

3. The note should be as brief as possible.
4. The explanation should avoid all doctrinal interpretations or emotionally charged accusations or innuendoes.

Marginal helps are not designed to add to the text. They are nothing more nor less than the inevitable means by which we permit the text to speak for itself in some degree equivalent to the manner in which it spoke to those who first received it. Helps which go beyond this are not justified, but those which make it possible for the Scriptures to speak their message clearly and effectively should have a place somewhere.

Pronunciation Does Not Come from Books

Recently when a change in spelling was made in an African language because it was found that for years different phonemes (significant sounds) in the language had been written with the same letter of the alphabet, the missionaries remarked that the change would help them pronounce the language better because they were making the same confusions in their speech. This was certainly true, but it should not have been. A language, *any* language, should be learned as it is spoken by the native speakers, not as it is written. This is even so when the language is correctly written. Missionaries learning the language in different dialect areas should have in their own speech the characteristics of those areas. It is only by mimicry that good pronunciation can be formed. Good language-learning is primarily a matter of the ear and the tongue, and only secondarily a matter of the eye and the pencil.

Borrowed Words May Be Wrong

The borrowing of words from another language is one of the ways in which a language enriches itself. Part of the reason for the rich variety of vocabulary in English is due to the tremendous amount of borrowing which has taken place in its history. The translator, however, should study every borrowed word very carefully before he uses it, because words are rarely borrowed with exactly the same meaning and usage that they had in the source language. In one language, for example, the word *king* has been borrowed and is in current use. However, it does not mean primarily a ruler, but a "big shot," and with the implication of somebody who is proud of his high position—real or fancied. This is hardly a satisfactory term by which to translate "king" in most Biblical contexts.