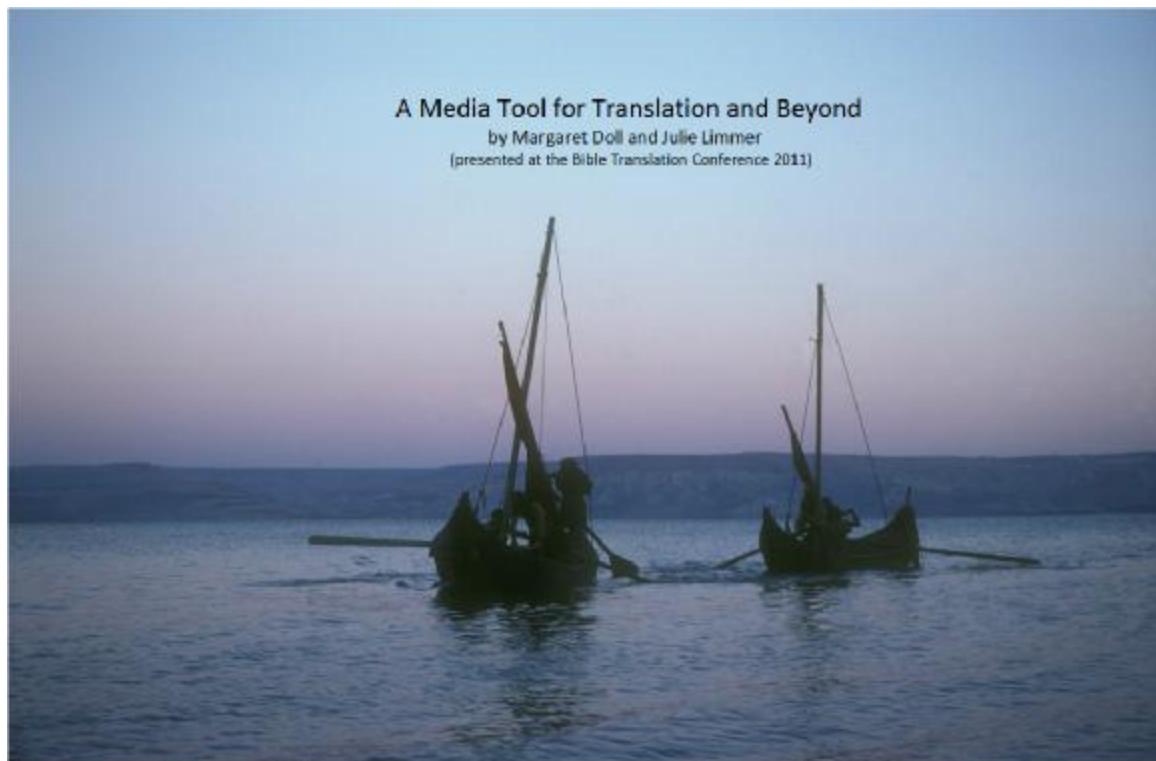


# A Media Tool for Translation and Beyond

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## Abstract

Not everybody can wait! Written translation often takes years. What if we could have Bible stories in video form in weeks? What if you had a tool to engage people in the Bible translation process while broadening access to the Scriptures? A new media strategy, introduced in a cluster project in Papua New Guinea with initial success, provides hands-on involvement engaging learners cognitively, emotionally, and physically, and generating ownership of the final product. The process, which involves recording Bible stories, can be used at any stage of a translation project. Digital images help convey the story culturally, historically, and geographically leading to learner-driven dialogue. The discussion among the national team can reveal implicit information and key terms, and can facilitate the effectiveness of explicit information. Scripts recorded in the vernacular, along with music and a choice of images for each story, are easily assembled into video. The video-stories can be shared in a number of formats, including cell phones.

There was a common reaction by PNG branch members when this strategy was explained and demonstrated at several workshops: "This is what we have been waiting for! Why didn't we know about this before?"

