The IMR Primer design

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This paper explains the elements of the IMR Primer design and also gives some other examples of activities that might be included in the primer. The IMR was created collaboratively for use in Solomon Island villages to encourage the growth and development of literacy abilities and practices in local communities. We believe the IMR materials can also be appropriately adapted to many other cultural settings.

An important feature of the IMR is the development of sets of lessons based on topics that are of interest to people living in rural settings in the Pacific. Each topic is based on a short locally authored text and covers 4-6 lessons. Many of these topics have been chosen, researched and developed by Solomon Islanders themselves. Some examples of topics developed thus far are:

- Jesus heals the man with the withered hand

- Choosing a wife

- Looking after our forests

- Sustainable living – overuse of resources

- AIDS

- Drugs

- Money management

- Soccer

- Women's reproductive health

We are gradually adding to the IMR topic collection and hope that people who wish to use the IMR are able to select and adapt materials from the IMR that are appropriate for their community. The primer sets have been designed to be used with adults and could also be adapted for use with out of school youth. The topic sets can be combined into primers or reading magazines. The use of four topics to a booklet seems to work well. For the early primers it is good to choose lesson sets that are based on a text that is less complex.

As mentioned in the paper, *An introduction to the IMR*, the primer has been designed to reflect a Sociocultural model of literacy aquisition. Where possible we have attempted to ensure that primer activities give learners a variety of opportunities that develop their abilities in the four roles of reader-writers. That is, we want to encourage learners to become capable decoder-encoders, text participants, text users, and text analysts. Therefore in each lesson teachers are encouraged to have times when the learners read a text, talk about it, ask questions of it, tell others about it, create new texts from it and apply the text to their own lives.

There are many other reasons behind the IMR primer design choices. These relate to theories of learning and to the cultural practices and needs of Solomon Islander youth and adults. We believe that learning should be a social activity where the benefits of discussion and working collaboratively with others, in both large and small groups, are incorporated into the learning environment. This fits well with the Melanesian cultures that place a high value on oral communication and on doing things in community. We also believe that a literacy learner needs to be immersed in print very early on, with lots of opportunities for reading and writing of real, relevant and meaningful texts. There should also be opportunities to observe good reading and writing behaviours as well as opportunities for personal practice in reading and writing a variety of texts in a supportive environment. We believe literacy tutors should do lots of demonstrating in their teaching so that the learners know what is required of them when they work in groups or

individually. There also needs to be plenty of repetition so that the learners can grasp new concepts but not so much that it becomes boring for them. We believe that learning should also be enjoyable. So for these reasons we have tried to include a variety of learning activities in the materials design - activities that can be done with others, with support and independently when learners are ready.

The primer is designed so that it can be used in literacy classes or in informal small groups with people who have a strong desire to learn to read and write. Real texts about issues of interest to adults provide the basis of the lessons. In this way learners are involved in real learning for real purposes from the beginning and they can immediately see pathways or progress towards their personal learning goals from day one.

We have specifically designed the primer with the goal of helping to increase the literacy levels of whole communities not just individuals. This is reflected in the learning activities that encourage participation in literacy activities of whole families rather than just those who attend the classes or small groups. For example, the *Waka wetem famili long hom* activity, (Work with your family at home), encourages whole families to participate in reading and writing activities together in an enjoyable non-threatening way. Similarly, the development of community newsletters, posters, dramas and other texts of interest is encouraged. These can be used in classes, placed on community notice boards or shared with community groups. This provides an audience for written texts and in turn provides motivation for the learners, and their families, to produce good written material. Posters, bookmarks and calendars can be created and sold in the community to raise funds for more literacy materials. The inclusion of drama, song and storytelling within the primer also fits well in Melanesian cultures and serves to reinforce learning and share knowledge gained in reading and discussion orally with other community members.

The IMR primer design encourages new readers to build their reading fluency in their local language through repeated readings, reading with others and to others, discussing, understanding and responding to texts and in this way become more confident in reading and writing. This aspect of the primer follows a whole language approach so that the learners develop fluency, comprehension skills and enjoyment in reading early in the process. The whole text is included at the beginning of the set of lessons. It should be read through completely by the teacher several times in the first lesson and then read once at the beginning of each lesson. This sets the scene for each lesson which then focuses on a specific section of the text with related word work and other activities.

Each lesson may take longer to work through than just one meeting time so tutors are encouraged to go at the pace of the students and cover all of the content and not be restricted by time. If it takes three times of meeting together to cover one lesson then as long as the learners are not bored it is best to work according to their needs rather than just rush through the lesson to get it all done in one meeting. If more than one meeting is required per lesson then the tutor should at every meeting read through the whole text to set the scene. Then review the shorter focus text for that lesson. The specific word work content for the lesson should also be revised, before moving onto the other learning activities that still need to be completed.

