ITS NEWS

International Translation Services (ITS) works in collaboration with colleagues in SIL and other organisations to provide translation and consultancy services to those who need them and are willing and necessary to enable a supportive environment for multilingual communities and societies to flourish and thrive.

We value: Interconnectedness, Capacity Building, Diversity, Innovation

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"But my daughter already knows her language!"

Greg Delobar - *International Translation Services Director*

This is an objection heard all too often. Parents argue that their child is fluent in their language and so doesn't need to learn the classroom*.* However, proven methodologies for learning to read and write in a second language have shown results in better learning outcomes and for learning a second language. Many bilingual programmes have also shown that the skills learned in learning to read and write in a second language for young learners

There is a movement afoot in Bible translation that proven quality assurance practices in the translation process are creating "bottlenecks" or delays to accelerating translation. They argue that these processes take too much time. In a recent meeting I attended, there was a discussion about the "quality" of a translation. One person in the discussion made the statement *quality means "the fewer errors we have."* He then went on to say that the translation of the Bible into his language was of poor quality because it was full of errors. Then with a new one. I thought immediately of subtractive vocalization. I wondered, "Why is it that he thinks that the translation is of poor quality?" Is it because he has learned to read in a system of consonantal phonemes, proven learning, to achieve a quality translation? Is it because he assumed we would then look at and examine a process that "circumvents" this so called "quality" process? Or is it because he is unfamiliar with the many layers of checking that are in place to ensure the quality of the translation?

We're thinking much these days about maintaining quality in Bible translation[*]. So, imagine my surprise when I read the following statement in a recent publication about the importance of quality Bible translation in a language that serves them and their neighbors: "Translation quality." One of them even described it as a "tool!" When asked to say more, to give more details, they could not. They were unable to explain why they had such a negative view of the interpretation. More money is needed to be spent on training and monitoring the engagement with communities in learning what are the important terms to be translated and how they are to be translated. Translation quality is a tool that is used to ensure a proper translation plan for processes which help to ensure quality. Shortcuts are being taken.

When we meet together as Bible translation partners, we frequently hear the words, "quality," "accuracy," "faithfulness to the original text," and "clarity" as goals. But, do we all have the same understanding of what these words mean? Can we be confident that we are all in the productive way and mount of processes which create less than ideal quality outcomes?

In his explanatory material around Vision 2025, John Watters makes the statement, "Urgency, thus, motivates us to consider additional creative strategies..." [Emphasis mine.] Is it true that urgency motivates us to consider creative strategies? Or, is it true that urgency has been through increased urgency and pressure to meet deadlines that we are ignoring best practices?

Let me state the obvious. We all want people to have access as soon as possible to a quality Bible translation in a language that serves them and their neighbors. We all agree with it, and through the power of the Holy Spirit and the ministry of the people of God, their desire will be realized. However, we must not be in such a hurry that we do not do it right. Let's not be in such a hurry that we ignore proven practices that have been developed over the years to ensure quality.

Thus, the tendency is to submerge learners in the second language. This practice is known as subtractive bilingual education. And it is all too common in early childhood education programs. Research has shown that the best practice is to develop the learner's first language while strengthening learning outcomes and the learning of a second language for young learners.

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[*] The common argument is that the student already knows his/her language. Behind this line of thinking is the value or assumption by many that translation is about transcribing another language into the home language. Translation is not transcription. Translation is the process of moving the meaning of a text from the home language of the native community and educationally, communicate with the wider, heart language community.

[*] For example, coming to the UK by Ship to Serve at the session is not a journey to Europe, it is a journey to the UK. Similarly, the Bible Translation Conference is not a journey to Europe, it is a journey to Oxford, the Bible Translation Conference will focus on the theme, Quality in Translation.

New Consultant

- Martin Sauer *(DWT)*

Congratulations to Martin Sauer (SIL DWT) on completing all the requirements for certification as a Translation Consultant with SIL.Work. Michael Jarvinkhoi (SIL Francophone Africa) is his mentor. Michael Jarvinkhoi announced that the SIL Accreditation Committee for Translation Consultants in Africa has reviewed the dossier and has recommended Martin Sauer for certification.

Having studied applied linguistics at university as an MA degree, Martin felt gifted and called to translation. In 1998 he went to Chad with his family to serve as a translator with SIL, but found himself working in the area of literacy instead. After 10 years of literacy work in Chad, however, still able to have some involvement in translation, he was encouraged to lead various translation courses. He was also able to train two MTTs and together with them translated Matthew's Gospel. Then, in 2010, he was invited to join the team of a translation-oriented training and mentoring ministry. This time, his interest in becoming a translation consultant grew.