## **1. Introduction**

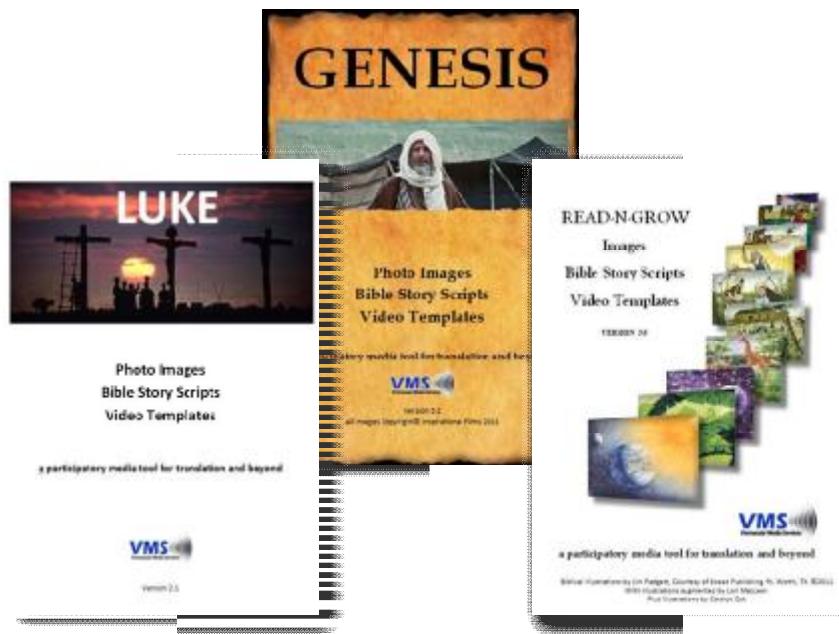
Over the years, SIL's Vernacular Media Services (VM, now part of SIL Global Publishing Services) has received many requests from field teams for illustrations to support and enhance Scripture use. The impact of visual materials has been evident in Scripture videos like the JESUS film. In an effort to produce something that would better fit the needs of minority languages, the VM Group developed what were called Customizable Slideshows. However, they were limited by the images that were available and the complexity and time needed to produce each story. Within a short period of time, the Lord brought together for us the needed technology, along with the acquisition of thousands of images (live photo images from the LUKE and GENESIS Scripture videos, and illustrations from the Read'n Grow Picture Bible), and a new focus born out of field research from studies in orality and storytelling.

With the development of Bible Story Media Tools, we came to the realization that we could, for the first time, offer our language teams something other than just another product; we could offer them a concept and a strategy that could empower them and their translation teams during multiple stages of the translation process. We have always offered end-of-program products like videos and audio programs, but never something that could be used in the beginning stages of translation. The strategy of using simple stories matched with images that can result in a simple video story is more than a product. Stories speak a language that is already a familiar medium of communication to an oral society. When carefully selected images reinforce each part of the story, it opens up a whole new area of common ground for the translator and the language helpers to have discussion. The process of discussing the pictures or selecting an alternate picture can expose ideas and concepts that would be hard to discover otherwise. The language helpers become the ones taking ownership of a story; and as the picture story develops, they are the ones moving it to a video story in which they have done the complete assembly and narration that can then be shared with their own people.

## **2. The Components of the Bible Story Media Tools**

We have three Bible Story Media Resource disc sets:

- LUKE Photo Images, Bible Story Scripts & Video Templates
- GENESIS Photo Images, Bible Story Scripts & Video Templates
- READ-N-GROW Images, Bible Story Scripts and Video Template



Each **resource** disc is a tool that is easy to use, engages the community, and is accessible, like low hanging fruit. Each set contains images, scripts and video templates, and all the software needed for recording and production.

## 2.1 Photo Images and Illustrations

The LUKE and GENESIS discs contain hundreds of photo images taken during the filming of the LUKE, JESUS, and GENESIS films. READ-N-GROW is a two-disc set that contains over 2,300 illustrations taken from the Read-N-Grow Picture Bible. Photo images come in three sizes: high quality for making prints, smaller for video quality, and thumbnails for scripts.

In the photo gallery on each disc, images are named according to the chapter they come from—for example, G12 for Genesis chapter 12, and then by sequence in the chapter. The gallery includes extra images for each story if the language team wants to expand a story or use a different picture or create their own stories.

Imagine the conversation at the translation table. These pictures can be used to fill in background information, minimizing the need for explicit information in a translation. They can generate discussion leading to the development of key terms. They generate interest, both at the table and in the community. The images could be used to produce simple read-alongs, literacy books, PowerPoint presentations, flipcharts, posters and more.

## 2.2 Bible Story Scripts for Translation

Scripts are provided in template form for easy translation. The length of the script automatically adjusts for each language. There are thumbnail pictures with each section of the script.

