TESTING A METHOD FOR EVALUATING
KEY TRANSLATION TERMS USING BISU

Kari Ann Gustafson

Presented to Payap University in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN LINGUISTICS
Faculty of Arts

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Kari Gustafson
4 March 2010
The goal of this thesis is to test a method of evaluating key translation terms using the Bisu language. The research questions to be answered by this thesis are: Can a multiple-choice test instrument be productive in evaluating a list of potential key translation terms? Does a multiple-choice test result in a better total set of key translation terms? Does such a test provide the translator(s) with more confidence in currently used terms?

The guiding hypothesis of this thesis is that a multiple-choice test instrument would be a systematic, objective and useful approach to evaluating previously selected key translation terms. This hypothesis is established in that the multiple-choice test instrument leads to a total set of key translation terms in which translators have increased confidence. Several currently used key translation terms appear to fail to adequately convey the meaning of the original to Bisu speakers. In some cases, newly created key translation terms increase comprehension. In others, the new terms provide no improvement.

The multiple-choice test instrument in this thesis proves to be productive in evaluating a list of potential key translation terms. A multiple-choice test results
in a better total set of key translation terms and the test provides the translator(s) with more confidence in currently used terms.

This thesis further advances research in techniques used to choose key translation terms by showing that an objective multiple-choice test instrument could be used to evaluate currently used key translation terms. It adapts and builds upon previous research in objective methods of testing translations, specifically, that of Stephen H. Doty. Additionally, this thesis contributes to the documentation of the traditional language and religion of the Bisu people.
ภพทดซย

วิทยาสมัครวิทยาลัยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อพัฒนาวิชามนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์ให้เป็นมาตรฐานที่มีประสิทธิผลในการประสานราชการที่อยู่ในค่าสำคัญในการแปลงหรือไม่แบบทดสอบแบบหลายตัวเลือกทำให้ได้รายได้สำคัญในการแปลงข้อมูลที่ค้นหาไม่ได้แบบทดสอบดังกล่าวทำให้ได้ผลไม่มีความน่าสนใจค่าที่ใช้มากขึ้นหรือไม่

สมมติฐานของงานวิจัยนี้คือ เครื่องมือทดสอบแบบหลายตัวเลือกเป็นแนวทางที่เป็นระบบเป็นรูปธรรมและมีประโยชน์ต่อการประเมินค่าสำคัญในการแปลงที่ใช้กับอยู่โดยคาดหวังว่าเครื่องมือทดสอบแบบหลายตัวเลือกจะทำให้ได้ผลการค่าสำคัญในการแปลงที่ทำให้ได้ผลมีความน่าสนใจมากขึ้นค่าสำคัญในการแปลงหลายตัวเลือกที่ใช้กับอยู่ในปัจจุบันไม่สามารถถ่ายทอดความหมายจากสถานะการทางไปสู่ความสามารถที่จะทำให้ได้ผลเพียงพอในบางกรณีค่าสำคัญในการแปลงที่ช่วยข้อมูลมาช่วยให้ได้ผลดีขึ้น แต่บางกรณีก็ไม่เป็นเช่นนั้น

งานวิจัยสนองให้เห็นว่าเครื่องมือทดสอบแบบหลายตัวเลือกเป็นเครื่องมือที่มีประสิทธิผลในการประสานราชการที่อยู่ในค่าสำคัญในการแปลงแบบทดสอบหลายตัวเลือกทำให้ได้
รายการคำสำคัญในการแปลทั้งชุดที่ดีขึ้นและทำให้ผู้แปลมีความมั่นใจในการใช้คำที่ใช้อยู่มากขึ้นค่ะ

งานวิจัยนี้เป็นการพัฒนาเทคนิคที่ใช้ในการเลือกคำสำคัญในการแปลโดยแสดงให้เห็นว่าสามารถนำไปเรียนหรือทดสอบแบบหลายคำเลือกที่เป็นภูมิธรรมมาประยุกต์คำสำคัญในการแปลที่ใช้กับผู้โดยตลอดแปลและทดสอบควบคู่จากงานวิจัยเหตุว่ากล่าววิจัยทดสอบการแปลที่เป็นภูมิธรรมโดยเฉพาะจากงานของ Stephen H. Doty

นอกจากนี้งานวิจัยนี้ยังมีประโยชน์ในการจัดเก็บข้อมูลภาษาและความเข้าใจมิติของภาษาพื้นฐานค่ะ
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The goal of this thesis is to present and test a method of evaluating key translation terms. A key translation term, as used in this thesis, is any special technical term that is crucial to the understanding of a translated text. These terms are evaluated using a pilot multiple-choice test instrument.

This document will advance research in techniques used to choose key translation terms. It will adapt and build upon previous research in objective methods of testing translations, specifically, that of Stephen H. Doty. In addition, this thesis will contribute to the documentation of the traditional language and religion of the Bisu people.

Chapter one of this thesis introduces the goals, hypothesis and rationale for this thesis. Chapter two reviews literature relevant to the study, identification and evaluation of key translation terms. Chapter three reviews the methodologies used. Chapter four focuses on terms identification using worldview interviews to isolate the receptor language group's religious beliefs. In chapter five, a componential analysis of the key translation terms is conducted. Chapter six evaluates a list of ten potential terms identified in chapters three and four, using a multiple-choice test instrument. Chapter seven concludes this thesis with an assessment of the multiple-choice test instrument for evaluating key translation terms.

1.2 Research Questions

The research questions to be answered by this thesis are:

- Can a multiple-choice test instrument be productive in evaluating a list of potential key translation terms?
- Will a multiple-choice test result in a better total set of key translation terms?
• Will such a test provide the translator(s) with more confidence in currently used terms?

1.3 Hypothesis

The guiding hypothesis of this thesis is:

A multiple-choice test instrument is a systematic, objective and useful approach to evaluating previously selected key translation terms.

This hypothesis will be established if: 1) it leads to a better total set of key translation terms and 2) it leads to more confidence in currently used key translation terms. It is not claimed this is the best method, only that it is a useful approach. An accepted and established method is used to identify these key translation terms.

1.4 Objectives of this Study

The primary aim of the thesis is to test a proposed method for choosing key translation terms. This thesis will be divided into two parts. The first part addresses methods for key translation terms discovery in Bisu. In the second part, these terms will be tested using a proposed multiple-choice test. These methods will be tested using Bisu, a language of the Tibeto-Burman family, Lolo-Burmese branch, spoken in northern Thailand as well as China, Myanmar and Laos. This method will focus particularly on key concepts in the semantic domain of religious terms.

The first part will focus on terms discovery and begins with worldview interviews focused on the receptor language group’s religious beliefs. Other methods for key terms discovery are also reviewed. Next, a word study of these terms using componential analysis is conducted. The usefulness of componential analysis in key terms discovery are also evaluated.

The second part of this thesis will evaluate a list of ten potential terms from part one, using a multiple choice test. Ultimately, the aim is to test the usefulness of this method for choosing key translation terms. This test will be pilot test using a relatively small population sample of native speakers. Should the test prove useful, a larger population sample may be used in the future. This test will include short selected passages from the New Testament in which these terms occur, followed by a question asking the native speaker to define a particular term in the text. Four possible answers will then be listed.
There are two sets of tests. The first test will use the key translation terms currently used in these New Testament passages. The second test will attempt to integrate knowledge gained from worldview interviews and componential analysis by replacing or modifying term using the same passages as the first test. Again the overarching goal is to determine whether or not the proposed test is productive. The pilot test will be evaluated according to its ability to accomplish its aims. The three aims of the pilot test are to 1) determine the native speaker’s understanding of the terms, 2) to identify potential problems with terms and finally, 3) to determine if replacement or modified terms improve upon the original terms.

1.5 Limitations and Scope

The sources of data in this thesis will be limited to two worldview research questionnaires and the results obtained from two different multiple-choice tests which attempt to evaluate these key translation terms. Terms or phrases that could not be obtained from worldview questionnaires or as a result of multiple-choice tests are not evaluated. Artificially created phrases or terms are included for comparison only. This thesis presents a preliminary method for evaluating key translation terms. The method will be tested on a limited number of participants. If this method proves useful, it may be tested on a larger pool of native speakers in the future. The method will also test only ten key translation terms, not all key translation terms found in the New Testament.

1.6 Rationale

The rationale behind testing a method for choosing key translation terms is to advance research in the area of key terms study. Little previous research exists on methodologies for choosing terms and no formal system exists for evaluating them. This thesis attempts to adapt an objective multiple-choice style test for the evaluating translations, proposed by Stephen H. Doty, for the purposes of key terms evaluation.

This thesis will focus on religious terms from the Bible. The background behind the choice to use the semantic domain of religious terms to test a proposed method for choosing key translation terms has two parts. Firstly, at the request of one dialect group, the New Testament is being translated into the Bisu languages. Therefore, this choice serves the community’s felt needs. Secondly,
the semantic domain of religious terms proves to be a most challenging domain to translate between unrelated languages. Religious terms often involve abstract concepts that require a greater understanding of the receptor language and culture than concrete terms. In this case, the source language is Koine Greek and the receptor language is Bisu; thus each vocabulary set emerges out of vastly different worldviews. The greater the differences in worldviews, the greater the difference in semantic categories at higher levels. In fact, this study provides examples that perfect matches or complete equivalency are almost impossible when the source language and receptor languages are so linguistically and culturally different.

1.7 The Bisu People

The Bisu people are located in 5 countries in mainland Southeast Asia (Thailand, China, Myanmar and Laos). They are closely related to the Pyen of Myanmar, the Phu Noi of Laos and the Coong of Vietnam. Similarities in language and in traditional women’s costumes of the Bisu, Coong and Phu Noi indicate that there was once a very close relationship between these three groups (Schliesinger 2000:184-5). In Thailand, the Bisu are located in 3 villages in Chiang Rai Province, with the total Thailand population estimated to be around 700. The three villages are Doi Chompu located in Mae Lao district, Doi Pui Kham located in the Phan District and Pa Daeng, Phan district.

In China, the Bisu are located in Xishuangbanna Prefecture of southwestern Yunnan Province, with the most recent edition of the Ethnologue estimating their population at 6,000. This group is known as the Lao Mien, i.e. ‘Old Burmese’ in Yunnanese (Grimes 2009). They are located in the villages of Mengzhe in Menghai County, in the villages of Zhutang, Laba, Donglang and Fubang in Lancang County, in the villages of Jingxin, Fuyan and Nanya in Menglian County and in parts of Ximeng County. In Myanmar, there are approximately 700 Bisu living in two villages near Mong Yang, Shan State, with outside groups calling them by the name Pyen (Person 2007). The total population of the Bisu in all countries is estimated to be between 7,000 and 8,000.

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1 The 2009 version of the Ethnologue contains major errors in the reported population of the Bisu in China. The numbers here actually reflect earlier versions of the Ethnologue.
The Phu noi people live in the Phongsali area of Laos (Schliesinger 2003). A subset of the Phu noi, calling themselves the Lao Pan, live in one village near Mung Sing in Luang Namtha Province. The Lao Pan people report themselves to number around 1,200. The Bisu people of Thailand report that their dialect has a “98%” mutual intelligibility rate with Lao Pan. The total population of the Phu noi including the Lao Pan is approximately 35,600 (Grimes 2009).

Little is known about the history of the Bisu people, but the Bisu claim their ancestors lived in the Xishuangbanna area of southern Yunnan province before being taken as captives to Thailand by the rulers of Chiang Rai during the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries (Schliesinger 2000:184). Later, the Bisu of Thailand resided in several places in northern Thailand before settling in the village of Doi Chompu in Mae Lao district about 90 years ago (Person 1999a). Wherever they went, they tended to be harassed by Northern Thai people who they say stole from them and cheated them. They settled in the Doi Chompu area because the mountainous area at the edge of the jungle was not suitable for rice paddy farming. Thus the Bisu believed the Northern Thai would not covet their land or possessions and leave them in peace. They tended cattle and water buffalo and survived on what they could find in the forest. Consequently, they gained some respect from their Northern Thai neighbors because of their knowledge of the forest. Only in the past 20-30 years have the Bisu begun planting rice as well as other crops.

Due to a sense of shame at being Bisu, the group abandoned their traditional clothing some 50 years ago, though some old costumes still exist. Recently, copies of the old garments have been made for use on special occasions. The traditional Bisu outfits in Thailand and Yunnan are similar to the traditional outfits worn by the Phunoi in Laos.

Similarly, the Pyen of Shan State abandoned their traditional clothing generations ago. Part of the group is said to have fled their Lao masters and took refuge among the Plang people of Shan State. As part of an agreement between the groups, the Bisu had to exchange their Bisu clothes for Plang clothes and become the “younger siblings” of the Plang and would not be allowed to intermarry with the Plang. Thus when the Lao master pursued them, the Plang told the Lao masters that there were no Bisu around, only “Pyen”, meaning to “change clothes”. The Bisu of Shan State still go by the name “Pyen” to this day (Person 2007).
The Bisu people are traditionally animist. In Thailand, the Bisu have adopted Buddhist practices. Bisu people in Thailand participate in most Buddhist festivals and many Buddhist rituals. However, on a day-to-day level, their animist beliefs and rituals are seen as important for group solidarity.

The Pyen in Shan State became Christians around 35 years ago. They claim to have abandoned their animist rituals and beliefs at the time of their conversion. Both villages have built churches and have designated pastors. However, these men have never received any formal religious training. In fact, few Pyen have ever attended school, religious or otherwise. These pastors must rely on their limited understanding of the Bible translated in the neighboring languages of Shan and Lahu. For this reason, they have expressed a strong desire to have the Bible translated into their own language.

Far less is known about the religious history of the Bisu in China or of the Phu Noi of Laos.

**1.8 Bisu Cultural Factors Relevant to Biblical Key Terms Translation**

The Bisu people share certain cultural beliefs and concepts with the New Testament period. Their lives revolve around the agricultural cycle and the spirit world. They are deeply concerned about the unseen world of the spirits whom they believe exert control over their lives. They easily relate to experiences with spirit possession, and they are interested in manipulation of spirits and spiritual power. They have experienced discrimination, both religious and political as well as oppression, poverty and economic insecurity. They often encounter social problems like caring for widows and explaining the existence of the disabled.

However, like many traditional peoples, the Bisu are predominantly animistic and egalitarian. The Bisu see their religion and its terminology as specific to the Bisu only, though their religion may appear to have much in common with that of other linguistically related ethnic groups.

Another complicating factor in understanding the Bisu religious system is the influence of Buddhism. The Bisu of Thailand, live within a larger society where the majority religion is Buddhism. Many Bisu, particularly younger people, are heavily influenced by Buddhist philosophy. This is largely due to the presence of Buddhist temples in each village, the significant role Buddhism plays in Thai public schools and the felt need to fit in among their Northern Thai peers.
1.9 The Bisu Language

This section describes relevant linguistic features of the Bisu language, including its language family classification, and a brief overview of its sound system, word order and other notable grammatical features. At the end of this section, the writing systems of the Thailand Bisu as well the Pyen of Shan State are described. This thesis uses the Pyen script currently employed by the Bisu of Shan State to cite key translation terms. The Thai script currently being employed by the Bisu of Thailand is given at each term’s first mention. Each term is transcribed in a roman-based script and glossed into English.

The Bisu language is classified in the *Atlas of the World’s Languages* (Bradley 2007) as Sino-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Burmese-Ngwi, Ngwi, Southern Ngwi, and Bisoid. Figure 1 represents the language classification of Bisu and shows which languages are most closely related to Bisu.

![Bisu Language Family Chart](image)

Figure 1. Bisu Language Family Chart.
As is seen in the chart above, the Southern Ngwi languages are divided into three branches, Akoid, Bi-Ka and Bisoid. Bisu, Laomian, Sangkog, and Phunoi are under the Bisoid group of languages.  

The Bisu language has SOV word order. It is a mostly isolating language. Like other Ngwi (a.k.a. Loloish) languages, particles are numerous and play an important role in the grammar, but often contain little lexical meaning (Person 2003:1). A native speaker will call a sentence without proper particles either ungrammatical or unnatural. Multiple particles, as many as six, may appear in the sentence final position immediately following the verb (Person 2003:9).

The sound system of Bisu has three contrastive level tones: low, mid and high, as illustrated in the following words (Person 2007:6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Bisu (phonemic transcription)</th>
<th>Pyen (phonemic transcription)</th>
<th>English Gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>hja³</td>
<td>hja</td>
<td>Hill Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>hja²</td>
<td>hja</td>
<td>Chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>hja¹</td>
<td>hja</td>
<td>To Itch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Bisu Contrastive Tones (Person 2007:6)

Bisu and Pyen both have nine phonemic vowels, as shown in figure 2. Phonetic vowel length differences are present, but noncontrastive. Two diphthongs /aw/ and /aj/ occur frequently in both Bisu and Pyen (Person 2007:5).

Table 2: Bisu and Pyen Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ɪ</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>ə</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bisu has 29 initial consonants. Pyen has 23 initial consonants. Pyen seems to have merged voiced nasals. This is also true among younger Bisu speakers in Thailand (Person 2007:2). Table 3 illustrates the consonant system of Bisu.

---

2. Linguists disagree as to whether there is even enough data available on these languages to form a ‘family tree’. Some linguists have instead proposed a ‘falling leaves’ model.
### Table 3: Consonants in Bisu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Alveol.</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stops</strong></td>
<td>Vl. p</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vl. pʰ</td>
<td>tʰ</td>
<td></td>
<td>kʰ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vl. h</td>
<td>t</td>
<td></td>
<td>kʰ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affricates</strong></td>
<td>Vl. b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fricatives</strong></td>
<td>Vl. s</td>
<td>ʃ</td>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laterals</strong></td>
<td>Vd. l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nasals</strong></td>
<td>Vd. m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>η</td>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vl. hm</td>
<td>hm</td>
<td>hm</td>
<td>hm</td>
<td>hm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approx.</strong></td>
<td>Vd. j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vl. h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the table 3 above, lightly shaded elements are present in Bisu but absent in Pyen; darkly shaded elements are present in Pyen but absent in Bisu. According to Person,

> Both native Bisu and native Pyen syllables (as opposed to Daic loan words) have the canonical form C₁ (C₂) V T (C₃), where C₁ represents an obligatory initial consonant, C₂ an optional second element in a consonant cluster, V an obligatory vowel, T an obligatory tone, and C₃ an optional final consonant (2007:2).

Table 4 below lists the 15 consonant clusters that Bisu orthography recognizes. Eleven of these are also found in Pyen. Consonant clusters only appear in syllable initial position (Person 2007:4).
Table 4: Bisu and Pyen Consonant Clusters (Person 2007:4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C1</th>
<th>C2</th>
<th>j</th>
<th>w</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pʰ</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hm</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both Bisu and Pyen feature six final consonants: /p, t, k, m, n, ɲ/. The presence of these final consonants is notable; many other languages of the Southern Yiphoish/Loloish branch no longer have final consonants (Person 2007).

In this thesis, the Romanized Pyen orthography will be used to transcribe Bisu terms. The Bisu orthography, as used in Thailand, is based on a modified Thai script. Thai has multiple characters to represent the same sound to indicate changes in tone rules. However Bisu has only three tones, so only one character or set of characters is necessary to represent each phoneme. The Pyen and Bisu alphabet are phonemic.
Table 5: Bisu Consonant Chart with Matching Phonetic Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Alveol.</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL</td>
<td>p 껑/ $p$</td>
<td>t &lt;bits&gt;/t</td>
<td>c }$/ch</td>
<td>k }$/g</td>
<td>$g$/?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL Asp.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pʰ $p$/hp</td>
<td>tʰ $t$/ht</td>
<td>cʰ $ch$/kt</td>
<td>kʰ $k$/hk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vd</td>
<td>b $b$/b</td>
<td>d $/d$</td>
<td>g $g$/3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL</td>
<td>s $s$/s</td>
<td>sh $sh$/sh</td>
<td>h $h$/h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL Asp.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ts $ts$/c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laterals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vd</td>
<td>m $m$/m</td>
<td>n $n$/n</td>
<td>ny $ny$/ny</td>
<td>ng $ng$/ng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL</td>
<td>hm $hm$/m</td>
<td>hn $hn$/n</td>
<td>hy $hy$/ny</td>
<td>hj $j$/ng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vd</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart above shows the Bisu and Pyen characters matched with their respective phonetic pronunciations. Not all variations in pronunciation among speakers are represented in the script.

Table 6 below demonstrates how both the Thai based Bisu script and the Romanized Pyen script represent the nine vowels. Table 6 demonstrates the comparison between Bisu and Pyen diphthongs. Table 7 demonstrates tone markings in Bisu and Pyen.

Table 6: Bisu Vowel Chart with Matching Pyen Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonetic</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>u</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>ə</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>ə</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ui</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyen</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>eu</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>ae</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Letter exists in Bisu Thai based script, but does not exist in Pyen Romanized script.
4 Letter exists in Romanized Pyen script, but not in Bisu Thai based script.
5 Letter exists in Bisu Thai based script, but does not exist in Pyen Romanized script.
Table 7: Bisu Diphthong Chart with Matching Pyen Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bisu Diphthong</th>
<th>Pyen Diphthong</th>
<th>IPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ใเ</td>
<td>Ai</td>
<td>a'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ใร</td>
<td>Ao</td>
<td>a''</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ใอ</td>
<td>Oe</td>
<td>o'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ใ-</td>
<td>Eo</td>
<td>e'^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ใ-</td>
<td>΄eo</td>
<td>e'''</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Bisu Tone Chart with Matching Pyen Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bisu Tone Mark</th>
<th>Pyen Tone mark</th>
<th>Tone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>σ</td>
<td>σ'</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>σ (unmarked)</td>
<td>σ (unmarked)</td>
<td>mid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>σ</td>
<td>σ,</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 2

Review of Relevant Literature

2.1 Previous Research on the Bisu Language

The Japanese linguist Tatsuo Nishida (1973) conducted the first linguistic research into the Bisu language. Nishida briefly studied the sound system of Bisu from 1964 to 1965. The Bisu orthography was first developed in 1998 in cooperation with villagers with the assistance of Kirk Person and was sponsored by the Foundation for Applied Linguistics (FAL) in cooperation with Payap University's Applied Linguistics Training Program (PYU-ALTP) (Person 1999a:5). Today, two orthographies exist for Bisu. An orthography based on the Thai Alphabet was created for the Bisu living in Thailand and later a Romanized orthography for the Pyen living in Shan State (Person 2007).

