

# SILA



SUMMER INSTITUTE OF  
LINGUISTICS AUSTRALIA

## ANNUAL REPORT

January to December 2019



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## 1. The Purpose of the Summer Institute of Linguistics Australia

The purpose of the Summer Institute of Linguistics Australia (SILA) is to serve minority language communities worldwide through language development activities. SILA does this through integrated programs of vernacular language study, literacy, translation, and development. Such programs facilitate understanding and communication, and help alleviate poverty, health problems and the disadvantaged state of these communities. SILA recognises that language is the building block for development activities in all of these areas.

To facilitate this purpose, SILA carries out, promotes or supports the following activities:

- effective training in language description and development
- specialised consulting to language development projects
- promotion and funding support of language and community development projects in ethnolinguistic communities



All of SILA's work is people-centred and community based. It is concerned with all aspects of human life. There is an emphasis on training and partnership with indigenous people, and the development of locally owned sustainable programs. Promotion of the work of SILA is assisted within Australia by its major partner organisation, Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia, with whom an agreement for services has been signed.

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## 2. Directors and Board meetings

The Board of SIL Australia is elected at its Biennial Conference. Approximately half of the Board members are elected each two years and serve for not more than four years without re-election. The most recent Biennial Conference of SILA was held in May 2019. At this time, it was agreed that the Chair of the Wycliffe Australia Board, an ex-officio position on the Board would be removed. The following are the names of the Directors of SILA who served in 2019:

Dr David Nicholls	Chair (from April 2016) (Board Member since 2013; Associate Area Director, Pacific Area, SIL International; Melbourne)
Mr Timothy Wilson	Treasurer (from April 1991) (Board Member since 1991; Chartered Accountant; Melbourne)
Ms Gillian Asquith	Vice Chair (from November 2016) (Board member since May 2015; Lecturer, Melbourne School of Theology; Melbourne)
Rev Graydon Colville	Until May 2019 (Board Member from 2005; International Director, Global Recordings Network; Sydney)
Mr Greg Conwell	Until February 2019 (Board Member from May 2015; Coordinator, Next Step Development, Wycliffe Australia, CEO Wycliffe Relief and Development Foundation; Melbourne)
Mr Paul Eckert OAM	Until May 2019 (Board Member from 2009; Production Coordinator, Remote and Indigenous Ministry Support, Bible Society Australia; Adelaide)
Dr Thomas Kimber	(Board Member since April 2017; Dean of Faculty, Senior Lecturer, Head of Postgraduate Coursework Department Melbourne School of Theology; Melbourne)
Mrs Roslyn Manson	(Board Member since May 2015; Care and Wellbeing, SIL Australia; Global Spiritual Formation Coordinator, SIL International, Spiritual Director; Melbourne)

Meetings of the full Board were held: 23 February, 17 April, 3 May, 10 August, and 8-9 November 2019. The Board Development Committee and Nominating Committee met as required between the Board meetings. The Annual General Meeting of SILA, in accordance with the requirements of ASIC legislation, was held on 3 May 2019.

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### 3. SILA program activities

Graham Scott served as Principal Executive Officer (PEO) for the period. The PEO serves as both the CEO of SILA and the Principal of the training program.

SILA is associated with SIL International as a 'Collegial Organisation', with a Memorandum of Understanding between the bodies. The MoU is the primary document expressing the formal agreement between the two bodies. This connection provides a formal means of input and feedback within the international corporation for personnel, training and language development projects.

#### a. SILA training

During 2019 training for language description and development continued to be delivered at the SILA campus, Kangaroo Ground, Victoria. For 69 years SILA has provided training in language learning, descriptive and applied linguistics, and literacy for SIL workers, members of other organisations, and members of the public.

In 2019 SILA delivered accredited training in partnership with Melbourne School of Theology (MST) a college affiliated with the Australian College of Theology (ACT). SILA delivered its training as units in an MST Master of Arts (Ministry), a Graduate Diploma of Divinity and a Diploma of Ministry (Pathway 2).

At the end of 2018 SILA was informed by MST that the partnership would not be able to continue past the end of 2019. This required SILA to seek an alternative organisation as an accreditation partner. An MOU was signed with Eastern College Australia, a partner of MST, in August 2019 with delivery anticipated to begin in January 2020.

