X Marks the Spot: A Look at Logos Bible Software Series X

Logos Bible Software has been around for some time, best known for its ability to link any number of electronic texts by biblical reference or topic, and for its amassing and tagging of hundreds of such texts for integration into its system. Until recently, its search capabilities on the morphologically tagged biblical texts have not approached those of other software such as GRAMCORD and BibleWorks.

Now, since Logos released its “Series X” in 2001, it has been improving the capabilities of the program for biblical language study. At the same time, the number of commentaries and other useful research tools available in the Logos/Libronix format has grown. The UBS NT Translator’s Handbooks have joined the list, and the OT Handbooks have just started shipping. Also just released is the Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible, a co-production of the German Bible Society and the Bible Society of the Netherlands that includes the apparatus of both BHS and UBS GNT4 and other important databases. More on that later.

CONTENTS

Logos offers a number of packages with varying degrees of functionality and varying basic collections of reference works. The collections aim to suit the needs of the specific category of user, although there is much in the Scholar’s Library, for example, that will be of little use to the scholar. The collections most relevant for T7 readers are: Original Languages Library ($399.95), Scholar’s Library ($599.95), and Scholar’s Library Silver Edition ($999.95). Collection contents, too lengthy to list here, are compared at logos.com/products/info/comparison.

Biblical texts included in all three packages are: UBS GNT4, BHS, Rahlfs’ LXX (all morphologically tagged), as well as several versions of the NT textus receptus. The Silver Edition includes the Vulgate and the Peshitta NT (misleadingly listed only as “Peshitta”). Greek lexicons include Louw-Nida, Liddell-Scott abridged, and TNDT. The LXX lexicon (Lust, et al.), Newman’s NT glossary, and the Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek NT are included only in the Silver Edition. The basic offering of English versions is numerous but narrow—15 different translations are included, most on the literal end of the continuum, but with TEV and NLT—and there are no other modern versions offered in these packages (they, and other English versions, must be purchased individually).

Harold Scanlin’s The Dead Sea Scrolls and Modern Translations of the Old Testament is included with all three scholar’s packages.

In addition to the basic packages, there are over 3,800 books in the old Logos Library System (LLS) format or in the new Libronix Digital Library System format (Libronix DLS) (all are compatible with the new system) that can be purchased separately. All books come with the basic Libronix program so that they can be searched and hyperlinked with other texts in the same format (you don’t have to buy a package). The expandability and hyperlinking of the library is still probably the strongest feature of the software. A list of available books can be found at the Logos website (logos.com). Although the majority of the books are devotional or pastoral, the list of research resources is growing—Anchor Bible Dictionary, Metzger’s Textual Commentary, HALOT, BDAG, Word Biblical Com-
mentary Series, the IVP Reference collection, to name just a few.

Multilingual packages (collections of resources aimed at a particular language group) are also available or in preparation: there is an Afrikaans Bible library, a Spanish-language collection Biblioteca de Estudio Bíblico, a Portuguese electronic library (being developed by the Bible Society of Brazil), and the Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible, mentioned already.

Books that have been available for some time are packaged with the old Libronix Library System program. They are fully compatible with the new Libronix system, but if you buy only those books, you will be set up with the old Logos 2.0 program. For example, I had the Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (HALOT) which was installed with the old program, but when I installed the new Libronix system, HALOT was reindexed and fully functional within it.

The quality of the linking of texts is directly related to how the texts are tagged, and potential differences in the document structures. A problem arises, for example, if you have two Hebrew lexicons open, BDB and HALOT, and try to bring up entries for the same lemma, you will find them imperfectly matched—typing in a root in HALOT in some cases brings up the Hebrew entry in BDB. Oddly, when you search for verbal roots “on the fly” in BDB, that is by typing directly into the search bar at the top of the window, if the original (print) BDB verbal root has a dagesh in the first consonant, you will only obtain the correct result if you type the letter with a dagesh. For example, if you type אָּלַל, because I is listed in BDB with a dagesh (since it actually occurs as a verb, while II אָלַל does not). Even worse, in the case of this verb, when do you type אָּלַל, you are taken to the Aramaic entry. This should be fixed, but if not, at least a lookup list of homographic lemmas would help.