There are also two works by Person on Bisu particles, “Sentence final particles in Bisu narrative” (2000) and an article entitled “Text type and particle usage in Bisu discourse” (2003). As these titles suggest, Person investigated the use and frequency of Bisu particles in various Bisu discourses including folktales, life histories and expository texts. He concluded that Bisu particles vary according to text type.

Person also wrote a paper called “The Kinship System of the Bisu of Chiang Rai” (Person 1999b). He reports that Bisu has a similar pattern as Hawaiian terminology for siblings and cousins and that there is no cross-cousin marriage.

Ji (2005) conducted a sociolinguistic survey of the Bisu language. Her study investigated Bisu language vitality through studying language use and attitudes among Bisu speakers in China and Thailand. In all, six villages were investigated. Ji’s analysis divided these villages into ‘strong villages’ (Laopin and Zhutang in China, and Doi Chompuu and Doi Pui in Thailand) and ‘weak villages’ (Cimizhu and Nanya). The ‘strong villages’ have strong Bisu language vitality, and the weak villages to have low vitality. In the strong villages, Bisu is acquired as a mother tongue, and it is used with frequency in the home domain and within the group itself. Speakers in these villages also tend to have a positive attitude.
toward their language and a literacy program. The weak villages demonstrated a language shift to Lahu or Chinese. In those villages, Bisu was used less frequently at home, and it tended to be used mostly by older speakers of the language. Speakers in weak villages tended to have a negative attitude toward the Bisu language and showed less interest in its development.

Xu (2001) wrote a description of the Bisu language that describes the phonology, lexicon, grammar, dialects and the position of Bisu within its language family based in research conducted in China.

Gillian Day also wrote a thesis entitled, the Doi Chom Phu Bisu Noun Phrase (2009) in which she describes the noun phrase in Bisu.

2.2 Biblical Key Terms and the Rationale Behind Contextualization

This section reviews literature concerning key terms choices particularly focusing on articles regarding terms for spiritual beings, demonstrating a strong argument for using local terms, especially for spiritual beings, in the receptor language rather than borrowed or newly created terms.

In “The effect of key terms choices on local theology”, Hill describes the results of her research on biblical key terms conducted among the Adioukrou people of the Ivory Coast (2005). The purpose of Hill’s research was to determine the effect of using local terms for divinities and spiritual beings versus non-local terms for these beings mentioned in New Testament that she had been involved in translating.

According to Hill, the effect of using local terms for God and the devil in Adioukrou was that the traditional meaning, which did not originally have a one-to-one correspondence with source language concepts, was transformed through the use of these local terms in the Scriptures. After repeatedly hearing the terms used in new ways and in new situations, people began to understand, through context, the source language concepts of these beings.

The non-indigenous term for ‘evil spirits’ used in the Adioukrou New Testament was a combination of the words for ‘spirit’ and ‘evil’. This created word had no real referent for the Adioukrou people. A literal translation of “evil spirit” in Adioukrou meant that this term also did not fit into any category in the Adioukrou worldview.
Hill concludes, “By developing new expressions to refer to angels and demons in Adioukrou, rather than increasing the correctness of the comprehension of the categories, comprehension was arrested and these terms have remained disconnected from Adioukrou reality, and that after eighty years.” (2005:9)

Loewen (1985) recounts the case of the Maquiritare New Testament translation in Venezuela. In this language the western expatriate translators involved claimed that there was no adequate local term for ‘God’ in that language. They had instead chosen to use a borrowed term from Spanish. The local translators did however mention that there was a culture hero called Wanaari. “He was spoken of as having done some of the things the Bible ascribes to God, but he was also the ‘lyingest’, ‘cheatingest’ and most immoral character in tribal folklore and hence totally unfit for the divine name in the Bible” (1985:201).

However, it was soon discovered on a visit with a group of local evangelists that the name Wanaari was being used for God instead of the Spanish term. They explained, “The only name for God they know is Wanaari” (1985:201). When asked about the immoral characteristics associated with this personality, the evangelists chalked up such stories to gossip and rumor. Loewen explains, “With one bold stroke a whole tribal mythology of the now ‘bad’ stories about Wanaari had been reinterpreted. And the end result was that the church decided to use Wanaari rather than Diyo to express God in the New Testament about to be printed”(1985:202).

Loewen notes that even in situations where a local term may have negative characteristics associated with it, “… we should not reject such names outright; first of all, because we need to recognize that the Bible will put this name in its own context, and the influence of the context can eliminate many of the negative things that were earlier associated with that name”(1985:203).

In “Translating the ‘gods’”, Mundhenk (2002) noted that in Hebrew, Greek and many other European languages, the same word can be used for ‘God’ or ‘a god’. Mundhenk noted that in the biblical languages, one could only tell the difference by the context. He also noted that the word ‘gods’ denotes a variety of different ideas and in each case the term must be addressed individually.

Mundhenk remarks,
In some languages there are a large number of different spirits being recognized, each with their own characteristics and significance in the culture. If there are many, then it will probably be the case that only a few of them will actually be used in the translation of the Bible. Some will be so specific to the culture that they will not match anything that the Bible talks about (2002).

Because of this, Christians may be confused about important areas of their life, since they believe these spirits to have a powerful influence in some aspect of their lives. Mundhenk recommends including these spirit beings when translating key biblical passages that are meant “to give a list which is all-inclusive of the domain of ‘spirit beings”’ (2002:224).

2.3 Methods for Key Translation Terms Discovery and Checking

In John Beekman’s article entitled “Anthropology and the Translation of the New Testament Key Terms” (1980), he emphasizes “the necessity of understanding the receptor language culture, as it relates to religious beliefs and practices, is most critical when it comes to the translation of New Testament key terms.”

Beekman outlines methods of discovery, ways to validate the receptor language meaning of potential terms and how to choose or adjust these terms if necessary. His suggestions for the discovery of key terms include four methods. Beekman lists these methods in order of probable usefulness. The methods are: 1) the native-text method, 2) the hypothetical example method, 3) the question method and 4) listening to others’ converse.

The native-text method, involves investigating the local mythology concerning the origin and description of the world. However, the Bisu have no creation or origin stories and few of their native texts discovered to date discuss mythological stories that would prove useful.

In the hypothetical example method, several plausible hypothetical situations concerning the same general subject are created.

---

6 Electronic Version on Translators Workplace DVD, no page numbers listed.
The question method involves asking questions of respondents that will elicit, for example, for the names of supernatural beings. One might also discover a potential term for ‘Holy Spirit’, by asking what the personality components of a human being are.

Lastly, Beekman suggests that one may discover potential terms by simply overhearing native speakers converse with one another.

Once potential key terms have been collected, Beekman suggests two procedures to validate their adequacy, the cycle check and componential analysis. The cycle check method is simply the reverse of the procedure used to discover the term.

Beekman also mentions using componential analysis as a method of verifying terms. The componential analysis method is defined by the Online Random House dictionary as:

> The analysis of a set of related linguistic terms, esp. word meanings, into combinations of features in terms of which each item may be compared with every other as in the analysis of *man* with into the semantic features ‘male’, ‘mature’, and ‘human’, *woman* into ‘female’, ‘mature’ and ‘human’ and *girl* into ‘female’, ‘immature’ and ‘human’ and *bull* into ‘male’, ‘mature’ and ‘bovine’.

The hypothetical method was useful for eliciting words that were not generated from the questionnaires. The over-hearing method may prove useful in the future as understanding of the worldview and religious beliefs of the speakers increases, but it seems that it is also not the best place to begin. The question method via worldview questionnaires and the componential analysis method were implemented in this thesis. An alternative to the cycle check method is discussed below.

Stephen Doty’s (2006) “The paradigm shift in Bible translation in the modern era, with special focus on Thai” offers an alternative to the testing method that Beekman has suggested. In his work, Doty reviews the most common method of checking translations for comprehension used by translators in SIL. This type of checking is called ‘the oral method’. It involves having the speakers read a passage and having them answer questions or re-tell the story in their own words. This method is used to find out what a person understands from the translation or how he or she interprets the text.
Doty points out that this type of comprehension checking has several disadvantages. Firstly, it is subjective in that the translator decides ‘on the fly’ whether or not the answer is good enough to be correct. Secondly, mother-tongue speakers often find the process intimidating and threatening. He points out that translators must work to gain the trust of speakers before using this method. Thirdly, this method is a very time-consuming process. Lastly, the result often demonstrates only one point of view. The results are skewed depending on how bright the subject may or may not have been.

In his dissertation, Doty uses a multiple-choice test to determine which of three types of translation styles Thais understand best. Doty notes that this type of test for checking translations had not been used before. In his test, subjects were asked to read a passage from Luke and then answer questions based on the text. Questions were followed by three possible answers from which to choose in addition to a fourth alternative of “I don’t know”. The translation with the highest number of correct answers from subjects was considered the best understood translation. However, this method only works with literate subjects.

Doty asserts that this method for testing translations is more objective than other methods often used by translators in that it can only be graded for correct and incorrect answers. Another advantage is that the test can be administered anonymously, meaning that subjects did not need to give their names and that they did not know the tester personally. Another advantage in a written test is there is a record to consider one’s answers more thoughtfully than oral responses.

Research in this paper will make use of Burnett’s (2000) *World of the spirits: A Christian perspective on traditional and folk religions* in which he describes common threads in traditional and folk religions in various parts of the world. It is used to help explain or compare the religious beliefs of the Bisu people. Burnett’s book provides a starting point for the discussion of Bisu religious terms and conceptual categories.

Research in this paper also relies on Louw and Nida’s *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on semantic domains* (1988) as the source language domain. The domains of Supernatural Beings and Powers (domain 12 in Louw and Nida), and Religious Activities (domain 53) are used. Additionally, Katherine Barnwell,
Paul Dancy and Anthony Pope’s work, entitled “Key Biblical Terms” (1995) is used to further define terms or componential features, when helpful.
Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction to Methodology

Chapter three highlights the research methodology and procedures used in this thesis. Section 3.1 covers the methodology used in key translation terms discovery, while section 3.2 covers the methodology used to test key translation terms. Both parts consist of the following sections: research perspective and design, research questions and participants, unit of analysis, variables and instrument, data collection procedures as well as analysis and reliability of research results.

3.1.1 Research Perspective

The research perspective taken in this thesis is both descriptive and comparative. The research is evaluated based on work by Hill (2005) in which she made the case that indigenous terms for spiritual beings are superior to non-indigenous or artificial terms. This thesis is written from a relevance theory perspective. In this view, using local terms for spiritual beings is the most effective way to foster cross-cultural communication and translation as it builds on concepts already known to Bisu speakers. (For more on relevancy theory see Sperber and Wilson 1995).

3.1.2 Terms Discovery, Research Design, Questions and Participants

An initial worldview interview was conducted to gain overall understanding of the Bisu religious belief system and a list of terms that could be possible candidates for key terms for spiritual beings and other religious terminology in the New Testament.

The initial worldview questionnaire was based upon Harriet Hill's Worldview Research Questionnaire. This questionnaire was translated from English into Bisu with the help of a language assistant. The initial worldview questionnaire can be found in the appendix.
Data for this study was collected from mother-tongue speakers in the rural Bisu village of Doi Chompu located in Mae Lao district, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand. The village has a population of approximately 250 people.

Data for this study was collected from senior mother tongue speakers of the Bisu language community, including Leow (female), Un (male), Moon (male), Nang Gong (male), and Gap (female). It should be noted that Bisu people in this age group were not educated in the Thai government school system. In the past, Bisu children were not permitted to attend Thai public schools, though some Bisu men over the age of 30 were placed in the monkhood because their parents did not have the resources to raise them. The women in this demographic (50 plus) however, have never attended school of any kind and thus are largely unable to read or write in any language. Bisu men of this generation have had more exposure to a Theravada Buddhist worldview than the women of the same age group. However, both the men and women of this age group grew up during a time when the Bisu people living in Thailand had yet to adopt Theravada Buddhism. Many Bisu people in this age group grew up as monolingual speakers of the Bisu language. Only in adolescence did they acquire fluency in Kammuang or Northern Thai, spoken in Chiang Rai Province.

3.1.3 Unit of Analysis

The main goal of key translation terms discovery in this thesis was to obtain a set of religious terms in the Bisu language that, in some form, resemble the concepts behind the religious terms of the Greek language. Firstly, worldview interviews were conducted based on Harriet Hill’s Worldview Questions. A componential analysis of all possible key translation terms was then conducted. A list of 10 possible terms was then compared to the source language. Definitions and componential features of source language terms relied primarily upon Louw and Nida’s *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Based on semantic domains* (1988) and Katherine Barnwell et al.’s “Key Biblical terms” (1995).

Barnwell’s document assists by providing the following:

1. A description of the meaning of selected New Testament Greek terms, showing the essential parts (or components) of meaning of each one, and the ways in which the terms contrast or overlap with each other.
2. An explanation of areas of match and mismatch between the New Testament Greek terms and the terms that are commonly used to translate these terms in English.

3.1.4 Research Variables and Instrument
The dependent variables in this study were the degree of influence of Thai vocabulary borrowing and the influence of Thai Theravada Buddhism. The Bisu people have a strong desire to be accepted and seen as “civilized” Buddhists by their Kammuang (Northern Thai) speaking neighbors. At the same they desire to preserve their unique language and cultural traditions.

3.1.5 Data Collection Setting, Procedure and Analysis
All interviews were conducted in Doi Chompu village. All interviewees were told that the purpose of the interview was to collect Bisu religious words. Interviewees were told to try to use as much Bisu as possible and to only revert to Thai borrowings if there was no Bisu word available.

The first questionnaire contained 98 questions, in Bisu, pertaining to the Bisu worldview. The entire session was recorded with an Olympus digital recorder. A Bisu language assistant then transcribed the entire recorded session into Transcriva, a transcription software program from Apple. Meanings of any words not understood were then elicited from language assistants.

A summary of the worldview questionnaire was created, noting down any terms relating to the domains of Supernatural Beings and Powers and Religious Activities. Sixty-seven follow-up questions were created. A second interview was conducted with just one of the speakers from the first interview, a village elder, Ubong Un.

3.2 Methodology for Testing of Key Translation Terms
This section discusses the test instrument used to evaluate key translation terms using a multiple-choice test. It consists of the following sections: design, research questions and participants, unit of analysis, variables and instrument, data collection procedures and analysis and reliability of research results. The research perspective of the section is same as the previous section. It is emphasized that the test proposed here is only a pilot test.
3.2.1 Research Perspective
This thesis operates from the same perspective as Doty (2006). Assuming that this proposed method for testing key translation terms is effective, then the best scores should reflect the best understood terms.

3.2.2 Testing Design, Questions and Participants
The multiple-choice test instrument was designed to test 10 key terms. A search was conducted of all the passages in which each term occurred in the Gospel of Mark and the book of Acts. These two books have already been translated into Bisu and passed the standard translation checking process required by SIL. It is assumed therefore, that the accuracy of translation in these passages should not pose a problem.

3.2.3 Unit of Analysis and Research Variables
The test instrument for choosing key translation terms is evaluated according to the degree to which it meets its stated goals. Each question aims to 1) isolate the native speaker's comprehension of specific terms, 2) ascertain barriers to correct comprehension, and 3) determine whether suggested alternative terms may improve overall comprehension.

The degree to which participants actually understood the passages surrounding key translation terms was not evaluated.

3.2.4 Data Collection Setting, Procedure and Analysis
Data from the first test set was collected from residents of Doi Chompu village, while data from the second test set was collected from residents of Doi Pui village. Doi Pui village is a predominantly Bisu speaking village of approximately 500 people also located in Chiang Rai province. Each village speaks a mutually intelligible variety of Bisu.

For each test, each subject listened to a passage and then answered a multiple-choice question concerning the meaning of a key term in that passage. Their answers, gender and age were noted. For the first test, each subject was interviewed individually so that participants would not be able to discuss their answers with each other. In the second test, multiple subjects were interviewed
at the same time, but each wrote down their answers on a piece of paper separately without discussing their answers with each other.
Chapter 4

Analysis of Bisu Supernatural Being

4.1 Summary of Data from Worldview Questionnaires

This section summarizes the results of both worldview questionnaires. This information was useful for drawing an approximate schema of Bisu Cosmology and to discover appropriate indigenous terms for spiritual beings and religious activities.

4.2 Bisu Worldview Overview

Ang cao (ʼ букв) is the greatest spirit in the world. Ang cao is a daeya (ʼ букв), the general Bisu term for spiritual beings, but ang cao is not commonly referred to as a daeya. Rather he is referred to by the name ang cao. He is considered to be male in gender, and he is regarded as the father of the Bisu people. He is the benevolent spirit who takes care of the Bisu village and ensures the happiness of its residents. Ang cao is territorial in nature in that the particular ang cao who is in charge of one village is not the same ang cao who is in charge of another village. However, each one is still called ang cao. From an outsider’s perspective, this fact would appear to contradict Bisu subjects’ statements that ang cao is the greatest spirit in the world. However, it does not seem to be regarded as such in the Bisu worldview.

Bisu say that they like ang cao, and it is considered a good thing to have knowledge of him. The Bisu have no origin story associated with ang cao, nor do they have any stories about the origin of their people.

Ang cao is concerned if Bisu people ‘sin’ (ang si, ʼ букв) or fail to respect him. He is the one who divided the peoples of the world into their tribes and languages, and specifically divided the Bisu from non-Bisu people (Bicham, ʼ букв). Ang cao has omniscient qualities in that he is able to immediately perceive Bisu people’s thoughts. He knows all things. It is not possible to hide from him. Neither is it possible to deceive him under most circumstances.
Poverty is seen as due to fate/destiny. Ang cao cannot help you to rise out of poverty. You must work to remedy this situation on your own. If Bisu people wish to seek spiritual help, they must do so through the spirit priest. Often Bisu people will need to communicate with the spirit world if they become ill and they suspect the cause of their illness may be that they may have offended a spirit. Only the shaman can intercede between Bisu people and the spirit world. While the shaman intercedes with many spirits or daeya, the village priest communicates only with ang cao. The village priest does not attempt to communicate with other spirits. No special language is required to communicate with ang cao. Bisu language is the only language used to communicate with him. A ritual sacrifice is offered to ang cao three times a year. The village priest is charged with performing this sacrifice. No defective animals may be used. Once the sacrifice is completed, the animal may be eaten. On the day the sacrifice is offered, no Bisu person is allowed to work. Other lesser spiritual beings are referred to as daeya. These lesser spirits have no particular hierarchy among them, though all of them are inferior to ang cao. They are differentiated according to the aspect of nature in which they reside or by a kinship term if they are an ancestor spirit. They do not have proper names. There are many different kinds of lesser spirits including Grandfather and Grandmother spirits, Mother and Father spirits, two different types of household spirits (yum dae ‘house spirit’), a forest spirit (song khong dae ‘forest spirit’), spirit of the local Buddhist temple, spirits that possess people, spirits of those who have died and have not yet been reborn, and spirits that lurk around graveyards (pum dae ‘grave spirit’) and cremation sites. Most of these spirits reside in the forest and some live in trees. The forest spirit tends to possess people on occasion. Usually this is a result of an offense unknowingly committed against that spirit.

There is another particular kind of spirit, daephakdae (ดาพบากดรา) that possesses people. When possessed by this spirit, the individual’s voice will often change and the person will act strangely. This spirit will also make the person ill and is thought to eat the innards of the possessed person. Bisu are generally not interested in these lesser spirits to the extent that they are interested in ang cao. Conversely, these lesser spirits are not interested in Bisu people, as long they are not offended. Bisu fear these spirits because they can sometimes be harmful to people.
Ancestor spirits are a special kind of spirit that demands that their descendants pay attention to them. It is possible to deceive ancestor spirits. The continued goodwill of these spirits is contingent upon their being properly propitiated. Notably, fear of spirits was not the greatest fear for the Bisu, but nonetheless, the fear of spirits is a powerful force in their lives. The thing that Bisu people fear most is natural disaster caused by windstorms and fire. There is a strong belief in agentive causation. Illness, accidents, natural disasters and other types of misfortune are attributed to discontented spirits. Bisu people believe that it is good to confess an offense against another person and ask for forgiveness. The greatest offense that two people can commit is for an unmarried woman to become pregnant within the boundaries of the village. It is believed that if people can avoid committing offenses within the boundaries of the village, then village residents will be healthy and happy. In the past, ang cao prohibited Bisu from making noise in the village during certain daytime hours. This prohibition did not include funeral rites. If these noise rules were broken, villagers could get sick. These rules are no longer observed today. If an offense against the spirits is committed, the guilty party must perform a ceremony. An offense is still an offense even if others don’t know about it. It is very dangerous to commit offenses against spirits. The spirits will kill Bisu people for these offenses. If a Bisu person becomes ill for a prolonged period of time, they must have offended the spirits and must perform a sacrifice to make it right again. Once the sacrifice is completed, no further action is necessary. At the birth of a child, Bisu parents call upon the mother and father spirit of that child and claim the newborn child as their own. If this is not done, the mother and father spirit may reclaim the child as theirs. Bisu people believe that after they die, they enter a dreamlike state of being. Bisu people believe that the person who has the most power in their lives is His Majesty the King of Thailand.