SILA's training and consulting operations rely on volunteer staff. Academic staff consisted of both permanent and sessional personnel with considerable field experience in linguistics and language development activities. Support staff operated the administration office, library, student support services, IT services, and the occasional child-minding program.

#### Summer Semester

SILA's 6-week summer semester serves as an intensive introduction to the yearlong courses as well as providing a stand-alone non-accredited introductory course called *Launch* for students studying language learning, phonetics, basic linguistic analysis and anthropology.

The course was non-accredited in 2019 unless students were enrolled at MST. Ten students studied over the summer: seven were MST students studying at graduate level, and four were *Launch* students, not taking the course for credit. Non-accredited subjects taught were Language Awareness, Cultural Anthropology, Language Learning, and Phonetics. MST students were enrolled in the Linguistics and Language Learning unit.



Launch Students 2019

## Semesters 1 and 2

There were fifteen students in Semester 1 and fourteen in Semester 2, a total of sixteen overall. Six were full-time and two were distance students. Two were enrolled in the MST MA (Ministry), seven students were enrolled in the MST Graduate Diploma of Divinity, four in the MST Graduate Certificate of Divinity, two in the MST Diploma of Ministry (Pathway 2) and one MST student enrolled in a Master of Ministry took one unit.

The Master's units were taught by intensive with a guest lecturer co-teaching the Semester 1 unit. All units were delivered at the SILA campus at Kangaroo Ground, or online. One unit was offered by split intensive in Semester 2.

In 2019 five students graduated with a Graduate Diploma of Divinity, four with a Graduate Certificate of Divinity and two with a Diploma of Ministry. These students will prepare for, or return to, service in language development work in Africa, Central America and the Pacific.

For a number of years SILA has had plans to provide a pathway to tertiary education for Pacific Islanders with experience in translation and language development who have not had the opportunity to acquire formal qualifications. In 2019 SILA welcomed two members of Bible Translation Association of PNG (BTA) to Kangaroo Ground to study for the year. They graduated with diplomas which included three new units of study specifically developed for those who have not had the opportunity for higher education. It is hoped that these are just the first in a potential series of groups of translators in the one-year diploma. The program is designed to establish them with training that would be highly respected in their social contexts and enables them to competently coordinate language projects and mentor others like themselves in years to come.

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## **SILA Academic Governance**

The partnership with MST has meant that the SILA training operations have been incorporated into the academic governance structure of MST.

Throughout the year, an internal Education Committee comprising SILA academic staff processes the academic matters needing development and documentation.

## **Promotion of academic activity in major discipline areas**

Academic perspectives of SIL Australia are enhanced by:

- seminars, workshops and visiting lecturers
- attendance by SILA staff at academic conferences and seminars relating to the disciplines taught
- staff member involvement in research and supervision of higher degree students
- the involvement of several SILA members in the development of computer software to aid translation of texts in related languages

## **Professional development and scholarship**

### **Study Programs**

Eight staff or sessional staff members were enrolled in formal study programs in 2019, three in PhDs, four in Master's degrees and one in a Graduate Certificate.

### **Conferences**

Staff attended a variety of conferences overseas. Three staff attended the SIL and Partners Meeting in Indonesia, and four staff attended the biennial Bible Translation Conference in Dallas, Texas. One staff member attended the CLITICS (Competent Linguists Training in Consultant Skills) conference in Chiang Mai and one staff member attended the Inclusion, Mobility and Multilingual Education Conference in Bangkok. One of the SILA software developers attended a UNESCO language technology conference in Paris, France and presented at HELISET, an Indigenous languages conference in Canada, and at an Australian Indigenous languages conference in Darwin.

Staff attended a number of conferences in Melbourne, including the ACT Registrars Conference, Evangelical Women in Academia Conference, Paradosis and the biennial conference of the Institute of Professional Editors.

### **Seminars, Lectures and Workshops**

Staff attended a variety of seminars, webinars and other training events on diverse topics such as literacy and multilingualism, participatory orthography development and orthography use, editing, strategic planning, Spiritual Direction, and use of Paratext software.

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One staff member attended a Language Learning workshop in Thailand and another was a participant in 'Four Pillars,' an SIL International leadership development event, in Denpasar. Staff members also attended workshops in editing digital content and facilitator training.

A 'Trends and Issues in Translation' seminar held on campus was attended by many staff, as was a 'Languages Matter' seminar, also held on campus. A number of staff members attended a 'Communities on the Move' three-day workshop (see more below).

