked in 1970. This completed the tally of the larger languages of the south-west area. Summer Institute of Linguistics teams analysed the phonology of the Fasu language south-west of Lake Kutubu in 1961, the Samo language north of the Biami area in 1971, and a team is currently working on the Polopa language of the area east of Samberigi.

Where various Mission groups or other agencies are at work in the one language area, failure to reach agreement on the orthography may mean considerable delay in the vernacular programme. However, in these tribes in the Western and Lower Southern Highlands Provinces, the Asia Pacific Christian Mission (A.P.C.M.) was the only group working on vernacular literacy, except for the large Huli tribe, where the Methodist Mission (now United Church), the Capuchin Order of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Seventh Day Adventist Mission were also working in the initial years of contact. In that situation the A.P.C.M. called a round-table conference in 1954, attended by representatives of all Missions, at which it submitted its alphabet and proposed orthography, and these were discussed and accepted by all groups. More recently, in 1970, in response to requests, a two-day seminar was held at the Tari Administration Centre, where lectures were given on the alphabet, orthography and basic grammatical features, for interested Mission and Administration personnel, by W.M. Rule of the A.P.C.M.

7.2.4.3. PRIMERS AND READERS - METHODS AND CONTENT

In the 1930s, along the Lower Fly, the first missionaries, L. Twyman, A. Drysdale and F. Briggs, who received supplies by coastal steamer from Port Moresby only irregularly and months apart, conducted their initial literacy classes with charts as they had neither duplicators nor any means of producing books. In the post-war years, as lines of communication improved and duplicators (and later printing-presses) became part of field equipment, both the Gogodala and the subsequently entered areas had first duplicated, and then printed, primers and readers. S. Horne and M. Teale produced Gogodala primers and readers in 1947-48, and in each of the other areas, the books were prepared within two or three years of the alphabet having been finalised. The syllable method of teaching reading was used in the first sets of primers in all the above-mentioned areas, except for Huli, where the literacy worker, E. Twyman, experimented with the sentence method, though even here some literacy teachers employed the syllable method, using the books as readers. Both these methods were replaced by a combination method when primers were revised in all areas, commencing with Gogodala and Foe in the mid-1960s, and including each language, the most recent being Aekyom (1972) and Pa and Huli (1973). At this time, pre-readers were also introduced, some on models prepared by J. Rule and V. Walton, some using the Department of Education pre-reader material. The newly-opened areas, of course, had no previous primers. N. Briggs at Bosavi put her first set of Kaluli primers and readers to use in 1971 and has found

them very successful. In the Biami area, entered in 1969, T. Hoey compiled primers in 1973, tested them in 1974, and is now using them in duplicated form. The Gogodala primers used the sentence method in stories with controlled vocabulary, plus separate complementary syllable drills, but the method followed in all the other areas has been to commence with key words of basic interest in the culture and, from these foci, (a) to build up into culturally relevant stories, and (b) to break down into syllable drill and recognition, so that new words are used and genuine reading commences as soon as possible. Manifestly the choice of words which contain both the phonemes of most frequent occurrence and also basic interest and usability in story material has been crucial. Since due to financial considerations, only one set of primers and readers has been possible in the areas, the criterion for choosing material has been that what is of interest to the adult male is also of interest to young people and to women, and for this reason, the hunting of pigs and cassowaries, the building of houses and canoes, adventurous, eventful trading trips, pig-feasts and singsings, visits by plane to large (comparatively!) centres, have featured largely in the story content, with gardening, fishing, treatment of sickness, and other relevant everyday activities also having a place. One trend in the construction of readers has been to utilise the ability of local literate men as writers. For example, in the Foe series, with four phonemes plus nasalisation and some glides still to be introduced, seven excellent hunting stories in the restricted vocabulary were written by Sesemena Kunugamena, who also wrote all the stories for the final reader with the illustrations being done by an indigenous artist, Malawa Toni.

