

# Matzke Messenger

February 2011

*Tim & Martha Matzke - serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators in literacy and communications*

One of the amazing things about living in the tropics is the rapid pace at which things grow. With a swift swipe of a machete, a branch can be severed from a tree and stuck in the ground. And within weeks the bare stick will be sprouting bright green leaves.

An exception to this rapid growth is the slow-growing pineapple. The top of the fruit is lopped off and planted shallowly in the ground. The plant top takes root and begins to grow, but you may wait for 18 months before the plant produces a pineapple fruit.

Back in 2003, Tim was invited to attend an education conference sponsored by the Solomon Islands Government and present a paper on vernacular education. In the paper, Tim made recommendations for preparing for mother tongue education in the country's educational system. In the months following the presentation, the government adopted most of the recommendations, including the formation of a Language Policy Task Force.

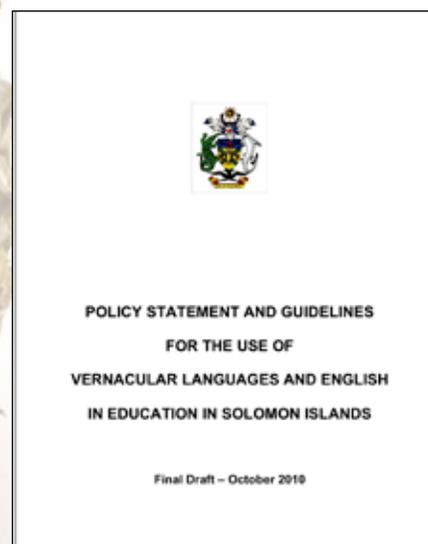


When this Task Force was formed, Tim was asked to serve as the secretary. Meetings were held and the group wrestled through policy decisions on how children could be taught to read and write in their mother tongues in the school system. As Tim led the group through discussions of the issues, he often wished he had more background in vernacular education or a good way to gather more resources.

Shortly before we left the Solomon Islands, Tim was able to help the government identify a resource person on vernacular education from Australia. Joan made multiple trips to the Solomons and worked with the Task Force to draft a policy.

In November, we received an email from a Solomon Islander friend that read, "Yesterday, the National Education Board of the MEHRD (Ministry of Education) deliberated and passed the Language Policy and Early Vernacular Education Policy that Joan worked on. UNICEF will be funding the piloting of an Early Vernacular project. I think Tim would be pleased to hear this bit of story." Tim was pleased indeed to hear that news. The 'seed' that Tim had 'planted and watered' is finally starting to show signs of bearing fruit! It's also left Tim wishing he could be back in the Solomons to help implement the policy, but that is not possible at the moment.

One of the reasons Tim is excited about the new position that he has been asked to fill here in Dallas is that he will be compiling information that educators and governments around the world need to help educate children in their own languages. He understands what it is like to be in a remote location with limited resources. With these tools on the internet, people will have a place to go to get help. Tim is eager to get started in this new assignment that is going to meet a critical need around the world!





## Two Steps Forward, One Step Back...

Through the fall months, we enjoyed speaking in churches and small groups in Michigan, Minnesota, Texas and Kansas. We are excited to report several new supporters have joined our team, and some existing partners have increased their giving. So all told, we have seen an average increase of \$1000 a month! However, others have had to reduce their giving or discontinue altogether and at the same time, our health insurance costs went up. So, while we gained some ground, we are still short about \$1300 a month of the amount Wycliffe has determined we need to cover our living costs.

Over the next few months we are scheduling more speaking engagements in Minnesota and Texas. We are looking for opportunities to share about our work so we can begin our new assignments. If you can help us set up a speaking engagement at a church, Bible study or other small group, we would love to share about what God is doing in Bible translation and literacy around the world.

We are so thankful for our supporters - those who have joined the team recently and our faithful friends who have stood with us through the years. We are blessed indeed!

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### Financial Gifts designated for Tim Matzke can be sent to:

Wycliffe Bible Translators  
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or online at: [www.wycliffe.org/Give/MissionaryMinistries.aspx](http://www.wycliffe.org/Give/MissionaryMinistries.aspx)



### God is good, all the time...

In our last letter we mentioned that both girls need serious orthodontic work. We had NO idea how we were going to be able to afford that. It seemed impossible!

Friends donated a car to Wycliffe and asked that the funds be designated for braces for the girls. The braces fund was on its way! Then we received an unexpected check for \$1000. Shortly after that, we received word that a supporting church was sending us \$2000 toward the girls' orthodontic work. Those gifts are making a large dent in the money we need and we thank God for the generosity of these friends.



**Emily** graduates from high school in June and has applied to a number of colleges for the fall. She is planning on pursuing a degree in Secondary Education in Social Studies.

Emily continues to demonstrate her talents and gifts as a teacher. Recently she took second place in the state competition with a project she produced for the Texas Association of Future Educators!

**Sarah** competed with hundreds of other students for the regional choir and made 9th chair in the first soprano section.

Sarah is working on a project on C. S. Lewis for her school's Gifted and Talented program.