

Training Bible Translators in Non-Western Contexts
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Group #1 discussion notes:

What does an effective Bible translator need to know?

1. language issues

- When the source and target language differ in significant ways, the translators need to
 - a) know that they are different,
 - b) know *how* they are different,
 - c) recognize that both language structures are legitimate (the target language is just as good as the source),
 - d) know how to map from the structure in the source language to the one in the target language so as to preserve meaning (i.e. to be accurate in a natural way), and
 - e) consistently make the mapping when drafting and revising the translation
- Training in their own language, language awareness, value and appreciation of their own language –
- discover your language, what does this involve?
 - not phonetics and phonology (however, the orthographic questions will need to be answered and discussed as part of discovering their language, including ssuch things as word breaks
 - syntax and discourse analysis
 - ordering of elements – chronology, position of most important part,
 - what is natural, logical relationships between propositions

2. cultural issues and philosophy

- Anthropology questions important related to differences in culture
- Greek philosophy knowledge important help to background in NT, Corinthian letters imply background in Stoic philosophy
- Training how to check their translation, anthropological understanding important to make sure how the checking should be done within the culture
- What about actual visits to Israel for training? Does that matter? Yes, may be question of logistics more than of value

3. psychological and character issues

- What does the translator need to know in the beginning:
 - curious about things

comparison and contrast, discriminate between own culture and biblical culture

- Character, competence, chemistry – character trumps competence (acceptance by community important)
- Important to make disciples in the process of translation
- What does our selection of a translator do to that person's position and status in the community, increase in pressure, wage scales in comparison to the culture, what happens to them when we are done with the project? Do we prepare them for the criticism they will face?
- those outside the culture should not be the ones selecting the translators, but they should have input, and the decision must be acceptable to them, too, so the project will have the best possible resources humanly speaking

4. pedagogical issues

- progression of learning, knowledge may not have to be in the single translator, team skills to be able to work together
- information must be shared, what is known must be in the project
- Train to see differences, then they'll ask questions – first job is to understand
- At what point do we say “you are a translator”? (we still need to sort out competencies and appropriate levels
- continuum instead of threshold – candidate→translator→exegete
- can we have a translator whose deficiencies are supplied by a facilitator and still have them be a translator, have to supply them guidance from others where necessary
- mentoring – what does the mentor need to know? Does the translator move to the point to where they are mentoring others?
- it is not just a question of what the translator must know, but also what he/she is able to do

5. computer and technical skills

- definitely needed, but did not take time to define here
- computer skills could be had within the group