

Pitjantjatara translation conference at Umawa



This year we held our first translators conference at Umuwa, a small community south of Ernabella that is the base for many Government services to the APY Lands. One translator remarked how good it was to be away from some of the distractions in the community to focus on the Old Testament translation.

The week was a great success. There were about 10-15 Pitjantjatjara translators who were able to attend, coming mainly from Amata and Ernabella, but also Oodnadatta and Adelaide. Some of the highlights included talking about some of the challenges of translating the Old Testament when working in busy communities, with little or no workspace and while facing the on-going challenges of caring for family. We talked about what it meant to 'get into the zone' for translation work, and how prayer and our own reading of God's word are crucial for this task. We looked at how each of the Old Testament books we are currently working on are structured and what their message was to the people of Israel and how that message applies to us today. We looked at how there are many prominent themes in the Old Testament – e.g. being made in God's image, looking after the creation, being in covenant relationship with a holy God, and needing sacrifice to atone for sin – that prepare us for reading the New Testament and ultimately are fulfilled in Jesus.



A PROJECT OF THE NORTHERN REGIONAL
COUNCIL OF THE UNITING ABORIGINAL
AND ISLANDER CHRISTIAN CONGRESS AND
THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
NORTHERN SYNOD



Pitjantjatjara translation conference at Umawa cont.

Dave Barnett



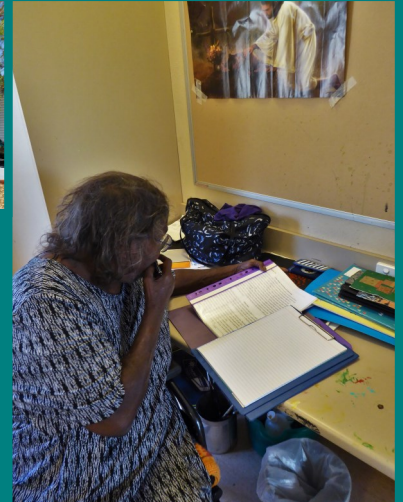
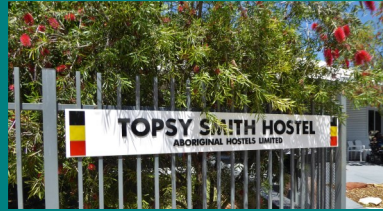
We also explored some of the different genres of the Old Testament, and noted what features of Pitjantjatjara needed changing when translating the Psalms as opposed to the Law, and then again when translating the Proverbs. Each translator also had opportunities to do some work on their own particular OT book and draw on the collective wisdom of the group to discuss and solve any problems (like what exactly was the Urim and Thumim? Where was it kept? How was it used? And, how on earth should we translate it into Pitjantjatjara?!) Perhaps, however, the most significant part of the week were the times chatting with one another over meals, hearing stories of one other's struggles and triumphs, and being able to pray for each other and be reminded of why we're persisting in doing this work: because God loves every family in the APY Lands and wants to make himself known to us all.

The translators left the conference with a renewed sense of calling to this work and an increased enthusiasm to translate these incredible Old Testament stories. For this, and all his blessings to us over the week, we are truly thankful to God.



Kanytjupai's commitment

Coordinate Issue #18 December

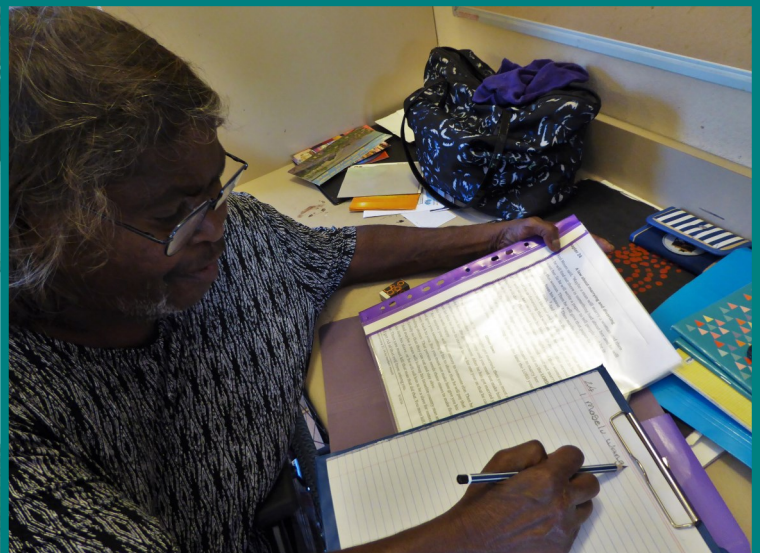


Before the Translator's Conference Kanytjupai Armstrong and I were talking about how to encourage the translators in their work. One of the things we talked about was trials and sufferings, and that a translator should not be surprised when difficulties come upon them.

