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Preheader Translation News

International Translation Services (ITS) works in collaboration with colleagues in SIL and other agencies to creatively steward and advance the translation practices, tools, methods, and training necessary to enable a supportive environment for individuals and communities to flourish and engage with Scripture.

We value: Interconnectedness. Capacity Building. Diversity. Innovation.

April 2023

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"...He opened his mouth and taught them, saying…"

- Greg Dekker - ***International Translation Services Director***

Words matter. What we say - whether calculated, in jest, with good intentions, in all seriousness and conscientiousness, planned, or without thought, - what we say, matters! It matters because what we say cannot be taken back. What we say has an impact.

The spoken word enlivens communication. The YWAM Oral Bible Translation (OBT) Manual by Marcia Suzuki talks about it in this way, "Language is a complex and intricate manifestation of our God-given identity as His image. [A written representation of language may] miss a lot of its communicative power."

I thought of this as I reread Mathew 5:2, "… and [Jesus] opened his mouth and taught them, saying…" A couple things occurred to me as I read this and other scriptures. The written Scriptures formed an authoritative record. Jesus brought the record to life through speech. Orality. This contrast of reading and speaking is highlighted in Luke 4:17-21 when Jesus was handed the scroll of the Prophet Isaiah, from which he read, initially. Then it says, "He closed the scroll and… He began to *say* to them…" Of course, the impact here is the fulfillment of the prophecy in their presence. But in both events, Jesus *speaks*. He enlivened the written word. He embodied the Word.

During a pilot training of the Scripture Authentication Elder training in Papua New Guinea, an initial training of an accelerated methodology for OBT hosted by the ETEN Innovation Lab, local church leaders were noted as saying several very encouraging things about the oral translation approach. One, the oral approach allows those who intimately know and speak the language to both translate and then orally perform the meaning. Two, there is a greater sense of ownership of the oral product due, in part, to this performance aspect. And three, an orally performed Scripture benefits communities who already have written Scriptures.

Of course, there are challenges to be addressed in the process, too. One significant one is the reviewers' and translators' capacity to adequately internalize - commit to memory and heart - the meaning and sometimes complex make-up of, and difficult-to-understand meaning of the original text of Scripture, which is an essential step in the oral translation process. And there are other challenges as well.

And yet, even knowing the challenges, I came away from attending the OBT Global Gathering in Entebbe, Uganda, Jan. 10-12, encouraged that with rigorous attention to the established oral translation methodology, excellent quality outcomes are not only possible, but the resulting oral Scriptures have amazing potential to impact communities with the Good News.

Read on in this issue as Nathan Payne, SIL International Coordinator for Oral Translation Services describes the oral translation process, tells a short story of the impact of OBT, gives a short description of a unique exegetical tool that SIL is developing to contribute to OBT, and summarizes steps being taken by SIL to orient Translation Consultants to Oral Translation methods. Phil King, SIL International Coordinator for Translation Training and Development recounts his experience with the innovative oral translation process being developed and piloted by ETEN, including SIL and other partners.

Oral Bible Translation Q&A

- Nathan Payne - ***ITS Oral Translation Services***

Q: *What is Oral Bible Translation?*
A: Oral Bible Translation can take many forms, so it can be difficult to define. Typically OBT involves becoming intimately familiar with a passage of scripture (often called internalizing) and performing the passage orally. A recording of that draft is what is taken through the other steps of the translation process.

Q: *What are those steps?*
A: The steps vary from project to project. A typical OBT workflow would be: exegete, draft, record, community check, revise, backtranslate, consultant check, studio record, publish.

Q: *How is OBT different from written translation?*
A: This is a difficult question because most of the OBT steps can happen in a written translation workflow in some form or another. For example, written translation projects have used internalization and oral drafting for decades. And face-to-face, conversational consultant checking, which is a very oral process, has been part of written translation as well. Perhaps two permanent distinctions are: 1) in OBT the draft is a recording instead of text, and 2) performance features (tone, emotion, etc) are part of the translation that's being produced.