Several staff members are involved in communities of practice in areas such as language program management, translation, leadership development, strategic planning and staff care.

### **Professional Standards Registration Requirements**

One staff member participated in weekly supervision with a Spiritual Director, monthly peer group supervision, and monthly Spiritual Direction to maintain their registration as a Spiritual Director.

### **Bruce Hooley Dinner 17 July 2019**

At the second annual dinner and lecture Maik Gibson (PhD, MPhil, BA (Linguistics)), International Sociolinguistics Coordinator for SIL International presented a lecture titled 'Is multilingualism normal? A view from the Bible and a look forward'. Dr Gibson outlined examples of multilingual individuals and communities in the Bible and encouraged those present to embrace the possibilities and opportunities offered by multilingualism in our lives and ministries.



Dr Maik Gibson speaking about multilingualism in the Bible

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## **Communities on the Move: Multilingualism, Urbanisation and Diaspora in the Pacific 16-18 July 2019**

The workshop, hosted jointly by SIL Pacific and SIL Australia, brought together staff from many SIL Operational Units (OUs) in the Pacific region, as well as staff from the Seed Company and Wycliffe Bible Translators New Zealand. The presenters, Dr Stephen Quakenbush (Director of Strategic Initiatives) and Dr Maik Gibson (International Sociolinguistics Coordinator) both from SIL International, offered information about migration patterns, diaspora communities involved with language development work, and the ways in which SIL International is adapting to the current world linguistic situation. Jason Griffiths (SIL Pacific Area Director) facilitated group discussions as participants considered the multilingual nature of their own contexts, as well as the impact and possibilities of urbanisation and diaspora on language communities and language development work. The final day of the workshop allowed time for developing plans for the next steps participants and their organisations could take, and drafting action plans which included people who should be involved and possible time frames.



Workshop participants in group discussions

## **Research Outputs in 2019**

Several staff members presented papers at conferences or seminars and one had a book review which is to be published:

### **Christine Brodie**

Brodie, Christine. 2019. Beeman and Urow. 'Strengthening the bridge between languages.' Book review to be published in *Literati Journal*, Jan 2020.

### **Erik Brommers**

Brommers, Erik. 2019. 'Bible translation on your phone: Adapt It Mobile.' Paper presented at Bible Translation Conference, Dallas, TX, 12 October.

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**Deborah Conwell**

Conwell, Deborah. 2019. 'The relevance of Obadiah.' Paper presented at Bible Translation Conference, Dallas, TX, 15 October.

**Roslyn Manson**

Manson, Roslyn. 2019. 'Taking spiritual direction from the chair to the labyrinth.' Paper presented at 'Spiritual Direction without Borders' Research Symposium, Melbourne, 21 August.

**Bruce Symons**

Symons, Bruce. 2019. 'Onesimus and reconciliation in Colossians.' Paper presented at Postgraduate Seminar, Melbourne School of Theology, Melbourne, 17 October.

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## b. Funding of development projects

### SILA Overseas Aid and Development Fund

SILA's Overseas Aid and Development Fund is a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) fund which provides assistance to literacy and education development projects. During the reporting period, a total of \$23,940 was raised through donations and \$11,494 was distributed via World Relief Australia (WRA) for projects.

SILA has supported the **China Minority Education (ChiME) project** through the Overseas Aid and Development Fund since 2014. The ChiME project concluded in late 2019. ChiME is managed by SILA consultant Dr Brian Billard, with Dr Liz Billard acting as education consultant. The objectives of the project are (1) to transition the program in Jianchuan, especially the Shilong preschool program, to long-term sustainable local control and operation and (2) to transfer knowledge and experience from that program to national agencies with the capacity and motivation to replicate the program to the benefit of other remote minority communities in China.

The first objective was achieved in 2018. Two cooperation contracts were signed with local universities in 2016 to meet the second objective. One university disengaged after 2017 but cooperation with Dali University continued through to successful completion and handover in 2019.



Final meeting with David Li, Yunnan Minority Affairs Commission Deputy Director

The **Mayoyao mother-tongue based multilingual education project** in the Philippines has now been running for three years and was due to be completed at the end of 2019. The final workshop was to take place in October but was postponed to April 2020 when more participants would be available.