4.3 List Potential Key Translation Terms

The following is a list of terms elicited during worldview interviews that could potentially be used as key translation terms in the New Testament.
Table 9: Tentative List of Bisu Terms Taken from Worldview Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bisu pirit</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Bisu Spirit</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ang cao (องค์เจ้า)</td>
<td>Greatest of the Spirits</td>
<td>Bisu (บุญ)</td>
<td>Bisu people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ang si (องค์ผิด)</td>
<td>To do wrong</td>
<td>hcam (กาม)</td>
<td>Fate, destiny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daeya (ภาคิยา)</td>
<td>Spiritual being (class noun for all spirits)</td>
<td>Ang cop (องค์เจ้าปืน)</td>
<td>To deceive, trick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tue si tue lae (คือผิด คือผิด)</td>
<td>To make a mistake (Minor Implications)</td>
<td>Putang (ปู่บาง)</td>
<td>Spirit priest, one who takes care of ang cao (องค์เจ้าปืน)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bicham (ปี่ขา)</td>
<td>Non-Bisu people, esp. Dai-speaking peoples</td>
<td>Subaa (ซุป้า)</td>
<td>to forgive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gammkan (กแนะนำ)</td>
<td>To promise or oath</td>
<td>ang hjong ang la (องค์เจ้าฮ่องฮองลา)</td>
<td>Soul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ang pong dae (オンライン)</td>
<td>Father spirit</td>
<td>Gu dae (ปู่เดี)</td>
<td>A Large group of spirits of dead people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ang ba dae (ออนไลน์)</td>
<td>Mother Spirit</td>
<td>hcam dae (กามเดี)</td>
<td>Cave gravesite spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahuu dae (อาฮู)</td>
<td>Grandfather Spirit</td>
<td>pum dae (ปูมเดี)</td>
<td>Graveyard spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahpii dae (อาฮี้)</td>
<td>Grandmother Spirit</td>
<td>hto lo ni (ฮัน ฮัน นิน)</td>
<td>Spirit of the Crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shong hjong dae (ช่องฮ่อง)</td>
<td>Forest Spirit</td>
<td>lang dae (ลางเดี)</td>
<td>Water Spirit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

7 No Bisu word for ‘to forgive’ was elicited. The Bisu indicate that they believe this term is borrowed from the Northern Thai language, also known also Khhammuang. However, the Northern Thai is pronounced ‘su-maa’ and is itself a borrowing from Pail/Sanskrit.

8 The word for ‘cave’ here is Northern Thai.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bisu spirit</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Bisu Spirit</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yum dae (ยูมเดย)</td>
<td>House Spirit</td>
<td>lang tu dae (ล่างเตย)</td>
<td>River Spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wat dae (วัดเดย)</td>
<td>Temple Spirit</td>
<td>tasae dae (ตาเสยด)</td>
<td>Mountain Spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daephakdae</td>
<td>Possession Spirit</td>
<td>Nam bo dae ( namoroบด)</td>
<td>Spirit of the Well</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.4 Bisu Spirit World Overview

The following chart provides an analysis of the lesser Bisu spirits grouped according to their common componential features. These eleven components were determined from the collection of components derived from worldview questionnaire transcripts. These eleven components are: *Supernatural, Kinship Link, Require regular attention, Territorial, Formerly human, Require Regular Appeasement, Helpful, Harmful, Nature, Gender and Personal Name*. The component *Supernatural* indicates whether or not that particular group of spiritual beings can be considered as being *daeya* (เดยา), the Bisu class noun for independent supernatural (i.e. non-material) beings. The feature *Kinship Link* indicates whether or not that group of spirits is perceived as having a family relationship with the living. The component *Require Regular Attention* indicates that these spirits desire the attention of human beings in some way, so as to continue to be in a positive relationship with human beings. The component *Territorial* indicates that these spirits are perceived as occupying a particular locality. Outside their particular locality, it is not necessary to be concerned about these spirits. The component *Formerly Human* indicates these spirits were at one time human beings and will one day be reborn as human as opposed to spirits who have never been human nor will ever become human. The component *Helpful* indicates that this spirit can be counted upon for assistance in some manner. The component *Harmful* indicates that the spirits in this group are

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9 The term for ‘temple’ is borrowed from the Northern Thai language. Bisu traditional religion does not have any formal temples. This term refers to a Buddhist temple spirit. Bisu belief in this spirit is likely an import from Buddhism as practiced by the Northern Thai people.

10 The word for ‘well’ here is Northern Thai. Before water wells were installed in the Bisu villages, water was fetched from the local stream.
perceived as being generally harmful to human beings rather than helpful. The component *Nature* indicates that this group of spirits tends to be associated with some aspect of nature such as a river, a field or the forest. The component *Gender* simply indicates whether or not this group of spirits is perceived as having a male or female gender. Lastly, the component *Personal Name* indicates whether or not any of these beings has a personal name attributed to them.

**Table 10: Componential Analysis of Bisu Spirit Beings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Componential Features</th>
<th>Familial</th>
<th>Protector</th>
<th>Nuisance</th>
<th>Nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supernatural</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship Link</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require Regular Attention</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial</td>
<td>-?</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Human</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require Regular Appearance</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmful</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Name</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above chart, the components common to all *familial* spirits are that they are supernatural beings who are *formerly human*, maintaining the *gender* they had when they were human and who have a *kinship* link to the living, from whom they require regular attention as well as appeasement in exchange for assistance to the living kin.

The components common to all *protector* spirits are that they are territorial supernatural beings with no kinship link to the living, who have never been human beings and who require regular attention and appeasement in exchange for providing assistance in some form.

We can see from the above chart that *familial* spirits and *protector* spirits are separated by three components. *Familial* spirits have a kinship link with the living whereas the *protector* spirits do not. They are also *formerly human* and have *gender*.  

30
Also summarized in the above chart are the *nuisance* spirits. The features that are common to all *nuisance* spirits are that they *territorial* supernatural beings who are sometimes *formerly human* and sometimes not and who can be *harmful* to human beings.

Lastly, the above chart illustrated the features common to all *nature* spirits. These features are that they are *territorial* supernatural beings who are associated with an aspect of *nature* and who can be *harmful* to human beings.

### 4.4.1 Bisu Familial Spirits

All the *familial* spirits listed below would also possess all of the features mentioned under familiar spirits in Table 7. The features for *Grandmother* spirit, *Grandfather* spirit, *Mother* spirit and *Father* spirit are: +1 Generation and +2 Generation and Male and Female. +1 Generation indicates that this spirit is removed from the living relative (ego) by one direct generation. +2 Generation indicates that this spirit is removed from the living relative by two generations. What is important to note here is that after a *formerly human familial* spirit such as *Grandmother* spirit moves beyond +2 Generations from ego and are still not yet reincarnated, they move into the category of *gu dae* (GUI). These are spirits that for whatever reason were never able to reincarnate (at least not yet) and therefore have become angry and lurk around the village at night. They have lost their *kinship* link to the group, as their families no longer make offerings specifically for them. This is important to note when talking to Bisu speakers about the nature of the soul and what happens to it after death. Any key term for using the Bisu term for ‘soul’ must take these beliefs into consideration.

### 4.4.2 Bisu Nuisance Spirits

The following chart illustrates the componential features for individual Bisu *nuisance* spirits. Again, the features that are common to all *nuisance* spirits are that they are *territorial* supernatural beings who are sometimes *formerly human* and sometimes not and who can be *harmful* to human beings. Terms for each of the types elicited from questionnaires are listed at the top of the chart. The componential features for particular *nuisance* spirits are: *formerly Human*, *formerly Familial Spirit*, *Group*, *Cemetery* or *Cremation Site*, *Cave* and *Possession*. The feature *formerly Human* is the same as the previous chart. However not all members of the category of *nuisance* spirits share this feature, so it is necessary
to place it here again. The feature Formerly Familial spirit indicates that this spirit was previously one of the familial spirits, but no longer has a kinship link with the living. Their children and grandchildren are now deceased. They have not yet been reborn as humans, and there is no longer anyone to pay attention to them. The feature Group indicates that this term is used to denote not any individual spirits, but a collection of them. The feature Cemetery or Cremation Site indicates that this spirit is believed to reside in the vicinity of anywhere where people have been buried or cremated. The feature Cave indicates that this spirit resides near a cave where people have been buried. The feature possession indicates that this particular spirit may on occasion enter into the body of a human being, causing harm to the person being possessed.

Table 11: Componential Analysis of Bisu Nuisance Spirits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Gudaee (กุด้)</th>
<th>Pumdaee (ปูมดี)</th>
<th>Htamdaee (ฮทัมเดี)</th>
<th>Daephakdae (ดาภักดี)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Human</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formerly Familial Spirit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery or Cremation Site</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cave</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above chart summarizes that the term gu dae (กุด้) denotes a group of nuisance spirits that are formerly human and formerly familial spirits. The term pum dae (ปูมดี) denotes an individual nuisance spirit that is formerly human, residing near a cemetery or cremation site. The term htam dae (ฮทัมเดี) denotes a nuisance spirit that is formerly human and residing in or around a cave that has been used a burial site. The term daephakdae (ดาภักดี) denotes a nuisance spirit that is not formerly human and occasionally possesses people.

The above chart illustrates that the term daephakdae (ดาภักดี) denotes a type of spirit that has the fewest features in common with other nuisance spirits in that it is not formerly human.
Chapter 5

Choosing Key Translation Terms

5.1 Introduction
In this section, Bisu religious terms are evaluated and compared to the Greek Terms in Louw and Nida’s (1988) semantics domain 12: Supernatural Beings and Powers. Firstly, the Bisu term Ang Cao (オオオオ) is compared with Theos ‘God’. Then Bisu spirit terms are compared with ‘angels’ and ‘demons’. Next, the various Bisu spirits are compared with the Greek term ‘Satan’. Then terms for Supernatural Beings such as ‘ghost’ and ‘ancestor’ are compared to the corresponding Greek terms.

5.2 Choosing a Term for the Supreme Being
In this section, translation issues surrounding the Supreme Being are discussed. In particular, common views of the Supreme Being among traditional peoples are discussed, in order to lay a foundation for the discussion of the translation of the Christian term for the creator God into Bisu. A short review is provided of Burnett’s discussion of this topic and a more local view of the Supreme Being in other Lolo-Burmese speaking groups is discussed.

According to Burnett, in traditional societies, the Supreme Being generally has neither temples nor priests. He is regarded as too exalted to be concerned with human affairs (2000:31). Later, it is shown that some of these beliefs about the Supreme Being are found in other Lolo Burmese groups which are closely related linguistically to Bisu. But, we will also see that in some cases the Supreme Being does in fact have temples and priests. This fact will figure in later discussion, as the componential features of highest Bisu spirit to componential features of the Supreme Being in other Lolo Burmese groups are compared in order to evaluate its suitability as a potential term for the creator God.

Many translators have used the vernacular term for the Supreme Being for the term “God” in the Bible. Burnett notes the idea that the English term for “God” originated from the name of one of the German gods. As Burnett describes it, “A
Biblical content was therefore given to each of these names which mixed a familiarity of the term with a newness of interpretation” (2000:32).

In the Bisu-related Lolo-Burmese languages of Hani, Akha and Akeu, Miqyail is the traditional creator God. This is the word used for the key term for the creator God in the translation of the New Testament into those languages. Bi Yeh who is a lesser being than Mi Yeh, is noted as being a spirit of the Akha who is responsible for the wellbeing of the villagers (Schliesinger 2003:51). Ang Cao is similarly the spirit in charge of the wellbeing of the Bisu. In Schliesinger (2003: 84, 119, 144) the spirit in charge of the wellbeing of the people is referred to as the guardian spirit.

In Akha, Miqyail is the traditional creator God. The word Apoe often precedes Miqyail and it means literally ‘male ancestor’ (Boyce 1997:55). This is the word used for the key term for the creator God in the translation of the New Testament into those languages. However, traditional beliefs about this being are very different from the Judeo-Christian concept of ‘God’. The Akha have a creation story surrounding this being in which Mi Yeh was originally the only being to exist. He then created the sky, which is considered to be his son. All people on earth are descended from that son. He then created another being who consolidated everything Mi Yeh had created into the world as it is today. The legend also tells of two semi-divine rulers whom Mi Yeh sent to rule over the Akha, but they disobeyed Mi Yeh, so he called them back. Mi Yeh replaced these rulers with another legendary ruler who learned the Akha way by flying up to Mi Yeh each night (Lewis 1982: 217-218).

“The main way in which ‘God’ expresses his power among the Akha today is through his representative in the village, the village priest. He is considered to be ‘next only to God’ (Lewis 1982:218). The Akha believe Mi Yeh himself chooses the village priest for this task. His role is different from the function of the spirit priests and shamans who deal exclusively with spirits rather than with Mi Yeh. Further discussion of the Akha village priest dedicated to Mi Yeh as compared to the village priest dedicated to ang cao is found in section 6.1. G’ui sha is the name of the traditional creator God of the Lahu people (Schliesinger 2000:169). There is a traditional creation story related to G’ui sha as well. This is also the term used for the creator in the various Lahu Bible
Translations. Some Lahu villages even have special temple houses dedicated to G’ui sha (Walker 1986:388). It should be noted that Northern Thai villages also have village priests who are dedicated to the guardian spirit of the village. Northern Thai people believe that there is a special spirit who is elevated above other local spirits and who oversees the welfare of the village and its residents. This spirit typically has a wooden shrine dedicated to him outside the village (Tambiah 1970).

Bi Yeh, in contrast to the creator Mi Yeh, is noted as being a spirit of the Akha who is responsible for the wellbeing of the villagers (Schliesinger 2003:51). Ang cao is also the spirit in charge of the wellbeing of the Bisu. In Schliesinger (2003: 84, 119, 144) the spirit in charge of the wellbeing of the people is referred to as the guardian spirit.

5.2.1 Componential Features of God and Translation Options

In this section, the componential features for ‘God’ in the original Koine Greek language used in the New Testament of the Bible are listed and each one discussed. The following list of primary characteristics for God is taken from Barnwell et al. (1995).

1. He is a spirit.
2. He is supernatural, having power that is greater than any other spirit.
3. He created the world.
4. He sustains the world.
5. He is good, being kindly disposed toward men.
6. He is holy, i.e. everything he does is totally just and right.
7. He stands in a father relationship to human beings.
8. He is eternal.
9. He has perfect knowledge of everything.

Barnwell offers three possible solutions for translating the key term ‘God’. (1) Adopt a proper name for an existing spiritual being. (2) Choose a descriptive title. (3) Use a term borrowed from a major language. Barnwell notes that a proper name should only be chosen where there is sufficient identity between
the Christian God and the spiritual being. Barnwell notes that the first five features are most important for this identity (Barnwell 1995).

5.2.2 Componential Features of Ang Cao Compared to ‘God’

The following chart illustrates how the componential features of ang cao ‘village spirit’ compare to Barnwell’s (1995) list of componential features of Theos (Θεὸς) in the New Testament. The chart demonstrates that ang cao ‘village spirit’ shares six out the nine important componential features of Theos ‘God’.

**Table 12: Application of Componential Analysis to Ang Cao**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of Theos ‘God’</th>
<th>Ang Cao ‘Village Spirit’</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Fits the definition of Dae Ya (independent, non-material spiritual being).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is supernatural, power greater than any other spirit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Ang Cao is the greatest of the spirits; there has never been any greater spirit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created the World</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Bisu do not know who created the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustains the World</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Ang Cao protects the Bisu people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good, kindly disposed toward men</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Seen as good and as the protector/helper of the Bisu people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy; everything he does is totally just and right</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Bisu has no word for Holy; however Ang Cao has never done anything perceived as bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stands in a father relationship to human beings</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Seen as the father of the Bisu people. It is natural to speak of him as such.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Bisu do not know when or how Ang Cao originated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has perfect knowledge of everything</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Knows people's thoughts even as they think them; knows everything.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.3 Componential Analysis of Ang Cao and Mi Yeh

As noted in section 5.2, the Lahu, Akha and Lisu peoples all believe in a supreme being. As Walker notes,

There are fundamental similarities, along with some important differences, in the ideological premises and ritual traditions of the Lahu, Lisu and Akha peoples. An animistic ideology permeates the world view of all three peoples and all three have the notion of a great world-creating divinity (Lahu G’ui sha; Lisu Wu sa; Akha, A poe Mi yeh); but the cult of this divinity seems most highly pronounced among the Lahu (Walker 1992:59).

The Hani, a Lolo-Burmese group of China, also believe in the same creator divinity as the Akha (Lewis & Bai 2002b:129).

Since, the above-mentioned divinities, including Mi Yeh, were used to translate Theos ‘God’ in related languages, a comparison of the componential features of Ang Cao and Mi Yeh is presented below. Mi Yeh was chosen for comparison because a longer list of features in Lewis & Bai (2002b) and Walker (1992) could be found, compared to the other deities mentioned.

The chart below summarized how the Bisu Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ matches closely in componential features to the Greek Theos ‘God’ as compared to the Akha Mi Yeh. Mi Yeh possesses two features, creation and eternal existence, that are not attributed to Ang Cao ‘village spirit’. On the other hand, Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ does possess two features that Mi Yeh does not. He is kindly disposed toward people, and he is always just and right in his actions.
Table 13: Componential Analysis Comparing Ang Cao and Mi Yeh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features of Theos ‘God’</th>
<th>Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ (Bisu)</th>
<th>Mi Yeh ‘God’ (Ahka)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+ (Boyes 1997:55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is supernatural power greater than any other spirit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+ (Boyes 1997:55; Lewis 1982:219)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created the World</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>+ (Boyes 1997:55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustains the World</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good, kindly disposed toward men</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy; totally just and right</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father relationship to human beings</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+ (Boyes 1997:55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eternal</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>+ (Lewis 1982:217)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect knowledge</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+ (Lewis 1982:219)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two additional features of Mi Yeh that might also be of interest. He gave the Akha, Akeu and Hani their traditions (Boyes 1997:56). Also, according to the Akha tradition, Mi Yeh gave out books to all the peoples of the earth, but the Akha lost theirs by eating them (Boyes 1997:56). Mi Yeh also created all the other spirits (Lewis 1982:217). But, these beliefs are not attributed to ang cao ‘village spirit’ (Bisu).

Eight other possibly relevant features shared by both Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ (Bisu) and Mi Yeh (Lewis 1982:218):
1. Both can be called upon for aid in some manner.
2. They both require sacrifice.
3. They both have a singular priest who represents him and him alone.
4. The deity himself chooses the priest.
5. Both are considered to be different from other more ordinary spirits as evidenced by not calling him a spirit like other spirits.
6. Both punish people who show them disrespect.
7. Both have personal names.
8. Both have imposed certain prohibitions or taboos, especially sexual transgressions.

There were also two features attributed to Mi Yeh that are not attributed to the God of the Bible. Firstly, in the past he turned the world over to be ruled by two semi-divine rulers. Today the village shaman is his sole representative. Secondly, the sky is also believed to be his son. Neither of things is true of Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ (Bisu).

In conclusion, there exists a strong case for using a term Ang Cao for the key translation term Theos ‘God’. Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ (Bisu) is similar enough in its features to Theos ‘God’ to warrant its consideration.

5.3 Choosing New Testament Terms for Angels and Demons

In this section I discuss the componential features of ‘evil spirit’ and ‘angel’ and compare these features with particular types of Bisu spirits. It will be shown that finding a term for ‘evil spirit’ is much more straightforward than finding an appropriate Bisu term for ‘angel’.

Barnwell lists ten characteristics of evil spirits as seen from the scriptures. They are independent spiritual beings, not the spirits of people who have died. Evil spirits serve and work for Satan (Mark 3:22-27). They can be identified with the fallen angels who followed Satan in rebellion against God (Revelation 12:7-9). They have names such as in Mark 5:9 and can take control of a human being. When in control of a person, they can afflict him in different ways: They can cause him to act violently and to try to destroy himself (Mark 5:2-5). They can cause a person to have convulsions and foam at the mouth (Mark 9:17-27) and cause dumbness (Matt. 9:32; Mark 9:17-27). They can cause the person who is under their control to attack others violently (Acts 19:16). They can speak and hold conversations with another person (Matt. 8:29-32), and they often scream or shout loudly (Mark 5:7; Luke 9:39).
Of the above features of ‘evil spirit’ in the New Testament, eight out of ten are true of the particular Bisu spirit called, *daephakdae* (ดาเพะค่าดี). However two of the above features are not true of them; they do not serve Satan nor do they have personal names.

As eight out of ten features of ‘evil spirits’ are shared by the Bisu term *daephakdae*, it would seem that is a strong case for using this term for an ‘evil spirit’ who possesses people in the New Testament.

Finding an appropriate indigenous term for ‘angel’, however, proved extremely difficult. Firstly, all spirits or *dae ya* (เดีบ) are considered malevolent and capricious in nature. They are independent and serve only themselves. Louw & Nida define *angelos* (ἄγγελος) as ‘a supernatural being that attends upon or serves as a messenger of a superior supernatural entity’. There are no spirits that remotely match these features in the Bisu cosmology.

Finding a Bisu term that matched the feature ‘head of evil spirits’ was also difficult. The Bisu spirits are not ordered in terms of a hierarchical power structure. If there is any order amongst them at all, then they can only be arranged according to their relative importance in the lives of Bisu people. Some are more dangerous than others. There are also spirits for which it is important to make offerings, but these spirits do not lord it or spiritual beings.

### 5.4 Choosing Terms for Religious Specialists

In this section, the problem of choosing appropriate terms for religious specialists in Bisu is addressed. In particular, a term for ‘priest’ is sought. The term most often considered as good candidate for ‘priest’ in the New Testament is the local term for ‘Shaman’. In the case of a shaman, Burnett (2000) notes that the term has been used to refer to a broad category of related observations. The three main features of a shaman are 1) that he is healer and protector of the people from spiritual forces, 2) He cooperates with the spirits, while not being controlled by them, and 3) He is often believed to make flights or journeys into the spirit realm (2000:175-176).