7.2.4.4. STUDENTS

Because, in each tribal group, the Mission began its activities in the earliest days of outside contact, the potential students, who had strong motivation for such activities as hunting, gardening, fishing, trading, discussing and fighting, had no motivation except curiosity for learning to read and write. However, as the areas opened up, some of the men went out to work on the coast in towns and plantations, and as the languages were learned and the Christian message preached, some people became Christians. All the missionaries engaged in literacy work are unanimous that the two dominant motives for desiring literacy have been to maintain communication between those at work and those at home in the village, and to read God's Word for themselves in their own language. At Mt Bosavi, where a missionary couple first settled in 1969

and the first vernacular literacy class in the Kaluli language was conducted in 1971, Norma Briggs has written:

This class was successful if the flow of letters from the coast is any indication! About half of the class has gone to the coast To write an intelligent letter is the test in these parts ... no good going to the coast if you can't write home!

On the other hand, Ivy Lindsay from Suki in the Western Province, where the percentage of literates is very high, reports

Our greatest response came following a convention where there was a real movement of the Spirit of God. The people who came into spiritual blessing had the incentive. Scores of them became good readers.

Other motives have been noted in one or more areas. These are: prestige, the handling of one's own affairs or business, a stepping-stone to English or Pidgin, the acquisition of 'education and knowledge, when and where it is offering', and a 'new (i.e. added) interest in life' (both these latter from the populous energetic Huli tribe).

There are two areas, both in the Upper Fly, where the adult population has shown little interest in literacy, and the missionary in one of these (the Yonggom language group) has commented that local men returning home after graduating from Teachers' College have damaged the literacy cause by indicating that they consider the vernacular 'to be only rubbish at the best'. Fortunately such an attitude does not appear to have been noticeable, or to have had any significant effect, in the other areas, and the current official encouragement of the vernacular languages will no doubt effectively counter such attitudes.

Certainly it is true that among those of school age, the Department of Education, staffed by Australians and committed to English as the single medium of instruction in the schools, discouraged the teaching of the vernacular in the school syllabus from the early 1950s to 1972. During that time in most of the Mission areas, the literacy workers, convinced of the value of becoming literate first in the mother tongue, conducted vernacular literacy classes for all schoolchildren either for a year before they entered school (at 6-7 years), or concurrently with the school programme, by adding an extra 15 minutes to some part of the school day, so that while the children were acquiring oral English, they were learning to read and write their vernacular. Both methods were successful, and as a result, many hundreds of ex-schoolchildren including those who left school before or at Standard 6, who were not selected for High School, and who have dropped English, are fluent readers and writers of their own language. In 1972, when Mr Vincent Eri was the first Papua New Guinean Acting Director of Education, *Additions to the Primary School Syllabus* were published which required,

among other things, one hour per week to be given to native language and community activities, and since that time, vernacular literacy and creative writing in the vernacular have been pursued within the official school programme. Under the present National Coalition, the Department of Education has devoted attention to the running of pilot courses in selected schools whereby the children become literate in their own language first and subsequently in English. Those in the Mission who have been doing this in the local school for many years have found that it pays good dividends in terms of an appreciation of the mother tongue and the individual identity, the preservation of the language's oral literature by committing it to writing, and the encouragement of creative writing. There is also no doubt that progress in the metropolitan language, in this case English, is in no way hindered by the child's achieving literacy first of all in his own language.

