

Daniel C. Arichea, Jr.
(1934–2021)

The Bible Translator

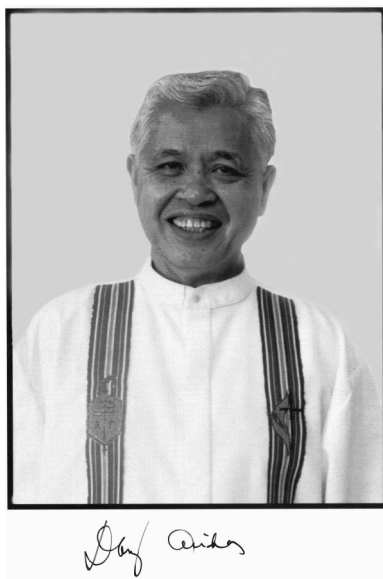
2021, Vol. 72(2) 262–267

© The Author(s) 2021

Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/20516770211036336

journals.sagepub.com/home/tbt

I first met Danny Arichea forty years ago. He hailed from the Philippines and was then a UBS translation consultant (TC) based in my home country, Indonesia. The first time I met him, however, was not in Indonesia but at the UBS Triennial Translation Workshop (TTW) near Chania, Crete, in May 1981. My wife Vivian and I travelled from the USA, having been invited by the Asia-Pacific RETCO, Dr. I-Jin Loh, to my first UBS TTW and to join the global family of dedicated UBS TCs and Bible Society translation officers (TOs) meeting in one place.

After the TTW, as a new staff member, I relocated from my hometown in Malang, East Java, to Bogor, West Java, to the Indonesian Bible Society (IBS) Translation Department office compound. We were invited to live in the Aricheas' house there, as Danny and his family were getting ready to spend a year in the USA on research leave.

As senior consultant and mentor, Danny introduced me to the various aspects of UBS translation ministry, guiding me through the formative years until I was confirmed as a full TC. In my first month, Danny, Perry Katoppo (the IBS translation secretary), and I conducted a New Reader Scripture workshop for indigenous languages of the island of Sumba in the eastern part of Indonesia. When I asked Danny there whether he enjoyed his regular early morning jogs, he replied, “Not on this island, too many dogs around—they chased me while I was jogging.” In other places, whenever Danny got a chance, he would play tennis, sometimes with the translator. He also liked to sing, and had a good baritone voice. He liked to sing in the choir, with his wife Ruth as choir director.

Early on, Danny encouraged me to recruit a mother-tongue translator for the Madurese Bible. IBS had had many problems with finding the right person and their best solution was a Madurese living in East Java, who did not speak the standard dialect of the island of Madura. So the draft translation was not well received by its intended audience there. I located a gifted woman translator from the heartland of the island with all the necessary linguistic talents and skills, who had attended our translation workshop. Though Danny confirmed that this person was very well qualified, our excitement at the chance to resurrect the Madurese project was dampened by the fact that IBS no longer had a budget for the project. But through God’s grace, a person stepped up to fund the project after hearing me speak about the IBS translation mission at a local Anglican church in Jakarta one Sunday morning.

In addition to supervising the Madurese Bible translation project and several projects in indigenous languages, Danny also involved me in the final consultant checking in the national language translation project, namely the revision of Today’s Indonesian New Testament, which was later published as part of the Indonesian Common Language Bible. Through the rigorous checking sessions, I learned a lot from Danny’s approach to consultant checking and his serious commitment to meaning-based Bible translation following Eugene Nida’s dynamic/functional equivalence method.

When Danny became the Regional Translation Coordinator (RETCO), he would require a UBS TC-in-training to experience a translation workshop in Papua before being confirmed as a full TC. It was in Papua that the logistics of carrying enough material (motorcycle battery, solar panel, commentaries, handbooks, etc.) aboard a MAF single-engine Cessna aircraft, led me to dream of the day when Bible software would contain all Bible commentaries and important resources within my laptop.

In my second year of service, when the translation secretary was preparing for further study overseas, Danny recommended me to IBS to head the Translation Department, managing the translation teams nationwide, liaising

with national church leaders related to translation matters, as well as working with other department heads as part of the IBS General Secretary's working team. When it was my turn to do further study the following year, I recommended Danny to fill the vacancy until Perry returned to Bogor.