Q: *How is OBT different from an audio Bible?*
A: The two can look very similar on the surface but have some core differences. An audio bible is the recorded audio of a written translation and OBT is oral audio from the start. We've done some testing of the two and have found that OBTs are more learnable. In other words, they allow the listener to retain more of what they're hearing. This has advantages for scripture engagement and for translation projects that use an OBT as one of their sources. OBTs tend to be longer than audio Bibles, somewhere around 1.5 times longer recordings when everything else is equal.

Q: *Tell an OBT impact story*. A: Here's a link to a video.

Q: *Is SIL developing any exegetical tools for OBT?*
A: Yes, we've just started a major project to produce the first Oral English Translation of the whole Bible. We're calling it the Spoken English Bible. A major component of this project is to produce oral exegetical resources for OBT as well. These are recorded stories and conversations to help translators understand the books they're translating. The initial fruit of this project can be found at www.OBThelps.org.

Q: *How is quality assurance for OBT different from written translation?*
A: Whether it's a traditional translation consultant working with an OBT team or a group of church elders (see Phil's write-up below), there are several principles that can help the process to work better. We tend to pass along information the way we receive it, which often doesn't work when we get it from books and academic articles and need to pass it on to oral preference learners (the OBT team). Consultants should be able to tell a story to communicate a concept instead of using a powerpoint with lots of text. Consultants also need to be experienced with the steps an OBT team uses, such as internalization, oral drafting, oral community checking. Many translation consultants naturally adapt their methods when shifting over to OBT and have no trouble, others need some help.

Q: *How is SIL preparing consultants for this?*
A: We've done workshops to prepare translation consultants for checking OBT. We're working on an OBT component to the CBC system. SIL Asia area has begun experimenting with a growth plan directly for OBT consulting without requiring a CIT to become certified as a written translation consultant first. Email me (Nathan Payne) for more information on any of these efforts.

Orality and the ETEN Innovation Lab

- Phil King - ***ITS Training and Development***

Have you heard of the ETEN Innovation Lab? You're probably aware that ETEN is a collective alliance of Bible translation partners and resource partners, working together to see all people gain access to God's Word in a language they can clearly understand by 2033. SIL has been a key player in ETEN from the start, working together alongside Seed Company, Wycliffe, Biblica, Pioneer Bible Translators, Deaf Bible Society, Unfoldingword and others. For the past couple of years, ETEN has been sponsoring an Innovation Lab, to look at various aspects of the Bible translation ecosystem. This is based on the recognition that there are currently many excellent established processes for Bible translation, but there are also emerging approaches and ideas that could make a significant contribution. The Innovation Lab was set up to nurture some of these 'emerging' ideas in a variety of different areas, including technology, resources and quality assurance.

I've had the privilege of being part of the Quality Assurance branch since October 2022, alongside Bryan Harmelink (WGA), Sebastian Floor (Seed Company), Barry Funnell (The Word for the World), Ken Schmitt (Wycliffe US), Andy Kellogg (MIssionMutual) and Stephen Cave (Biblica). Over the previous months, the QA branch had identified three key proposals from their exploration of emerging quality assurance processes: prioritizing an oral to print approach; focusing on church- and community-based quality assurance; and multiplicative use of consultant expertise (more details in the March 2023 Consultant Development and Management bulletin). These were also themes that have come up frequently in papers submitted for the Quality in Translation symposium series this year.

In December, I participated first hand in a workshop with around 120 projects in Papua New Guinea associated with BATTLE Inc and the United Church of PNG (Papuan Islands Region) as they pilot these emerging approaches. The oral approach is structured around a community- and church-based weekly workflow of guided internalization (using resources built into Audio-Visual Translation Tool, AVTT), drafting and recording, community testing, use in a church setting, and review by a community-based Scripture Authentication Elder (for whom the workshop in December was designed). The authentication elder is responsible for checking that the translation is trustworthy, faithful, intelligible, appealing and appropriate (a set of qualities being proposed as a refinement of the more familiar Clear, Accurate, Natural and Acceptable), so the workshop spent a lot of time on these qualities. Further quality assurance is provided by a Scripture Review Board, representing churches across several different language communities, to give further approval for use of the translations in the church.

It was very exciting to see the passion, motivation and commitment of the church representatives at the workshop, to witness the sense of ownership and responsibility they felt about translation, to hear how these oral community-based processes 'fitted' their cultures, and to see church leaders from across the country praying for each other and committing to support one another. I'm looking forward to seeing how these projects continue to develop.