It has been found in all the areas that the older people (40 years +, with the life expectancy at about 55) only achieve literacy when the mental alertness and motivation are really strong. Since in all the areas literacy is also being conducted among the children and young people, it follows that in the areas first entered (Gogodala in 1932, Suki in 1946) the overall literacy rate is much higher, as many of those now in the older age bracket became literate in their childhood or adolescence. The Gogodala overall estimate is 50%, Suki 60%. The areas entered in the late forties or the fifties, have overall estimates varying from 33% (Zimakani), 25% (Foe, Samberigi, Yonggom) down to 10% (Aekyom), 8% (Pole, Huli), 4% (Pa). (In the latter case, a small, scattered population in the remote trans-Strickland area illustrates the situation where lack of motivation, as well as absence of strategic teaching centres, militates against a rapid achievement of literacy.) These overall estimates, however, must not be allowed to mask the fact that in most of the areas, because of the vernacular literacy prior to, or concurrent with, the English programme, the majority of the children and young teenagers are literate in their own language. For example, in the Samberigi tribe of 2,200, 95% of 500 schoolchildren (recently graduated and current) are literate. These 475 children would in their turn represent some 70% of their age bracket. Thus total literacy (discounting the small group who cannot or will not learn) is certainly an attainable goal in these relatively small tribes within three or four decades, providing an adequate number of instructors can be provided for the expanding population. The inaccessibility of some of the population, as with the Aekyom where many live in rather difficult terrain up in the headwaters of the Fly and Mart Rivers, is in some cases a deterrent. In others, a number of different Missions with differing language

policies, as in the Huli tribe, may be a factor. Of the seven Missions at present working in the area, the Seventh Day Adventist Mission and a small group, the Sovereign Grace Baptist Mission, have aimed at introducing Pidgin, though this was not spoken by the people, as had the Roman Catholic Mission, which has in more recent years also evinced a growing interest in using the vernacular as well in promoting vernacular literacy. The remaining four Missions, the A.P.C.M., the United Church, the Christian Missions in Many Lands (C.M.M.L.), and the Wesleyan Mission, have all aimed at vernacular literacy from the outset, using the materials produced by the A.P.C.M. These had varying degrees of success, depending on continuity of staff (e.g. in the C.M.M.L. Koroba area since 1961, more than 25 European staff have come and gone), the use or non-use of syllable break-up drills which were needed to supplement the initial sentence-method primers, and the amount of training given to those conducting literacy in the outlying hamlets (often the pastors, who had had no teacher training). All these Missions are agreed that the new Huli primers and readers, prepared by Syd Gould of the A.P.C.M. in conjunction with a teacher-training programme, will ensure a much more rapid rise in the literacy rate.

7.2.4.5. INSTRUCTORS

The two most obvious trends in the field of instruction have been the indigenisation of the teaching programme, and the upgrading of the scope and content of the training course. A corollary of the second has been the improved status of the vernacular teaching role. The first full-scale training course for indigenous teacher trainees was conducted by Murray and Joan Rule at Lake Kutubu commencing in October 1965. The local language, Foe, was the medium of instruction, and the lectures were given in Principles of Teaching, Reading Method, Writing Method, Number Method, Teaching Aids and Class-room Techniques, with demonstration lessons and practice teaching a part of each day's programme. The trainees, eight in number, were all young men, some married, literate in their own language. One only had had several years of English school. After the first term of eight weeks, the trainees were sent out to their areas to commence literacy classes, and brought back in for a second term of four weeks in June 1966, and three short revision and refresher terms in November 1966, January and May 1967. Similar courses have subsequently been held in the Pole, Aekyom and Gogodala areas, and more will be held from time to time as needed. In 1973, a teacher-training course of four weeks was conducted by Jean May and Eunice Loeweke of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in the Fasu tribe, and graduates of this course are now teaching in their village centres.