Kanytjupai and her friend Margaret Dagg began their careers as Bible translators in 1989 working with Ann Eckert. And they are still translating to this day as well as mentoring the new translators. But Kanytjupai reminded me of the times she was treated badly or suffered great sadness especially when she was translating the New Testament.

But she found comfort in several passages in the New Testament that reminder her that this is normal. Paul says to Timothy, "Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be treated badly.**" (2 Timothy 3:12 NIV). But he also reminds us that, "**Our troubles** are small. They last only for a short time. But they are earning for us a glory that will last forever. It is greater than all our troubles." (1 Corinthians 4:17 NIV).

All the translators really respect Kanytjupai as an experienced translator and also as a great woman of faith. That is because she has had to suffer all kinds of trouble, but these troubles have proved that her faith is real and worth more than gold. When Christ returns her faith will bring great praise, honor and glory to God. (see 1 Peter 1:5-7)



Happenings in East Arnhem translation

Louise Macdonald



In East Arnhemland since the Djambarrpunu New Testament was published in 2008 there has been much motivation to begin translation work in many of the other languages spoken in East Arnhem. Committed translators began to work in partnership with AuSIL and Coordinate on many of these languages.

There have been a number of success stories with the Gospel of Mark completed in Wangurri last year. The Gospel of Mark in Dhanu'mi is nearing publication. However, work in many of the other languages had become stalled. So commencing at the Coordinate work shop last year in September we have had numerous meetings and conversations to try and overcome these obstacles. Two themes have been significant throughout all of these meetings – 'What is God calling us to do?' and 'How can the translation process be culturally appropriate for Yolŋu people?'

There have been two very significant meetings held in East Arnhem in the last year. Firstly the East Arnhem Area Council meeting for NRCC was held in April at Ramingining and translation issues dominated the agenda. Maratja Dhamarrandji (Support worker for NRCC) spoke of how different Yolŋu all are. Our languages are different and like in art, we each have to follow our own clan rules, each with our own style. Mätjarra Gurrawurra (Liyagawumirr translator) spoke movingly of her experience in the past, working with Miss Beulah Lowe "the work was transformational, it spoke to my heart, I sometimes became lost in the power of the Word" Mätjarra realised with Miss Lowe that "we will never achieve perfection, but we need to keep doing the work – God is giving us the motivation to do this for the people." From this meeting there was a commitment made to encourage and support this work through prayer and also to strive to use Yolŋu Matha where possible as the Front Translation.

After Ramingining a very strong weekly prayer group started their work. Every Wednesday the Scripture in Use workers from the Bible translation Centre at Galiwin'ku would put together prayer points as a text message and send this to people committed to praying over these points throughout East Arnhemland. This was powerful work which kept everyone up to date and made sure that God remained the focus of all the work.





Out of this came the second meeting in East Arnhemland at the Yirrkala church. We were cared for with food and accommodation by the Yirrkala congregation and this allowed representatives from AuSIL, NRCC, The Northern Synod of UCA and Coordinate to gather with about 15 translators. To have this much talent in one place makes this an historic event.