Flexibility is encouraged with tutors who have experience in teaching. However for new tutors, there is enough structure to guide them through the teaching process. A brief teacher's manual is available for the Pijin materials and could be adapted to other languages if needed. The primer requires the tutor to be literate in the language to be able to read to and teach others.

Elements of the primer design

As mentioned previously, each topic begins with a double page spread of the text that is the key focus for the topic. Tutors will read this text to the students at the beginning of each lesson and possibly at the end of the lesson as well.

Topik: Tekem lelebet, livim samfala

Komuniti blong krab grou smol

Nem blong mi Karu. Mi stap wetem komuniti blong mi antap long hil long Neiyo. Mifala long komuniti ya, mifala save godaon long si wanfala taem long evri yia. Disfala gogo ya, hem impoten tumas bikos long taem ya nao namba blong komuniti blong mifala baebae hem kamap staka moa.

Mifala olketa mere krab godaon long saetsi fo bonem bebi krab blong mifala. Bifoa mifala kasem saetsi, mifala save mitim staka had taem tumas. Yu save nao, pipol laek kaikaim mifala tumas ya!

Mi laek fo storim kam, wat nao hemi hapen long mifala las yia. Taem mifala gogo daon from bus nomoa, olketa pipol stat fo holem mifala an mifala traehad fo haed andanit long olketa drae lif blong kokonat. Mifala samfala ranawe insaet long olketa hol blong mifala. Nomata olsem, staka long

mifala nao olketa pipol holem olketa an putim olketa insaet basket blong olketa. Bat mifala no givap fo traehad fo kasem saetsi.

Nara samting nao taem mifala mek rere fo waswas, olketa pipol kam moa fo tekem olketa eg blong mifala. Olketa pipol save tekemaot evri eg blong mifala an mifala sore tumas bikos semtaem olketa kilim mifala dae tu.

Mi lake tumas bikos mi suim aot long dip si, dastawe nao mi no dae. Mifala stap long saetsi fo wanfala wik, bihaen mifala mas go baek long hom blong mifala long Neiyo.

Taem mifala kam baek kasem hom moa, mi barava sore tumas fo lukim dat mifala no staka nao olsem bifoa. Taem mi go wakabaot long nara haos mi no lukim eniwan insaet long haos tu. Taem ya nomoa mi barava sore tumas, bikos mi save dat namba blong mifala bae hemi no save kamap staka nao.

The lessons related to this text follow these two pages. Here is the first lesson in this series.

Leson 18

Komuniti blong Karu

Nem blong mi Karu.
Mi stap wetem komuniti blong mi antap long hil long Neiyo. Mifala long komuniti ya, mifala save godaon long si wanfala taem long evri yia. Disfala gogo ya, hem impoten tumas bikos long taem ya nao namba blong komuniti blong mifala baebae hem kamap staka moa.

Mifala olketa mere krab godaon long saetsi fo bonem bebi krab blong mifala. Bifoa mifala kasem saetsi, mifala save mitim staka had taem tumas.

Tokabaotem
1. ?Komuniti ya, hem stap long wea?
2. ?Olketa hu nao stei long komuniti ya?
3. ?Wae nao olketa krab mas go long saetsi?
4. ? Hao mas taem long wanfala yia nao olketa krab mas go long saetsi?

?Wae nao olketa krab save wakabaot wansaet?

Olketa string long wansaet leg long krab hem save waka wetem narasaet leg. Taem olketa string long wanfala leg hem pul narasaet hem pus.

Leson 18

Waka wetem wod

O o

Olketa woman krab godaon long saetsi for bonem bebi krab.

olketa	bonem
ol	bo
o	o

oktapus o

o	o	o	o	o
ok	or	bo	ko	lo
oktapus	orens	bonem	komuniti	long

Raetem olketa leta an wod ya insaet long buk blong yu.

O o O o O o O o O o O o O o

oktapus orens olowe olsem moskito motu
Olketa woman krab godaon long saetsi fo bonem
bebi krab an goap agen long maonten.

Raet abaotem wanfala kaen krab long ples blong yu. ?Wea nao olketa stap? ?Wat nao olketa kaikaim? ?Hao nao olketa luk?

We will now discuss each part of the primer design as illustrated by this sample lesson. Note, some of the icons changed in later books and if they differ greatly they are pictured as well.

1. Shared reading of the text

Leson 18

Komuniti blong Karu

Nem blong mi Karu.