A slightly different and highly interesting approach is being used by Syd Gould, the A.P.C.M. Literacy Supervisor in the Huli area. Faced with a very large tribe extending over a hundred miles of country, and very few roads, he first trained his literacy assistant, Olene Yawai, and then together they launched teacher-training courses in nine strategic centres covering the Mission areas of A.P.C.M., Christian Missions in Many Lands, Wesleyan Mission, and the United Church. To be accepted, the trainee needs to be able to read and write Huli. The course consists of three concentrated fortnightly sessions spaced a few months apart. During the intervals, the trainees practise on a small settled group what they have learned in the session. This allows the lecturers to move around the nine centres in turn. Increasingly, as he has shown he can handle it, the lecturing and demonstration have been handed over to Olene Yawai. At the end of 1973, allowing for a 10% drop-out, they estimated they had at least 100 teacher trainees practising. The first of these groups of teachers graduated in March 1974, and the remaining groups through to July, so that by the second half of 1974 some 3,000 pupils could be taught. Each of the communities has fed and lodged the lecturer, and provided the \$12.00 towards each fortnight's training course. The trainees, when they graduate, 'must pass a test on teaching principles, and also pass an inspection on actual teaching'. Since the project is Mission-sponsored, 'They must also be of good spiritual standing to the church'. Gould and Yawai ran a supervisors' training course for those who did well as teachers, and now have supervisors out in many areas. Yawai has gone on to theological training, and Dalewa Pipigi has succeeded him. In accordance with Gould's original vision, he is training three supervisors for C.M.M.L. and is planning a teachers' training course for the S.D.A. Mission for September 1977.

In all areas, the indigenous literacy teachers are paid by the hour at regulation rates, and almost all are part-time workers, teaching from four to 20 hours per week, and spending the rest of their time on their own gardens and other activities. The Mission Literacy Committee has found that over half its annual budget is being devoted to teachers' pay. It is conceded to be desirable that a class should contribute to its teacher's pay, but in so much of the Western and Southern Highlands Provinces there is little or no cash cropping, and thus very little income. The economic situation is slowly improving, but the income probably has to reach a certain level before people are willing to divert some of it from the acquisition of food and clothing and 'things', to the acquisition of skills.

7.2.4.6. CLASSES AND CAMPAIGNS

In none of the areas have campaigns of the 'crash-course' variety been held, except with small pilot groups to test out primers before printing. The regular class for so many days a week has always been the pattern. In the pre-war years, education was largely a branch of the activity of the Christian Missions, and consequently 'schools' were open to all comers. With the appointment of the first Director of Education in 1946, and the subsequent sorting out of the conditions under which a school would be 'recognised', syllabus, staff and pupils became subject to regulations, but in the earlier years, and up to the mid-1950s, missionaries in all the areas which had been entered up to that point were conducting schools for four or five mornings a week. These, which attracted a wide spread of ages, were basically vernacular literacy classes (reading and writing) with added instruction in numbers, geography and sometimes hygiene, in the Gogodala area oral English also being added. When regular schools were set up and 'school age' defined and regulated, separate classes were organised for adults. From areas where records have been kept or where one of the original missionaries is still on the field, it is clear that the growth pattern was that the missionaries themselves conducted regular literacy classes for a certain number of mornings (or afternoons) each week, organising a new intake each year. Then, from these groups, some with an aptitude for, and interest in, teaching joined in the teaching programme. Finally, as an organised training course was established, and numbers of teachers were trained, classes were able to be held simultaneously in a number of the village centres, and the missionary could turn to more advanced teaching. For example, in the Orokana area of the Foe tribe (the total population of the tribe is about 3,400), Hector Hicks over the years 1957-63 with the assistance each year of sometimes one, sometimes two colleagues, with a new intake each year, taught 690 teenage boys, young men and older men (mostly teenagers) with sometimes 70 in a class, of whom 85% became literate. In the following two years, three nationals came into the programme; the year after that the training course at Lake Kutubu was held, with these three young men being among the trainees. Currently, seven literacy classes are being held apart from the school programme.

At Samberigi (the total population of the tribe being 2,200) over the years 1958-66, Don Mosely had yearly intakes of school-age children and adults, with the class of adult men coming in three times a week, and ranging in numbers from 40 to 70. His wife also conducted literacy for girls and women. After this, the appointment of a full-time literacy supervisor enabled 100-150 adults to be taught daily in three classes,

plus vernacular literacy in the English school, and pastors to be trained to take on vernacular literacy in their village centres. Currently 15% of the population are being taught, which will bring the overall literacy rate up to 40%.

The records from the Huli area indicate that in the early years of literacy classes, the majority of learners were women, but the reason for this lies probably in the fact that the majority of the teachers were women (missionaries' wives). In the current programme, the indigenous trainees are all men.

