ITS NEWS
International Translation Services

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.

September 2023

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When is Vision 2025 accomplished? -

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

No doubt the immediate answer to that question for most people working in the Bible Translation Movement who are familiar with the statement and resolution from SIL's 1999 International Conference is "When a Bible translation project has been started in every language that needs one."

I've been thinking: Maybe we should evaluate the accomplishment of Vision 2025 not by this metric, but by the *degree* to which BT organizations have changed, and have responded well to the *strategies* outlined in the Vision, to *new ways of working*.

That is, compared to the *manner* in which we (inclusive) were working pre-1999, have we advanced significantly in the strategic *ways of working* outlined in the '99 Vision? Have we made noticeable, *quantifiable* progress in the non-negotiable items listed in Watters' paper? These were 1) working with partners, 2) building capacity in the church and language communities, 3) multiplying ourselves through training, consulting, and mentoring, 4) assuming a greater sense of urgency, and 5) phasing over of language programs to local and national leadership. To the degree in which we have progressed in these non-negotiable ways, we have achieved Vision 2025.

To repeat, Vision 2025 was never about working harder, but working *differently*. It was about greater dependence on God, in faith. It was about new methodologies working well and in harmony with well-established methodologies. It was about responding well to thematic issues which could, if integrated well into our ways of working, bring greater efficiency to the BT task. These themes have been much-rehearsed, and answering a few questions may help us evaluate our response to the Vision:

Urgency: How many limited-goal and larger-goal projects have resulted from our response to Vision 2025, and are processes in place in each to ensure quality results? Note: Our sense of urgency is not naive. We don't assume that translation of the Bible is the only means of proclaiming the Good News to those who have yet to hear it.

Partnership: In what quantifiable ways have our partnerships with other individuals and organizations increased in depth and scope, and in what ways have these partnerships resulted in accomplishing more than could have been achieved acting on our own?

Capacity building: To what degree are our efforts in capacity building resulting in trained personnel, adequate finance, and networks of individuals and institutions able to provide guidance, consultancy, and finance for the ongoing work of Bible translation?

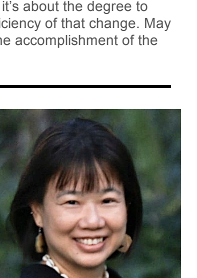
Creative strategies: How many new ideas can we name that have been born since 1999, relating to alternative products, new technology, training, and partnership, which lend themselves to greater efficiencies in various aspects of the Bible translation task, and have we abandoned certain activities that have proven to be ineffective or inefficient? Note: By "efficient" we mean, in part, well-organized, methodical, systematic, structured, well-planned, avoiding waste and not ignoring local ways of working, either.

Sustainability: How many - and how frequently or regularly - can we document language development and Bible translation projects that are started by the receptor community or continue beyond the intervention of an external actor or organization on behalf of the receptor community?

As I write, I am thinking about something else, too: the principle of compounding. As we approach 2025, we are seeing a compounding of strategies and efforts implemented toward achievement of the Vision. That's great. But let's take care that due process toward quality is not sacrificed in our enthusiastic quest.

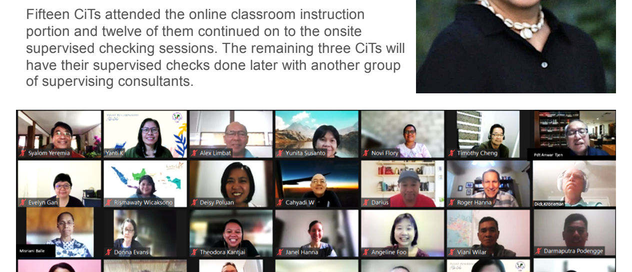
The answers to these questions, in whatever detail needed, will help us understand whether - and to what degree - Vision 2025 has been accomplished. The Vision is about working differently, to get a different result, sooner than later. It's not so much about what percentage of remaining needed translations have been started, it's about the degree to which we (inclusive) have changed and the effectiveness and efficiency of that change. May God continue to enable our efforts together as we work toward the accomplishment of the Vision.