John Prepares the Way				
#	Image	Narration Text	Scripture Reference	Translation
1		John Prepares the Way	Matt. 3:4-11, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 1:9b, 3:1-17	
2		John, the child born to Zechariah and Elizabeth a few months before Jesus was born, grew and became strong physically and spiritually.	Luke 1:80	
3		He lived in the desert and wore clothes made from camel's hair. He had a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.	Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6	

LUKE contains scripts for 22 stories covering the birth, ministry, and death of Christ. GENESIS contains 15 scripts covering the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. READ-N-GROW contains 139 Bible story scripts from Creation to Revelation. The English scripts have been modified with translation principles in mind—such as eliminating confusing pronouns and idioms, and words with multiple meanings.

As an aid in translation, several of the scripts are available in other national languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, French for Francophone Africa, Tagalog, and Korean. Scripts have been translator and consultant-checked.

### 2.3 Video Templates

Each of the scripts has been loaded into a video template; so that once you have translated the script, you simply record your translation for each picture. The motion is already in the program and automatically adjusts to the length of your text. Tutorials are included on the disc.



Software included in each set:

- Photo Story 3
- Software for putting videos on DVDs and mobile phones

### **3. Rationale**

Stories are powerful because they engage learners at a deep level; they draw us into an experience at more than the cognitive level, engaging our spirit, our imagination, and our heart. This engagement is complex and holistic. Learning through stories is a multi-faceted process: stories are heard, told, and recognized. Hearing a story implies reception; the story comes from the outside and must be received and interpreted by the learner. When the learner becomes the storyteller, she moves from a cognitive understanding of a concept to link it to her own experience. In this connection new learning takes place (Clark and Rossiter 2008).

Non-Western learning tradition is holistic and contextual. It engages the mind, body, spirit and emotions. It involves learning through experience under conditions that facilitate the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, aptitudes, values and interests in order to enhance performance, bring about change, or solve practical problems. In contrast, the West “separates secular and sacred knowledge and thus fragments knowledge...learning is forgotten soon...because it was never grounded or connected to life processes” (Merriam and Kim 2008, 77, quoting Benally, 1997, 84). In order to best accommodate non-Western learning styles, it is important to recognize the interrelationships of the learner’s body, cognition, emotion, and spirituality; to become aware that people learn through experience with real issues in community (Merriam and Kim 2008, 77).

The Bible Story Media Tools are designed to engage discussion; they involve physical, mental, emotional and spiritual engagement. Translating the stories, learning the stories, choosing the images, engaging in the discussions for clarification and learning the context of the stories, all involve the participants holistically. This media tool is ‘participatory’ because participants analyze, decide, plan and create the stories with corresponding images of their choice. They can be used in language development work because dialogue generated during the process will help members of the language group “think and talk more deeply about different aspects of their language” (Hasselbring 2010), draw out the beliefs and knowledge of the participants, lead to the establishment of key terms, and foster ownership by the community. The participants not only engage in creating a Bible story video, they come away having learned the stories and their contexts well enough to teach them to others. Scripture texts come alive through adding movement to carefully selected photos or images. With careful attention to biblical accuracy, key terms and a clearly understandable message, these stories can help fill the literacy gap and fuel the desire to know God and His Word. Developing the stories and images can be used as an effective, alternative place to begin Bible translation. These tools draw non-believers to seek God and motivate believers to look more deeply into the translated Scriptures. “Every culture uses stories to tell us what it means to be

human, what kind of world we live in, why there is suffering and pain, and what, if anything, we can do to deal with that suffering and pain" (Willis 2004, 33).

## 4 Using the Media Tool in PNG

In March 2011, Julie returned from a six-month assignment in Papua New Guinea where she gave several workshops sharing about VM's new Bible Story Media Tools. Translators, language development and literacy workers, and Scripture engagement people all became excited at their potential uses.

Earlier in the fall (2010) in PNG, one translator who had worked with the VM development team used the GENESIS resource disc with participants (many of them new to the program) from nine different language groups at a two-week translation workshop. Here is a quote from a letter to her supporters:

"Project VITAL could not have gone better! It was truly a gift to work with the participants from nine different language groups! We completed recording four Abraham stories in all nine languages, and sent DVDs home with all the groups. It was also a pleasure to see how thrilled the participants were with their work, and that the templates were easy to use. By the end of the course, the participants were recording each other, and I was there only to provide guidance. Hopefully, the materials and the knowledge will continue to be useful in future VITAL courses. Please pray that God would use the videos to touch many lives in the Milne Bay area" (Laura Romer 2011).