The primary focus of this project is to support national teachers in the Mayoyao area to develop reading books and curriculum materials in the local Mayoyao language for

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children in Kindergarten to Grade 3. These materials are to help students from Kindergarten to Grade 3 develop foundational literacy skills in their local language before also acquiring the national languages of Filipino and English.



Mayoyao workshop participants preparing materials

## **World Relief Australia**

SILA is a signatory to the World Relief Australia Code of Conduct. As a signatory, SILA wishes to express its commitment to the responsible and effective use of donations, to helping the poor and needy in developing countries irrespective of nationality, race, gender, political conviction or religious belief, and to improving the quality and effectiveness of SILA development initiatives.

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### **c. Consultant support for language development projects**

SILA provides specialist consultant services to entities and partners of SIL International where language development work is being carried out.

#### **China Minority Education (ChiME) Project**

The ChiME project is based on the work SILA consultants Dr Brian Billard and Dr Liz Billard did in establishing a pilot preschool bilingual education program among the Bai people of Shilong village, Jianchuan County from 2001 to 2009. The Billards concluded their work in this project near the end of 2019. During 2019 Brian made two final visits to Dali University in March and August. The cooperation from this university continued through to successful completion and handover by the end of 2019.

The academic team at Dali University acknowledged a number of benefits of the project. One such benefit is seeing the ChiME materials as a valuable resource that they will continue to study and apply, not to blindly follow the processes that Brian and Liz used with the Bai people in the preschool program, but to understand the principles that made the Shilong program a success and to use these principles to create programs for other regions that are specially tailored for those regions.

The project has also delivered materials in English and Chinese and PowerPoint presentations covering a series of agreed topics. The Chinese version of these materials will be sponsored for publication in China by Dali University. In addition to these materials, the Billards have produced a large archive of all the documentary resources used by Liz Billard through the process of researching needs, curriculum planning, curriculum development, teacher training and curriculum delivery for the Shilong village preschool program. These materials are also being made available for people working with other minority people groups internationally. These are initially available through SIL Australia but will also be available internationally later.



Brian with the Dali team in August

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## Mayoyao Mother-Tongue Based Multilingual Education Project

SILA advisors Christine Brodie and Robyn Terrey visited Mayoyao for the fifth time in April 2019. The focus this year was on developing a better understanding of 'bridging' from mother-tongue to the national languages of Filipino and English. This included developing agreed definitions for grammar concepts in the local language so that teachers could see the similarities and differences in languages.

The workshop had 25 teachers spanning Kindergarten to Grade 3. Teachers were also able to access some additional local illustrators who provided high quality drawings reflecting local cultural scenes and practices. It was discovered that there were no child-appropriate poems written in the local language. This created a problem for teachers in fulfilling curriculum goals relating to rhyme and poetry so that was also addressed in this workshop. Thirty works were created and collated into a short booklet form and distributed to teachers.



Carmen teaching about writing poetry



Resources for making instructional materials

An SIL colleague who has previously lived in the Mayoyao community and was instrumental in helping them to document the language and develop the orthography has been helping to proofread, edit and provide some additional advice to enhance some of the materials that have been developed during the workshops, particularly those relating to grammar and orthography.

By the end of the year partners at the Translators Association of the Philippines (TAP) had completed translating a second group of texts into Filipino, which are being formatted for publication. The teachers and students will be able to access a copy of the books they have made in Mayoyao, Filipino and English languages. This supports the Department of Education requirement that all students will become literate in all three languages.

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Christine had the opportunity to make a short presentation of the Mayoyao MTB-MLE Project at the Inclusion, Mobility and Multilingual Education Conference in Bangkok, 24-26 September 2019. The focus of the presentation was on the hands-on, interactive workshop approach to learning that collaborates with teachers to develop a responsive professional learning program.

## Language Technology

### Software Development Project

The project had another successful year. Adapt It continues to have good impact in various places round the globe. The development team works together well, though physically separated from each other. Work continues on the desktop version of Adapt It (AID), also on Adapt It Mobile (AIM) and Key It (KIT) (a scripture keyboarding mobile app). The team includes two full-time SIL developers from the USA who are remotely assigned to SIL Australia. They are an indispensable part of the operation.