Indo-Malaysian TCDW Report - **Angie Foo**



Janel Hanna and Angeline Foo were the co-directors of this year's Indo-Malaysian TCDW (LPKP), held from 17 July to 18 August 2023. The tentative dates for next year (2024) are: 24 June to 05 July (onsite classroom) and 05-16 August (onsite supervised checks).

Fifteen CiTs attended the online classroom instruction portion and twelve of them continued on to the onsite supervised checking sessions. The remaining three CiTs will have their supervised checks done later with another group of supervising consultants.



Two weeks of online classroom instruction with 15 CiTs and 14 consultant trainers from 17 to 28 July 2023.

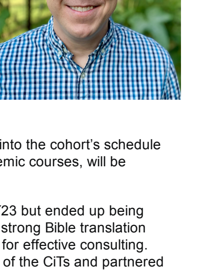
Onsite supervised checking session with 12 CiTs and 7 supervising consultants. 29 July to 06 August 2023 was the preparation time and travel to the location. Then they spent two weeks (07-18 August 2023) for the actual checking sessions with six language groups. Of these six, one is an OBT project and the other five are written projects.

New Publication - **Michael & Rachel Aubrey**

Congratulations to Michael & Rachel Aubrey on the *Bible Translation* chapter (pgs 185-193) that they contributed in a new book on helping those in biblical studies find and discover new vocational paths.

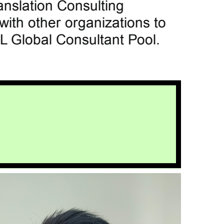
What Can You Do with Your Bible Training? Traditional and Nontraditional Vocational Paths. 2023. Edited by Brandon C. Benziger and Adam W. Day.

Bible translation chapter abstract: In this chapter, Michael and Rachel share the story of their journey into Bible translation, and more specifically how they forged a new path into the work of biblical language research where they apply linguistic analysis to the biblical languages for translation.



Alongside their own stories, they explore how biblical studies serves as a constant and essential dialogue partner in the work of Bible translation, as well as enumerating the variety of joys and trials that come with serving in ministry contexts. They conclude the chapter with advice for those who might want to serve in Bible translation, including how to pursue further training to ensure you are equipped for your role, how to explore and discover a range of roles that exist within Bible translation service, and how to seek out mentors and opportunities that might help in taking steps toward that goal.

SC Residency Program - **Dan Jones**



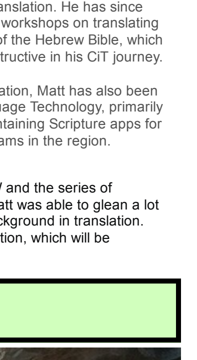
Dan Jones (*SC Translation Consultant & Director of Consultant Development*) has completed a six-month review of the SC Residency Program. This program is structured around cohorts of Consultants-in-Training (CiT) being mentored and developed into translation consultants (TC). Each cohort consists of 2-3 CiTs who are matched with at least two TC mentors. These cohorts then work alongside each mentor twice per year, resulting in four mentored translation checking workshops per year.

One Oral Bible Translation training opportunity will be integrated into the cohort's schedule each year. Then additional training opportunities, including academic courses, will be pursued and completed throughout the program.

What has worked well? Initially we planned for 15 residents in FY23 but ended up being able to accept 20 CiTs accepted into the program. These all had strong Bible translation experience and education, possessing the "soft skills" necessary for effective consulting. We added "Cohort Managers" to provide operational supervision of the CiTs and partnered with the Dallas International University Graduate Certificate in Translation Consulting courses. A new development this year is the effort to collaborate with other organizations to supply mentors for the CiTs, such as the collaboration with the SIL Global Consultant Pool.

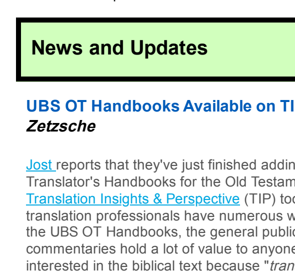
New Consultants
Matthew Armand

Matthew Armand - *Asia*



Congratulations to Matthew Armand (Asia) on completing all requirements for certification as a Translation Consultant, under the guidance of his supervising mentor Donna Toulmin.