Schliesinger says of the Bisu, “The village sorcerer called *bhu dtang*, serves as a medium between the people and the spirits. The *bhu dtang* is chosen among the venerable males of the village, whose parents already passed away, by the means
of a rotating stick” (2000:187). However, the results of questionnaires show that this statement would appear to be inaccurate according to the definition of ‘sorcerer’ in Burnett (2000:141) and in Sitton (1998b:109). According to responses in the worldview questionnaires, the bhu dtang is not associated with multiple spirits, but is only concerned with ang cao ‘village spirit’. Rather, he is the village priest charged with ritual sacrifices to ang cao ‘village spirit’. Performing sacrifices to ang cao is his main duty. The putang (IRI) as he is called, is distinct from the local shaman or spirit doctor, who performs sacrifices to spirits that are believed to have made a person sick. He also offers sacrifices to territorial spirits on behalf of others for the protection of land or property. The local spirit medium possesses special gifts such as ‘clairvoyance’, but does not offer sacrifices.

Given the above evidence, it would seem that the term putang ‘village priest’ is a strong candidate for the key translation term ‘Priest’ in Bisu.

5.5 Choosing Terms for Taboos and other Offenses

Burnett discusses the notion of ‘taboo’ in various traditional societies around the world. Burnett refers to Margaret Mead’s definition of the term in Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences published in 1937. “Tabu may be defined as a negative sanction, a prohibition whose infringement results in an automatic penalty without human or superhuman mediation” (2000:75).

Regarding the concept of ‘sin’, Burnett explains that the notion of sin is generally universal, but that the particular offences that are perceived as ‘sin’ vary from among cultures. Burnett explains that the concepts of taboo, pollution and sin overlap each other and that the relationship between pollution and morals is often unclear (2000:85).

Burnett goes on to state “All societies tend to have an informal classification of the degree of seriousness of various sins” (2000:87). In traditional societies, the greatest sins are those committed against your own people, because it affects the solidarity of the group. In contrast, Burnett notes, sins such as murder and rape by insiders of outsiders is often considered insignificant. Burnett also notes that prohibitions against stealing, murder and adultery are almost universal, but the specific definitions of what constitutes these sins vary from one culture to another (2000:88).
According to worldview interviews there is a Bisu word that describes the breaking of taboos or the moral code. *Ang si* (安四) is more serious than simply making a mistake. It includes moral failures such as pregnancy out of wedlock. It can also be used to talk about the breaking of taboos set up by *ang cao* ‘village spirit’ as well as social sins such as ‘stealing’. It was evident that in worldview interviews offenses committed against the group or within the village area were more serious than offenses outside the group or village area. However, the term does have moral and ethical implications and is stronger than simply making a mistake. It is therefore a strong candidate for the key translation term ‘sin’.
Chapter 6

Testing of Key Terms

6.1 Introduction

This section will firstly review the list of key translation terms to be tested in this thesis. Next, each key translation term will be discussed, including the original Biblical Greek term as well as the currently used Bisu term along with the potential new translation term. Lastly, the test instrument question for each term will be explained and the results given.

6.2 List of Key Translation Terms

The following chart lists key translation terms tested in this thesis using a pilot test instrument. The Greek terms are located in the first column. The second column lists the Bisu term currently being used along with a literal translation. The third column lists the potential new terms. Translations of these terms are also listed. In fourth column is the number of the questions used to test these terms. The questions can be found in the appendix. In the last column is the passage from Mark or Acts that was read to the subjects.
### Table 14: List of Key Translation Terms, Questions and Passages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eng.</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Suggested</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spirit</td>
<td>12.18 (\text{πνεῦμα} (\text{pneuma}))</td>
<td><em>Ang h kond ang la ang sheung ang shang</em> (องหกงองลาองเชืององช่าง) ‘Clean Soul’</td>
<td><em>Hpacaw ang h kond ang la ang sheung ang shang</em> (พราคาแองหองลาองเชืององช่าง) ‘Phracaw’s clean soul’</td>
<td>1, 6a</td>
<td>Mk 1:9-12; Acts 6:1-3, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demon</td>
<td>12.37 (\text{πνεῦμα δαμιόνιον} (\text{daemonion}), \text{δαμίον} (\text{daemon}), \text{διάβολος} (\text{diabolos}))</td>
<td><em>Daeya</em> (เดี๋ย) ‘spirit’ or <em>Daeya ang lay</em> (เดี๋ยแองไล่) ‘Dangerous spirit’</td>
<td><em>Daephakkdae</em> (เทพะกตาด) ‘Possession spirit’</td>
<td>2, 5</td>
<td>Mk 1:23-27; Mk 9:17-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin</td>
<td>88.289 (\text{ἁμαρτία} (\text{Hamartia}))</td>
<td><em>Ang si ang blap</em> ฮงซิฮ่งบลำบ (Sin-Bisu-Thai)</td>
<td><em>Ang si</em> (ฮงซิ) (Sin- Bisu)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mk 2:1-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satan</td>
<td>12.34 (\text{διάβολος, Σατανάς} (\text{Satanos}))</td>
<td><em>Satan</em> (ซาตาน)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mk 3:22-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>53.86 (\text{ἱερεῖα; (ierateia)})</td>
<td><em>Purohit</em> (โปริท) ‘preist-thai’</td>
<td><em>Putang</em> (พุทง) ‘priest of the village spirit’</td>
<td>6b</td>
<td>Acts 6:1-3, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul</td>
<td>(\text{πνεῦμα sense 1(d) (Barnwell 1995)})</td>
<td><em>Ang h kond ang la</em> (องหกงองลา) ‘Soul’</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Acts 7:59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dream, Vision</td>
<td>33.486 (\text{ὄναρ} (\text{onar}); \text{ἐννίπτων} (\text{enupnion}))</td>
<td><em>Mae beunbeun</em> (เม้บิ้นบิน) ‘Dream’</td>
<td><em>Mae beunbeun yang mama to la chi</em> (เม้บิ้นบินยางมามาต่อลาชี) ‘dream that is really happening’</td>
<td>8b</td>
<td>Acts 10:3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angel</td>
<td>12.28 (\text{ἀγγέλος} (\text{angelos}))</td>
<td><em>Htaewada</em> ฮต่าวดา ‘Angel-Thai’</td>
<td><em>Hpracaw daeya ang men</em> (พราคาแองเมน) ‘Phracaw’s good spirit’</td>
<td>8a</td>
<td>Acts 10:3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng.</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>Current</td>
<td>Suggested</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>Ref.</td>
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<td>------</td>
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<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God</td>
<td>12.1 Θεός (Theos)</td>
<td>Ἡπρακαύ</td>
<td>Ἁγγα (Theos)</td>
<td>‘god, Buddha’</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.3 Holy Spirit

This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term πνεῦμα (Pneuma) ‘spirit’ and then discusses the term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.

#### 6.3.1 Translating the Greek Term πνεῦμα (Pneuma) ‘Spirit’

In Louw & Nida (1988), the Greek term 12.18 πνεῦμα (Pneuma) is defined as ‘a title for the third person of the Trinity, literally ‘spirit’. English translations of this term are ‘Spirit, Spirit of God, and Holy Spirit’. According to Barnwell (1995), the term πνεῦμα (Pneuma) has three senses in which it is used, a person’s spirit, a spirit as in an independent and invisible being, or a supernatural impulse or inspiration. Barnwell lists the various senses as follows.

**Spirit**

1. A person’s spirit:
   - a) A person in relation to God and the supernatural world,
   - b) Divine wisdom and authority in a person,
   - c) A person’s inner attitude or disposition, and
   - d) The life of a person, the invisible part of him, which is separated from his body when he dies.

2. A spirit, an independent and invisible being:
   - a) The category of spirits in general,
   - b) The Spirit of God (Holy Spirit),
   - c) A ghost, a spirit without a body, usually the spirit of a dead person, and
   - d) An evil, unclean spirit.

3. A supernatural impulse or inspiration
Barnwell notes that in senses 1 c and d the term “'spirit' has no specific connection with God.”

Louw and Nida (1988, under 12:18 ‘Holy Spirit’) note that it is difficult in some languages to find a satisfactory term for the Holy Spirit of God. Choosing a term that normally refers to local spirit beings may indicate evil or mischievous character. Choosing a term ‘heart’ or ‘soul’ of God may also be problematic in that the term may imply that the God has died, as the soul in many languages is inactive until after death. The soul is also often seen as something that is not able to act on its own. Other problems may include the idea that the soul is often believed to be impersonal as opposed to being the personal manifestation of God.

6.3.2 The Current Term ‘Holy Spirit’ in Bisu

The term currently being used in Bisu for the key term ‘Holy Spirit’ is Ang hkong ang la ang sheung ang shang ‘clean soul’. The word for ‘soul’ refers to the invisible part of a human being that departs the body, usually after death. However, in Bisu beliefs, this part of a person may depart temporarily from an individual at certain times during their life, causing the person to become ill. If this occurs, a special spirit doctor is called upon to call the ‘soul’ of that person back to them. Bisu people maintain that although their beliefs about Ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ are similar to Thai beliefs about winyaan (วิญญาณ) ‘soul’, they are not the same. What is important here is that for Bisu people, Ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ brings to mind a particular set of beliefs specific to Bisu people only.

The addition of ‘clean’ is meant to express the sense of ‘Holy’ in ‘Holy Spirit’. ‘Clean’ in this Bisu sense has no special religious or ceremonial connotation, but as mentioned in 6.3.6 it can have a moral one. It is the common word for all things unsoiled, such as a ‘clean shirt’ or a ‘clean house’.

6.3.3 Test 1 Discussion of Question and Findings for 通风 (Pneuma)

The passage used in both tests for the key term ‘Holy Spirit’ was taken from Mark chapter 1:9-12 with the term actually being used in verses 10 and 12. In this passage, Jesus arrives in Nazareth in the region of Galilee where John baptizes him in the Jordan River. In verse 10, as Jesus emerges from the river ‘the clean soul like a white dove bird landed on Jesus.’ (Bisu-English Back
Translation) Then in verse 11, God speaks from heaven and declares that Jesus is his son and that God loves him. Finally, in verse 12, the term ‘clean soul’ is used again when the author Mark says, ‘The clean soul caused him to go into the forest where no one lives.’

This passage constitutes the first place in the gospel of Mark where the term ‘clean soul’ is used. It should also in theory establish that the term ‘clean soul’ is associated with God in some manner as he is also mentioned, though the specifics of that relationship may remain unclear.

There are several problems with introducing this key term for ‘Holy Spirit’ to Bisu using this passage. Firstly, the passage does not give Bisu speakers a specific definition for the term. The original Jewish audience of the New Testament had many advantages over a Bisu audience regarding this term as they had a history of the ‘Spirit of God’ being active on earth from the moment of creation. Bisu speakers have no similar concept with which to associate this term. Also, hearers in New Testament times believed that the ‘Holy Spirit’ would possess people on occasion, so this situation was not unusual, although the significance of this particular instance seems to have been lost on them at the time. Since the term for ‘Holy Spirit’ here is actually literally ‘clean soul’, Bisu hearers are likely to be influenced by their own particular beliefs about the nature of the ‘soul’ in their interpretation of this passage.

The question posed to hearers after listening to this passage was “What is ang hkong ang la ang sheung ang shang? ‘clean soul’” There were four possible answers. The first answer was daeya ‘spirit’, the general term in Bisu for an invisible being. Usually, this term conjures up negative feelings in Bisu speakers as these are malevolent beings that are capricious and unpredictable, self-serving and have no special affection for human beings. They are at once demanding and difficult to satisfy. They are easily offended, and thus the Bisu are afraid of them. They can however be persuaded to act on behalf of a person if certain demands are met. Ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ becomes such a being after death. The author’s prediction was that Bisu speakers would not be likely to choose this answer, as it is the one that least fits the context. Bisu speakers also make a distinction between ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ and daeya ‘spirit’.
The second answer was ‘the soul of a person who has done good (works)’. The author’s predication was that this answer would be the most likely to be chosen among Bisu speakers. When one talks about *ang hkong ang la ‘soul’* one usually includes references to the person to whom it belongs. It is not normal for a supernatural being to have an *ang hkong ang la ‘soul’*. Therefore it seemed likely that Bisu speakers would think the term refers to a person.

The third answer listed is *hpracaw ang hkong ang la ‘God’s soul’*. This is the meaning that is intended by the use of the term *ang hkong ang la ang sheung ang shang ‘clean soul’*.

The fourth answer listed is “I don’t know”.

The author predicted that the first test set would result in a low number of correct answers. The author predicted that second test which adds *hpracaw ‘God’* in front of this phrase would increase the number of correct answers to this question. The reasoning for this was that by specifying to whom the ‘soul’ belongs, namely God, the hearer is be less likely to misunderstand the phrase as referring to a living human being.

In the first test set, where the original key term for 'Holy Spirit', *ang hkong ang la ang sheung ang shang ‘clean soul’* was used, two out of six subjects believed the term referred to God’s soul which was the sought after answer. Four out of the six subjects believed the term referred to the soul of a person who has done good works.

As predicted, the majority of subjects believed that the phrase *ang hkong ang la ang sheung ang shang ‘clean soul’*, was referring to a person who was of good character. From this, two possible conclusions might be proposed, 1) the word ‘soul’ in Bisu is automatically assumed to belong to a living human being, or 2) the word ‘clean’ in Bisu when combined with ‘soul’ is understood to refer to that individual’s good character.

The results of the first pilot test would suggest that the term *ang hkong ang la ang sheung ang shang ‘clean soul’*, in Bisu does not appear to communicate the correct meaning of the Greek term (*πνεῦμα* (Pneuma) ‘spirit’) to the majority of subjects in this study. One discovery noted in the interviews is that ‘soul’ in Bisu in common usage tends to be proceeded by a pronoun or proper name indicating possession. This reinforces the idea that a ‘soul’ must belong to someone. The
phrase ‘clean soul’ as it is currently being used, does not indicate to whom the ‘soul’ belongs. Therefore in test 2, the term will be proceeded by the current term for ‘God’ in order to test the validity of this hypothesis.

6.3.4 Test 2 Discussion of Question and Findings for वेष्म (Pneuma)

Mark 1:9-12 was used to test this term in test 2, just the same as in test 1. However, the term for वेष्म (Pneuma) ‘spirit’ was changed from अंग हकधंग अङ ला अङ छेंग अङ शंग ‘clean soul’ to हप्णन्या हकधंग अङ ला अङ छेंग अङ शंग ‘God’s clean soul’. As it was noted that in worldview interviews that the term अंग हकधंग अङ ला ‘soul’ was always used with a possessor preceding it, the possessor हप्णन्या ‘God’, was added. As such, the term literally means ‘God’s clean soul’.

Subjects were asked, “What is हप्णन्या हकधंग अङ ला अङ छेंग अङ शंग ‘God’s clean soul’?”

In the second test set, where a modified key term for ‘Holy Spirit’, हप्णन्या हकधंग अङ ला अङ छेंग अङ शंग ‘God’s clean soul’ was used, three out of six subjects responded with the sought after answer of c) ‘God’s clean soul’. Two subjects responded with the answer b) the soul of a person who has done good works, while one person responded with d) I don’t know. This represents a slight improvement from test 1.

These results, combined with the results from test 2, would seem to suggest that the problem is not with अंग हकधंग अङ ला ‘soul’ but with अंग छेंग अङ शंग ‘clean’. When the results of this test question are viewed in conjunction with answers given for question 6 where this same phrase अंग हकधंग अङ ला अङ छेंग अङ शंग ‘clean soul’ is used it would suggest that this term can have moral connotations. Bisu speakers are confused when ‘clean’ is used to describe something impersonal like अंग हकधंग अङ ला ‘soul’. Even with the addition of the possessor हप्णन्या ‘God’, Bisu speakers often still understand the phrase to refer to a person.

There are at least two possible interpretations of the data. The first is that अंग हकधंग अङ ला ‘soul’ perhaps cannot, or perhaps should not, be used to talk about God or spirit beings as अंग हकधंग अङ ला is primarily associated with living people who possess bodies. According to worldview questionnaires, the अंग हकधंग अङ ला
‘soul’ of a person may sometimes leave his body while they are still alive. However, once the person dies the *ang hkong ang la* ‘soul’ departs the body and either is immediately reincarnated or becomes a *daeya* ‘spirit’. Some *daeya* ‘spirit’ formerly existed as *ang hkong ang la* ‘soul’ but none possess one.

The second possible interpretation is that the term *ang sheung ang shang* ‘clean’ is a description of one’s character, similar to the English expression ‘He’s a good soul’.

### 6.3.5 Conclusions on ‘Holy Spirit’

This section reviewed the results for both test sets for the key translation term ‘Holy Spirit’ in terms of the stated goals of the test. The test provided potential information about native speakers understanding of the terms and potential problems were identified. Though more speakers would need to be tested to verify the findings, evidence suggests that the use of the term for soul may be restricted to only living human beings. Evidence also suggests that term ‘clean’ may not be the best term to translate the Greek idea of ‘Holy’.

### 6.4 Evil Spirits

This section begins by reviewing translation problems associated with the Greek term *δαίμονιον* (daimonion) ‘demon’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.

#### 6.4.1 Translating the Greek Term  άμονιον (Daimonion) ‘Demon’

Sense 2d of *πνεύμα* ‘spirit’ (Barnwell 1995) is ‘an evil, unclean spirit’. In a separate section of her work called ‘Evil Spirits’, she explains that

> The terms ‘evil spirit’, ‘unclean spirit’ and ‘demon’ are used interchangeably in the New Testament. They refer to spiritual beings that serve Satan as his agents, being under his authority. These spiritual beings have the power to oppress a human being and take control of him (1995: Evil Spirits).

Louw & Nida note that often languages have a large number of terms that refer to particular kinds of evil spirits who are often believed to be the cause of various kinds of human behavior such as insanity, depression, epilepsy, sexual perversion and violence. In a case where there is no generic term that covers all
instances, Louw & Nida (1988) suggest selecting “a class of demons which parallels most closely the descriptions of demon activity in the New Testament and use such a term with appropriate contextual qualifications so as to suggest that such a term is to be understood in a general sense.” They also note that the term ‘evil spirit’ should not be so unduly restrictive as to cause the hearer to think there are both good and evil demons or clean and unclean demons.

6.4.2 The Current Term ‘Evil Spirit’ in Bisu
The current term for ‘Evil Spirit’ as used in Mark and Acts in Bisu is daeya ‘spirit’ or daeya ang lay ‘dangerous spirit’. Daeya ‘spirit’ as stated previously refers to a term that conjures up negative feelings in Bisu speakers. Occasionally, the term ang lay ‘dangerous’ is added. This is not a phrase that is typically used by Bisu speakers to talk about local spirit beings. Daeya ‘spirits’ are malevolent beings that are capricious and unpredictable, self-serving and have no special affection for human beings. They are at once demanding and difficult to satisfy, thus terrorizing human beings. They can be persuaded to act on behalf of a person if certain demands are met.

6.4.3 Test 1 Discussion Questions and Findings for μονιον (Daimonion)
There are two passages in this study that used the Greek term δαιμόνιον (daimonion) ‘demon’, each with a separate question. The first passage was also taken from Mark chapter one. In verses 23-26 a man is introduced who is possessed by an evil spirit “a spirit had entered him and (he) cried out. ‘Jesus Nazareth person, what are you doing to us? You have come to destroy us. I know who you are. The clean person.  Whom God has sent.’” (English Back Translation) Jesus then commands the spirits to be quiet and come out of the man. The term daeya ang lay ‘dangerous spirit’ is used in verse 26, “The spirit causes the man to shake and cried out. Then it ran out of him.” Those gathered around the area wondered to each other what had just happened and where Jesus got such power. Then at the end of verse 27 they note “spirits run away from him in fear”.

The question then posed to subjects about this passage is “In this story, what is a daeya ( Diane) ‘spirit’? The possible answers were a) daephakdae ‘possession spirit’ b) winyaan ‘soul’ (Thai), c) a forest spirit and d) any kind of spirit. Daephakdae
'possession spirit' is a particular type of Bisu spirit whose chief feature is that it tends to possess people. It has many features common to spirits that possessed people in New Testament times. It can speak through a person, using their voice, though it may sound strange. It can also cause a person to have superhuman strength or cause them to go into convulsions. It does have at least one feature not normally attributed to New Testament spirits in that it is believed to eat the insides of a person.

_Winnyaan_ is the Thai term for ‘soul’. At is very similar to _ang hkong ang la_ ‘soul’ in Bisu, but speakers maintain that it is distinct. Speakers are unlikely to choose this answer, as it is very distinct from the category of _daeya_ ‘spirit’.

A forest spirit is another kind of spirit that the Bisu people believe can possess people at times, most notably if one goes out into the forest and accidentally offends it.

The last choice is ‘Any kind of spirit’.

The second passage used in this study to test the term for ‘evil spirits’ was in question 5 which used Mark 9:17-26. In this passage, a father brings his demon-possessed child to Jesus, believing that Jesus can heal him. However, Jesus is not available, so Jesus’ disciples make an unsuccessful attempt to drive the demon out of the child. When Jesus appears on the scene, the father of the sick child describes his condition and how the disciples were unable to help. Jesus then asks several questions about the child's condition. The father explains that the symptoms include repeated attempts by the spirit to kill the child by throwing him into the fire or the river. The man then asks Jesus if he can do anything to help. Jesus responds by saying that with enough faith anything is possible. The man then asks for more faith. Then Jesus commands the spirits to come out of the boy and orders them never to return. The child goes into convulsions and then falls still, causing onlookers to speculate that he may be dead.

After listening to this passage, subjects were asked, “Suppose this was a Bisu story. What kind of ‘spirit’ _daeya_ would this ‘spirit’ be?” The purpose of this question is to discover whether or not the general term in Bisu for ‘spirit’ _daeya_ is sufficient or if speakers associate the kind of spirit described in this particular passage to a particular kind of Bisu spirit, namely the spirit called _daephakdae_.

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‘possession spirit’. This spirit in particular appears to most closely resemble that of the kind of evil spirit mentioned in this passage.

As in all questions, four possible choices are given. The first was *daephakdae* ‘possession spirit’, a type of Bisu spirit that is frequently associated with acts of possession. This spirit may give the host superhuman strength and cause the host to foam at the mouth as well as throw him into convulsions. The spirit may also communicate with others using the voice of the host, though the voice may be altered.