New Consultant

- Jennifer Harper - ***Nigeria***

Congratulations to Jennifer Harper (SIL Nigeria) on completing all the requirements for certification as a Translation Consultant with SIL Africa. Her mentors were Andy Warren-Rothlin and Rachelle Wenger. Jonathan van den Broek (Anglo-Lusophone Africa Translation Domain Team Leader) said: *The SIL Africa Area accreditation committee for translation consultants has examined the dossier submitted for Jennifer Harper, including the additional testimonies supplied when requested. I am pleased to inform you that the committee accepted the proposal and formally recognised Jennifer as a Translation Consultant. May the Lord bless her in her work with translation teams in Nigeria and beyond.*

Jennifer has a BS in Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work (Kansas State University) and an MA in Hebrew and Aramaic Languages and Culture (Leiden University). She has been working in Nigeria, West Africa with SIL since 1994. She spent her first term in Sociolinguistic Survey and then took a long term assignment with a sensitive project, initially as a literacy specialist in a macro team which included Literacy, along with Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) translation. She served in a number of roles in that project and then retasked in 2010 to specialize in OT to answer the call for more people in Old Testament translation and consultancy. Jennifer studied for a year in Israel in the Home for Bible Translators program (now called JCBT) and then completed a one-year MA in Hebrew and Aramaic at Leiden University, Netherlands. She currently serves as the Language Program Facilitator and Translation Advisor with the Tugbiri Language Program (Nigeria).

Update on Global Consultant Pool (GCP)

- Viji Mathew - ***GCP Director***

The Global Consultant Pool (GCP) is an SIL entity composed entirely of full-time translation consultants who live and work out of their home countries. It was created by SIL's Executive Leadership Team in 2018 in collaboration with Wycliffe USA as a resource for translation consulting needs among partner organizations and as a resource for managing remotely assigned translation consultants of SIL operational units. It's principal purposes include:

- Providing a community of practice and professional development for remotely assigned translation consultants, who, due to working from home, often experience little collegial interaction.
- Improving the management of consultants and their consulting assignments in order to alleviate the need for translation consultants to find their own work.

The GCP's 20+ consultants have experience working in Anglophone Africa, Eurasia, India, other parts of Asia such as Indonesia, several parts of Latin America, and elsewhere. GCP also identifies the need of mentoring CiTs or Translation Advisors and translation teams. I am delighted that Stefán Féliz-Kent will be joining the GCP in the near future. Stefán is a CiT who has extensive experience in churches and translation work in Costa Rica. He has been mentored by Teryl Gonzalez, Bill Bivin, and Olivia Razafinjatoniary. For any queries or further information, please email me..

AQuA - Brave New [TC] World

- Jim Clarke

From one of the Developers:

Augmented Quality Assessment (AQuA - read more here) is a tool designed to aid translation experts during the quality checking of Bible drafts. AQuA does this by pointing out differences between two texts (say, a local language draft and a reference translation) corresponding to the areas of Accuracy, Naturalness, and Clarity. Our hope is that this will give translation teams a better idea of where in a draft they should be focusing on revision.

The current iteration is very powerful and shows a lot of potential. There are currently four assessments available within AQuA: (1) formal equivalence (how closely the wording of the draft translation follows the reference translation), (2) missing words (which words are present in the source but missing from the draft), (3) semantic similarity (how close the source and draft are in meaning), (4) and readability (a simple measure of sentence and word lengths across a draft). The three assessments that I have found most helpful are the formal equivalence, the readability, and the missing words. There is also a semantic similarity assessment, but it is most effective only if the receptor language is linguistically similar to one of the 109 languages AQuA has trained on. Semantic analysis can also be used for back translations in one of those 109 languages.

The current web-interface is basic, in part because the developers are focusing on the app as an engine that can be put in existing software that most translation teams are already using, like Paratext and Scripture Forge. As such, the focus is more on functionality than a flashy way to access the assessments.

The staff, themselves, have been phenomenal. They have put in a lot of good work and have been eager for feedback. They bring to the table an understanding of both computing and linguistics, and are very sympathetic to the needs and concerns of real world translators and consultants.