UBS NT Handbooks: Although the Handbooks are available electronically in Paratext and Translator’s Workplace 4 (TW4), the Logos version (listed sale price a hefty $399.95 for the 20 NT volumes, $400 for the 21 OT/DC volumes) has some added useful features, although some corrections are needed. TW4 has tagged the Handbooks very nicely, so that you can click on a Bible reference and go directly to the text of the reference in TEV or RSV (or any other version you have open), and when there is a note in the Handbook to see comments elsewhere in the book or in another Handbook, you can click on the link to go directly to those comments. Logos has improved on this by providing a “hover note” containing the text. So, for example, at Titus 3.9, there’s a note “For stupid controversies see 2 Tim 2.23.” If you hold the cursor over 2 Tim 2.23, the Handbook discussion of 2Tim 2.23 pops up in a separate box that will disappear as soon as you move the cursor. This is good for quick reference. If you want to spend more time with 2 Timothy, you can click on 2 Tim 2.23, and the 2 Timothy Handbook will open at that place in a separate window. The popup is especially useful for Bible texts. Anywhere a linked Bible reference occurs (not just in the Handbooks, but in all the Logos texts), you can simply move the cursor to hover over the link, and a popup window appears, containing the text of the reference in the version that you have specified in the program options.

Stuttgart Electronic Study Bible (SESB): For a UBS translation officer, this is probably the most useful “package” in the Libronix format. Logos has just released SESB for North America ($279.95), and the German Bible Society is distributing it outside North America (+$400). This package includes BHS, NA27, LXX, all with their morphological tagging, and most important, because they have not been available commercially in any form, Eep Talstra’s syntactically tagged Hebrew Bible (the WIVU database) and the critical apparatus for BHS and NA27. Also included are the Vulgate, some basic Hebrew and Greek lexicons, and some modern translations: Luther (1984), Gute Nachricht, Einheitsübersetzung, Elberfelder, Die Schrift, NRSV, NIV, NVSR study edition, Français courant, TOB, Statenvertaling, the NBG 1951 translation, Groot Nieuws Bijbel, and the Danish common language version. There will be more details on SESB in the next issue of TT.

FUNCTIONS

One thing unusual about Logos in comparison to any other Bible software I’ve seen is the way functions are separated out into modules, or “addins.” With most software, when you buy the software, you get all the functionality of the software. But because of the library system, where Logos works in conjunction with publish-
ers, it distributes its basic search environment with every electronic text in the Logos format. The different packages put together by Logos have different combinations of the addins, which supplement the basic search capability with a range of functions. The result is that not all Logos setups have equal functionality. If you choose to buy a package that doesn’t have a certain function that you later find you want, you need to buy the addin separately.

Here’s a brief description of the addins most relevant for exegetical and language study. All of them come with the three packages mentioned above unless otherwise noted: In the Original Languages Addin, the Exegetical Guide lists each word in a specified verse or passage one by one, providing the lemma, and optionally, the parsing, gloss, and the results from any linked lexicons or dictionaries. Unfortunately, many links from BHS to BDB and the Strong’s lexicon are to the wrong form of the root (noun instead of verb, proper noun instead of common noun, Aramaic instead of Hebrew entry, homograph, etc.).

The same happens in the popup information window, which can easily become a misinformation window. These are more manifestations of the BDB problem mentioned above under Contents, which stems from the way the program executes searches. The exegetical resources for NT Greek appear to work better, although there are occasionally errors in links there as well (e.g., John 3.1, BAGD εἰσῆλθεν instead of εἰσῆλθαν). The Lemma Report is a concordance function, listing the entries of a lemma in whatever Hebrew/ Greek lexicons you have, and all the forms of the lemma and where each form occurs in the biblical text.

There are a number of functions that compare Bible versions. Parallel Bible Versions allows you to display any number of versions of a verse or passage in aligned parallel columns in the same window. Passage in All Versions does the same thing only displaying the versions consecutively. Compare Parallel Bible Versions, only in the Scholar’s packages, displays the versions in parallel columns, with differences between each version and a selected base version highlighted, and the percentage of variation from the base calculated. Compare Pericopes displays graphically the divisions of a biblical book into pericopes, according to the versions selected. This is an interesting feature that gives you an immediate picture of how different versions view the discourse units. Not all versions are provided with pericope sets, unfortunately. Bible Clusters plots versions on a graph to show the relative distance between them for a given verse or passage, based on differences in word usage. Bible Version Difference Rivers displays the differences in a “river” graph.