James 1:19-25 was our opening scripture:

Marrkapmirr walal narraku wäwa ga yapa, buthuru-bitjurnnydja God-Wañarrwalañawnydja dhärukku manymakunjun yan, rukitjthin manapul, ga yaka dhä-wapthurr yänayiny bondiñuwnydja lakaranharaw marngikunharawnydja marrtjinyaraw bala. Bulnha nathil gi galkurr; nurrunjuny nathil nhepi dhu ga nhina njunhiliyi God-Wañarrwal dhärukjur. Ga yaka yänayiny naramurriyi nula yolguny yolñuw, bili yakan nhe dhu nuriñiyi naramurriyiny dhärukthu ga nayanuy nhokiyinjal nhe galkikum yolñunhany, mähr walal dhu nhina dhuwurr-dhunupa God-Wañarrwal manymakjur romjur. Ganarrthula nula nhäny mala njunhi yätjkurnnydja, bala djalkthurra yan. Yakan gi buluny djäma nula nhäny yätjkurr; yänan nyilñ'maranhamirra nhunapinya nhe God-Wañarrwala, buthuru-bitjurra gi nhanju, bala märranjun njunhiyiny dhäruktja njunhi nayi nhirrparr dhuwaliyi nhokal nayanulil, bili njunhiyiny dhäruk ganydjarmirr warray, ganydjarr ga gäma walñakunharawnha nhuñu. Yo, näkuny God-Wañarrwuny dhäruk, bala djämamirriyanjun yänan njunhi nhaltjan nayi ga God-Wañarr waña nhokal. Nuli nhe dhu ga njunhi näma ganarrthamany, njunhiyiny nhakun nhe ga mayali'-wilkthunmirra nhunapinyan nhe.

This meeting gave the translators the opportunity to freely voice their concerns and give powerful testimony to the call God has made to them to continue with the work of Bible translation in their heart languages. The result of this meeting has been to recommit to our partnerships, to create a work plan that is designed to ensure that the call of God to translators is nurtured and that Yolñu have a strong voice in how decisions are made and what work is to be achieved. As the next article tells, this work has already born fruit.



Djanu: A Warramiri word

Margaret Miller



In October this year, the Warramiri Translation Team held in their hands their first draft of Mark's gospel! A priceless moment: to see Warramiri's very first book of the Bible drafted.

Warramiri people traditionally have lived on the remote horizons of north-east Arnhem Land, where whales cross deep seas, beside ancient trade routes for trepang and iron. These are all part of the Warramiri identity and of Guthadjaka. Guthadjaka lives at the northernmost tip of Elcho Island, at Gäwa

homeland, and is always seeking ways to promote the use of her language Warramiri in the home and the local Gäwa Christian School.

The Gupapuyŋu:Birrili clan connects with Warramiri, using the Warramiri language, a Djanu variety of Yolŋu Matha. Bepuka is a Gupapuyŋu:Birrili elder.

Since 2010 Guthadjaka has been joined by Bepuka to translate Mark's gospel into Warramiri. Undeterred by the obstacles of remoteness, and computer malfunctions, Guthadjaka returned from a recent East Arnhem Coordinate meeting, with a God-given resolve to set herself the task of completing the draft of the gospel of Mark into Warramiri with Bepuka's help. Bepuka gained daily support from AuSIL staff, Lynette and Mike Wilson. Lynette became Bepuka's computer assistant and in less than 3 months this team completed what they began in 2010: their first draft of the gospel of Mark.

Bepuka describes these recent months; "Lynette and I have been translating from Wangurri to Warramiri. It's a big job and wonderful. I am learning God's Word as well as the translation process. If there is something that we don't know, we go to the English [a back translation of the Wangurri] to find the meaning. We make sure we get the same meaning, like in an English Bible. We are aiming to translate it correctly into Warramiri, so that later when people read it, it will be accurate and understandable. When we get together, both Lynette and I pray. We pray for this Word. We get on with the work and even work into the night, working on the book of Mark. We've been doing our best on this work, but it will need to go to the elders for checking to see if they approve or want to correct it. I woke up feeling sick [one morning], and I had to leave my work at Yalu early. I was lying down to rest when Lynette and Michael came to pick me up to work on the translation. I completely forgot about feeling sick and got to work, and my sickness went away without any medicine. This is the way we've been doing it, daily: translating from Wangurri to Warramiri. This is the way I've worked with Lynette, my adopted niece. She is learning a lot about Wangurri and Warramiri through this and she is also teaching me about translation along the way."

Pray for those
checking Mark's
gospel's first
draft of
Warramiri
Team leader:
Guthadjaka
Bepuka

AuSIL staff:
Lynette Wilson



2014 I was having a conversation sometime in late 2014 with Kirsty Burgu and she said to me, "Minister you know that the Worrorra people are slowly dying? And with that the language is also dying?" Having said that, somehow she became quiet and stopped talking. I was saddened by her words and I did not want their Worrorra language to die. I thought that we as the church ought to play our role to enable people at Mowanjum to reclaim their language, but how? The issue that Kirsty raised troubled me for a few months.