Principal areas of focus in 2019 were:

- **AID**—Version 6.9.4 was released in early June 2019. Part time team member, Leon Pearl, has nearly completed a much improved, simplified, and faster way to do the Knowledge Base sharing feature - yet to appear in a release. Surgery and COVID-19 have interfered in our schedule. The source text parsing is being improved to support USFM version 3.0 and later so Adapt It will be able to handle the complex markup in source text from the Digital Bible Library. This will be ready in 2020.
- **AIM**—Erik continues to add useful features, and support for tablet installations too.
- **KeyIt** development was temporarily on hold, but design changes and a new set for developing were investigated by Graeme late in 2019.
- **Help Desk work**—Bruce Waters, team manager, continues to be the principal Help Desk person. Nearly all user bug or feature enhancement reports have been handled successfully, and requests for advice responded to. Some feature enhancements will be completed in 2020.
- **Training Workshop**—The Gove workshop in May 2019 was very successful. Six different Yolngu languages commenced work on adapting the New Testament.

## Keyman Team

A second software development team is headed up by Marc Durdin. In 2019, this team continued its work on Keyman which was originally created in 1993 to type Lao on Windows, and is now a free and open source keyboarding platform which allows anyone to write a keyboard layout for their language. Keyman is available for many platforms, including Windows, macOS, iOS, Android, Linux and the web.

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In October the Keyman team released version 12 which includes the predictive text feature. This tool has the potential to aid communities with low literacy, particularly in endangered languages and many of the minority language groups SIL serves around the world. Where language groups have low literacy or are only just beginning to have a written script for their language, these suggestions on how to finish a word help standardise spelling and make typing less difficult for users. Version 13 is expected in early 2020.

Language communities are now invited to start building word lists for their language which Keyman will use a word repository for offering predictive text suggestions. [Learn more about Keyman on the website](#)



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## 4. Financial statements

### SIL Australia

#### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 31 December 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Donations and gifts	48,360	23,173
Contribution from WBTA	17,142	17,131
Interest income	7,322	6,129
Rent and accommodation income	68,098	64,533
Tuition, course and other service fees	115,482	73,704
Other revenue	53,593	29,366
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>309,997</b>	<b>214,036</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Accounting and audit fees	4,275	8,150
Computer, library and other equipment	24,206	14,806
Depreciation expense	15,251	11,127
Donations, gifts and contributions	79,888	52,500
Employee costs	41,460	41,841
General office expenses	29,851	20,776
Insurance expense	11,819	10,157
Subscriptions	11,863	11,386
Training and other staff costs	30,512	28,958
Travel expenses	5,028	13,633
Utilities and rates	10,610	9,606
Other expenses	23,868	15,512
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>288,631</b>	<b>238,452</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit for the year attributable to the members of Summer Institute of Linguistics Aust.</b>	<b>21,366</b>	<b>-24,416</b>

**SIL Australia**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As at 31 December 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Assets</b>		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	298,342	227,567
Trade and other receivables	18,686	8,913
Financial assets	100,000	155,000
Other assets	3,355	3,131
Non-current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	49,425	53,932
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>469,808</b>	<b>448,543</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	5,217	3,557
Employee benefits	2,054	1,815
Other liabilities	4,000	6,000
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>11,271</b>	<b>11,372</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>458,537</b>	<b>437,171</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Reserves	93,802	131,857
Retained earnings	364,735	305,314
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>458,537</b>	<b>437,171</b>

*Audited full financial statements are available on request.*

**SIL Australia**  
**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**For the Year Ended 31 December 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Operating Activities:</b>		
Receipts from customers	292,902	226,089
Payments to suppliers and employees	-273,705	-233,317
Interest received	7,322	6,129
<b>Net cash provided by/used in operating activities</b>	<b>26,519</b>	<b>-1,099</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities:</b>		
Payment for financial assets	55,000	0
Payments for property, plant and equipment	-10,744	-36,764
<b>Net cash provided by/used in investing activities</b>	<b>44,256</b>	<b>-36,764</b>
Net increase/decrease in cash and cash equivalents held	70,775	-37,863
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	227,567	265,430
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year</b>	<b>298,342</b>	<b>227,567</b>



## World Relief Australia

**Summer Institute of Linguistics Australia** partners with the World Relief Overseas Aid Fund by acting as its agent for fundraising and the delivery of relief and development projects in developing countries.

**Summer Institute of Linguistics Australia** is a signatory to the World Relief Australia Code of Conduct.

<https://www.wra.org.au/>



**Summer Institute of Linguistics Australia** is a charity registered with ACNC (Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission)

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