Similarly, the Verb River creates a graph representation of the attributes of Hebrew and Greek verbs in a given passage. The passage can be analyzed with respect to up to five Greek or six Hebrew verb attributes (person, tense, etc.). The river graph shows the flow of verb usage throughout the passage.

Morphological searching and complex queries in Hebrew and Greek are the real differences since I last worked with the program. Logos has made great strides in accommodating such searches with their command line type search and...
has the advantage of staying open after you run the search so you can adjust your search, which you will definitely need to do while learning the system. In the GQE, you make a picture of your search, moving terms around and drawing arrows from one to another to establish proximity, agreement, or boolean conditions. With all its options, the GQE can accommodate quite complex searches.

Now that they’ve overcome the user interface problem, the big issue Logos developers have to face is that of speed. On my machine (1.1Ghz, 256MB RAM), Logos was so sluggish as to discourage use, especially for morphological searching. It is not very forgiving of mistakes or big tasks. Once it’s been sent on its mission, often nothing can bring it back—not escape, cancel, x—you just have to wait. There may be a wide range of response in speed, judging from the messages in discussion groups, but Logos needs to improve the program’s interaction with different operating systems and configurations to obtain uniform speed in operations. In addition, the program can be a bit heavyhanded—e.g., it opens Internet Explorer when you select an internet link, instead of allowing you to use your default browser, and certain windows cannot be minimized or backgrounded.

HELP!
Logos may not really believe anyone’s going to use their contextual help—when you open the help file it stays stubbornly on top of every other window. It can’t be minimized or alt-tabbed away. So you can’t work through learning the Exegetical Guide, for example, by going back and forth between the help box and the Exegetical Guide box. The support people will tell you that you can open each separate help file as a document, just like any other Logos document, but then you lose the integration of help files, help file search capabilities and context-sensitive help. I would like to see much more in the way of illustration in the Help files. They mostly go through the dialogue items without a good statement of how the items work in relation to each other. Some aspects of the program have much more illustration online, where there are also tutorials. These pages could be added to the help files for people who don’t have good online connections.

LOCALIZATION
Logos has given a gratifying amount of attention to localization, making the menus, dialogues and help files available in a growing number of languages. There are currently interfaces in Afrikaans, Basque, Catalan, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, a number of Englishes, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. Logos has set up a convenient template for users to create local language interfaces.

CONCLUSION
The interlinked library has always been the main focus of the Logos/Libronix system, and is still the selling point. For a TO, especially, it’s helpful to be able to carry sets of commentaries and Bible texts around in a laptop, and to have them interlinked. Logos does this best. The selection of academic resources is improving, especially with the addition of SESB. Once Logos resolves speed issues, it will truly be a competitor in morphological searching.

Now, if one only had money...  

Contact Information:
Logos Research Systems, Inc.
1313 Commercial St.
Bellingham WA 98225-4307
www.logos.com
International distributors are listed at the web site.

Minimum requirements:
350MHz Pentium II (700MHz Pentium III recommended)
64MB RAM (128MB recommended)
Windows 98/Me/NT4.0/2000/XP
CD-ROM drive
800x600 display (1024x768 recommended)
MS Internet Explorer 6.0 or later
Recent Publications

Inclusion of an item in TIC Talk does not necessarily mean we recommend it, or that we have seen it, though in most cases we have. It means that the article or book (sometimes by title alone) looks as if it might be of interest to our readers. Names in bold indicate people who are in some way related to UBS. Other bolding is for quick location of the general topic.

Bible Translation


Kwame Bediako. 2003. “Biblical Exegesis in the African Context—The Factor and Impact of the Translated Scriptures.” Journal of African Christian Thought 6/1:15-23. Part of this article was presented at the 2000 TTW. B. concludes “that biblical exegesis in the African context cannot be considered adequate if it bypasses the factor and impact of the translated Scriptures in the actual languages in which the majority of Christians in Africa read, hear and experience the Word of God.” (22)

Penny Schine Gold. 2004. Making the Bible Modern: Children’s Bibles and Jewish Education in Twentieth-Century America. Cornell University Press. G. examines the arena of children’s education and the role of the Bible in the reshaping of Jewish identity, especially in the US in the 1920s and 1930s, when a second generation of Eastern European Jews engaged in the task of Americanizing Jewish culture, religion, and institutions. Jewish educators based in the Reform movement undertook a “cultural translation” of the Bible to modernize it, harmonize it with American values, and move it to the center of the religious school curriculum. The text, having become abridged and amended “Bible tales,” served as a bridge between tradition and modernity. G. analyzes this development with reference to the intellectual history of 18th- and 19th-century Europe, innovations in public schooling and social theory, Protestant religious education, and later versions of children’s Bibles in the United States and Israel. Chapter 4 “Teaching the Bible to Children,” discusses pedagogical issues and rewriting the text; chapter 5 “Bible stories retold: theory into practice,” discusses aspects of the texts: as children’s discourse, omissions, the nature of God, human characters/moral exemplars, and bible stories vs bible history.