In those days, a UBS TC had to acquire a new language, preferably a national language or a language of wider communication so that he or she could function well in translation workshops and translation checking with the mother-tongue or indigenous translators. Danny's command of the Indonesian language was the envy of many foreign missionaries. Very rarely did he run out of words. However, he knew the right time to keep silent. On one notorious occasion, four of us (two Malaysians, Danny, and I) were trying to return from a translation workshop in central Kalimantan during a period when haze curtailed most flights. We ended up at Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, for which the three "foreigners" did not have the appropriate travel pass. Danny insisted that the three of them remained silent and I alone registered at the hotel with my Indonesian ID, and did all the talking at the airport, lest they be discovered by their accent. In this way we reached Jakarta without further incident.

It would be amiss not to mention Danny's wit. He would tell all sorts of jokes to lighten up a tense situation. One day Danny spoke to a General Secretary of a local Bible Society about their TOs who would fall asleep during the sessions in the workshop but would be wide awake when it was time for lunch or dinner. Danny would even tell jokes about himself, how he would fall asleep as soon as he was in a moving vehicle, or was still fast asleep when the plane he was on landed. Danny was a master of wordplay. As his explanation for not wearing a tie, he said, "Blessed be the tie that binds!" I participated in Danny's installation service as the Methodist Bishop of the Philippines, and, true to form, he did not wear a tie; he proudly wore his traditional barong shirt. Danny would even joke and describe himself as "ruthless" when his wife Ruth was not with him.

Professionally speaking, Danny's association with the Philippine Bible Society (PBS) spanned fifty-three years, first as a member of the PBS Translation Committee in 1968, then for twenty-six years directly related to UBS translation services, and again with PBS. His excellent professional and scholarly contribution to the UBS translation program was recognized by the UBS global translation family. He officially joined UBS in 1969. As a UBS TC, he was first posted to Thailand in 1972, then in 1974 was assigned to live in Indonesia (serving Indonesia and Malaysia). Afterward, he became the Asia-Pacific RETCO in the UBS Regional Office in Hong Kong, succeeding Dr. I-Jin Loh, a role that he served in for eight years (1987–1995) until his appointment to the episcopal office of the Methodist Church in the Philippines. However, well past his UBS

and then Methodist Church retirement, Danny was back serving with PBS, and continued to work as a senior TC in the PBS office until his hospitalization in May 2021.

Danny's wisdom, initiative, and senior managerial leadership in the Bible translation community have been recognized and appreciated globally. As a Supervising Consultant and as the Asia-Pacific RETCO, Danny led by example. He encouraged others to do their best in translation ministries as well as in research and writing. He himself authored several Handbooks for Translators, and contributed articles to *TBT*. His papers and presentations at Asia-Pacific Regional Translation Consultation mini-workshops and the global TTW were always stimulating. Danny's impact on his colleagues was significant. He inspired others to walk in his footsteps.

As the RETCO, Danny implemented new initiatives like Bible comics, and setting up committees to work on Bible translations for peoples of other faiths. He worked hard to encourage qualified and promising scholars from various Asian countries to join the UBS translation team. He took special efforts to ensure the full participation of Bible Society TOs in regional and global translation workshops and seminars. Danny encouraged leaders of national Bible Societies to provide spouse travel for qualified translation staff, as was afforded to their UBS counterparts, though he was not always successful.

He would ensure sufficient budget provision so that UBS TCs and Bible Society TOs and translation teams would be equipped with computers and book budgets for their continued reading and research in biblical studies, linguistics, and other related fields. Danny encouraged all translation staff to fill out monthly work reports according to categories of activities. He championed democratizing our activities, including the selection process in various committees, even the election of the RETCO.

As the Asia-Pacific RETCO, Danny was instrumental in appointing the first female UBS TC, Dr. Anicia del Corro. Years later, in Danny's capacity as the Board Chair of PBS, he was instrumental in the appointment of the first female General Secretary of the Philippine Bible Society, Dr. Nora Lucero.

In 2008, on the occasion of Danny's golden jubilee in Christian ministry, PBS published a special book entitled *A Man Called Daniel: A Festschrift in Honor of Bishop Daniel C. Arichea, Jr.*, to which Danny's colleagues from the Philippines and all corners of the world contributed articles, ranging from general and specific topics in Bible translation and the practical applications of the Bible to social issues. This book showed the respect and affection that Danny's colleagues have for him and his scholarship both in Bible translation ministries and in the faith and practice of the church as a whole.

Danny's extended absence from his family for his ministry did affect his wife and their daughter Miriam and sons Stephen and Michael. However, Danny, being Danny, was able to share this with his trusted colleagues.