When the participants returned from their villages for the February course, the translator got this feedback about the videos:

"They were a great success in the villages. And people are hungry for more! They were saying that it is especially great for those who cannot read. It even seemed to make a difference in finally helping the community understand the value of the work being done at the VITAL courses. For example, the Ghayavi community sent along 467kg of bananas to show their support of the program. Praise God that these video resources are bearing fruit" (Romer 2011).

Correna Janzen is a beginning translator in PNG. After learning about these resources at a workshop, she decided to introduce one of the stories as a starting place for Bible translation. Here is Correna's testimony about the experience:

"We used the story "A Wife for Isaac" as a training resource. We used the story to teach 10 Sos Kundi men the steps of translation. The majority of these men had never done any translation before. In two weeks, they learned the basics of how to produce a rough draft and then step by step take the translation all the way through to a village check. Producing the video gave the men a purpose for working on their reading fluency. We did the entire project right in the village. We added music and sound effects. The result was a good quality video. Before

we left the village, we showed the video to a crowd of at least 1,000 people. Working on the video was a fun way to train a group of men in translation and literacy. A few weeks later, we used the video for Scripture Use. We plan to begin working on the Christmas Story videos soon" (Correna Janzen 2011).

## 5. Testimonials

### ***From Africa***

Naphtaly is a Bible translator for the Suba people in Kenya. The Suba New Testament was dedicated in April of 2011. Many of the Suba people are unable to read, and they and their language have been very downtrodden. The only esteem and value for their language was when the JESUS film was dubbed into Suba. So Naphtaly now desires to develop audio recordings and other materials to encourage language development. He visited the VM department in Waxhaw; and when he saw what we had developed for making Bible story videos, he was excited by all the potential of these resources. Naphtaly said the scripts were so easy to translate that he wanted a microphone right there on the spot. When he saw a sample Bible story video, he asked about adding text (YES!) or turning them into little read-along booklets (YES!). Could these little stories also be posted to You-Tube? (YES!) and cell phones? (YES!). He was so amazed that he held the disk up and kept saying, "All this is on there?" And, all this is: the program for making the videos, all the pictures from the LUKE or GENESIS films, the software programs that will convert it for DVD or mobile phones, step-by-step tutorials, and all the scripts and video templates. He could not believe that all this was on a single disk. Naphtaly will now have one more way to make God's Word known, to involve the people in his language community in the project themselves, and to give them materials for ongoing language development.

### ***From Australia***

Wangaar is an aboriginal woman who lives on an island off the coast of Australia. She taught herself how to use a computer and figured out on her own how to put audio Scriptures onto cell phones. We showed her how to put videos on cell phones as well. In less than four hours, she had translated and created a Bible story video and put it on her cell phone.

Within several days these videos had gone viral in the village. Everyone had them on their cell phones. Within a few weeks, Wangaar heard her neighbor's children in the playground reciting Bible stories. When Wangaar asked their mother how they learned them, she said: every night my children fight over my cell phone because they want to listen to and see the Bible stories before they go to bed.

### ***From PNG***

John and Lena Allen are missionaries in PNG with That They May Know. John is a translator and Lena is a nurse who runs a clinic with no doctor. John heard about the Bible Story Media Tool at an airshow in Oshkosh and was excited because he already has Luke and Genesis translated into Kamea. Now he will translate the Luke and Genesis stories into Kamea using the media tool with the photo images to show to their people.

People from many different language groups come to Lena's clinic. They often need to wait several hours before seeing the nurse. Lena intends to translate the stories into the trade language, Tok Pisin, get them checked for accuracy and fluidity, and show them on the monitor in the clinic waiting room. She will also use the Photo Story 3 program on the disc to make her own simple videos with health and hygiene messages to use for health care training interspersed with the Bible story videos in the waiting room.

## 6. What's Next?

The skintones of all of the illustrations on the READ-N-GROW discs are being darkened to a more Mediterranean tone. The work is being hand-done by a graphic artist and will be available in our next release.