I had been attending several of the Co-Ordinate meetings in 2013 and 2014. In one of those meetings Howard Amery asked, "Are you interested in doing some work on "Scripture in Use"?" I was taken aback.

2015 My car was on a recall and I needed to take it to Darwin. This was a great blessing for me as I saw this was an opportunity to meet up with Howard, while my vehicle was being fixed. So the arrangement was made to meet with Howard in February. Our project began with the loading of the computer and looking at the software. The project would involve transcribing John's Gospel from the original typed manuscript from Library archives on the computer. The original translation of John's Gospel into the Worrorra language was carried out by Rev James RB Love and three Worrorra men in 1933, but it had never been published.

So in April we started with John chapter 1 and we completed our initial transcribing of John's Gospel on the 21st December 2015. Since then we have been working on the process of continuous checking and re-checking of the accuracy of our work, and crosss-referencing these words to JRB Love's wordlists to assist in building a wordlist and additions to the Worrora dictionary.

2016: We the congregation at Mowanjum and especially the Worrorra speaking people were again blessed that Howard came all the way from Adelaide to Mowanjum to run a workshop in April. On the first day of workshopping there were four of us, Janet Oobagooma, Howard, Kirsty Burgu and myself. Kirsty, on hearing about our project, took a great interest to also be a part of our team. We welcomed Kirsty into our midst. An interesting element about Kirsty is that she has completed her Certificate 3 course in Theology at Nungalinya College. Being involved with John's Gospel would help her greatly in her future leadership role as a preacher and perhaps also doing Bible studies. Another good news for us is that another lady is also interested in joining us. We went through Rev Love's translation and the pronunciation of the words. It is our hope to do more of this, if possible. The second day was different in its approach and nature. Present in the workshop were Janet Oobagooma, Maree Klesch (from Batchelor Institute) Leah Umbagai, and myself. In this second workshop we concentrated mainly on the vowel sounds, both long and short, which are the key to good pronunciation. There are eight vowels altogether. And secondly we dealt with the consonants, many of which are the same as in English.

Janet, Kirsty and I were so grateful when Howard brought to us 6 bounded copies of "The Gospel according to St John in Worrorra". This is the work that we have been transcribing on the computer. With further research Howard was able to come up with a 'contemporary script'.

Again, Howard led us through the passages from John's Gospel. We looked at the language, the meaning of the words and the pronunciation. We are planning to continue this line of work into the future. And we are continuing to iron out our human mistakes.

We are very thankful for the divine presence and guidance.

As we are approaching the end of the year we at Mowanjum Uniting Church would like to wish you all a blessed Christmas and may that "Bright Morning Star" continue to guide us.



Nyimandum, Albert Barunga and Wundunmoi formed the translating team with Reverend Love to translate the Bible into Worrorra. They spent many hours and days together on the verandah of his home at Kunmunya, publishing Worrorra translations of the gospels according to St Mark and St Luke.

The Gospel according to St. John
in **Worrorra**



typed from the unpublished manuscript
by Rev JRB Love, Kunmunya Mission
translated into contemporary script by Howard Amery
in association with Mowanjum Uniting Church
and Northern Regional Council of Congress,
September 2016.

Linguist Lynn Heywood moves to Maningrida



15 years ago Monica Naliva (who was in the school bilingual program) and Rita Djitmu asked for Bible translation to happen. Many attempts were made to start but always other things got in the way.

Early this year Ndjebbena speakers in Maningrida put their request for Bible translation in their language to Dave and Kathy Glasgow, who then took this request to AuSIL in Darwin and Coordinate. Lynn Heywood has now answered this call and is settling into the UCA church house in Maningrida, learning to speak the language and to discover a new culture and many new relationships.

Monica Naliva says:

This lady's name is Lynn, she is the one that will be working with me and other elders of the Njebbana people to translate The Bible into Njebbana language. I'm already feeling excited and happy about this and I know that God will be with me and Lynn working beside me and her. Also Lynn, she shared her testimony to me and said to me "Monica, I believe God sent me to work with you",

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