The second choice is *gudae* ‘our spirits’. The term refers to the collective group of spirits that haunt a village because they were unable, for various reasons, to immediately reincarnate upon their deaths.

The third choice is *pumdae* ‘grave spirit’, a spirit that haunts graveyards or cremation sites. This is a spirit of a deceased person.

The fourth choice is ‘Any kind of spirit’ or *daeya*.

It was the author's prediction that the majority of speakers will identify the *daephakdae* ‘possession’ spirit (or answer choice a) as the particular kind of spirit that best suits the context of these passages.

In Bisu Key Term Test 1, question 2 using Mark 1:23-27, two out of six subjects responded with the sought after answer of a) *daephakdae* ‘possession spirit’ while three out of six subjects responded with d) any kind of ‘spirit’. Finally, one person answered b) *winyaan* ‘soul’ (Thai).

These results would suggest that while it is possible that this spirit is a *daephakdae* ‘possession spirit’, it is just as possible that it could be any one of the Bisu spirits. This might suggest that the general (and original) term for ‘spirit’ *daeya* is sufficient when talking about spirits that possess people in the New Testament.

6.4.4 Test 2 Discussion of Questions and Findings for ‘Evil Spirit’

Test set 2 used the same passage as test set 1 for key term ‘Evil Spirit’, Mark 1:23-27. The term for ‘evil spirit’ was changed from the general term for ‘spirit’ *daeya*, to *daephakdae* ‘possession spirit’. The purpose of this was to determine if a more specific term could be used in its place and if doing so would increase subjects understanding of the passage.
After being read the passage, subjects were asked, “In this story, what kind of spirit is this?” The following answers were listed as possible choices, a) a dangerous spirit *daeya ang lay* ‘dangerous spirit’ b) *winyaan* ‘soul’-Thai, c) forest spirit and d) any kind of spirit.

In the second test where the more specific term, *daephakdae* ‘possession spirit’ was used, three subjects responded with the sought after answer of a) ‘a dangerous spirit’. Two subjects responded with the answer b) *winyaan* ‘soul’-Thai, while one subject answered d) any kind of spirit.

These results represent only a slight improvement over test 1. Subjects from both tests answered that the particular spirit in this story could be either a *daephakdae* ‘possession spirit’, a *daeya ang lay* ‘dangerous spirit’ or any kind of spirit. As the point of this test question was to determine if the more specific spirit *daephakdae* ‘possession spirit’, these results are inconclusive.

6.4.5 Conclusion on ‘Evil Spirit’

In conclusion the term *daeya* ‘spirit’ is sufficient as a key translation term for ‘demon’. The results do support the use of a more specific term. This particular question and it’s results, should they prove valid through further testing, could potentially suggest that according to native speakers’ understanding of the scenario regarding demon possession in this story, this type of spirit could really be any kind of spirit.

6.5 Sin

This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term ἁμαρτία (Hamartia) ‘Sin’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.

6.5.1 Translating the Greek Term μιτ (Hamartia) ‘Sin’

The Greek term 88.289 μιτ (hamartia) according to Louw & Nida (1988) means, “to act contrary to the will and law of God - ‘to sin, to engage in wrongdoing, sin.”’ ‘Hamartema’ (88.290 ἁμαρτημα) according to Louw & Nida means “that which someone has done in violating the will and law of God - ‘sin, wrongdoing.’”
Barnwell (1995) in the section entitled ‘Sin, Sinner’, defines ‘hamartia’ as ‘the quality of being wrong in the sight of God or an individual act of doing wrong against another person or against God.” In her study of the term, Barnwell divided the various senses of the term as follows:

A. Sin (noun form)
   1. A specific act or acts of wrongdoing.
   2. Sinfulness, being in the wrong, as the condition that human beings are in, the state of being sinful.
   3. An accumulated record of wrongdoings.
   4. A personified power or force that is at work in peoples’ lives to make them do wrong.

B. To sin

C. Sinner, a person who sins.


Barnwell (1995) suggests exploring a list of the words in the same general area of meaning as ‘sin’ in the receptor language. She also advises investigating the limitations of any term for ‘sin’ for it may only refer to particular kinds of wrongdoing, such as those that the receptor culture perceives as major acts of wrongdoing.

6.5.2 The Current Term for ‘sin’ in Bisu

The term currently being used in Bisu for ‘sin’, is *ang si ang blap*\(^{11}\). It is a combination of the Bisu term and the Thai term. The Thai term *baap* is also used in the Thai translation of the Bible and is a word borrowed from Buddhism. The Bisu combination term is an artificial term used only in the Bisu New Testament.

This word is a Bisu rendering of the Thai term *khwambaap* (ความผิด). According to Tambiah (1970:53), it means ‘demerit’. It is the opposite of *bun* ‘to make

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\(^{11}\) *Blap* is a borrowing from Thai that is in turn a borrowing form Pali/Sanskrit. The Thai term is actually pronounced *baap*, but Bisu inserts an ‘l’.
merit'. The combination term did not appear in worldview interviews. In those interviews, only the Bisu term, *ang si* was observed.

Most Bisu speakers perceived these two terms to be close in meaning, though not the same. The exact nature of the difference was not completely clear, except that the Bisu term has no Buddhist implications.

In worldview interviews, Bisu speakers were asked what constituted the greatest *ang si* ('sin') a person could commit. They responded that the greatest 'sin' was for a woman to become pregnant out of wedlock within the boundaries of the village. Clearly, the term has moral implications. Other types of *ang si* include murder and theft. Based on the fact that speakers claimed that the village spirit *ang cao* 'god' knows about their *ang si* 'sin' even when no one else can has seen it and that he knows even when they are thinking about committing *ang si* 'sin', it is clear that *ang si* 'sin' includes thoughts as well as actions. Bisu speakers also believe that *ang cao* 'god' is concerned about the 'sins' of the Bisu people and to commit *ang si* against him personally could have deadly consequences. The term is not used to describe acts that lesser spirit beings *daeya* 'spirits' find offensive. The term *ang si* 'sin' denotes an offense that can also be committed against other human beings. The Bisu language makes no distinction between intentional and unintentional acts of wrongdoing. *Ang si* 'sin' refers to intentional as well as unintentional ones.

Visser-den Hertog (2007) conducted a survey of Thai subjects to discover for herself the meaning of various Thai Buddhist terms. She discovered that “the concept of *khwaambaap* is linked to the concept of karma,” and that “*khwaamphit* is not so bad as *khwaambaap*. *Khwaamphit* may be understood as something bad that was done unintentionally” (2007:3-4). She also discovered that Buddhist respondents cited lying, stealing, adultery, killing animals and drinking alcohol as examples of *khwaambaap*. She also notes that the Buddhist concept stresses the sin of killing animals more than the killing of people.

6.5.3 Test 1 Discussion Questions and Findings for ‘Sin’

The passage used in question 3, in which the term 'sin' is in focus, was Mark 2:1-12. This story begins with Jesus at Peter's house in Capernaum, where Jesus is staying. Already by this time in the gospel, Jesus' teaching is popular and his
healing powers well known. He is surrounded by a group of people so large that he is inaccessible to some coming to seek his help. One paralyzed man is so desperate that his friends lower him down to Jesus through a hole in the roof of the house. Expecting Jesus to heal the man of his paralysis, the crowd of onlookers is shocked when Jesus turns to the man and declares, “Child, I forgive your sins.”

Knowing this had shocked the teachers of law among the crowd, Jesus used a rhetorical question to challenge they’re thinking. He asks them whether it is easier to heal people or to forgive sins. Jesus then declares that he will demonstrate his powers by healing the man so that people will understand that he has authority on earth to forgive sins.

Jesus then turns to the paralytic and commands him to get up, take his mat and walk home. The man immediately gets up and walks home.

After listening to this passage, subjects were asked, “What does ang si ang blap ‘sin’ mean?” The subjects were given the following answers to choose from: a) ‘to disobey God’, b) ‘to disobey people’, c) ‘to disobey spirits’ or daeya, or d) ‘I don’t know’.

The purpose of the question was to determine if the subjects understood that the term used here, ang si ang blap ‘sin’ (Bisu-Thai Combination), meant acts of wrongdoing committed against God. If so, they would choose answer a) to disobey God. Secondly, the results of this question could then be compared to the same passage and question in test 2 using only the Bisu term, ang si ‘sin’.

It was unlikely that Bisu subjects would choose answer c) ‘to disobey spirits’ daeya as the worldview interviews suggest that the term is not normally used when talking about lesser spirits. These spirits must be at times placated, but when one of these spirits takes offense, the Bisu believe it is because certain required ceremonies have not been performed.

Three out of six subjects responded with the sought after answer of a) to disobey God. Two people responded with the answer b) to disobey people. One person responded with d) I don’t know. These results would suggest that the majority of people understand ang si ang blap ‘sin’ to refer either to disobedience to God or to people.
6.5.4 Test 2 Discussion on Questions and Findings for ‘Sin’
The passage used to test the key translation term ‘sin’ in test set 1 was the same as in test 1, Mark 2:1-12. The term was changed from ang si ang blap ‘sin’ (Bisu-Thai) to ang si ‘sin’ (Bisu only). The purpose of this test question was to determine if the Bisu term was sufficient. The same question was asked as in test 1 and the same choices were given.
Four out of six subjects answered a) to disobey God, while two subjects answered b) to disobey people. This would suggest that the term ang si ‘sin’ (Bisu only) could mean either to disobey God or to disobey people. The context of this passage doesn’t make it totally clear which sense is meant. Both answers are correct according to the Bisu sense of the term.

6.5.5 Conclusion on ‘Sin’
This section reviews the results for both test sets for the key translation term ‘Sin’. This particular question and its results, should they prove valid through further testing, could suggest that the addition of ang blap ‘sin’ (Thai) to ang si ‘sin’ (Bisu) does not significantly change listeners’ understanding of the term. Therefore, one might conclude that the terms are interchangeable and that is not necessary to add ang blap ‘sin’ (Thai). Ang si ‘sin’ (Bisu) alone was sufficient to convey the meaning of ‘sin’ for the subjects of this test.

6.6 Satan
This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term Σατάνας (Satanas) ‘Satan’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.

6.6.1 Translating the Greek Term Σατάνας (Satanas) ‘Satan’
There are two Greek terms from Louw and Nida, 12.34 διάβολος (Diabolos), Σατάνας (Satanas) for the being that is commonly translated as ‘Satan’ or the ‘Devil’ in English. The first term literally means ‘slanderer’ and the second means ‘adversary’. Both terms refer to the principal supernatural evil being.
Under the same entry, Louw and Nida also cite a verse from the passage that will later be used in this thesis to test the Bisu term for ‘Satan’, namely Mark 3:23.
Barnwell defines the term ‘Satan’ as referring to “the supreme evil spiritual being who leads and directs all other evil spiritual beings.” Barnwell also notes that διάβολος (Diabolos) in its singular form indicates the supreme evil spiritual being and contrasts with the plural form that refers to lesser evil spirits or those spirits who follow Satan.

Louw & Nida advise against a literal translation of διάβολος (Diabolos) as ‘slanderer’ as there is nearly always a more relevant way of referencing the Devil. It is equally inadvisable, they say, to borrow a term from another language, as this may introduce other complications, especially if the term’s meaning is not consistent throughout the language area. Some languages use a descriptive phrase such as ‘the chief of demons’ rather than a proper name.

6.6.2 The Current Term ‘Satan’ in Bisu

The term currently being used for Σατανάς (Satanas) in Bisu, as well as the Thai Bible, is Satan (สatan), which is a transliteration of the Greek term. In the traditional religion of the Bisu, there is no formal organization of the daeya ‘spirits’. The spirits have no leader and therefore there is no proper name in Bisu that would present as an obvious choice. The Bisu term currently being used is problematic because the term Satan is used in both Thai and in Bisu to describe a bad person.

6.6.3 Discussion of Test Questions and Findings for ‘Satan’

The passage used in question 4 of the Bisu key terms test is Mark 3:22-27. In this passage, a group of people from Jerusalem accuse Jesus of being able to cast demons out of people because “The head of spirits named Beelzebub has entered Jesus.” Jesus responds by asking a rhetorical question, “Can Satan drive out his own group?” He then makes a statement that is difficult to translate in many languages. He explains that if the members of a household cannot get along, it is impossible for them to continue living together. Jesus ends by emphasizing that Satan and his followers are no different.

Of special note is the first reference to 'Satan' in the Bisu translation is verse 22. The people from Jerusalem refer to ‘Satan’ as ’the head of spirits named Beelzebub’ (Bisu Back Translation). Beelzebub is not a name that is familiar to Bisu people, and it is worth noting that this passage constitutes the first mention of Satan in this Gospel. The Greek translation of this particular passage only
indirectly identifies 'Satan' as 'Beelzebub'. In order to understand that 'Satan' is the head of spirits, a Bisu speaker would need to deduce from the context that 'Beelzebub' is another name for 'Satan'.

After hearing this passage, Bisu speakers were asked, “Who is 'Satan'?” Four choices were offered. The first was a) daephakdae ‘possession spirit’, which is explained earlier in this thesis, a type of spirit known for possessing people. The second choice was b) any kind of ‘spirit’ daeya. The third was c) ‘the head of dangerous spirits’ daeya ang lay. And the final choice offered was d) ‘a bad person’.

Four out of six test subjects responded with the sought after answer of c) the head of dangerous spirits. One person responded with b) any kind of spirit and one person responded with d) a bad person.

6.6.4 Test 2 Discussion on Questions and Findings for ‘Satan’

The passage used to test the key translation term ‘Satan’ was the same passage as used in test 1, Mark 3:22-27. The only change to this passage was that the phrase in verse 22 from “The head of spirits named Beelzebub has entered Jesus,” to “The head of spirits named Satan has entered Jesus.” The reason for this change was that this passage constitutes the first mention of Satan in this Gospel. The original translation of this particular passage only indirectly identifies 'Satan' as 'Beelzebub'. In order to understand that 'Satan' is the head of spirits, a Bisu speaker would need to deduce from the context that 'Beelzebub' is another name for 'Satan'. So this test replaces the name Beelzebub with Satan, so that the text explicitly states that he is the headman\textsuperscript{12} of dangerous spirits. As Barnwell (1995) suggests, “In areas where the name ‘Satan’ is not known, it will be good to introduce the name, but it will be advisable in such a case to provide some indication of who is referred to, at least the first time Satan is mentioned in a particular passage.”

After listening to this passage, subjects were given the following answers to choose from. The first was a) daephakdae ‘possession spirit’. The second choice

\textsuperscript{12} The Bisu term does not actually indicate a human being, but a leader of some kind. ‘Headman’ is the closest English translation for the Bisu term as it is normally used.
was b) any kind of spirit or daeya. The third was c) ‘the head of dangerous spirits’ or daeya ang lay. And the final choice offered was d) ‘a bad person’.

The purpose of this question was to determine whether explicitly stating that Satan is the headman of dangerous spirits in the text will encourage more correct answers or whether the common usage of the term (referring to a bad person) will dominate subjects understanding of the term.

In test set 2, three out of six subjects answered d) a bad person. One of the subjects answered a) daephakdae ‘possession spirit’, one of the subjects answered b) any kind of spirit and finally, one person answered with the sought after answer of c) The head of dangerous spirits. This represents a surprising decrease in correct answers from test set 1. As everything about the test remained the same, there seems to be no real explanation for these findings. It does however confirm that many Bisu people do use this term to refer to a bad person.

6.6.5 Conclusions on ‘Satan’

As with all questions in this pilot test, this question was evaluated according to its ability to accomplish its aims. This question did not significantly develop an understanding of the native speaker’s ability to understand the term or to identify potential problems with terms. Finally, the results suggest the replacement term did not improve upon the original term.

6.7 Priest

This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term ἱερατεία (hierateia) ‘priest’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.

6.7.1 Translating the Greek Term ἱερατεία (hierateia) ‘Priest’

As Barnwell (1995) points out, in the Old Testament, the primary role of the priest was to perform sacrifices. Barnwell describes the main responsibilities of the priests as follows, “They carried out various sacred duties in the Temple on behalf of the people as a whole. These included offering sacrifices and offerings every morning and evening, together with special sacrifices and other duties on the Sabbath and at annual festivals” (Barnwell 1995). Additionally, priests would present altar sacrifices on behalf of individuals. Priests also “…had the authority
to declare a person or thing ‘clean’ in the sight of God, and ‘acceptable to him and free from religious taint.’”


‘he was doing his work as a priest ... before God’ Luke 1:8.

Usage of this term employs an additional sense after the Gospels and begins to be used figuratively by the epistles, especially Romans and Hebrews, refer to all believers in Jesus as members of the ‘priesthood’ of believers. Lastly, there is only one occurrence, as Barnwell (1995) notes, of the term ‘priest’ being used to refer to non-Jewish priests in the New Testament.

Louw and Nida (1988) suggest,

In societies in which there is no organized priesthood and where there are only medicine men or shamans, it has often been possible to translate (53.86) ἱερατεία (hierateia) as simply ‘to be God’s shaman.’ Whether such an expression can be used depends very largely upon the connotations associated with shamanism.

They also note “In a number of languages ‘chief priests’ are referred to simply as ‘big priests’ or ‘important priests.’”

Barnwell’s (1995) suggestion echoes that of Louw and Nida. She emphasize that the most important feature of a priest that distinguishes him from other religious leaders is that he presents the sacrifices and offerings of the people. She suggests trying to find a term in the receptor language that highlights this function. However, she also advises testing the acceptability of such as term as a word for ‘priest’ in the New Testament. The term may remind receptor language speakers too much of the traditional religious practices.

6.7.2 The Current Term ‘Priest’ in Bisu

The term currently used in Bisu to denote ‘priest’ is purohit. It is a term borrowed from Thai.
6.7.3 Discussion of Test Questions and Findings for ‘Priest’

The passage used in the Bisu key terms test in this thesis for the key term ‘Priest’ was Acts 6:1-3 and 7. The particular passage was chosen because it includes terms that the author wished to test, both the key term ‘Holy Spirit’ and ‘Priest’ are used in this passage. The key term ‘Priest’ is not frequently used in Mark or Acts, and therefore it was something of challenge to find a passage to test a term for a Jewish priest. Unlike the Gospel of Matthew, which was written for a Jewish audience, the Gospel of Mark was likely written in Rome, originally for the Christian church in that city. The Gospel of Luke, was written for a Gentile audience and includes the story of the priest Zechariah who became the father of John the Baptist. However, no passage in Mark uses this term. Other religious leaders, however, play a key role in all of the Gospels.

Acts is not especially useful to test this term either. Acts mentions the ‘chief priests’, but the general term for Jewish priests, in their temple role of performing sacrifices, do not figure prominently.

Given the limitation of using only the already translated books of Mark and Acts, and not wanting the distraction of adding the modifications of ‘chief’ or ‘leading’ to the term for ‘priest’, one is left with Acts 6:7.

In the passage, Acts 6:1-3 and 7, the early Christian church was beginning to take shape as a multicultural and multi-lingual organization. It included both Jews and Gentiles. However, in this instance Jews who grew up speaking Hebrew were apparently prejudiced against Jews who grew up speaking Greek and began to argue over the distribution of food to Greek speaking widows. The 12 apostles of Jesus call the believers together to resolve the situation. They propose creating a new position in the church body, whose role it is to oversee the equal distribution of food. The apostles propose the following in the Bisu translation of verse 3: “In your group there are people who have the clean soul strongly. So choose 7 people from among them who are smart and good. Then have them become the people who take care of the food preparation.”

Verses 4 to 6 are skipped in the test in order to avoid distracting the speakers hearing this story for the first time. Instead, verse 7 is read to them:
“The people who knew the story of God’s word increased greatly. And in the city of Jerusalem there were also many people who believed in God’s word. A lot of priests also believed the word of God.”

It should be acknowledged that while hearing this story, Bisu speakers would not have the advantage of an introduction to the socio-linguistic situation of the first century Jews. However, Bisu speakers have had very similar experiences of prejudice in their history with Northern Thai speakers.

After hearing this story, Bisu speakers were asked, “What does purohit (プロヒット) mean?” They were given the following options to choose from: a) ‘a monk’, b) ‘a person who performs sacrifices’, c) phrasutwat 13 and finally, and d) ‘I don’t know’

A higher number, four out of six subjects, responded to question 6b with the correct answer b) a person who performs sacrifices, this might suggest that a majority Bisu speakers seem to understand the Thai term. What can be learned from this result is that certainly not all Bisu speakers understand the borrowed term as it is currently being used. Key term test 2 may provide further insight if the local term elicits a greater number of correct responses.

The prediction on the part of the author and the Bisu translation team was that the majority of people would not understand the meaning of this term. It was thought that a borrowed term would result in fewer correct answers than a receptor language term.

6.7.4 Test 2 Discussion of Questions and Findings for ‘Priest’

The passage used to test the key translation term, ‘priest’ was the same as for test set 2, Mark 9:17-27. The only difference was that purohit ‘priest’ (Thai) was replaced by putang (プタング) ‘village priest’, the local term for the priest who is dedicated to ang cao ‘village spirit’. After listening to the passage, subjects were asked to define the term using all of the choices that were used in test set 1.

13 This word is not from Thai. It was used Acts 14:13 where it was used as the word for Zeus in the Bisu translation of the book of Acts. It should not have been used as a possible answer for this question.
The choice of the term *putang* ‘village priest’ was driven by a desire to use the local term for a person whose duty it was to perform sacrifices on behalf the group as a whole. The *putang* ‘village priest’ fulfills this role for the Bisu (see Section 5.7).

Five out of six subjects responded that with the answer b) ‘a person who performs sacrifices’, of these subjects, one person originally answered b) but then changed their answer to d) ‘I don’t know’, when the question was re-read to him. One other subject chose this answer as well. These results represent a slight improvement over test 1.

The subject who answered that he didn’t know what a *putang* ‘village priest’ was, was asked to confirm that a *putang* ‘village priest’ was the person in charge of sacrifices to *ang cao* ‘village spirit’. The subject confirmed that it was, but that he didn’t understand what it meant in this context. This might indicate that using the local term in a new context may confuse some people.