Mi stap wetem komuniti blong mi antap long hil long Neiyo. Mifala long komuniti ya, mifala save godaon long si wanfala taem long evri yia. Disfala gogo ya, hem impoten tumas bikos long taem ya nao namba blong komuniti blong mifala baebae hem kamap staka moa.

Mifala olketa mere krab godaon long saetsi fo bonem bebi krab blong mifala. Bifoa mifala kasem saetsi, mifala save mitim staka had taem tumas.

Each lesson begins with an extract from the main text for that topic. This provides the main focus for the lesson's activities. The open book symbol reminds tutors that this part of the lesson follows a shared reading approach. The focus here is on the whole text and helping learners gain fluency in reading through repeated readings (large group, small group, partners) and discussion of the passage. In early stages the reading will be from memory or by using predictive strategies but gradually students will build up sight vocabulary and decoding strategies to complement these strategies.

Tokabaotem   2. Discussion questions

Tokabaotem   1. ?Komuniti ya, hem stap long wea?

2. ?Olketa hu nao stei long komuniti ya?

3. ?Wae nao olketa krab mas go long saetsi?

4. ? Hao mas taem long wanfala yia nao olketa krab mas go long saetsi?

Reading is always followed by discussion. Every lesson has discussion questions listed. These are questions about the text being read or practiced in that lesson. This helps check that through reading, meaning is being established and helps learners to become text participants—critiquing the text and its messages. It is good to do these activities in groups because this is less threatening for the participants and through scaffolding their learning and working together, they will be able to learn a lot more and be more confident when working individually.

3. Word work

Leson 18

Waka wetem wod   O o

Olketa woman krab godaon long saetsi for bonem bebi krab.

olketa	bonem		oktapus
ol	bo		o
o	o		

o	o	o	o	o
ok	or	bo	ko	lo
oktapus	orens	bonem	komuniti	long

After repeated readings and discussion questions there will be a time where the focus will shift to looking at the sound/symbol relationships of different letters and letter combinations and to learning sounding out strategies, which are very helpful in code breaking and code making. Where possible the sounds will be relevant to the key words in the text in focus and highlighted by a key sentence or phrase of the story. In this example we use the summary sentence: Olketa woman krab godaon long saetsi for bonem bebi krab. After looking at words that have the 'o' sound in them, we think of other words that start with or contain the sound. Such words are used in the break down (analysis) and build up (synthesis) activities. We suggest that the sounds of the language are introduced according to a productive order. This is determined by frequency counts and consideration of key words for each text. See *Developing your primer* for further details.

4. Writing activities

Each lesson should include at least two types of writing activities. Exercise books are used for the writing activities. The first writing activity should focus on letter formation—teaching or reviewing how the sound in focus is written. Students practice writing it as a capital and small letter, in words and then in a sentence that summarises the text or a key sentence from the text.

The second writing activity should encourage learners to create a piece of writing in response to the text. In early lessons tutors should work with the learners and model the text writing on a board or chart. It should just be a few sentences to start with. Students would then copy this into their exercise books. In later lessons students can work together either in small groups, pairs or individually depending on their abilities and confidence. Writing could also include lists of information or like objects etc. It doesn't always have to be connected text.

Text innovation is one activity that is good for new writers. This is when writers use an existing text to create a new one. It can be done in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. For example, you might ask learners to give the story a different ending, to re-write a text from a specific character's point of view, to rewrite a text as a play or write a song about it.

5. Additional activities

We have included in the primer additional activities where the learners are encouraged to interact with the text, discuss what it really means to them, and do things that will help them or people in the community apply what has been learned in daily life. Sometimes we include other activities for just for fun and to build interest. Most of these activities has its own symbol and can be repeated throughout the primer as is appropriate. In this lesson the additional activity is a *did you know* reading.

The question mark light globe marks that we are introducing a piece of interesting information related to the text. It helps to increase the learners' knowledge of such things as the people, places and culture of the focus text or gives additional interesting information not included in the story. It can also be a way of encouraging learners to find out other background facts and share that information with others in the class.

When all the activities for the lesson are completed, teachers and students are encouraged to read the whole text again together. This reminds students that the focus of all the learning activities is to be able to read real texts confidently.

The learning activities in the primer include lots of repetition, visual helps and should be very active so that students are not just sitting and listening to or mimicking the teacher.

The next two pages gives details of additional activities that are included in other lessons.