Global Publishing's VM Group has been given permission to develop still images and scripts from UBS's Bible Lands as Classroom DVD series. This series was filmed in Israel and the Middle East. It includes topics on geography, climate and agriculture; Old and New Testament history and culture, including information on kings and surrounding nations, descriptions of the tabernacle and synagogues, customs such as burial, mourning, stoning, fishing; religions of the ancient tribes of the area. These assets will be developed and included in a future release of the Bible Story Media Tool.

This addition to the media tool will help add geographical, cultural, and historical background information to the context of the stories. Among other benefits, this can help national and indigenous pastors and lay leaders to lead Bible studies and teach the stories of the Bible with a more thorough understanding of the contexts.

For more information, see these tools online: <http://vmscat.sparkdev.org>

See a Demo version of ***GENESIS Photo Images, Bible Story Scripts & Video Templates*** resource disc: <http://genesisdemo.sparkdev.org/>

For other inquiries, contact [VMS-Projects@sil.org](mailto:VMS-Projects@sil.org)

## Appendix

### Recording with Oral-oriented People—the Prompter Technique

**Definition:** The prompter technique uses one person with a script (as in a drama or play) to prompt another person to speak. It is a phrase-by-phrase method where a sentence or a part of a sentence is read and a narrator/speaker repeats it into the microphone.

#### Rationale:

- The speaker is freed from the mechanics of reading.
- Readers often sound as though they are reading.
- Sometimes the person who is the best choice as a speaker is not a fluent mother-tongue reader—especially at the beginning of a translation project.

**Purpose:** This method allows the speaker to concentrate on how the words should be said with natural expression, inflection and emotion—resulting in a recording that sounds natural, not read.

#### Persons Involved:

The **prompter**—(usually a MT translator or other person able to read the language naturally and fluently)—reads and practices the script phrase by phrase with the speaker.

The **narrator/speaker**— is the person whose voice is recorded. It is his or her job to repeat the phrases with expression-sounding clear and natural.

The **recordist** – is the audio technician who does the recording and editing.

#### Preparation before recording:

Select a passage to be recorded. Rehearsals and script refinement should be done ahead of time—not during the recording session. (However, minimal changes will still occur during recording and playback as people hear the project.)

#### **Prompter Technique procedure for recording with non-readers:**

Here is a narrative description of the Prompter Technique process:

The **prompter** reads a portion of the script out loud to the **narrator/speaker**. He may read several verses to give context for the recording.

Then the **prompter** reads a sentence or part of a sentence (preferably from punctuation to punctuation). The **speaker** repeats it. They practice it until they are both satisfied with it. If it takes more than one or two attempts to remember the phrase and say it naturally, the phrase may need to be shortened.

The **recordist** (the technician or person doing the audio recording) does a few sample recordings as the **speaker** practices and adjusts the volume and the microphone placement for that **speaker**.

The **prompter** will let the **recordist** know when they are ready. Then the **prompter** says the phrase (or sentence) one more time and the **recordist** gives an agreed-upon signal and begins recording as the **speaker** repeats the phrase.

Repeat this process until the selected section has been recorded.

*Caution:* If you record phrase-by-phrase, it is important to control the inflection at the end of phrases.

**Here is a step-by-step description of the Promter Technique process:**

During the recording session:

1. Work out a system of signals that everyone agrees on. (For example, the recordist will say “1,2, record”, or give a hand signal or nod.)
2. Select the passage to be read and recorded.
3. Break the passage into the size of phrases the speaker needs. Whenever possible, record from punctuation to punctuation.
4. Practice (rehearse) a time or two until you get the right effect for the voice and text.
5. If changes are made to the script to make it sound more conversational and natural, note these changes on the script so the difference will be understood during editing.
6. Record phrase by phrase. The **recordist** needs to note time ‘in’ and ‘out’ on the script.

**Keep a journal (log, notebook) for your recording sessions.** Keeping good records (notes) will save time and frustration, if you have to go back and re-record something later.

**Modified prompter method for recording with non-fluent readers when the prompter is not a mother-tongue speaker**

Select a passage to be recorded.

- The **prompter** encourages the **reader** to read a portion of the passage aloud.
- The prompter follows along in the text and stops the reader when an error occurs. Have him correct and repeat mispronounced words, and practice for flow.
- Connect those words to the words preceding and following.
- Have the **reader** read the portion (usually a sentence, verse or paragraph depending on initial fluency) again until it flows and sounds natural.
- Record the part that is ready. And continue to work on each passage this way.

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