### 6.7.5 Conclusions for ‘Priest’

According to the aims of the test, this question succeeded in demonstrating that Bisu speakers understand the Bisu term as meaning ‘one who performs’ sacrifices. One potential problem identified was that the use of a local term in a new context may be, at least at first, difficult for a few Bisu people to understand. If further testing confirms these results, then this test question will have demonstrated that a local term may be an appropriate alternative.

### 6.8 Soul

This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term *πνεῦμα* (pneuma) in the sense of ‘Soul’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.

#### 6.8.1 Translating the Greek Term *νεῦμα* (Pneuma) in the sense of ‘Soul’

The key term often translated in English as ‘soul’ is problematic. Beliefs commonly understood by English-speaking translators about the word ‘soul’ are inconsistent with that of the terms used in the New Testament (Barnwell 1995: Soul). The author encountered this problem when studying this key term and
believes that Thai and Bisu translators may encounter the same kinds of problems.

English speakers generally understand the term ‘soul’ as referring to the invisible part of the person that continues to exist after death. In Thai this term would be winyaan and in the Bisu language it is ang hkong ang la. English, Thai and Bisu all have different beliefs about the nature of the soul and the kind of things it might do while the physical part of the person is still living, but they all share the belief that this is the invisible part of a person that continues on after death.

In the New Testament, one sense of the Greek term πνεῦμα (pneuma) meaning ‘spirit’ is actually the part of a person that continues to live on after death. This is the same term that is used to describe the Holy Spirit, spiritual beings like demons and a person’s inner attitude and disposition.

In Acts 7:59, the term Stephen uses to refer to the invisible part of himself that will separate from him at death is actually ‘spirit’ or πνεῦμα (pneuma) or sense 1(d) in Barnwell’s list (section 6.3.1).

Section 6.3.1. outlined the differences between the terms ‘soul’ and spirit’ in Greek. It was stated that the term in focus here is actually one sense of the term πνεῦμα. The Bisu terms meaning ‘spirit’ daeya and ‘soul’ ang hkong ang la constitute similar problems as they do in English. A literal translation of πνεῦμα (pneuma) might result in daeya ‘spirit’ which actually refers to senses 2 (a) the category of spirits in general, 2(c) a ghost, a spirit without a body, usually the spirit of a dead person and 2(d) an evil, unclean spirit. However, it does not refer to sense 1(d) the life of person, the invisible part of him, which is separated from his body when he dies. For that sense the term ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ is used.

6.8.2 The Current term for ‘Soul’ in Bisu

As previously stated in section 6.3.2, the word for ‘soul’ refers to the invisible part of a human being that departs the body, usually after death. However, in Bisu beliefs, this part of a person may depart temporarily from individuals at certain times during their life, causing the person to become ill. If this occurs, a special spirit doctor is called upon to call the ‘soul’ of that person back to them. Bisu people maintain that although their beliefs about Ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ are similar to Thai beliefs about winyaan (วิญญาณ) ‘soul’, they are not the same. Bisu cannot explain exactly how, but their sense is that the two are in some way
different. What is important here is that for Bisu people, *ang h Kong ang la* ‘soul’ brings to mind a particular set of beliefs specific to Bisu people only.

### 6.8.3 Test 1 Discussion of Test Questions and Findings for ‘Soul’

The passage used in both Bisu key term tests to evaluate the term for the invisible part of an individual that separates from him at death or [πνεῦμα](pneuma) is Acts 7:59-60. In this passage Stephen is being stoned to death. This excerpt from Acts is very brief and does not include the preceding verses which includes Stephen's long speech. Nor does it include the verses that indicate why Stephen is being stoned and by whom.

The verse in focus here is verse 59 that reads in Bisu as follows:

“Then the group of people began throwing stones at Stephen. So then Stephen prayed. ‘Jesus, please take my soul.’ (พระเจ้า ขอ ลง อย่างจะอย่างมา น่า ตี้ ล้า ลา ปรา.)”

“Then Stephen got down on his knees. And (he) cried out. ‘Lord of life, this time do not cause them to have this sin.’ When he finished praying he died.”

After listening to this passage, subjects were asked the following question: “What does ‘Jesus, please take my soul’ (พระเจ้า ขอ ลง อย่างจะอย่างมา น่า ตี้ ล้า ลา ปรา) mean?”

Subjects were then given the following options to choose from: a) Stephen will die and God will take him to heaven, b) God will give Stephen a good soul (*ang h Kong ang la ang men* อย่างจะอย่างมา อย่างแน่น), c) God will cause a spirit (*daeya* .OrderBy) to come out of Stephen and finally, d) I don’t know.

The focus of this question was not to determine the appropriateness of the term *ang h Kong ang la*. This question is an attempt to investigate Bisu subjects’ understanding of an expression using this term that may possibly conflict with their worldview.

For question 7, five out of six subjects responded with the sought after answer of a) Stephen will die and God will take him to heaven. Only one subject responded with d) I don’t know. This result would seem to suggest that Bisu speakers understand this use of the term for ‘soul’ in Bisu. This might also reaffirm the meaning of *ang h Kong ang la* ‘soul’ as the part of a person that separates from him after death.
The author's predictions for this question was that there was more or less a fifty-fifty chance subjects would understand this expression. They would probably understand the term 'soul', but might think that God was giving Stephen a new or better soul.

6.8.4 Test 2 Discussion of Questions and Findings for ‘Soul’

The passage used in the Bisu key terms test in this thesis for the key term ‘soul’ was the same as in test set 1, Acts 6:1-3 and 7. In this question the phrase surrounding the term was modified slightly from the original from “Jesus, please come down and take my soul.” ( Gravepost เว่ กาง องค์ของฉัน บาง นา ลืม หัว ลำ ปาก) to “Jesus, please receive my soul well.” ( Gravepost เว่ กาง องค์ของฉัน บาง นา แม่น แน่ ชื่ิจ แล้ว ลัดไม). The purpose of this question was simply to see if the total number of correct answers would improve if the phrase were stated slightly differently. The actual term for soul was not in focus. The idea was to explore the uses of this term in order to better understand it.

Three out of six speakers chose answer a) Stephen will die and God will take him to heaven. Two subjects chose answer c) God will cause a spirit to come out of Stephen and one chose answer b) God will give Stephen a good soul. These represent a decrease in correct answers from test set 1.

6.8.5 Conclusions for ‘Soul’

According to the aims of the test, these questions succeeded in demonstrating that Bisu speakers understand the term ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ as meaning the part of a person that departs the body after death. When used in this way in the text, speakers seemed to understand Stephen referring to his impending death. However, modifications to the original seemed to actually confuse speakers.

6.9 Dream, Vision

This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term ὄραμα (horamati) ‘vision’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.
6.9.1 Translating the Greek Term ὁ ὁράματι (horamati) ‘Dream’

The term ὁράματι (Horamati) ‘vision’ was not originally on the author’s list of key terms to investigate. However, while reviewing the story of Cornelius’s dream in Acts with intent of addressing the key term for ‘angel’, my language assistant mentioned that were different kinds of dreams in Bisu. The term used in this particular passage was the general term to refer to dreams of virtually any kind. In the course of our discussion, I had him note the expressions in Bisu denoting the types of dream one can have. I then asked my language assistant which kind of dream he thought Cornelius was having in this particular instance. After this discussion I incorporated the term into the tests.

Louw & Nida list four different types of dreams or visions under Semantic Domain 33: Communication, Sub-domain d’: Non-Verbal Communication, entries 33.486 to 33.489. The first group listed is 33.486 ὁνάρ (onar); ἐνυπνιόν (enupniōn) meaning, ‘a dream as a means of communication’. Louw & Nida cite Matthew 1:20 and Acts 2:17 as examples of this type of dream mentioned in the New Testament.

καὶ ὁ ἀγγέλος Κυρίου καὶ ὁνάρ ἐφάνη αὐτῷ
‘behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream’ Matthew 1:20.

καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ὑμῶν ἐνυπνιῶσιν ἐνυπνιαζόνται
‘and your old men will dream dreams’ Acts 2:17.

The verb form of dream that Louw & Nida note is 33.487 ἐνυπνιαζόμαι (enupniaxomai) meaning ‘to experience dreams having the significance of visions’. As example of this is also seen in Acts 2:17:

καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ὑμῶν ἐνυπνιῶσιν ἐνυπνιαζόνται
‘and your old men will dream dreams’ Acts 2:17.

The third type of dream that Louw &Nida note is 33.488 ὁρασίας (horasis); ὁράμα (horama); and ὁπτασία (optasia) meaning “an event in which something appears vividly and credibly to the mind, although not actually present, but implying the influence of some divine or supernatural power or agency.” Louw & Nida cite
examples of this type of dream in Revelation 9:12, Acts 9:12 and 2 Corinthians 12:1.

καὶ οὗτος εἶδον τοὺς Ἰπποὺς ἐν τῇ ὦράξει
‘and thus I saw the horses in the vision’ Revelation 9:17.

καὶ εἶδεν ἄνδρα ἐν ὦράματι Ανανίαν
‘and he saw in a vision a man named Ananias’ Acts 9:12.

ἐλεύθεροι δὲ εἰς ὀπτασίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεις Κυρίου
‘and I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord’ 2 Corinthians 12:1.

Lastly, Louw & Nida list 33.489 ἐκτασίας (ekstasis) meaning ‘a vision accompanied by an ecstatic psychological state’. They cite Acts 10:10 as an example:

ἐγένετο ἐπ αὐτῶν ἐκτασίας
‘an ecstatic vision came to him’ Acts 10:10.

The passage used in this thesis to test the Bisu term for dream or vision is Acts 10:3-4. This passage employs ὦράματι (horamati) or 33.488. A corresponding Bisu term will be tested for this meaning.

Blood (2000) in his note on Acts 10:3, refers the translator back to the note on Acts 2:17c in which he says:

In your translation, you should make it clear that the visions and dreams would be from God, and that, by means of those dreams, God would show people what he wanted them to know. Visions here are what God causes people to see while they are awake. Dreams here are what God causes people to have while they are asleep. If your language has only one word for “visions” and “dreams,” you could distinguish the two by including words about the people being awake for visions and asleep for dreams (Blood 2000).

However, as we shall see in the next section discussing the Bisu semantic domain of ‘dreams, visions’, Bisu terms do not make a distinction between being awake

70
or asleep, nor are they especially concerned about supernatural influence. Rather it appears that the important feature that separates categories of dreams and visions in Bisu is the perception of reality.

### 6.9.2 Discussion of Bisu Terms for ‘Dreams, Visions’

Bisu terms for ‘dreams’ may be divided into two categories, those that have an aspect of reality associated with them and those that do not. Among the terms that do not have any aspect of reality, the term *mae buen buen* (แม่บูนบูน) is further qualified by descriptive terms that denote the quality of the dream or one’s emotional response to it.

In the following chart, the various kinds of dreams in Bisu are shown. In the first column is the Bisu term. In the second column is an explanation of the term. In the third column the componential feature ‘+/- Reality’ is for that instance of the term or phrase is shown.

**Table 15: Bisu Dreams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dream</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen buen</em> (แม่บูนบูน)</td>
<td>General Term for Dreams</td>
<td>+/- Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen buen shok ya</em></td>
<td>Normal Dreaming</td>
<td>- Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen buen ang men</em></td>
<td>A Good Dream</td>
<td>+/- Reality, emphasis emotional response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen buen ang mon</em></td>
<td>A fun, humorous dream</td>
<td>- Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen buen ang lay</em></td>
<td>A violent dream</td>
<td>- Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen yong</em> (แม่บูนโอง)</td>
<td>A nightmare</td>
<td>-Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen buen ba mon ba</em></td>
<td>A sad dream</td>
<td>- Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mae buen buen buen an</em></td>
<td>A recurring dream</td>
<td>-Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mama to la chi</em> (แมม่าตั้่าชี้)</td>
<td>A dream that is really happening or could really happen</td>
<td>+ Reality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above chart demonstrates that there are only two terms besides the general term that are either + Reality or +/- Reality. These are mae buen buen ang men 'a good dream' or mae buen buen yang mama to la chi 'a dream that is really happening or could really happen'. As noted in the chart, the term mae buen buen ang men could be either real or not. The focus with this term is the positive emotional response one has to the dream. This leaves mae buen buen yang mama to la chi 'a dream that is really happening or could really happen' as the most likely alternative to the general term as it is the only term that definitely has an aspect of reality to it.

In conclusion, the key term tests in this thesis will attempt to evaluate the general term that is currently being used in the translation against the term, which emphasizes reality.

6.9.3 Test 1 Discussion of Test Question and Findings for ‘Dream, Vision’

The passage used to test the key term 'dream, vision' in Bisu in this thesis is Acts 10:3-4. In this passage, Cornelius falls into a dream-like state or vision in which an angel of God appears to him. Cornelius is fearful at the sight of the angel. This angel tells Cornelius that God has heard his prayers and seen all that Cornelius has done to help the poor in his community.

After listening to this short passage, subjects were asked the following question: “What kind of dream, mae buen buen was Cornelius's dream?” The following options were listed: a) ‘a dream’ mae buen buen shok ya ‘ordinary dream, no significance’, b) ‘a dream that was really happening’, mae buen buen yang mama to la chi c) ‘a good dream’, mae buen buen ang men and finally, d) ‘I don't know’.

None of the subjects gave the sought-after answer of b) ‘a dream that was really happening’ mae buen buen yang mama to la chi. Rather all six subjects gave the answer c) ‘a good dream’ mae buen buen ang men. These results strongly suggest that firstly, the term currently being does not strongly indicate that the dream has any bearing to reality. Secondly, these results would also strongly suggest that the subjects interpreted this dream to be of the kind that results in positive feelings. Finally, since subjects were given the option of choosing the kind of dream that is definitely real and yet chose simply 'a good dream' which could be
either real or not instead, this would strongly suggest that subjects did not believe Cornelius's dream to have been real.

6.9.4 Test 2 Discussion of Test Questions and Findings for ‘Dream, Vision’

The passage used to test the key translation term ‘Dream’ for test set 2 was the same as for test set 1, Acts 10:3-4. In test 1, general term for ‘dream’, *mae buen* was used. In test 2, a phase, *mae buen buen yang mama to la chi* that means a dream that was really happening or could really happen. After listening to the text, the subjects were given the same set of possible answers, except for the first answer, which was changed to ‘a regular dream’.

The purpose of this question was to determine if a more specific term for dream that explicitly states that the dream is real, would generate more correct answers (that the dream represented something real) than the general term.

Two out of six subjects answered b) ‘a dream that was really happening’. Three subjects answered, c) ‘a good dream’, and one subject answered a) ‘a regular dream’. These results represent an improvement over the zero correct answers received in the first test set. It would suggest that modifying the term to be more specific might help speakers understand that Cornelius was not simply having a really good, but unreal dream.

After discussing these results with language assistants, it was concluded that perhaps the real problem with this question is the content of the dream itself. In his dream, Cornelius sees an angel. It should be noted the term for ‘angel’ used in the first test was a term borrowed from Thai. Thai angels are not known to actually appear to people. This may be why no one thought the dream could be real. Calling the dream ‘real’ may have conflicted with what they know about ‘angels’.

In test 2, both an artificial local term for ‘Angel’ was used as well as the modified term for ‘dream’. It is now apparent that these terms should be tested separately and another context where a ‘real’ dream is occurring, but without any ‘angels’ appearing in it should be used to test any term for όριματι.

6.9.5 Conclusion for ‘Dream, Vision’

Bisu speakers are likely to understand the term *mae buen buen yang mama to la chi* ‘a dream that is really happening or could really happen’ to indicate a dream
involving actual events, while using only *mae buen buen* ‘dream’ in this context, tends to cause the majority of speakers to believe the dream was not real. A problem with an underlying belief about the nature of ‘Angels’ was also noted.

6.10 Angel

This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term ἄγγελος (angelos) ‘Angel’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.

6.10.1 Translating the Greek Term ἄγγελος (angelos) ‘Angel’

The Greek term normally translated, as ‘angel’ in English is 12.28 ἄγγελος (Angelos) means ‘a supernatural being that attends upon or serves as a messenger of a superior supernatural entity’. Louw & Nida cite several examples of ‘Angel’ in the New Testament:

\[\text{ἄγγελος κατὰ ἄντρω πάνω αὐτῷ}\]

‘an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream’ Matthew 1:20;

\[\text{τῷ δικαστῷ καὶ τοῖς ἄγγελοις αὐτοῦ}\]

‘for the Devil and his angels’ Matthew 25:41.

Louw & Nida offer several common ways of translating ‘angelos’ when no receptor language term exists. A borrowed term from another dominant language or a descriptive phrase may be used such as ‘messengers’, ‘messengers from heaven’, ‘and messengers of God’ or ‘servants of God’.

Finding an appropriate indigenous term for ‘Angel’ in Bisu was a particular challenge because all spirits that fall under the category of *daeya* are malevolent. To call a *daeya* ‘spirit’ good is somewhat of an oxymoron while calling it bad seems redundant. As yet, no indigenous term has been encountered that would present as an obvious choice for ‘Angel’.

6.10.2 The Current Term for ‘Angel’ in Bisu

The current being used for the key term ‘Angel’ in Bisu is *htewada*, a term, borrowed from Thai. This is different term for ‘Angel’ from the Thai New Testament, which is *thuutsawan* (ทูตสวรรค์).
Tambiah (1970) describes the village concept of the term *htewada* as “divine angels, benevolent in nature, and living in heaven or *sawan*”. He says, “a human being can never become a *htewada* ‘angels’ and that *htewada* ‘angels’ are never reborn” (1970:59).

Tambiah also points out that that the village concepts of *htewada* ‘angels’ and *phii* ‘spirit’ (Thai) are two opposed supernatural categories (1970:59). Bisu villagers affirmed the belief that a *htewada* ‘angel’ and a *phii* ‘spirit’ belong to different categories. The Thai concept of *phii* ‘spirit’ closely resembles that of *daeya* ‘spirit’ in Bisu.

The current term for ‘angel’ in Bisu adds the term *hpracaw* ‘god’ to *htewada* ‘angel’ resulting in the phrase, *hpracaw htwada* ‘God’s angel’.

Of note is that the word for ‘God’ used here is *hpracaw* ‘God’. As we shall see in the following section, many subjects believe it refers to ‘Buddha’ rather than to the Supreme Being.

6.10.3 Test 1 Discussion of Test Questions and Findings for ‘Angel’

The passage used to test the key term ‘Angel’ in Bisu in this thesis is Acts 10:3-4, the same passage used to test ‘dream, vision’. In this passage, Cornelius falls into a dream-like state or vision in which an angel of God appears to him. Cornelius is fearful at the sight of the angel. This angel tells Cornelius that God has heard his prayers and seen all that Cornelius has done to help the poor in his community.

After listening to Acts 10:3-4, subjects were asked, “What is an angel of God? *hpracaw htwada*?” The options were: a) ‘a person who helps God’ *hpracaw*, b) ‘a spirit *daeya* that helps God’, c) ‘a spirit *daeya* that likes to help people’, and finally, d) ‘I don’t know’.

Four out of six subjects responded with the sought after answer of b) ‘a spirit that helps God’. One of those subjects actually answered b) or c) ‘a spirit *daeya* that likes to help people’. One other answered c) as well and finally, one person answered a) ‘a person who helps God’ *hpracaw*.

These results might suggest that qualifying the term *htewada* ‘angel’ with *hpracaw* ‘God’ helps to clarify whom the *htewada* ‘angel’ serves. However, it would seem that the term is still confusing to Bisu speakers and the term does
not sufficiently distinguish this particular *htewada* ‘angel’ as being any different from the ones that already exist in their worldview.

### 6.10.4 Test 2 Discussion of Questions and Findings for ‘Angel’

The passage used to test the key term for ‘Angel’ in Bisu in this thesis is the same as the one used to test ‘dream, vision’. However, in test set 2, the term was changed from *htewada* ‘angel’ to *hpracaw tang daeya ang men* ‘God’s good spirit’. This term is essentially an artificial expression.

After listening to Acts 10:3-4, subjects were asked, “What is an angel of God? *hpracaw tang daeya ang men*. The options were: a) ‘a person who helps God’ *hpracaw*, b) ‘a spirit that helps God’, c) ‘a spirit *daeya* that likes to help people’, and finally, d) ‘I don’t know’.

Three out of six subjects responded with the answer, b) ‘A spirit *daeya* that helps God’ *hpracaw*, while two subjects responded with c) ‘A spirit *daeya* that likes to help people’, and one person said d) ‘I don’t know’. These results do not show any significant change from test set 1. These results would suggest that perhaps more testing needs to be done on this term to determine whether or not there is good reason to use the local term rather than the borrowed term. Since, there was no significant change, the results are inconclusive.

### 6.10.5 Conclusions for ‘Angel’

This question on ‘angel’ did not meet any of the goals of the test. No significant new information was gained about speakers’ understanding of either of the terms tested. Perhaps a passage using an excerpt from the Old Testament where ‘Angels’ are described in more detail would prove more useful. In this passage, we are told only what the ‘Angel’ said in a dream and nothing about what angels are or their nature. Also, in retrospect, it would have good to have one the possible answers to the question be ‘a spirit that helps the Buddha’.

### 6.11 God

This section begins by reviewing translation problems with the Greek term ἀρχηγός (theos) ‘God’ and then discusses the corresponding term being used in Bisu. Next, the results of both multiple-choice tests are explained.
6.11.1 Translating the Greek Term θεός (Theos) ‘God’

The key term normally translated as ‘God’ in English is θεός (theos) ‘the one supreme supernatural being as creator and sustainer of the universe’. Louw and Nida cite Acts 17:24 as example of this use of θεός (Theos):

ό θεός ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ


Louw and Nida state (1988):

The componential features of theos involve a basic, underlying ambivalence. On the one hand, theos is regarded as unique to the exclusion of all other gods: οὐδεὶς θεός εἰ μὴ εἷς ‘there is no God but one’ 1 Corinthians 8:4. This is strictly a monotheistic view of theos. On the other hand, there occur such expressions as εἰς ἐξήνευσιν λεγόμενοι θεοί ‘even if there are so-called gods’ (1 Corinthians 8:5), and in the OT the Lord is described as being ‘far above all gods’ (Psalm 97:9), ‘the God of gods’ (Psalm 136:2), and the ‘great King above all gods’ (Psalm 95:3), which is essentially a henotheistic view of θεός.