One of the stories that Danny told was that one day when he returned from a long trip, he saw a note from his family. The very formal salutation in this letter was quite revealing: “Dear Dr. Arichea.” Danny realized that it would not be an easy letter to read. On another occasion, when he got home from another long trip, the children told him, “Daddy, don’t change the rules!”

It was fitting that during the virtual memorial service in honour of Bishop Arichea that the Rev. Dr. Henriette Hutabarat-Lebang, the Board Chair of the Indonesian Bible Society, expressed, on behalf of the society and the Indonesian churches, her appreciation for the Aricheas for having served in Indonesia for close to twelve years.

I have learned a lot from Danny, not only as a UBS TC but also as a RETCO. Danny has been a role model, a close colleague, and a family friend. He got to know our boys almost as soon as they were born and has always been “Uncle Danny” to both of them. Danny was glad to meet my parents during a translation workshop just outside Malang, East Java, and my dad invited him to preach in the church that he was pastoring.

Danny must have been prophetic when he joked with me that I would follow him wherever he went: first, as UBS TC for the Indonesian Bible Society and Bible Society of Malaysia, 1988–1999, and, second, as the Asia-Pacific RETCO, 1999–2012, based in Brisbane, Australia.

After his retirement, I still met Danny and Ruth in person a few times in Manila, when I was invited to help with a translation seminar and workshop in 2010, as well as the UBS Chinese Scripture Forum in 2012, and finally the UBS Global Bible Translation Staff Training in 2016.

On April 6, 2021, Danny gave his homily and said the closing prayer and the benediction at the virtual memorial service of another dear UBS colleague, Rosario Yu. And at the end of the virtual service, Danny greeted me personally. A month later we were saddened to receive the news that Danny and Ruth were hospitalized due to the coronavirus. All of us around the globe were praying fervently for both of them. We were glad to learn that Ruth recovered and was discharged from the hospital. However, a few days later we saw Ruth’s message through Facebook as follows:

At 12:41 this afternoon, June 1, 2021, God opened the gates of the mansion he has so lovingly prepared for his dearly beloved son & faithful servant, Daniel C. Arichea Jr. From his birth on March 9, 1934, he has run the race, fought the good fight and kept the faith. His children, faith children, friends and kin, rejoice for the bells of heaven are ringing joyfully! He is now home! Thanks be to God!

Danny lived his life to the fullest. We all share the loss that the family feels. For the global Bible translation family, one more of the faithful old guard and translation pillars has departed after a life of dedication and

commitment to making God's word available in all media and for all peoples everywhere.

Farewell, Danny. We will always remember you, and what you have done for God and your fellow human beings. Rest in peace.

Daud Soesilo

*Retired Translation Consultant and Regional Coordinator
United Bible Societies*

Basil Rebera writes:

Ranjini and I grieve Danny's passing. While we feel the loss, we celebrate and cherish the friendship we shared with Danny and Ruth.

I met Danny in Manila in December 1974 at the Philippines Bible Society office, where I was assigned, as a new United Bible Societies (UBS) recruit, to a three-week period of orientation to the organisation and administration of translation projects, under the guidance of Rosario Yu, who was then Secretary of the Translation Department. Danny was there on a brief visit. When we were introduced, Danny greeted me with warmth and welcomed me to the Regional Translation fellowship. As he was leaving he said he looked forward to meeting with me again and with his exuberant signature laugh cautioned me not to breach any of Rosario's laws!

Danny was the longest-serving UBS translation officer in the Asia Pacific Region, both as a consultant (TC) and then as Regional Translation Coordinator (RETCO). Danny excelled in his performance as a TC and was held in the highest esteem by his colleagues. I never worked together with him on projects, but we met at the annual Regional Consultation and the Triennial Translation Workshops (TTWs). I owe much to what I learned from his presentations on those occasions and his contributions to UBS publications. He, like most Filipinos, had a wonderful baritone voice and was a leading member of the choir, usually conducted by Ruth, at the RETCONs and TTWs.

Because of extensive travel to remote places, TCs did encounter hazards from time to time. Danny would recount some of them, and always with good humour. And there were customs and cultural sensibilities one had to adapt to, and exotic cuisine one was invited to partake of. Danny once told of how he used to cope when he was served with what were delicacies to his hosts, but quite alien to his palate: He used to utter a silent prayer, "Lord, I'll take it in, if you'll keep it down."

Vale dear friend and esteemed colleague.

Basil Rebera

*Former Translation Services Director and Translation Consultant
United Bible Societies*