Waka wetem famili long hom

Waka wetem famili long hom, (Work with the family at home) is an activity that encourages whole families to be involved in literacy -- not just those who are able to attend literacy classes. When families are involved in reading and writing activities that are meaningful and enjoyable this helps to strengthen their view of the importance of literacy education and the benefits it provides to their family and community and encourages the new learners.

Work at home activities encourage students to take paper, pencils and any other available materials home for their family to develop (and perhaps illustrate) a text related to the theme of the lesson. For example the family might be asked to write a testimony of someone in their family who has trusted God when learning about the man with the shriveled hand who put his trust in Jesus or to help the student write a prayer. For the forest theme, the family may be asked to write a story about something important that happened in their own forest area, or make up a song about looking after the forest. In the work at home activities, learners are encouraged to work on the project with their family but anyone in their family can help with the writing and illustrating. The learner is then encouraged to practice reading this piece of writing aloud with the family. The writing is then brought to class and shared with the rest of the class by the teacher or the student.

The texts generated in this way could also be included in community newsletters or placed on the community notice board to be read by the whole community. Having a real audience will create a real purpose, motivation and a sense of excitement for those families who participate in this activity. They will want to create the best piece of writing they can. In this way extra reading materials are developed for the learners.

<u>Literacy Art – Bookmarks, calendars, posters</u>
Literacy Art is a way of developing literacy materials through the learner's creativity. Through encouraging Literacy Art, portions of texts or key messages artistically presented will be placed in more and more homes and in community spaces thus encouraging others to read. Literacy Art can also provide a way to raise funds for literacy materials. In the Solomons, a Christian country, Scripture in art, posters of portions of the Bible and so on will be very popular.

<u>Match pictures and stories</u>
This learning activity requires a set of pictures and a set of matching texts on cards. Teachers begin by reading the texts and students match the picture cards to the text. As the learners gain more confidence they are encouraged to read through the story cards in groups or on their own and find the matching picture card for that part of the text. The activity could be available to be used on a regular basis as a good warm up activity while waiting for others to come to class.

Memory Sentences
1 John 5:14
Taem yumi askem enisamting long God, an diswan hemi falom tingting blong hem, yumi save wea hemi herem yumi nao ya. Olsem, yumi no save fraet fo kam long God an tok wetem hem.

<u>Memory Sentence</u> (or verses) will summarise the main points of the whole text and students will be encouraged to write them on cards, in their exercise books and to memorise them.

Drama and storytelling

Solomon Islanders love drama and are very skilled at it. By including drama as a primer activity we incorporate a natural way of learning for these people into the literacy class. Working on dramas also encourages those who are acting to read and reread the materials that will be presented. Drama also provides a media for sharing new knowledge that is gained through reading with others who do not read in a non-threatening way.

Dramatic storytelling can also be encouraged as a literacy class activity. The focus of this kind of storytelling is to encourage the continuation of the oral tradition in oral societies and acknowledges the importance of this form of communication for such communities. This activity also provides an appropriate way for people to share new knowledge with others in their community . The activity is particularly appropriate for topics that are scripture based, or based on informational texts, but is not limited to these types of topics. Storytelling, as used in the IMR, is a particularly useful technique when it is important to retain detailed accuracy of certain aspects of a text – such as dates, places, specific action, sequences and outcomes.

The storytelling lesson is usually the final lesson of the topic and deals with the full text. We have used a model based on the Biblical storytelling process. This method involves the learners going through several processes with the full text to learn key parts of the story by heart. See lesson 6 of *The man with the withered hand* topic for more detail. The text will by now be very familiar to the learners and as they go through the processes of preparing the story for telling they will be using many of their newly acquired literacy skills.

Once learners know the process of preparing a story or text for telling, they can teach this process to other people and work on preparing other stories for telling. This can lead to an evening for the community where the learners present their story in front of everyone.

Word finds and puzzles

There are many different kinds of word finds and puzzles that can be used to revise sounds and syllables and encourage word building abilities. These are generally very enjoyable activities for new readers but should not be overused in the lessons.

How many words can you make up using the sounds in the boxes below?

gru	si	va
fla	na	mata
gla	si	mu

1._____

2. _____

3._____

4_____

Conclusion

The IMR primer is not an end in itself but is something that will help increase people's literacy abilities and interests as well as generating the further production of literature to be used by all in the wider community. Therefore it is important to choose texts that are relevant and productive— ones that can be discussed, shared, critiqued and that are open to extensions activities.

We hope that these materials will be used in small groups and in informal settings to encourage the development of literacy abilities and literacy use in local communities. In each language group, community members could also be trained to develop and produce literature and other appropriate materials to be used in the classes, and in the broader community, to increase literacy abilities and encourage the valuing of literacy and education.