However, as Louw & Nida point out, the view of theos seen in Galatians 4:8, τοὺς φύσει μὴ οὖσιν θεοίς ‘those who by nature are not really gods.’ demonstrates the “that the gods of the pagans are not to be viewed in the same category as θεός.” Rather, these ‘gods’ falls under 12.22 θεός theos meaning “any one of many different supernatural beings regarded as having authority or control over some aspect of the universe or human activity”. Louw & Nida cite Acts 28:6 as an example:

θεωροῦντων μὴ δὲν ἄτοπον εἰς αὐτὸν γινόμενον ... ἐλεγον αὐτὸν εἶναι θεόν

‘when they saw that nothing unusual happened to him ... they said, He is a god!’ Acts 28:6.

Translational equivalents of ‘God’ are of three major types: (1) proper names, (2) descriptive titles, and (3) borrowed terms. There are a number of problems involved in each of these types of translational equivalents.

According Louw and Nida (1988), if translators want to use a proper name in the receptor language, it is essential that the characteristics of that being be close to
the biblical God. Louw and Nida note that the essential features of an indigenous term should include (1) benevolent disposition and behavior, (2) creative and sustaining activity in the world, and (3) supreme power.

Louw and Nida (1988) also point out that there may be a number of problems involved in the use of an indigenous expression for theos, such factors as (1) psychological distance (the idea that such a god, though all powerful, is still very remote from mankind) and (2) the necessity for constant propitiation (as though such a god needs to be constantly entreated or sustained by means of gifts in order to make him favorably disposed toward mankind). Louw and Nida also note that:

Ideally, one should employ a well known receptor-language term for ‘God’ which would be applicable not only to the one supreme being, but could also refer to the ‘gods of the heathen,’ that is to say, a rendering of theos should be a generic expression which could be made particular and even exclusive by some such qualifier as ‘the’ or ‘the one’ or ‘the unique.’ Sometimes a qualifier such as ‘the great’ or even ‘the supreme’ can only do this.

6.11.2 Discussion of the Current Term for ‘God’ in Bisu
The term currently being used to translate ‘God’ in Bisu is hpracaw. It should be noted that hpracaw ‘god’ is one of many possible terms of reference for the King of Thailand as well as for the Buddha himself and for the statues dedicated to him.

6.11.3 Test 1 Discussion of Test Question and Findings for ‘God’
The passage used in this thesis to test the key term for ‘God, gods’ is Acts 17:23. The English back translation of this verse reads as follows:

“I was walking around. And I saw your altars. I saw one altar that has written on it ‘This God (hpracaw) we don’t know his name.’ I now ask to tell you the story of the God (hpracaw ) you don’t know and whose altar is here.”

After hearing this verse, subjects were asked, “Who is ‘God’ hpracaw?” The following choices were offered: a) ‘The king of Thailand’ b) ‘Buddha’ (พระพุทธเจ้า) c) ‘a big spirit’ daeya ang heu and finally, d) ‘I don’t know’.
None of the subjects responded with the sought after answer of c) ‘a big spirit’ daeya ang heu. Five out of six subjects believed the term referred to b) ‘Buddha’ (พระพุทธเจ้า). One subject responded with d) ‘I don’t know’.

These results would strongly suggest that the term hpracaw means ‘Buddha’ to Bisu speakers, even when the context would seem to contradict this interpretation. It was predicted that the majority of subjects would choose b) ‘Buddha’ (พระพุทธเจ้า). It was unlikely that subjects would choose the sought after answer of c) ‘a big spirit’ daeya ang heu as these terms refer to the Bisu belief system.

6.11.4 Test 2 Discussion of Questions and Passage for ‘God’

The passage used in test set 2 to test the key term for ‘God, gods’ was Acts 17:23. The term for God was changed in this passage from hpracaw ‘god’ to ang cao ‘village spirit’. Ang cao ‘village spirit’ is the Bisu term for the greatest of the Bisu spirits.

The English back translation of the passage reads as follows:

“I was walking around. And I saw your altars. I saw one altar that has written on it ‘This God, ang cao we don’t know his name.’ I now ask to tell you the story of the God ang cao you don’t know and whose altar is here.”

After hearing this verse, subjects were asked, “Who is ‘God’ ang cao?” The following choices were offered: a) ‘The king of Thailand’ b) ‘Buddha’ (พระพุทธเจ้า) c) ‘a big spirit’ daeya ang heu and finally, d) ‘I don’t know’.

Only one subject answered c) ‘a big spirit’ daeya ang heu (daeya เดี๋ยอาง หน). Two subjects answered a) ‘the king of Thailand’, and two subjects answered b) ‘Buddha’ (พระพุทธเจ้า). These results suggest that changed the term for ‘God’ from hpracaw ‘god’ to ang cao ‘village spirit’ does not result in any significant change from test set 1.

The problem is perhaps the fact that ang cao ‘village spirit’ sounds very similar to hpracaw ‘god’. Even if in Bisu it is the name of the greatest of the Bisu spirits, it doesn’t appear that that is the first understanding that comes to Bisu speakers’ minds when they hear the term used outside of their own local context. Outside of the local context it refers to either Buddha or the King of Thailand.
6.11.5 Conclusion for ‘God’

According to the aims of the test, this question succeeded in demonstrating that Bisu speakers are likely to understand the terms, *hpracaw* ‘god’ and *ang cao* ‘village spirit’ both to be Buddha. It suggests that the replacement term is not likely to improve upon the original term as far as initial comprehension is concerned, should further testing render the same results.

6.12 Summary of Data

The following represents the raw data from each of the two tests conducted. Test 1 includes all of the original words currently being used in the translation of these passages. Test 2 includes changes made to key terms in all of these passages. The results of each question are given first, followed by a chart with statistical analysis.

The following chart shows the breakdown of answers given in Test 1. The top row lists the age and gender of the subjects. All subjects in test 1 were from Doi Chompu village. The row at the bottom lists the total percentage of correct answer given by that subject. The first column lists the number of the corresponding question in the test, while the second column lists the desired answer. The last column in this chart shows the percentage of correct answers given for that question.

This chart demonstrates that in five of the eleven questions, fifty percent or more of the subjects responded with correct answer. The highest score was in response to question seven with eighty-three percent of the subjects getting the answer correct. While question 4, 6b and 8 all received correct responses 66% percent of the time. The questions receiving the lowest scores were questions 6a, 9 and 10 which all received zero correct responses. While questions 1,2 and 5 all received correct responses only 33% of the time.
The following chart shows the breakdown of answers given in Test 2. The top row lists the age and gender of the subjects. The row at the bottom lists the total percentage of correct answer given by that subject. The first column lists the number of the corresponding question in the test, while the second column lists the desired answer. The last column in this chart shows the percentage of correct answers given for that question.

This chart demonstrates that in seven of the eleven questions, fifty percent or more of the subjects responded with correct answer. The highest scores were in response to question three, five and six b with questions five and six b had eighty-three percent of the subjects getting the answer correct. While question three received correct responses 66% percent of the time. The questions receiving the lowest scores were questions 4, 6a and 9 and 10.
### Table 17: Results of Test 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Femal</th>
<th>Femal</th>
<th>Femal</th>
<th>Femal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>e15</td>
<td>e16</td>
<td>e42</td>
<td>e42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Holy Spirit</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Evil Spirit</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Sin</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Satan</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Evil Spirit</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a Holy Spirit</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b Priest</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>b/d</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Soul</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Angel</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dream</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 God</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following chart shows the percentage difference in test results between test 1 which used the original key terms and test two which used modified key terms. This chart demonstrates that in 7 out of 11 instances, the modified key terms received a higher score than the original terms. In three instances the scores decreased.
Table 18: Chart Comparing Differences Between Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Key Term</th>
<th>Test 1</th>
<th>Test 2</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Holy Spirit</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>+17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Evil Spirit</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>+17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sin</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>+16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Satan</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Evil Spirit</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>+50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>Holy Spirit</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>+33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b</td>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>+17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Soul/Spirit of a person</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>-33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dream/Vision</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>-16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Angel</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>+33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>God</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>+17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.13 Conclusion

The proposed methodology for testing key translation terms succeeded in meeting its goals. In most cases, the test resulted in a better knowledge of Bisu speakers’ understanding of the terms, and in many cases, revealed potential translation problems.

For eight out of ten terms tested, conclusions could be made about native speaker’s comprehension of the term. Some currently used terms were found lacking. Evidence suggests that the use of the current term for soul may be restricted to only living human beings and not appropriate to use for ‘Holy Spirit’. Evidence also suggests that the current term ‘clean’ may not be the best term to translate the Greek idea of ‘Holy’ as it denotes character rather than a state of being.

Some currently used terms seem to need no changes. The term daeya ‘spirit’ is sufficient as a key translation term for ‘demon’. The results didn’t support the use of a more specific term. It was also demonstrated that Bisu the term ang hkong ang la ‘soul’ as meaning the part of a person that departs the body after death was sufficient. Modifications to this term seemed to actually confuse speakers.
Some indigenous terms were found to be good potential replacements for borrowed terms. The addition of *ang blap* ‘sin’ (Thai) to *ang si* ‘sin’ (Bisu) did not significantly change listeners’ understanding of the term. It was also demonstrated that Bisu speakers understand an indigenous term meaning ‘one who performs sacrifices’ could potentially replace the Thai term. However, the use of a local term in a new context may be, at first, difficult for a few Bisu people to understand.

The results for three terms proved inconclusive. A problem with an underlying belief about the nature of ‘Angels’ results in majority of speakers believing a ‘dream’ wasn’t real, despite the use of an indigenous term for a ‘real dream’. Likewise, when an artificial term for ‘Angel’ was tested, speakers were confused. Modifications to a phrase for ‘Satan’ led to no decisive conclusion.

Lastly, it was found that even when the closest possible equivalent to an indigenous term for ‘God’ was used to replace a borrowed term from Thai, Bisu speakers still understood both the terms to refer to the Buddha.

The test was not conducted using enough participants to be statistically valid, but modifying the test and increasing the number of subjects could verify these results. The test provided valuable information to evaluate key translation terms choices. Naturally, comprehension is not the only factor in choosing key translation terms, but it is one of many important factors that the community and translators need to take into consideration.

The following modifications are recommended for the multiple-choice test to evaluate key translation terms. Firstly, the test questions concerning ‘Angel’ and ‘dream’ should be modified. Each of these terms should be tested using a separate passage that does not include the other term. Using a passage where an ‘angel’ speaks to someone contradicts Bisu speakers belief that says that ‘angels’ do not speak to people. When speakers hear that this occurred in a dream, they assume this belief is being confirmed, rather than contradicted. This leads speakers to conclude the dream cannot be real, even if the term for ‘real dream’ is used.

Should the results of the test remain the same after statistically valid population sample is achieved, then indigenous translation terms should be considered for ‘sin’ and ‘priest’. Translators should also consider revising terms for ‘Holy Spirit’,
‘Holy’ and ‘God’. Further investigation and experimentation needs to be conducted for the key translation terms ‘angel and ‘demon’.
Chapter 7

Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Summary of Findings

The goal of this thesis is to test a method of evaluating key translation terms. The results of this approach are outlined in this section. The research questions, hypothesis, objectives, limitations and scope of this study are also revisited. An evaluation of the testing methodology will be provided. The significance of findings will be discussed and suggestions for further research and recommendations will be made.

7.2 Conclusions on Research Questions

A multiple-choice test instrument was proved in this thesis to be productive in evaluating a list of potential key translation terms. A multiple-choice test resulted in a better total set of key translation terms and the test provided the translator(s) with more confidence in currently used terms.

7.3 Conclusions on Hypothesis

The guiding hypothesis of this thesis was that a multiple-choice test instrument would be a systematic, objective and useful approach to evaluating previously selected key translation terms.

The hypothesis was established in that the multiple-choice test instrument led to a total set of key translation terms in which translators have increased confidence. Several currently used key translation terms appeared to fail to adequately convey the meaning of the original to Bisu speakers. In some cases, newly created key translation terms increased comprehension. In others, the new terms provided no improvement.

7.4 Conclusions on Objectives of this Study

The primary aim of the thesis was to test a proposed method for choosing key translation terms. This thesis was divided into two parts. The first part addressed...
methods for key translation terms discovery in Bisu. In the second part, these terms were tested using a proposed multiple-choice test. These methods were tested using Bisu, a language of the Tibeto-Burman family, Lolo-Burmese branch, spoken in northern Thailand as well as China, Myanmar and Laos. This method focused particularly on key concepts in the semantic domain of religious terms.

The first part focused on terms discovery and began with worldview interviews focused on the receptor language group's religious beliefs. Other methods for key terms discovery were also reviewed. Next, a word study of these terms using componential analysis was conducted. The usefulness of componential analysis in key terms discovery was also evaluated.

The second part of this thesis evaluated a list of ten potential terms from part one, using a multiple-choice test. Ultimately, the aim was to test the usefulness of this method for choosing key translation terms. This test was a pilot test using a relatively small population sample of native speakers. This test included short selected passages from the New Testament in which these terms occur, followed by a question asking the native speaker to define a particular term in the text.

There were two sets of tests. The first test used the key translation terms currently used in these New Testament passages. The second test attempted to integrate knowledge gained from worldview interviews and componential analysis by replacing or modifying term using the same passages as the first test. Again the overarching goal was to determine whether or not the proposed test is productive. The pilot test was evaluated according to its ability to accomplish its aims. The three aims of the pilot test were to 1) to determine the native speaker's understanding of the terms, 2) to identify potential problems with terms and finally, 3) to determine if replacement or modified terms improved upon the original terms.

7.5 Review of Limitations and Scope

The sources of data in this thesis were limited to two worldview research questionnaires and the results obtained from two different multiple-choice tests which attempted to evaluate these key translation terms. Terms or phrases that could not be obtained from worldview questionnaires or as a result of multiple-choice tests were not evaluated.
This thesis presented a preliminary method for evaluating key translation terms. The method was tested on a limited number of participants. The method also tested only ten key translation terms, not all key translation terms found in the New Testament.

7.6 Conclusions on the Significance of Findings

This thesis further advanced research in techniques used to choose key translation terms by showing that an objective multiple-choice test instrument could be used to evaluate currently used key translation terms. It adapted and built upon previous research in objective methods of testing translations, specifically, that of Stephen H. Doty. Additionally, this thesis contributed to the documentation of the traditional language and religion of the Bisu people.

7.7 Further Research and Recommendations

It is recommended that the multiple-choice test instrument used in this thesis be administered to a larger population sample. Other key translation terms in the New Testament could also be tested using this method. Further research could be conducted to determine if more abstract key translation terms might be tested using this method as effectively as the concrete term used in this thesis.

Certain questions in the test worked better than others. If more than one key term happened to appear in the same passage, then at times, the term not currently being tested seemed to affect the results. For example, if testing of the key term ‘angel’ is attempted while the key term ‘God’ is mentioned in the same passage, the subjects understanding of ‘angel’ is affected by their understanding of the key term ‘God’.
APPENDIX 1

Initial Worldview Research Questionnaire

Adapted from “Worldview Research”
By Harriet Hill

God

1. Is there a God who is above all other gods (spirits)?
2. Is he the same kind of being as the other gods, or is he a different sort of being?
3. Who created the world?
4. Is God concerned about right and wrong?
5. Is God involved in this world (Does he participate in this world?)
6. Did he ever remove himself from this world?
7. Is God strong? Weak?
8. Has God given the world to other spirits?

God’s Power and Help

9. Who has the most power in people’s lives?
10. Who/what do people fear the most: God, gods, ancestors or witchcraft?
11. Who do people go to when they have problems?
12. Does God know what people are doing?
13. Can people hide things from God?
14. Can they trick him?
15. Can they trick the gods? The ancestors?
16. How do people get rain? Food? Who provides it?
17. If there is no rain, or there is no food, what do people think about God/the gods/Spirits?
18. Do people ever change the gods they worship?

God/gods/Spirits’ communication with people.
19. Where do people go for spiritual help?
20. Do they go directly to God, or to the spirits, or ancestors?
21. Is it important for a person to understand about their religion or do they only need to be concerned about taboos and rituals? Taboos are things we must never do.
22. Are prayers in languages people don’t understand more powerful?
23. Do people need to feel repentant? Repentant means to feel sorry about what you have done.
24. Does God ever communicate with people? If so, how? Do the gods?
25. Do people think dreams are important? Are people interested in hearing about other people’s dreams? Do dreams have meaning? Can you use a dream to direct your life?
26. How does a person know what a dream means?
27. Does God/the gods/spirits make any promises to people?
28. Does God/the gods/spirits keep his promises?
29. Can a person trust in God/his gods/spirits?

God/gods/Spirit and Love
30. How do you know when someone loves you?
31. Where do people experience love and belonging? Belonging means to feel at home.
32. Do fathers show love to their children?
33. Do the spirits love people? Do the ancestors love their children?
34. When people worship the spirits, is it because they love him/them? Or is it mainly to get things?

35. Do people enjoy their relationship with the spirits? Do people fear the spirits? Do they ever command them? Do people ever insult the gods to get them to do something?

**Sin**

36. What words are there for doing wrong things?

37. What are the most serious sins?

38. What are the least serious?


40. What are some common taboos?

41. What happens if a person does not obey a taboo?

42. Does a person need to perform a ritual to make amends? To make amends means to make right again.

43. Does he need to feel sad about having done wrong?

44. If no one knows about a bad thing someone has done, is it still considered bad? Or is it only bad if he is found out?

45. Is sin mostly something that affects the community? Is it also something that affects a person’s relationship with God, the divinities, or the ancestors? What happens if relationship with the gods or ancestors is broken?

46. What words are used for describing places, objects, names or states that are ritually pure, without any pollution? What words are used for describing polluted places, objects, names, or states? How does something become holy? How does it become polluted?

47. Is God or a spirit thought to be pure/ holy? Does he care about sin? Does he always do the right thing? Can we know how God is? How does he feel about the wrong things people do?

48. Are the gods/spirits concerned about right and wrong? Or are they only concerned with what they get from people?
49. How does a person know he has sinned? If a person gets ill, will he think that he has sinned? How do people find out what they have done wrong? How can they get well?

50. How does a community determine guilt? Ordeals? Mediums?

51. Is it a good thing for a person to confess their sins to others? Is it necessary?

**Punishment for Sin**

52. What happens to people after they die? Where do they go? What is it like there? Do they stay there?

53. Does everyone go to the same place? Are there any people that are not admitted, like witches?

54. Is there any sort of judgment after death or punishment for wrongdoing? Or is wrongdoing punished during a person’s life?

55. If a person does something bad against the community, is it the spirits that punish him? The ancestors? God?

56. If a person disobeys a spirit, is the punishment immediate? Immediate means very fast.

**Accountability**


**Man is a sinner and is separated from God by his sin.**

58. Are people thought to be basically bad, or basically good?

59. What do they inherit at birth from their mother? From their father? From spirits? Where does their spirit come from?

60. Does fate or destiny determine what a person does? Does his village or clan or family? Are people victims of spiritual beings or powers?

61. When people do wrong things, how does it affect them? What is the effect on the community and their relationship to others? What is the effect on their relationship to God? The gods? The ancestors?
62. Are people who have done wrong ever separated from the community?
   Why? How?

Making Amends for Sin

63. If someone has sinned, can they do anything to make it right?
64. Does the community punish people for doing wrong?
65. How are they punished?
66. Who decides what punishment is appropriate?
67. Is the person reintegrated into the community after the punishment is done?
68. Why would a person want a Buddhist funeral?

Religious Sacrifices

69. What kinds of sacrifices do people make?
70. Are there annual sacrifices? Annual means to do it every year.
71. Are there sacrifices that are made for particular problems?
72. Do people ever finish offering sacrifices?
73. Who offers each type of the sacrifice?
74. Do some sacrifices require blood? What kind of blood?
75. Animal blood? Human blood? Why?
76. Can sick or defective animals be offered as sacrifices?
77. If someone has done wrong and offended another person or a group, are their rites people follow to forgive one another and bring reconciliation?

Familiarity with Christianity

78. Do spirits have children? What are they like?
79. What do people know about Jesus? What do Christians think saves them?
   What do non-Christians think?

Salvation
80. Has it ever happened that someone has given their life voluntarily so another person could live?

Independent spirit beings (gods), human spirits, and powers

Spirit Beings/Gods

81. What kinds of spirit beings/gods are there?

82. What role does each kind play?

83. Where do they live?

84. Is there a generic term to describe all of the spirit beings/gods?

85. How do the spirits/gods relate to God? Have any rebelled? Or are they all carrying out his will?

86. Are the spirit beings/gods arranged hierarchically, with some above others? If so, is there a chief?

87. Do spirit beings/gods have their own domain of expertise? Do they have their own places?

88. Do spirit beings/gods enter into people and possess them? How does this happen? Are people innocent victims of the spirits/gods, or do they in some way invite the spirits/gods in, or allow them in? Are there ways of getting spirits/gods out of people (exorcism)?

89. Do spirits make people sick? Do spirits heal people?

90. Are spirits worshipped? How?

Spirit of a person

Receptor Culture Questions on Human Spirits

91. What are the parts of a person that are invisible/non-material? Describe each part, using expressions in which the term is used.

92. Which part leaves at death?

93. What happens to a person’s spirit after death? Where does it go? Does it ever come back reincarnated in another person?

94. Do people ever come back posing as a person?
95. Do people’s spirits ever return as ghosts? What are ghosts like? Why do they come back?

Impersonal Powers

Receptor Culture Concepts of Impersonal Powers

96. What kinds of impersonal powers are there? (Witchcraft, etc.)

97. Where did these powers come from? Why were they given?

100. Are there powers people use consciously, with rites and prayers, and others that work through them without them knowing it?