But then, following a request by Wycliff Germany, Martin spent eight years running their translation department. Then, in 2020, he and his family felt led to move to Kenya to join a Christian computer ministry again. It was with great joy that Martin was informed in January that Mercy Corps Scotland had formed as a consultant with SIL. In this way making the life dream finally come true. Martin is now able to work as a translation consultant, a role in which he can draw on experience in translation checking and training mentors and consultants. In spite of all the challenges, Martin during the time felt very much confirmed in his calling and talent for this work. He is very much looking forward to working with the many teams.

Think Tank would like to hold a Gathering of leaders and/or decision-makers in the near future to consider a proposal of a model for a supervising CTA. If you or your team leader or decision-maker in your organization would like to receive an invitation to the Gathering, please express your interest in participating by going to the link to the QR code when so advised.

Update on Translation Consultant Think Tank

- Greg Delobar

The Translation Consultant (TC) Think Tank has been meeting monthly since January 2022 to explore the accountability for CTA to projects who need them and how to provide them. The Think Tank has been meeting via Zoom. Two exploration groups were established by the Think Tank.

The first team explored possibilities to consider around a shared, regionally or globally accessible, TC database(s) to which participating organizations contribute. The team, led by Greg Delobar, met with Jeff Reimer (SIL Global) and Jason Edwards (SIL Global) together to develop listings of the CTAs in their country, region, or geographic area, and make these available as widely as possible.

The second team is currently exploring possibilities to consider around a model for supervising CTAs. The team, led by Greg Delobar, met with Phil King (SIL Global) and Tim Cox, and others about difficulties being encountered by CTAs related to compensation. This team is conducting research in collaboration with Providence Labs on the question of whether a compensation model can be developed that is fair to both CTAs and the SIL entities that employ them and support compensation for their work and time in the many projects they support.

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Translation Training and Development Update

- Phil King - *ITS Training and Development*

BTTI CQP: The next Bible Translation Training and Consultancy Certificate of Proficiency (BTTI CQP) will be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 5 June to 7 July 2023 at Kolbe Training Institute (KTI) and Kijabe Hospital Training Centre (KHTC) in Kijabe, Kenya. Please see the BTTI CQP page on the Training Events Calendar for more information and to register.

Digital Training Library: ISL has a number of scholarships available for staff who would like to access the Digital Training Library. The scholarships are for a period of 12 months and are open to Translation Consultants (TCs) and Translation Coordinators (TCs) who are not currently using the library. Please contact Phil King (phil_king@sil.org) if you would like to apply for a scholarship or want to check the SIL subscription of interest for a resource (please include the name of the publisher, very many thanks to Stephen Levinsohn, Tim Stirr and others who worked hard to make this possible). Please also contact Phil if you have any other questions about the library. Contact: contact me or phil_king@sil.org

In my context many of the most frequent challenges that translation teams face are related to training and implementation dynamics. What is the role of translation consultants in training and facilitating translation training? Come and share your insights and experiences with other translation consultants as we explore how translation consultants can be relevant and integrated approach to spiritual formation and development of BTT training.

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Interview with Translation Consultants

Paul Kirkhi - *Cameroon*

How did you get interested in Bible translation? As a translator of the Kom NT, one of the things I had to do was to test the drafts of our translation in a Sunday School class. I was the teacher of the class of young people in the Church of Christ. It was the impression I received from the reactions of the children that made me interested in my ministry: the deep impression that the Word of God made on the hearts of children who were very elderly and Christians for long entitled me.

I was reporting from Law chapter 17 one day and an elderly woman who had been in the church for many years, (and had two of her sons serving as pastors) confessed that she had never heard the story of the ten lepers before. She had been a Christian for many years before its Christ who had died on the Cross for our salvation and Risen. No one imagine my joy. My motivation that it brought to me. Besides the Sunday School class, my own understanding of Scriptures grew and I would say my walk with the Lord also grew tremendously.

What gets you excited when you work with others in Bible translation? Working with others in Bible translation is always a challenge. Each person has his or her own ideas about translation. There is mutual encouragement, discovering the right terminology that will be understood by the people, and the joy of seeing the Word of God in the hands of the people. I enjoy working with the parts and working with others is working in community. The social and spiritual returns of working with others are always positive.

What is your consulting philosophy? Missions undergird all that I do in Bible translation. And I see my role as a consultant as one who is committed to the task of the mission of Bible translation. Each translation project and each community is different. I see myself as a consultant as one who is committed to the task of the mission of Bible translation. I see myself as someone a translator that is accurate, natural and clear and the purpose for which it was done. I see myself as someone who is committed to the task of the mission of Bible translation. I see myself as someone who is committed to the task of the mission of Bible translation. I see myself as someone who is committed to the task of the mission of Bible translation