New Zondervan Resources Added To Logos

- Nick Peterson

On behalf of Paul O'Rear, I would like to announce that within the last month, Zondervan has graciously agreed to add more resources this year to our Translator's Workplace suite. Praise and thanks to God for how he is continuing to equip us for the good work set before us! Thanks also to Zondervan for their generosity and partnership in the vision of Bible translation. This is a multimillion-dollar gift when you consider the cost of each of the included resources and how many people are currently registered to use TW. And thanks to Paul O'Rear for his attentiveness to what resources are out there, what would be beneficial to our work, and for his continuing efforts to partner well with Zondervan. Praise the Lord, these resources are now available in TW! The following titles are included:

- 1 Corinthians, A Video Study: 36 Lessons on History, Meaning, and Application
- 2 Corinthians, A Video Study: 19 Lessons on History, Meaning, and Application
- A Dictionary of English Grammar for Students of Biblical Languages
- A Survey of the New Testament Video Lectures: A Complete Course for the Beginner
- A Survey of the Old Testament Video Lectures: A Complete Course for the Beginner
- An Introduction to Biblical Greek Video Lectures: Elementary Syntax and Linguistics
- An Introduction to Biblical Greek Workbook: Elementary Syntax and Linguistics
- Basics of Akkadian: A Complete Grammar, Workbook, and Lexicon
- Basics of Ancient Ethiopic: A Complete Grammar, Workbook, and Lexicon
- Basics of Arabic A Complete Grammar, Workbook, and Lexicon
- Basics of Biblical Greek Workbook, 4th ed.
- Basics of Hebrew Discourse Video Lectures: A Guide to Working with Hebrew Prose and Poetry
- Basics of Latin Video Lectures
- Biblical Greek Vocabulary in Context: Building Competency with Words Occurring 25 Times or More
- Deuteronomy, A Video Study: 60 Lessons on History, Meaning, and Application (Beyond the Basics Video Series)
- Esther, A Video Study: 11 Lessons on History, Meaning, and Application
- Ezra and Nehemiah: A Discourse Analysis of the Hebrew Bible (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament | ZECOT)
- Global Christianity: A Guide to the World's Largest Religion from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe
- Greek for the Rest of Us Workbook: Exercises to Learn Greek to Study the New Testament with Interlinears and Bible Software
- Greek for the Rest of Us: Learn Greek to Study the New Testament, 3rd ed.
- Habakkuk: A Discourse Analysis of the Hebrew Bible (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament | ZECOT)
- Hebrews, A Video Study: 26 Lessons on History, Meaning, and Application
- Hosea: A Discourse Analysis of the Hebrew Bible (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament)
- Joshua, A Video Study: 24 Lessons on History, Meaning, and Application
- Leviticus: A Discourse Analysis of the Hebrew Bible (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the Old Testament | ZECOT)
- Mark, A Video Study: 66 Lessons on Literary Context, Structure, Exegesis, and Interpretation
- Matthew, A Video Study: 38 Lessons on the Book of Matthew
- New Testament in Antiquity, Video Lectures: A Survey of the New Testament within Its Cultural Contexts
- NIV Study Bible: Notes (Fully Revised Edition)
- Obadiah, A Video Study: 7 Lessons on History, Meaning, and Application (Beyond The Basics Video Series)
- Old Testament Use of the Old Testament: A Book by Book Guide
- Reading Biblical Greek: A Grammar for Students
- The Concise New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis Word Biblical Themes Collection (15 vols.)

Translation Training and Development Updates

- Phil King

There are a couple of new additions to the BibleTranslationCompetencies.org website this month. I've added a page with 'Tools to Support CBC' where you can find tools for mentors or administrators supporting CiTs in their growth plan through the CBC / Competency Manager system. These include:

(1) a **spreadsheet** that you can use to do an initial evaluation of a CiT according to all the CBC competencies, to make a record of experience and qualifications relevant to each different area.

(2) a **mentor report form** that can be used to provide feedback on any supervised checking session, to document how the CiT has demonstrated each of the competencies.

These had both been requested by users of Competency Manager so have been developed to fill that need.

The next Bible Translation '*Training and Development*' Community of Practice is scheduled for 25th May, on the topic of spiritual formation during training, with insights from Eszter Ernst-Kurdi. It will be on EMDC.online at 6.30am/3.30pm UTC. Look out for the class sign up when it is entered into the system.

