

later it was decided that the *h* was unnecessary, as *c* is never used in any other connection, so *c* was made to do duty for *ch*. Then later still it was decided to drop the *y* from the combination *cy* (*chy* that was) and make *c* do the work of both the *c* sound and the *cy* sound. The preposition *i* "at" which used to be joined to the word it governs, is now to be written separately; *hw* is now *h'*; *nih* is now *ni ho* and so on. Most of these points occur many times on the same page, which makes typing very difficult as one has to be constantly on the watch for changes so that automatic copying is impossible. Fortunately for me an American missionary has very kindly done the typing for me, so that part was her headache, not mine.

These are at least some of the translator's problems before the entrance of the printed Word may give light and men may turn "to serve the living God."

Difficulties of translating the Bible into the South-Toradja language

(South-West Celebes ¹⁾)

Dr H. van der Veen

In translating the Bible into the South-Toradja language ²⁾, we encountered the same difficulties found in all Indonesian languages, and generally speaking, in all languages of more or less primitive and isolated peoples.

Words for Culturally Different Objects

One of the difficulties is the selection of equivalents for names of objects found in Palestine and not in this island. For instance, there are no sheep or camels here, and bread and wine are as yet little known. It is only in rare instances that such "foreign terms" can be rendered by exact equivalents. We tried to do so by rendering "fox" by *sindalloeng* "civet cat" (Malay *moesang*). This animal is a real chicken thief, and is a type of cat with a head resembling that of a fox. To translate the words "sheep," "camel," "bread," and "wine," we have used the Malay words: *domba*, *oenta*, *roti*, and *anggoer* which became *anggoro* in the Toradja language. We made an attempt to render the word "tent" by the native word *lantang sampin* "cloth shelter," or, "hut made of woven material," but the people could not become accustomed to this compound, because *lantang* is strongly associated with "hut made of branches" or "hut made of bamboo." Also in this case we finally adopted a Malay word, namely, *kémah*, pronounced *kema* in Toradja. Similarly with respect

¹⁾ Translated from Dutch by Rev. William G. Goudberg.

²⁾ This language is also known as Tae' or Sadan Toradja.

to "wineskins," Mat. 9 : 17, we first translated this word by the phrase *balasse baloelang*. The word *balasse*, however, means "bag made of the leaves of the swamp-palm" and *baloelang* means "skin" or "leather." Hence, the entire expression was designed to mean "bag made of leather," but the association of *balasse* with the leaves of the swamp-palm was so strong that the natives had much difficulty in adopting it. Again we had to turn to an Arabic-Malay word *kirbat*, pronounced here as *kiriba'*.

A temple building is not known among the South-Toradja people. Offerings are brought into the family or clan-house, and their word for this building *tongkonan* has the principal meaning of "clan-house." We were able to render the word for "temple" by *penomban* "place where sacrifices and prayers are made." This is related to the verb *menomba* "to offer, to worship." (Cf. Malay *sembah*). In translating the word "temple" we could have employed a different type of expression. Holy, sacred places, i.e. where the profane are not permitted to enter, are called *inan kaboesoengan*, literally, "place where one gets a swollen belly," (i.e. when one visits it in a profane state of mind). Such a place, which, because of the calamity connected with it, is to be avoided, constitutes a sacred and holy place. *Banoea kaboesoengan* means "holy house," but translating "temple" in this manner would emphasize the holiness of the place more than the fact that it is a place for prayer and sacrifices.

Terms for Generalized Processes

Most Indonesian languages are concrete, and they possess a rich variety of words to express a multitude of different activities. Well-known are the numerous words which are used to express the manner in which something is carried, e.g., carried on the back, on the shoulder, on a stick over the shoulder, on the neck, on the hip, in front, or on a string in the hand. When in revising the Gospel of John my language helpers and I came upon "the cleansing of the temple," where mention is made of Jesus overturning the tables of the money changers, the question was raised as to how the tables were turned, whether, for example, lengthwise or broadside, because for the two processes the language has different words. The fact that the language is so concrete and specific has prevented the formation of abstract words and words which would include a great variety of activities. For example, in South-Toradja there is no general word for "drink." This has to be translated by a phrase *toe mintoe'na diiroe'na* "whatever is being drunk."