His training in linguistics and translation began in 2010 and he then moved on to learning the *S* language in 2015. In 2016 he began working with the translation team as a Translation Advisor as this team was transitioning from publishing the NT to beginning the OT. In 2018 he became a CiT and started working more broadly across South Asia learning from great consultants in the area.



Matt completed an MA in Applied Linguistics at Dallas International University (2019) which focused on Bible translation, specifically OT translation. He has since attended several workshops on translating different genres of the Hebrew Bible, which he found very instructive in his CiT journey.

Aside from translation, Matt has also been involved in Language Technology, primarily building and maintaining Scripture apps for the translation teams in the region.

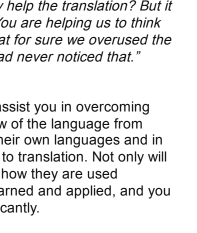
His consultant training was centered around the Asia Area TCDW and the series of mentored checks before and after. In these mentored checks, Matt was able to glean a lot from the experienced consultants who shared their extensive background in translation. After TCDW he was asked to conduct research regarding translation, which will be submitted for publication in the near future.

News and Updates

UBS OT Handbooks Available on TIPS - *Jost Zetzsche*

Jost reports that they've just finished adding all the UBS Translator's Handbooks for the Old Testament to the Translation Insights & Perspective (TIP) tool. While Bible translation professionals have numerous ways to access the UBS OT Handbooks, the general public does not. These commentaries hold a lot of value to anyone who is interested in the biblical text because "*translators are the closest readers of a text*" and material prepared to help them will potentially help anyone. The TIPs tool is meant to serve both the translation community and the general public. You can find the UBS OT information placed within the records for every verse of the Old Testament, as seen here in Micah 6:8. They are also working on including the UBS Handbooks for the NT and DC (Deuterocanonical) books as well.

Narrative Discourse Analysis for Translation Workshop - *Steve Nicolle*



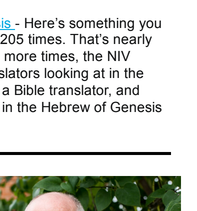
Steve Nicolle, a Translation Consultant and a CanIL Professor,) will be leading a three week (9-29 Oct 2024) Narrative Discourse Analysis for Translation Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya. Complete the questionnaire and registration form in the workshop invitation and for further information, email Tim Stirtz.

Are you finding it difficult to make translation of Scripture sound like the way people talk? Are the stories in the Bible catching the attention of listeners? Do some of the sentences sound awkward or difficult to understand, but you're not sure how to improve them?

"Before this work on discourse, I was thinking, how can this really help the translation? But it has changed the translation - I am a believer now in discourse. You are helping us to think about where the pronouns should be used, for example. I see that for sure we overused the pronouns, making our translation a burden to our readers. We had never noticed that." (Yao translator, Malawi, 2019)

The Narrative Discourse Analysis for Translation Workshop can assist you in overcoming these challenges. It teaches the appropriate style and natural flow of the language from traditional stories and texts. Translators study these features in their own languages and in Biblical texts, and then apply what they have just learned directly to translation. Not only will you be able to recognize the features, but understand when and how they are used naturally in Scripture. With each new lesson, new features are learned and applied, and you will be able to see and hear a translation passage improve significantly.

Translation Blogs - *Joshua Jensen*



Joshua Jensen (Cambodia) publishes occasional blogs on translation and linguistic topics on the Logos blog site.

An "and" That Matters: Translating and Reciting John 14:6 - A verse that we like to use in evangelistic teaching and discipleship is John 14:6. You can probably quote the verse. Go ahead and finish it: "I am the way [*fill in the blank*]."

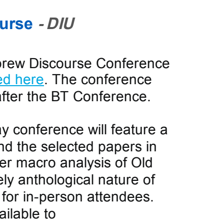
How did you finish the first sentence? Did you say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," or did you say, "I am the way, AND the truth, and the life"? Chances are good that you left out the first "and." If so, you're in good company (if you consider me and the King James Version good company, that is).

Chances are also good that you recited the verse with a particular pattern of stress or emphasis, represented by the following italics: "I am the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*."