Carlo Buzzetti. 2003. “Ogni traduzione Biblica è fatalmente parziale? Le ‘mini-note’ (la forza ermeneutica di una rinnovata risorsa antica).” Rivista Biblica 51/2:129-147. B. suggests adding “mini-notes” that show different renderings of the same text by other translations, making the task of Bible translation more cooperative, as well as educating readers.

Philip C. Stine. 2004. “Revisiting the Classics: Dynamic Equivalence Reconsidered.” The Translator 10/1:129-135. S. looks at the ways in which Nida’s Toward a science of translating and Nida and Taber’s The theory and practice of translation changed Bible translation and helped establish the field of translation studies, and also at problems associated with the approach those works advocate.

M. Tiwald. 2003. “...Iam Ecclesiae Patres... ad textus primigenios recursum magnopere commendabunt.’ Die Frage der authentischen Bibelübersetzung im Spiegel katholischlehramtlicher Doku-


The Hebrew Study Bible. 2004. A. Berlin and M.Z. Brettler, eds. Oxford University Press. Contributors to this study Bible, which uses the Jewish Publication Society’s TANAKH translation, bring into their annotations interpretations from rabbinic and other early Jewish sources. Besides introductions to sections and individual books there are seven essays on Jewish interpretation, from inner-biblical to modern; eight on the use of the Bible in Jewish life—the Dead Sea Scrolls, the synagogue, liturgy, Jewish philosophical and mystical traditions, in Israeli life, Jewish women’s biblical scholarship, and Jewish translations; nine on background information, including concepts of purity, historical and geographical background, biblical languages, textual criticism, canonization, the Masoretic Bible, and reading biblical poetry.

Foi et Vie 101/4 (2002) has a series of articles devoted to Bible translation: J. Joosten, “Lire la Bible en traduction. Une perspective historique” (describes three models of Bible translation: the translation serves as a substitute for the original, the translation stands alongside the original, the translation is independent but is supplied with annotations that refer the reader back to the original); J.-M. Babut, “La traduction par équivalence dynamique”; C. Dieterlé, “La Bible au risque des traductions,” (on problems of losing and gaining meaning, whether the source or target is given priority, the existence of many translations, ideological influences, and the changing status
of the texts); D. Fougeras, “Nommier Dieu en traduction biblique—quesques réflexions autour de la Nouvelle Bible Segond” (on the problem of translating the names of God and the choices of Segond); T. Römer, “Traductions et paratexte: sur le problème des annotations dans les Bibles modernes” (raises the question of the relationship of the “paratext” of annotations to the biblical text, illustrating with TOB problems that can arise, and suggesting that annotations need to be constantly reviewed and revised); D. Lys, “La Bible en quête de langage(s)” (review of the literary merits of the Bayard translation); S. Guilmin, “D’une Bible à l’autre” (critical of Chouraqui’s translation); and J.-P. Sternberger, “Les Bibles pour enfants ou Les aventures de Targoum et Midrach” (compares eleven French Bibles for children and three illustrated Bibles—their layout, intended use, illustrations, treatment of characters, and text).

And three articles in Protokolle zur Bibel 12/1 (2003): P. Arzt-Grabner, “Grenzfälle wörtlicher Übersetzung neotestamentlicher Texte,” (looks at different translations of Greek words, names, rendering of verbal forms, and levels of language to point to the difficulties of literal translations); A. Siquans, “Überlegungen zu einer frauengerechten Bibelübersetzung,” (compares Die Gute Nachricht and Der Gottesdienst. Liturgische Texte in gerechter Sprache with respect to their use of inclusive language); and R. Müller-Fieberg, “Ein ‘Bibel-Skandal in Frankreich?’ Vielmehr und trotz allem: Ein ermutigendes Signal für die Inkulturation der Bibel in unsere Gegenwart!” (description of and reflections on the Bayard Bible).