The South-Toradja language does have words meaning "to eat, to consume something," but a word for "meal" is lacking. Because of this we had difficulty to find a good translation for "The Lord's Supper." The common word for eating is *koemande*, and the corresponding abstract word *kakoemandean* has already the meaning of "eating time." For that reason we have formed an abstract word from a word found in the poetical language *toemimboe'* "to take nourishment." The derivative is thus *katoemimboeran* and we have used this to render "meal" in the Holy Supper.

The South-Toradja language is also lacking in a word to express the general idea of "to serve." It has plenty of words specifying various activities denoting types of service, e.g., preparing and serving food, etc. Further, it has the words *ma'parakai* "to regulate" and *ma'kamajai* "to take care of." We have chosen one of these words to translate "to serve." In this way we were able to find a translation for "The Son of man came not to be served but to serve," Matt. 20 : 28.

Words of Spiritual Significance

Words for spiritual concepts could be translated only with great difficulty. At the beginning of the preaching of the gospel among this people the name of God was translated by *Poeang Matoea*, which is "the Lord enthroned in the midst of the firmament." The Toradja people think of Him as the Supreme Being, but as having other gods under Him. Continued preaching made clear that in Christian terminology *Poeang Matoea* is the only ONE God, and that there is no other beside Him. By this means, both among the Christians and also among others *Poeang Matoea* received this new meaning and this new content. Hence it is used for "God" in the translation of the Bible.

The word "sin" was rendered *kasalan*. This word really means "transgression of a religious or moral rule." When gradually a congregation of native Christians came into being, the word received the meaning of transgression of God's commandments and total depravity.

It was very difficult to find a word for "soul." The concept of "heart" or "emotion" was rendered in preaching by *penaa* which like the Hebrew *rua* and the Greek *pneuma*, has the meaning of "breath." (Compare the verb *menaa* meaning "to breathe.") In preaching it was also used with the meaning of "Spirit." Hence Holy Spirit was translated by *Penaa Masallo'*. It would have been better to translate "spirit" by *soemanga'* (Malay *semangat*), which means "spirit of life, consciousness." Accordingly, the translation of Holy Spirit would be *Soemanga' Masallo'*.

The translation of the word "spiritual" (e.g. Rom. 1 : 11) was also difficult. We had desired to translate it by *messoemanga'*, a compound consisting of the *soemanga'* (mentioned above) with the preposition *mes-*, meaning "having the form of, appearing as," as for example in *menta'poeng* "in powder form, appearing as flour," or *mennoeai* "in liquid form, appearing as liquid." *Messoemanga'* therefore means literally "as spirit, in spirit form." But we were bound to the word *penaa* which in *Penaa Massallo'* "Holy Spirit" was already in general use. We translated it therefore by *mempenaa*. It would have been possible to translate it by *mendeata*, but this leans more in the direction of the personal soul.

The "inward man" is described by *ba'teng*. In 2 Cor. 4 : 16 we translated "the inward man" as *a'gan ba'tengta* "the form (i.e. being) of that which is inside" and "the outward man" as *a'gan kale tang marendengta* "the form (being) of our corruptible body." In Rom. 7 : 22 we translated "inward man" by *diona a'gan penaa* "after the form (being) of the heart."

In the South-Toradja language various organs of the body are considered to be centers of that which is spiritual. The expression "to take

it to heart" is translated by "to take it into the breast" or "to put it into the abdomen." The gall is thought of as the seat of the intellect and also of character.

When a European would say "he has no brains, he is dumb," a Toradja says "he has no gall." A sly person or one who plays mean tricks is called by this people "a person whose gall is yellow" or "one with a large gall bladder."