Both of these things—the single "and," as well as the pattern of stress—can easily slip past our notice. But they reveal the ways the context of a verse shapes how we say it and how we understand it.

How to Say "But" in Biblical Hebrew: A Translator Looks at Genesis - Here's something you probably never thought to count: The ESV uses the word "but" 4,205 times. That's nearly once for every 7 verses. That's a lot. The NASB has "but" slightly more times, the NIV slightly fewer. But they're all in the same range. So what are translators looking at in the Hebrew when they say "but" in English? To help my own work as a Bible translator, and hopefully the work of other translators, I did an exploratory study in the Hebrew of Genesis to find out. Here I present some of the results from that study.

Prayer Focus - *Steve Quakenbush*



In preparation for the World Day of Prayer 2023 this November, the SIL Prayer Ministries Community of Practice will be hosting a two-part missiological reflection on The Role of Prayer in the Mission of God.

Lillian McKeown (Eurasia Prayer Strategy Coordinator) will be leading these sessions in September (investigating what Jesus taught on the role of prayer) and in October (reflecting on ways Jesus modelled prayer in His own life).

- 2023 September 26 Tues - 1400-1515 UTC (West) 9-10:15 am Dallas/ 3-4:15 pm London
- 2023 September 28 Thurs - 0500-0615 (East) 8-9:15 am Nairobi/ 12nn-1:15 pm Bangkok
- 2023 October 26 Thurs - 0500-0615 (East) 8-9:15 am Nairobi/ 12nn-1:15 pm Bangkok
- 2023 October 31 Tues - 1400-1515 UTC (West) 9-10:15 am Dallas/ 3-4:15 pm London

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Macro Analysis of Hebrew Poetic and Prophetic Discourse - *DIU*

Paper submissions for Dallas International University's (DIU) Hebrew Discourse Conference have closed. 18 papers have been accepted, which can be viewed here. The conference will be held on 18 October 2023 from 8:00am to 5:00 pm - right after the BT Conference.

Co-sponsored by SIL International and Fontes Press, this one-day conference will feature a plenary speaker (Benjamin J. Noonan), roundtable discussion, and the selected papers in three parallel sessions. The research question focuses on whether macro analysis of Old Testament poetic and prophetic books is possible, given the largely anthological nature of many of the texts. A light breakfast and full lunch will be provided for in-person attendees. Virtual attendance via Zoom is available. A discounted price is available to students. Register here.

Coming Events

- 2023 - 03-05 October. Africa Oral Bible Translation Online Consultation (UTC 12-15:00). Registration link: Use this link to register for AfOBT2023. Conference themes: *Emerging Models of Bible Translation* (Bryan Harmelink), *Oral Exegetical Tools* (Stephen and Tricia Stringer and Nathan Payne and team), *Oral Translation of the Psalms* (Sebastian Floor, Elizabeth Robar and team), *Quality Assurance and OBT* (Brian Kelly and Randall Lemley), *Transitioning MAST projects in Africa* (Johnstone Ndunde and Mbuthia Wairison)
- 2023 - 13-17 October. Bible Translation Conference, Dallas, Texas. Register now.
- 2023 - 18 October. Macro Analysis of Hebrew Poetic & Prophetic Discourse Event, DIU, Dallas, TX (with virtual option) Click here to register.
- 2024 - 1-28 May. Francophone Grammar for Translation. Cameroon. Registration form.
- 2024 - 27-30 May. EMDC. Chiangmai, Thailand
- 2024 - 24 June - 16 August. TCDW (Translation Consultant Development Workshop). Hybrid. Application deadline is 31 December 2023. Space is limited. Preference will be given to the best qualified applicants who apply before the deadline. To request an application or more information, please email Angeline Foo.
- 2024 - 09-29 October. Narrative Discourse Analysis for Translation Workshop. Nairobi, Kenya.

Useful Links

- Bible Translation Consultant Competencies
- Competency Manager (CBC) and Consultant Competencies Resources Site
- 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

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- 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*

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- Greg Carlson - *Pacific*
- 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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This newsletter is produced by SIL International Translation Services.
Editors are Tuula O'Rear and B 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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