In the Gogodala tribe (population 11,000), although the early classes were quite large, individual missionaries were limited in number and could only be in one place at one time. Since the training courses have been held within the last three years, there are currently (at the time of writing) 57 classes being conducted by 57 indigenous teachers with 800 learners, for 1½-2 hours per day three days a week. These are being supervised by two European and four indigenous supervisors. This is apart from whatever vernacular literacy is being given to those of school age in the English school programme.

In the Upper Fly area, e.g. in the Aekyom-speaking group, adults in the past were not in the main interested enough in literacy to come in to centres for classes, but the current programme includes (a) a series of 'literacy treks' whereby those in the inaccessible hill areas will be reached and (b) regular literacy classes held in 12 villages.

The budget of the Mission Literacy-Literature Committee, in addition to grants to areas for new literature, the printing or reprinting of primers, and teachers' pay, meets a proportion of the running costs of literacy classes such as teaching aids, duplicating paper, stencils, according to relative numbers being taught.

William Smalley, Translation Consultant with the American Bible Society, has suggested¹ that in developing areas, literacy should be established as a 'highly respectable adult male activity' so that it won't fail through being regarded as 'kid's stuff' or a woman's pursuit. While the adult male has certainly been in focus in most areas, it is interesting to note that in the first-entered areas, the young men of 25 years ago are the adult males of today and they haven't thrown away their interest in reading now they are adults because some of their fathers weren't interested in it as adults. Gould considers that 'trying to teach older folk is not a very economical use of manpower' when the latter is in short supply. It would seem that the answer lies in the current trend of more and better training courses for indigenous teachers so that literacy can be offered at the village level to adult groups and young people's groups as well.

While ever in these rural areas the people are subsistence farmers with a little cash cropping, the literacy class for a short period in the morning or afternoon for six to twelve months will remain the major method of achieving literacy among the adolescent and adult population. Among those of school age, the method will be four or five literacy periods a week in the school programme, plus or minus a pre-school year of morning classes in the vernacular.

7.2.4.7. MAINTAINING LITERACY

There is no doubt that a major factor in earlier years militating against acquiring 'the reading habit' was the dearth of sufficient simple and interesting material to read. Those who had to go straight from the final reader to a New Testament Gospel just did not have enough practice with easy material to build up confidence and fluency, and many of these, though they read with comprehension, have never built up reading speed, and read aloud to others very slowly. (The use of syllable method alone was also a factor in this.) The first move in the right direction was the acquisition by most of the areas in the late 1950s of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge's 'Gospel Picture Books'; eight books with pictures only, illustrating our Lord's life from birth to resurrection and ascension, and these were interleaved with a simple paraphrased version of the story depicted by the illustration. Some areas followed these with Old Testament stories, some with local stories or legends, and a number commenced local newspapers (duplicated) either regularly or as news warranted. Also in the 1960s, use was made of booklets with suitable pictures and English text for translation which were being made available by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the most widely used being *How the Jews Lived*, *The Story of Transport*, followed by *People of Papua New Guinea*, *Houses of the World*, *New Guinea's Neighbours* and several stories illustrating the value of hygiene and the prevention of sickness. With the setting up of the Mission Literacy and Literature Committee in 1969, this trend has been further encouraged, in the budget for each year at least one booklet of English script and pictures being made available in sets of 30 to each large centre. These are used with the various classes and the popularity gauged. Books that have sale value are produced in greater numbers and sold at cost, or at a price that the reader can afford to pay. Over the same period, a further encouraging trend has been the emergence of indigenous translators - Teachers' College graduates or senior High School students who are willing and able to take reasonably straightforward English texts and produce excellent translations.