Translation, Linguistics


Anthony Pym. 2004. The Moving Text: Localization, Translation, and Distribution. Benjamins. P. sets up a dialogue between localization theory and translation theory, placing both within a more general frame of text transfer. Texts are distributed in time and space; localization and translation respond differently to those movements; their relative virtues are thus brought out on common ground. The book reviews key problems in translation theory, and critical concepts such as cultural resistance, variable transaction costs, segmentation of the labor market, and the dehumanization of technical discourse. It closes with a plea for the humanizing virtues of translation, over and above the efficiencies of localization.


For Better or for Worse: Translation as a Tool for Change in the South Pacific. 2004. S. Fenton, ed. St. Jerome Pub. The essays explore the impact translation has had on linguistic, cultural, ethnic and political identities in several nations of the South Pacific. The authors demonstrate that the Pacific Islanders were not only victims but also played an active role in the cross-cultural events they were party to and in shaping their own destinies. Some titles: “Translating the ancestors: Grey’s Polynesian Mythology,” John O’Leary; “Interpreting as a tool for empowerment of the New Zealand Deaf community,” Rachel Lockyer McKee; “Translation in New Caledonia: Writing (in) the language of the Other. The “Red Virgin,” the missionary, and the ethnographer,” Raylene Ramsay; “Foreigner talk to exonorm: Translation and literacy in Fiji,” Paul Geraghty; “Decolonization by missionaries of government: The Tokelau case,” Tony Angelo & Tioni Vulu. Article abstracts at http://www.stjerome.co.uk/1-900650-67-3.html

tion as a prelude for soul translation,” A. Segal; “Are kinship terminologies and kinship concepts translatable?” A. Rosman and P. Rubel.

Michael Cronin. 2003. Translation and Globalization. Routledge. A critical exploration of the ways in which radical changes to the world economy have affected contemporary translation. C. argues that translation is central to debates about language and cultural identity, and shows why consideration of the role of translation and translators is a necessary part of safeguarding and promoting linguistic and cultural diversity.


Umberto Eco. 2003. Dire quasi la stessa cosa: Esperienze di traduzione. Bompiani. Essays from various conferences and seminars that Eco has been part of bring together his observations and reflections on translation gained from experience as a corrector of other people’s translations, translator, and author collaborating with his translators. He reflects on translation from one language to another, as well as one medium to another.

John Holm. 2004. Languages in Contact: The Partial Restructuring of Vernaculars. Cambridge University Press. Studies five noncreole vernaculars (African American English, Afrikaans, Brazilian Vernacular Portuguese, nonstandard Caribbean Spanish, vernacular lects of Réunionnais French) from the point of view of social and linguistic factors in their partial restructuring. Argues that the transmission of their source languages from native to non-native speakers led to partial restructuring, resulting in the retention of a substantial amount of the source languages’ morphosyntax, but also the introduction of a significant number of substrate and interlanguage features. Proposes a formal theoretical model identifying the processes that lead to partial restructuring.

Fighting Words: Language Policy and Ethnic Relations in Asia. 2003. M.E. Brown and Š. Ganguly, eds. MIT Press. Essays analyze the impact of different kinds of language policies on ethnic relations in fifteen multiethnic countries in Asia and the Pacific (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, PNG, Philippines, China, Taiwan). The analyses include discussion of the origins of different language policies and how the policies have evolved over time. They develop policy recommendations, both for individual countries and in more general terms.

Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet. 2003. Language and Gender. Cambridge University Press. This is an introduction to the study of the relation between gender and language use, beginning with a discussion of gender and of the resources that the linguistic system offers for the construction of social meaning.

Narrative Theory and the Cognitive Sciences. 2003. D. Herman, ed. Center for the Study of Language and Information. This volume focuses on narrative as a crossroads where cognitive and social psychology, linguistics, literary theory, and the recent hybrid called “cognitive narratology” intersect, suggesting new directions for the cognitive sciences. The essays demonstrate the importance of narrative as a cognitive style, a genre of discourse, and a resource for literary writing and other forms of communication.


INSIDE—A REVIEW OF LOGOS SERIES X / LIBRONIX

Increasingly, publishers are issuing CD-ROMs along with textbooks. The following are Fortress Press printed volumes that are sold with the electronic text of the book and additional study materials on CD-ROM, in the Libronix format.