In looking for the best idiomatic expression for the concept "soul," we could leave out of consideration certain words, e.g. *soenga'* "life-spirit, life-fluid, life-span," a word which refers to the material existence and not to the spiritual; and *bombo* "man's soul after death." According to our opinion the most idiomatic word for "soul" is *deata*. This is actually a Sanskrit word which entered Toradja through Boeginese. This word adequately expresses the concept of "personal soul." When one is frightened, people say *mallai deatanna* "his soul has fled"; and when a person is very much afraid, they say: *pa'de deata* "the soul has escaped." Accordingly, we have translated "soul" by *deata*. The phrases "With all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." Matt. 22 : 37, was translated as follows: *la ponno penaammoe sia mintoe' tanga'moe sae lako deatammoe*, literally, "with all your heart, and with all your mind up to and with your soul included." In this rendering *penaa* is a translation of "heart," *tanga* of "mind," and *deata* of "soul."

The South-Toradja language has no single word to express "conscience." Hence we had to paraphrase it. My informants suggested *kada penaa* "word from the heart," *soekaran penaa* "measure of the heart," (i.e. the tool with which the heart can determine good and evil), and *penaa ma'pakilala* "the admonishing within." The last paraphrase was selected.

Metaphorical Translations

The South-Toradja language is rich in poetical expressions with a figurative, metaphorical meaning. We were able to draw from these to express accurately different biblical expressions. We were thus able to translate "For I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God," Exodus 20 : 5, by *pa Akoemo Jahoea Kapenombammoe, Poeang noka ditimba Olona*. The second half of this sentence means literally "Who will not that His face is drawn as water is drawn," i.e. "Who will not that a person treats Him without respect, or refuses to figure with Him, or dishonors Him, or in passing Him by honors to others above Him."

At first we were not able to translate satisfactorily the words "Thou shalt not commit adultery," Exodus 20 : 14. Formerly they were translated by *da mimassangmatoea*. This forbids immorality between young, unmarried people, but the expression was offensive to a mixed audience. Next we chose *massiporai*, which in some districts means "to commit immoral acts with each other." It was a better translation, gave no offense, and in some districts at least was correct. The basic meaning of the stem *porai* is "to wish, to like," and *siporai* means in some districts "to like one another, to be friendly to each other." From those districts,

therefore, the question came, "What is really the meaning of this prohibition? May we not be friendly with each other?" Hence we had to look for another expression. Finally we learned of a metaphorical expression *pasandak saloe lako rampanan kapa'* meaning "to fathom the river of marriage," i.e. "to approach the marriage relationship (of another), to disturb the marriage relationship (of another), to commit adultery." This translation was accepted favorably.

Difficult Words and Phrases

Dr E. A. Nida

Translators are constantly beset by problems of how to render particularly difficult words or phrases. What are such easy, common terms in various Indo-European languages, e.g. "love," "joy," "believe," and "save," may be very difficult in some aboriginal language. What is more, a term which provides no difficulty in one native language, may be extremely complicated to render adequately into adjacent languages.

It is true that many aboriginal languages lack abstract nouns, and this makes the translator's task exasperatingly complex. But on the other hand, other native languages seem to be well supplied with such abstract terms, and in certain cases may construct abstractions even more extensively than English or any other European language. For example, the Totonac language of Mexico may make a generalizing or abstract noun on the base of almost any type of finite action verb. This makes for almost endless refinements of statement, and the difficulty is not one of discovering some term which may be somewhat within the range of the Greek or Hebrew expression, but rather of choosing between several alternative expressions, each of which brings out some amazing new subtlety.

It is perfectly obvious that no one can or should pretend to tell the missionary translator just what type of term must be used, and in many cases the illustrative examples cited in this section will not provide any immediately useable idiom, but they may suggest some other solution, and if so, the ultimate aim of such help has been realized.

The data which are given as illustrative of the problems encountered and the solutions arrived at, are by no means complete. Missionaries will be able to provide many additional suggestions, and it is hoped that just such material will be sent to the editor, for it is not implied that when a word is once treated all the significant data have been presented. In these pages we expect to treat some words several different times, as missionaries continue to provide new and helpful information.

This section on *Difficult Words and Phrases* is distinct from the material on *Greek and Hebrew Word Studies*, for here an attempt is