The Literacy and Literature Committee has also explored other methods of providing booklets with reader appeal. Currently a consignment of the *Ladybird* book, *Stone Age Men in Britain* has been purchased, and is being distributed to the areas, and in this case the English text will be over-leaved with the vernacular, so that both text and translation will be available to those who also know English. Another current experiment is the publication of a book of actual photographs of a hunting adventure, taken by our Mission photographer, with simple English text for each area to inter-leave with the vernacular. This is still in the planning stage, but the results of a research survey on reactions to pictures carried out by John Sievert of the Lutheran Mission some years ago suggested that in unsophisticated areas, photographs rated more highly than drawings. Several writers and artists within the Mission are also being approached to provide texts and drawings suitable for production and use. With all of these, a basic number will be produced for use in the literacy and reading classes, and where sales value is assured, a greater number will be produced and sold, costs being covered wherever possible.

The local newspaper is an excellent means of keeping people reading; one such is the *Gogodala Tutuli (Conch Shell)* with a monthly distribution of 1,300 copies, indigenous contributors providing all the copy, and the *Huli Hall (Bamboo Torch)*, which has a growing distribution, and is aiming to appear monthly. Others are coming out, but less regularly, as news and editing staff permit. In the Foe Lake Kutubu area, a notice-board giving the weekly information about plane and personnel movements has been popular. Summaries of convention messages and Church Council discussions are duplicated and well received. Reading rooms, mobile or rotating libraries, and reading groups are some of the means being used or about to be used for the maintenance of active literacy.

The training of indigenes as creative writers is also one of the current aims, and this may also help in decisions as to what will have reader appeal and value. One missionary who has been working in the Gogodala area for 34 years suggests that 'perhaps one of the local problems is that there are no local "Deadwood Dicks" to read!'. However, indigenous writers may well come up with such equivalents. To date in the areas under review, they have written up local legends, humorous or dramatic local events, items for local newspapers (sports reviews, Council news, summaries of convention meetings, etc.), but at the Dauli Teachers' College, staffed by the A.P.C.M., students are experimenting with the short story form, and the field is wide open.

The provision of this intermediate and supplementary material has fulfilled a real need, but it should also be added that the vernacular

New Testament books maintain steady sales among the Christian sector of the population.

With the National Coalition Government's current encouragement of pride in the local language and culture, the future of vernacular literacy and literature is bright. In the areas under review, being all in the Papuan section of the country, the trade language of Papua, Hiri Motu, has been used by the men for communication across language boundaries. However, in all the Southern Highlands language groups (Pole, Sao, Foe, Huli, Kaluli and Fasu), there is currently a marked desire to speak and write New Guinea Pidgin, particularly on the part of pastors and community leaders, and of those planning to go out for a period of employment. To this end, transfer primers have been produced or are planned for each of these areas. This will provide access to the much wider range of materials available in Pidgin. In this connection Ossie and Jenny Fountain of the Christian Missions in Many Lands in the Koroba area of the Huli tribe have worked out and have on trial an oral Pidgin course designed for non-Pidgin-speaking nationals. They aimed to have it on the market by 1974.

7.2.4.8. SUMMARY

To summarise: in line with the basic policy of the A.P.C.M. to communicate in the language of the people, in the post-war years all alphabets and orthographies have been checked by competent personnel, and older primers and readers have been revised to bring them into line with more modern and improved literacy methods. There is currently widespread indigenisation at instructor level, and the beginnings of indigenisation at instructor-training level. The former has made possible a significant rise in the literacy rate because of the placing of vernacular teachers in the farther-out and less accessible village centres. The last ten years have seen the establishment of good vernacular training courses in teaching principles and teaching method, and an incidental subsequent improvement in the community status of the vernacular teacher. There is currently a marked increase in direct translation and creative writing by local writers. The National Government's current encouragement of vernacular literacy generally and particularly in the schools gives official support to what was already being done among the schoolchildren in the majority of the areas under review and will doubtless provide an added motivation for literacy among young and older adults. The discernible beginnings of a desire to speak and write Pidgin are being met by oral courses and transfer primers. The author considers that the future of vernacular literacy is bright.

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N O T E

1. Lectures given at United Bible Societies' Translation Workshop, Lae, Papua New Guinea, 1965.

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