101. Is there witchcraft? Can it be used for good? How? Is it used for evil?

102. Are there witches that eat people’s souls or make them sterile?

103. How do witchcraft and other impersonal powers relate to the gods/spirit beings? Do they control them, or are they stronger than the spirits?

104. How do the impersonal powers relate to God?

105. Are there ways to protect a field or home or child with an amulet, charm, or another item?
APPENDIX 2

Follow-up Worldview Questions Specific to the Bisu

Saturday, March 21, 2009

Ang Cao

1. Is Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ a name or a title for this spiritual being?
2. Did the Bisu used to call Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ by a different name?
3. What does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ mean?
4. What is Ang Cao’s ‘village spirit’ job?
5. Does he take care of the village?
6. Is it Ang Cao’s ‘village spirit’ job to take care of the Bisu people?
7. What does ‘Ang Cao’ look like?
8. Is Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ male or female?
9. Has anyone ever seen ‘Ang Cao’?
10. Does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ talk to people?
11. Can Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ help you if you are outside the village, like in Bangkok?
12. What does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ do to help Bisu people?
13. Does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ ever get angry? Why?
14. Who gave the Bisu people their traditions?
15. Does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ ever punish people?
16. Does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ know everything?
17. Has Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ aways existed?

18. How does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ take care of the Bisu people?

19. Does Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ ever do anything bad or unfair?

20. Is Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ like a father to the Bisu people? Is it natural to talk about him like this?

21. Is ‘sin’ committed against Ang Cao ‘village spirit’? Against whom is ang si ‘sin’ committed?

22. Do Thai people have anything like Ang Cao ‘village spirit’?

23. Do Northern Thai people have anything like Ang Cao ‘village spirit’?

24. Are phiisuebaan (phiisuebaan) and Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ the same?

25. What do ‘Akha’ and ‘Lahu’ people call Ang Cao ‘village spirit’? Do they have a spirit like this?

26. Is there any story about how the Bisu began? Any story about where the Bisu came from?

27. Do the Bisu have the following spirits?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spirit</th>
<th>Corresponding Spirit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind</td>
<td>Rocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water well</td>
<td>Rainbow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thunder</td>
<td>District</td>
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<td>Storm</td>
<td>Livestock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heaven</td>
<td>Streams</td>
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<td>Lightening</td>
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<td>Sun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
29. Do the Bisu have other spirits?

30. What do these spirits do?

31. What happens if a woman gives birth to a dead baby?

32. Is it bad for a woman to give birth to twins?

33. In the past, what were Bisu funerals like? (Before the Bisu accepted Buddhism)

34. Do Bisu people keep any kind of altar for ancestors in the house or anywhere else?

35. What is the Spirit gate outside of Ajarn Kirk’s house for? And the one near the temple?

36. Is there a person in each family who is in charge of taking care of the ancestor spirits?

37. Which spirits are bad and which spirits are good?

38. You have said there are two kinds of house spirits. Is one outside the house and one inside the house?

39. Do people ever try to have spirits enter them?

40. Can this power or spirit leave a person sometimes?

41. Do Bisu people have a spirit or power that lives inside each person?

42. Are there any female shamans?

43. Do Bisu people have other people besides the shaman who communicate with the spirits?

44. How is the shaman chosen? Is he born into it or is he chosen by the Bisu people?

45. Does the headman ever perform any special spiritual rituals?

46. Are Bisu people ever given a special spirit to watch over a person?

47. What do Bisu do about abnormal (strange) births?

48. Who decides how long a person will live?

49. Can a person know how long they will live? How?
50. After a person has died and the funeral is finished are there any more special ceremonies that need to be held in the following years?

51. Why do you perform them? What happens if you don’t?

52. Where do the ancestors live?

53. Can a person lose his or her soul?

54. Can you prevent a bad death?

55. What is the best way to die? At what age? What is a bad way to die?

56. How do you know a person is going to die?

57. Can a person control or change their destiny?

58. Who decides one’s destiny?

59. How do you know what your destiny is?

60. Do you have rules about talking about dead people?

61. Have the Bisu ever had a plague? What was the cause?

62. When a shaman communicates with the spirits does his behavior change?

63. Does the shaman talk to just Ang Cao ‘village spirit’ or other spirits also?

64. When you have a problem that the spirits have caused, do you ask the shaman for help or do you ask someone else?

65. If a person has died from a bad accident and their spirit is going around the village scaring people, what do you call that kind of spirit?

66. Does the village shaman have any special powers?

67. If a person has a special power to know the future or know the truth about something what do you call that power?

68. What do you call good spirits? What do you call bad spirits?
APPENDIX 3

Bisu Key Terms Test Mark 1:9-12

9 Then when Jesus arrived in Nazareth in the region of Galilee. John baptized him. In the Jordan River.

10 After Jesus finished bathing and came out. The sky opened. Then the clean soul like a white dove bird landed on Jesus.

11 Then God spoke out of the sky. (My) child, the father loves (him). The Father is of one mind (with him).

12 When Jesus finished (with) water-dunking baptism. The clean soul caused (him) to go into the forest where no one lives.

1. What is the ‘clean soul’?
   A. A spirit.
   B. The soul of a person who has done good.
   C. God’s Soul.
   D. I don’t know.

Mark 1:23-27

23 There, there was one person. A spirit had entered him (and) he was screaming.
24 “Jesus Nazareth person!” What are you going to do to us? You have come to destroy us! I know who you are. You are God’s clean person. (Who) God sent to kill us!”

25 Jesus answered. “Be quiet! And run out of the body of this man!”

26 The dangerous spirit caused the man cry out and shake violently. Then he went out (from him).

27 All the people gathered around. And (they) said to each other like this. “What happened? This is a new teaching that seems to have power. And other spirits are afraid (of him).

2. In this story, what kind of spirit is this?
A. ḙiši ‘possession spirit’.
B. ḙišu ‘soul’.
C. Forest Spirit.
D. Any kind of spirit.

Mark 2:1-12

1 Two or three days later Jesus entered the village of Capernium. He stayed at Peter’s house. The people of the village knew that Jesus was staying at Peter’s house.

2 The people filled up Peter’s house and gathered outside the door. And Jesus told the people the good news (speaking) from God.

3 There were 4 men. (they) brought a paralyzed man inside a blanket.

4 But (they) couldn’t enter in to where Jesus was. There were (so) many people. So they climbed up to the roof of the house where Jesus was staying. Then they lowered the paralyzed man down. To where Jesus was.

5 These men believed Jesus. They he could help them. Jesus saw them and said like this. “Child, I forgive your sins.”
6 There, there was a group of people who teach the traditions. They thought in their hearts like this.

7 “Oh! What is this he’s saying?”

8 Jesus immediately knew. What they were thinking. Then he said like this. “What do you think?”

9 I say to the crippled man like this. “Your sins are taken away from you already. Or “Get up! Then take your blanket and walk home.” Which is easier?”

10 So that my children may know you. On this earth, I have power. To be able to forgive.” Then Jesus turned to look at the paralyzed man. Then he said (to him).

11 “Get up and take your blanket and go home!”

12 The paralyzed man immediately got up. Then he took his blanket and walked away. All the people gathered around stood up to look out in front. They praised God. And (they) said to each other like this. “Oh! (we have) never seen anything like this before!”

3. What is ‘sin’ (สิ่งผิดต่อ)?

A. To disobey God (พ่อแม่).
B. To disobey people.
C. To disobey spirits.
D. I don’t know.

Mark 3:22-27

22 The group of people who had come down from Jerusalem said to each other. “The head of spirits named Beelzebub has entered Jesus. That is how he is able to cause the spirits to come out.”

23 Jesus called the group of people to come over to him. Then he told this story. “Can Satan drive out his own group?”

24 Where the land is broken. There it is not possible to live together.
25 If the household is quarreling. If the household cannot get along, they cannot live together.

26 Satan is the same. If he does not get along with his own spirits. They cannot live together.

4. Who is ‘Satan’ (ชัตติน)?
A. Daephakdae (เดฟังด้า) Bisu possession spirit).
B. Any kind of spirit (เดฟวี่).
C. The head of dangerous spirits (เดฟจี ดิ้งกัง).
D. A bad person.

Mark 9:17-27

17 In that group, there was one man. His child had a spirit (ผิวซี) that had entered him. And (he) brought the child to Jesus to get the spirit out of him. But Jesus wasn’t there. So Jesus’ disciples tried to get the spirit out of him. But (they) couldn’t get it out. Then this man saw Jesus and said like this. “Teacher, my son has a spirit that has entered him. (He) cannot speak.”

18 “But every time the spirit enters him. (It) causes him the child to fall down. (His) mouth fills up and (he) grinds (his) teeth. (His) body (becomes) stiff. I brought (him) to your disciples, but they couldn’t drive out the spirit.

19 Jesus answered. ‘Oh! Unbelieving people. How long have I been living with you? When will I finish being patient with you. Bring the child to me.

20 They brought the child to him. When the spirit saw Jesus it caused the child’s body to shake. (He) fell to the ground. (His) mouth filled up.

21 Jesus asked the father. “How long ago did he become like this?” The child’s father answered. “ He became like this when he was a very little child.”

22 The dangerous spirit enters him often and tries to kill him. (It) causes (him) to fall into the fire. (It) causes (him) to fall into the river. Teacher, if you can do anything to help. Then please help.
23 Jesus answered. What does ‘if (you) can help’ mean? With a person who trusts. Everything can happen”

24 The child’s father cried out. “I trust in you already. But if I don’t trust a lot, please increase my trust!

25 When Jesus saw there were a lot of people looking. (He) said to the dangerous spirit. “Bad spirit that causes ears not to hear and the inability to speak. I tell you to come out of this child and don’t enter him again!”

26 The spirit cried out. Then it caused child’s body to shake strongly. Then it came of the child. The child was dead still. The people said to each other. “Maybe the child is dead.”

5. Suppose this story was a Bisu story. What kind of spirit (அடித்தளை) would this spirit be?

A. Daephakdae (அறிக்கை) ‘possession spirit’

B. Gubadae (குப்படை) ‘spirits of those unable to reincarnate’.

C. Graveyard spirit (கால்மார்பை) ‘spirit of the dead that lives at a cemetery or cremation site’.

D. Any kind of spirit (அடித்தளை).

Acts 6:1-3, 7

1 At that time, there were many people who believed in Jesus. Everyday, (when) others were given food, the widows among the group of Jews who spoke Greek could not eat. So the Jews who spoke Greek argued with the Jews who spoke Hebrew.

2 The 12 disciples of Jesus called together the people who believed in Jesus to talk to/teach them. “It isn’t right. That we should serve food and forget about preaching the word of God.

3 Let’s do like this, brothers and sisters. In your group there are people who have the clean soul strongly (நோய் மு வெவ் சல் பின் நா அங்கோங்காறு)
And choose 7 people from among them who are smart and good. Then have them become the people who take care of the food preparation.

The people who knew the story of God’s word increased greatly. And in the city of Jerusalem there also many people who believed in God’s word. A lot of priests (ปู่วัด) also believed the word of God.

6a. What does ‘people who have the clean soul strongly’ (ชาวิ่ง ปี่น้ำ นาง่งองยางลา แเนซีององชาราง ยางลา) mean?
   A. The people would become monks (พระ).
   B. The people had the soul of God (พระางยิ่งองยางลา) in their bodies.
   C. The people were good-hearted (นางรมมาน).
   D. I don’t know.

6b. What does ‘Purohit’ (ปู่วัด) ‘priest’ mean?
   A. A monk (พระ).
   B. A person who performs sacrifices (ทำ).
   C. Phrasutwat 14 (พระซุ้ม วัด)
   D. I don’t know.

Acts 7:59

14 This word is not from Thai. It was used Acts 14:13 when it was used as the word for Zeus in the Bisu translation of the book of Acts. It should not have been used as a possible answer for this question.
59 Then the group of people began throwing stones at Stephen. So then Stephen prayed. “Jesus, please take my soul” (พระเจ้า ว่า เงา องค์ชิงสงเวลา มานา ถือ ลา ลา ปร่าว).

60 Then Stephen got down on his knees. And (he) cried out. “Lord of life, this time don’t cause them to have this sin.” When he finished praying he died.

7. What does “Jesus, please take my soul” (พระเจ้า ว่า เงา องค์ชิงสงเวลา มานา ถือ ลา ลา ปร่าว) mean?
A. Stephen will die and God will take him to heaven.
B. God will give Stephen a good soul (พระเจ้าอวยพรว่า อางแม่น).
C. God will cause a spirit (ผียำ) to come out of Stephen.
D. I don’t know.

Acts 10:3-4

3 About the third hour in the evening, Cornelius fell into a dream in which an angel of God appeared and said to him. “Cornelius!”

4 Cornelius was full of fear when he saw the angel of God. And he said ‘What?’. Then the angel of God said to him. “God has heard you praying. And he has seen you help the poor by giving gifts to them.

8a. What is an ‘angel of God’ (พระเจ้า เทวตา)?
A. A person who helps God.
B. A spirit that helps God.
C. A spirit that likes to help people.
D. I don’t know.
8b. What kind of dream was Cornelius' dream?

A. A dream (เฝ้ายเป็นฝัน ครอบ ยา)
B. A dream what was really happening (เฝ้ายเป็นฝัน ยัง มาแล้ว ดี ยา ชู้).
C. A good dream (not real) (เฝ้ายเป็นฝัน ยังแม่น).
D. I don't know.

Acts 17:23

23 “I was walking around. And I saw your altars. I saw one altar that has written on it ‘This God, (พูซา) we don’t know his name.’ I now ask to tell you the story of the God (พูซา) you don’t know and whose altar is here.”

9. Who is ‘God’ (พูซา)?

A. The king of Thailand.
B. Buddha (พระพุทธเจ้า).
C. A big spirit (ผู้ใหญ่ ทรงสิ่ง).
D. I don’t know.
9 Then when Jesus arrived in Nazareth in the region of Galilee. John baptized him. In the Jordan River.

10 After Jesus finished bathing and came out. The sky opened. Then the clean soul of God like a white dove bird landed on Jesus.

11 Then God spoke out of the sky. (My) child, the father loves (him). The Father is of one mind (with him).

12 When Jesus finished (with) water-dunking baptism. The clean soul caused (him) to go into the forest where no one lives.

1. What is the ‘clean soul’?
   A. A spirit.
   B. The soul of a person who has done good (works).
   C. God’s Soul.
   D. I don’t know.

Mark 1:23-27

23 There, there was one person. A spirit had entered him (and) he was screaming.

24 “Jesus Nazareth person!” What are you going to do to us? You have come to destroy us! I know who you are. You are God’s clean person. (Who) God sent to kill us!”
25 Jesus answered. “Be quiet! And run out of the body of this man!”

26 The dangerous spirit caused the man cry out and shake violently. Then he went out (from him).

27 All the people gathered around. And (they) said to each other like this. “What happened? This is a new teaching that seems to have power. And other spirits are afraid (of him).

2. In this story, what kind of spirit is this?
A. A dangerous spirit (แก๊งวิญญาณ).
B. วิญญาณ (Thai word for ‘soul’).
C. Forest Spirit.
D. Any kind of spirit.

Mark 2:1-12

1 2 or 3 days later Jesus entered the village of Capernium. He stayed at Peter's house. The people of the village knew that Jesus was staying at Peter's house.

2 The people filled up Peter's house and gathered outside the door. And Jesus told the people the good news (speaking) from God.

3 There were 4 men. (they) brought a paralyzed man inside a blanket.

4 But (they) couldn’t enter in to where Jesus was. There were (so) many people. So they climbed up to the roof of the house where Jesus was staying. Then they lowered the paralyzed man down. To where Jesus was.

5 These men believed Jesus. They he could help them. Jesus saw them and said like this. “Child, I forgive your sins (ทุจริต).”

6 There, there was a group of people who teach the traditions. They thought in their hearts like this.

7 “Oh! What is this he's saying?”

8 Jesus immediately knew. What they were thinking. Then he said like this. “What do you think?”
9 I say to the crippled man like this. “Your sins (ולה) are taken away from you already. Or “Get up! Then take your blanket and walk home.” Which is easier?”

10 So that my children may know you. On this earth, I have power. To be able to forgive.” Then Jesus turned to look at the paralyzed man. Then he said (to him).

11 “Get up and take your blanket and go home!”

12 The paralyzed man immediately got up. Then he took his blanket and walked away. All the people gathered around stood up to look out in front. They praised God. And (they) said to each other like this. “Oh! (we have) never seen anything like this before!”

3. What is ‘sin’ (ולה)?
A. To disobey God.
B. To disobey people.
C. To disobey spirits.
D. I don’t know.

Mark 3:22-27

22 The group of people who had come down from Jerusalem said to each other. “The head of spirits named Satan (סרתנ) has entered Jesus. That is how he is able to cause the spirits to come out.”

23 Jesus called the group of people to come over to him. Then he told this story. “Can Satan drive out his own group?”

24 Where the land is broken. There it is not possible to live together.

25 If the household is quarreling. If the household cannot get along, they cannot live together.

26 Satan is the same. If he does not get along with his own spirits. They cannot live together.
4. Who is ‘Satan’?

A. นิมิตใจ (Bisu possession spirit).
B. Any kind of spirit.
C. The head of dangerous spirits.
D. A bad person.

Mark 9:17-27

17 In that group, there was one man. His child had a spirit (นิมิตใจ) that had entered him. And (he) brought the child to Jesus to get the spirit out of him. But Jesus wasn’t there. So Jesus’ disciples tried to get the spirit out of him. But (they) couldn’t get it out. Then this man saw Jesus and said like this. “Teacher, my son has a spirit that has entered him. (He) cannot speak.”

18 “But every time the spirit enters him. (It) causes him the child to fall down. (His) mouth fills up and (he) grinds (his) teeth. His body (becomes) stiff. I brought (him) to your disciples, but they couldn’t drive out the spirit.

19 Jesus answered. ‘Oh! Unbelieving people. How long have I been living with you? When will I finish being patient with you. Bring the child to me.

20 They brought the child to him. When the spirit saw Jesus it caused the child’s body to shake. (He) fell to the ground. (His) mouth filled up.

21 Jesus asked the father. “How long ago did he become like this?” The child’s father answered. “He became like this when he was a very little child.”

22 The dangerous spirit enters him often and tries to kill him. (It) causes (him) to fall into the fire. (It) causes (him) to fall into the river. Teacher, if you can do anything to help. Then please help.

23 Jesus answered. What does ‘if (you) can help’ mean? With a person who trusts. Everything can happen”

24 The child’s father cried out. “I trust in you already. But if I don’t trust a lot, please increase my trust!”
25 When Jesus saw there were a lot of people looking. (He) said to the **dangerous spirit**. “Bad spirit that causes ears not to hear and the inability to speak. I tell you to come out of this child and don’t enter him again!”

26 **The spirit** cried out. Then it caused child’s body to shake strongly. Then it came of the child. The child was dead still. The people said to each other. “Maybe the child is dead.”

5. Suppose this story was a Bisu story. What kind of spirit would this spirit be?

A. **>(&N);+# (Bisu possession spirit).**

B. **(D-);+# (spirits of those unable to reincarnate).**

C. **(&#2D4;+# (spirit of the dead that lives at a cemetery or cremation site).**

D. Any kind of spirit.

**Acts 6:1-3, 7**

1 At that time, there were many people who believed in Jesus. Everyday, (when) others were given food the widows among the group of Jews who spoke Greek could not eat. So the Jews who spoke Greek argued with the Jews who spoke Hebrew.

2 The 12 disciples of Jesus called together the people who believed in Jesus to talk to/teach them. “It isn’t right. That we should serve food and forget about preaching the word of God.

3 Let’s do like this, brothers and sisters. **In our group there are people who have the clean soul strongly** (หนึ่ง หูล เว่อ จริง ปีนมานะ พวกว่า บางกล่องบางกล้า แปลตรงถึงจริงบางกล้า) And choose 7 people from among them who are smart and good. Then have them become the people who take care of the food preparation.

7 The people who knew the story of God’s word increased greatly. And in the city of Jerusalem there also many people who believed in God’s word. A lot of **priests** (คุณ) also believed the word of God.

6a. What does ‘people who have the clean soul strongly’ mean?
A. The people would become monks.
B. The people had the soul of God in their bodies.
C. The people were good-hearted (had good hearts).
D. I don’t know.

6b. What does ‘Purohit’ (priest in Thai) mean?

A. A monk.
B. A person who performs sacrifices.
C.  (Thai title for chief monk at the local temple).
D. I don’t know.

Acts 7:59

59 Then the group of people began throwing stones at Stephen. So then Stephen prayed, “Jesus, please receive my soul well.”

60 Then Stephen got down on his knees. And (he) cried out. “Lord of life, this time don’t cause them to have this sin.” When he finished praying he died.

7. What does “Jesus, please take my soul” mean?

A. Stephen will die and God will take him to heaven.
B. God will give Stephen a good soul.
C. God will cause a spirit to come out of Stephen.
D. I don’t know.

Acts 10:3-4
3 About the third hour in the evening, Cornelius fell into a dream in which a good spirit of God appeared and said to him. “Cornelius!”

4 Cornelius was full of fear when he saw the good spirit of God. And he said ‘What?’ Then the good spirit of God said to him. “God has heard you praying. And he has seen you help poor people by giving gifts to them.

8a. What is a ‘a good spirit of God’?

A. A person who helps God.
B. A spirit that helps God.
C. A spirit that likes to help people.
D. I don’t know.

8b. What kind of dream was Cornelius’ dream?

A. A dream.
B. A dream what was really happening.
C. A good dream (not real).
D. I don’t know.

Acts 17:23

23 “I was walking around. And I saw your altars. I saw one altar that has written on it ‘This God, we don’t know his name.’ I now ask to tell you the story of the God you don’t know and whose altar is here.”

9. Who is ‘God’?

A. The king of Thailand.
B. Buddha.
C. A big spirit.
D. I don’t know.
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RESUME

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