News and Events

New ITS Staff - *Angie Foo*

International Translation Services (ITS) joyfully welcomes Angeline Foo!

Angie and her husband Peter, members of Wycliffe Malaysia, are based in Papua, Indonesia. Their journey to Indonesia began in 2004 where they worked with a people group in the central highlands of Papua. In 2011, Angie became a translation consultant, and was recognised as a Senior Translation Consultant in 2022.

Angie has led the training and development of translation consultants in SIL Asia's Translation Consultant Development Workshop (TCDW) program for more than 10 years. She has also been the SIL Asia-area Bible Translation Coordinator since 2016 and is a member of the Journal of Translation editorial board.

Angie will be joining ITS in a customized role where her considerable experience and skills as a translator, translation consultant, researcher, writer, and trainer of translators can be applied to areas of Bible Translation research and best practice, among others. She will be transitioning into her role over the next six to twelve months. Please join the ITS team in welcoming Angie!

Transition - *Dick Kroneman*

International Translation Services announces that on October 31, 2023, Dick Kroneman will be stepping down from his position in International Translation Services as the Coordinator for Translation Research and Practice.

Dick has served in several different roles in SIL: MTT Training Coordinator in Indonesia (2001-2007), Asia Area Translation Coordinator (2008-2014), International Translation Coordinator (2014-2020), and International Coordinator for Translation Research and Practice (2020-2023). Since 2008, Dick has been involved as a trainer and mentor of new translation consultants. He also served as a co-director of Translation Consultant Development Workshops in Asia (2008-2014). During these years he also co-wrote a manual on best practices in Bible translation and consulting (2011).

In his role as an International Coordinator (2014-2020), Dick served as the Co-chair of the biennial International Bible Translation Conference, organized by SIL International and Dallas International University, and was involved as a co-founder, author and editor of the Key Terms in the Old Testament project.

Dick and his wife Margreet have served as translation consultants to several translation projects in Papua, Indonesia. They were closely involved with the Una literacy and translation project in particular. The Una New Testament was published in 2007; the complete Una Bible was published in 2022.

Even though Dick will be stepping down from his role as an International Coordinator under International Translation Services, he will not be retiring from translation related work. He will continue to serve as a senior translation consultant, and he is looking forward to spending more time on teaching, training, and mentoring new translation consultants, and on academic writing and teaching.

International Translation Services prays for God's richest blessings on Dick in this transition and are grateful to God for the significant contribution he has made to Bible Translation training, research, and practice.

Retirement - *Margreet Kroneman*

With grateful hearts for her many years of service, International Translation Services announces the retirement of Margreet Kroneman.

Margreet began her service to the Una Literacy and Bible translation project in 1988. The Una Bible was dedicated in 2022. As a translation consultant, Margreet contributed significantly to the Una translation as consultant to a team of MTTs working independently, as well as to many other translation projects. As an example, Margreet was instrumental in completing pre-publication checks for the Damal and Ngalik complete Bibles.

Margreet has also contributed significantly to the production of translation resources, translating all 5,000 Hebrew terms and definitions in the OT into Indonesian which are now being used in Paratext. Margreet has also acted to support translation teams in the use of Paratext.

Despite significant health issues, Margreet has given generously of her time and talents to advance the work of Bible Translation, has been very productive, and takes great pleasure in collaborating with others in the Work. Margreet gives much care to the quality of her work, has a passion to help others, spends a significant amount of time guiding others in their work, and derives much joy in seeing others succeed.

International Translation Services prays God's richest blessings on Margreet Kroneman in this new stage of her life.

Introduction to Oral Bible Translation - *Evelyn Gan*

For anyone interested in learning and experiencing Oral Bible Translation, YWAM and Wycliffe Malaysia are hosting an *Introduction to Oral Bible Translation* workshop on 5-16 June 2023 in Penang, Malaysia. This hands-on workshop gives participants an understanding of oral translation and practical experience of translating Bible passages. For more information, contact Joanna or Evelyn. Click here to register now.

Journal of Translation - *Freddy Boswell*

Plans are developing for the October 2023 issue of SIL's *Journal of Translation*. We welcome your submissions. If you are wondering if your research and scholarship are worth sharing, please email us and we will be glad to dialogue in advance of submission. So much is happening on so many fronts in Bible Translation work. Help us to present cutting-edge and up to date scholarship in our field. For queries, please email me, Freddy Boswell. Thank you!

Bible Translation Conference 2023 - *13-17 October 2023*

- Register for the 13-17 October 2023 Bible Translation Conference 2023 to be held in Dallas, Texas on the campus of Dallas International University..
- The theme is "**Quality in Translation**."
- **Keynote Speakers**
  - Andy Warren-Rothlin - Beekman Lecture
  - Tshokolo Makutoane - Beekman Lecture
  - Edgar Ebojo - Nida Lecture
  - Paul Kimbi - Lamin Sanneh Lecture
  - Angie Seow - Inspirational Address

Call to Prayer - *Steve Quakenbush (Spiritual Life Team Director)*

Below are two opportunities to engage with your colleagues in prayer for translation work. You may share requests (and answers) with Melinda Lyons. For further information click the Pray With Us link.

Unceasing Prayer - SIL hosts an hour of prayer on the Unceasing Prayer* platform the first and second weeks of each month at Wed 8pm Dallas / Thurs 8am Bangkok. The first week covers the range of SIL's work in Bible translation and language development, led by Melinda Lyons. The second week, led by Ramón Padilla and friends, focuses on new work in diaspora communities. Register for access to the Prayer Room ahead of time here. Interested in hosting another hour a month at a different time more convenient to your location? Please contact melinda_lyons@sil.org.

*Unceasing Prayer for Bible Translation (UP) is a global collaboration of Christians, churches, missions agencies, prayer ministries, and Bible translation agencies to lead praying believers in a 24/7/365 online prayer space.

ETEN Monthly Prayer Gathering - ETEN** believes "prayer is the strategy." With this in mind, the ETEN Prayer Working Group would like to invite you to join us every 3rd Thursday monthly on-line – connecting us in prayer for the latest needs and praise reports across the Alliance. Next up: April 20 and May 18, 2023, 15:00-15:30 UTC (10-10:30 am CDT). Register first by creating an account with your sil.org email address at ETEN.Bible. SIL will be hosting the November 16 gathering. Questions? Email steve_quakenbush@sil.org.

**ETEN is a collective impact alliance consisting of 5 resource partners and 11 implementing partners with a vision of making God's Word accessible to all people by 2033. SIL International is one of the implementing partners.

Useful Links

- Bible Translation Consultant Competencies
- Bible Translation 2023 Conference - 13-17 October 2023
- Journal of Translation
- SIL Senior Translation Consultants
- Email the SIL International Translation Office
- International Translation Services ILS Google page
- Join/visit the SIL Translation Resources Google Group
- Visit the public SIL.org/Translation site
- Find Translation Resources (both free download and for purchase) SIL.org/Resources/Publications
- Bamboo Project website
- Mentoring Matters website - Mentor Training Courses
- Consultant Development and Management Team
- Progress.Bible Information
- Memoriam website

SIL Translation Services

International Leadership Team

- Greg Dekker - *ITS Director*
- Dick Kroneman - *International Coordinator for Translation Research and Practice*
- Paul O'Rear - *International Coordinator for Translation Resources*
- Phil King - *International Coordinator for Translation Training and Development*
- Nathan Payne - *International Coordinator for Oral Translation Services*
- Viji Mathew - *Director, Global Consultant Pool*
- Brian Migliazza - *ITS Operations and Project Management*

Area Translation Coordinators

- Angie Foo - *Asia*
- Greg Carlson - *Pacific*
- Michael Jemphrey & Drew Maust - *Francophone Africa*
- Jonathan van den Broek - *AngloLusophone Africa*
- Thomas Hemphill & Katja Mueller - *Eurasia*
- Rick Floyd & Dwight Shaver - *Americas*
- Yuki Yamada - *Global Sign Languages Team (GSLT)*

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You are receiving this email because of your interest in translation updates.

This newsletter is produced by SIL International Translation Services. Editors are Tuula O'Rear and Brian Migliazza. It contains items of interest for translation personnel within SIL and related organizations. It includes notices of upcoming conferences and workshops, announcements of recent dissertations and journal articles, and pointers to useful information related to translation.

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