

finally corrected galley material will then be sent to a printer as copy for the ultimate composition.

Just how acceptable this revision of 1960 will ultimately prove to be can only be known within two or three years, for in the final analysis neither the Bible Societies nor the consultants are the final judges or arbiters, but the churches. However, this limited revision has been designed to provide the churches with what they seemed to want. It will be interesting to see how well the attempt has succeeded or failed.

A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRANSLATORS IN NEW LANGUAGES

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In 1957 the director of the Wycliffe Bible Translators in Mexico asked one of the translators to check the quality of a translation of the book of Acts completed by another member of this same organization. This was the beginning of what has developed into a regular consultation program with an annual translation workshop.

The first assignment mentioned above was accepted with misgivings even though valuable experience had been gained by the one requested to make the check as one of the committee members who translated the Chol New Testament. The orientation to translation principles received over a period of five years, in brief but personal sessions with representatives of the American Bible Society gave the confidence to embark upon this related but new field.

As additional opportunities arose to examine the work of other translators a number of ideas became more and more fixed as convictions. For example, it became increasingly clear that everyone needed some guidance regardless of the natural abilities and background of study he brought to the task. The Greek major, as well as the translator who knew nothing about Greek, needed help, although admittedly not always to the same extent nor in the same areas. Then it became evident that early and frequent consultations were more advantageous than one made, for example, when a person had completed and revised a book such as Mark. Psychologically the translator who has painstakingly translated a book and gone through one or two revisions is not ready to accept any major changes in his work. An early examination of even as little as one chapter will usually reveal some of the broad tendencies which are likely to be repeated in succeeding chapters. If these are brought to the attention of the translator before he has brought his work near to what he considers the final stage, he will more easily be led to a finished job of a higher quality and in the long run it will result in a saving of time to him in the total translation job.

To give this kind of personal attention and guidance early enough and with adequate frequency involves more consultations than can be carefully handled by one person. It became evident that several consultants were needed. Then it was noted that there existed a certain amount of repetition in the counsel given, since some problems have a way of turning up quite regularly. Slowly the idea of a translation workshop took form. The first was held in 1959 in the Zapoteco Indian village of Mitla, Oaxaca. It lasted two months with ten translation teams and their respective informants in attendance. Two consultants working alternately with different teams observed the translator at work with his informant, checked his material from the standpoint of exegetical accuracy, idiomatic quality, and intelligibility, and gave a written report listing only those changes which represented a recurring departure from some translation principle. For example, the following suggestions were made after carefully checking the first chapter of Mark in one language of Mexico. Each suggestion was followed by several examples which arose in the course of the check:

- (1) Check thoroughly the denotation and connotation of all words used in the translation. Cultural situations should be elicited to determine the areas of meaning.
- (2) Care should be taken to translate lexical items of the original with the closest possible natural equivalent.
- (3) Greater clarity may result from shifting parts of sentences or whole sentences to the experiential, logical, or theological order.
- (4) Since third person pronouns as well as pluralization is indicated by zero suffixes in this language, the third person pronouns are highly ambiguous. Inasmuch as Scripture narratives are not familiar material, it may be necessary to replace many third person references with the explicit names of the participants.

Two evenings each week a seminar consisting of a lecture followed by discussion gave the consultants opportunity to discuss problems which had been observed in the consultant sessions or which are generally troublesome to the majority of translators. Drs. Nida and Wonderly each gave a series of lectures which were of real value. While plans did not call for another translation workshop for another two years or so, the response of the translators was so enthusiastic and outspoken that it seemed wise to the Director to schedule another for the spring of 1960.

As the first conference came to a close, the consultants discussed ways in which the next one could be made more effective. It was agreed that additional consultants would be needed. It was also agreed that the initial questions as well as some of those asked during the course of a consultation could be listed in a questionnaire

to be filled out by the translator beforehand. It was felt that in addition to helping the translator correct some of his own errors, it would also help the consultant to do his part more quickly, more intelligently and with greater consistency. John Beekman, Henry Bradley, Harwood Hess and Donald Stewart drafted the first list of questions. Robert Longacre, William Wonderly and Viola Waterhouse revised, reorganized and in other ways modified the original list to make it more practical. The questionnaire in its present form follows:

TRANSLATION QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions are designed for two purposes: (1) To help you organize what you know about the structure of your language and about some aspects of the native culture, and (2) to make this information available for a translation consultant when he checks over your translation. It will save time for you both if you can have this information written up for him ahead of time.

Do not be discouraged if you cannot answer all the questions. Answer the easiest ones first and leave the more difficult ones until later. Some may not be pertinent to your language; others may show you where you need to concentrate on further study in order to have a better translation. Answer them in terms of what you think the answer is for your language, and don't worry about terminology or about departing from what you think may be the generally accepted analysis. If you cannot think of a technical term for some item, use a nontechnical one or give an example with an English translation.

For your first interview with a translation consultant you should have with you (1) as much of the following information as you have been able to secure, and (2) five triple-spaced typed pages of analyzed text, with interlinear literal translation, and free translation at the end. Number sentences consecutively (number by sentences rather than by lines). The analysis given in answer to these questions should be based on the equivalent of at least 100 double-spaced typed pages of native text if possible. You should also be able to discuss all translation problems with the informant in the native language.

If you feel you need special help on crucial parts of the analysis, write to one of the linguistic consultants, outlining your problem, or ask the director if a consultation can be arranged with a linguistic consultant, or plan to attend a linguistic workshop either on the field or at Norman, Oklahoma.

Words and Idioms

1. List the word classes of your language (e.g., noun, verb, etc.).
2. Do some verbs obligatorily take objects? Are some nouns obligatorily possessed? List types and examples.
3. Does the language have a large or a small number of derived (e.g., runner, truth) or compound (e.g., greenhouse) nouns? List types and examples. Are new compounds coined and used freely by the people in general? Are such compounds used frequently or infrequently in native text?
4. Give examples of:
 - (a) How foreign articles or concepts *have been* incorporated linguistically into the native language (e.g., chair, table, airplane, new foods, light plant, to judge, to fine, to elect);
 - (b) How new items *are* naturally denominated by the native upon seeing them for the first time. Is the tendency to borrow the name along with the article or concept? To create a compound or a descriptive phrase?
5. How are such abstractions as faith, love, thought, beauty expressed? By abstract nouns? By verbal or adjectival expressions? Some in one way and some in another? If there is an option, then which way is most frequent in text and conversation? How frequently, in text or conversation, do such abstractions appear as subject of a verb? As object?

6. List any special trouble spots in the structure of nouns or verbs (or other words) such as extra aspects or tenses, kinds of mood, number, degree, and the like, that you have still not been able to analyze to your satisfaction; items that you have to handle solely by 'feel' and informant reaction, and of which you are not always sure you have the right answer.

7. List a few sorts of simile (e.g., like a bird), metaphor (e.g., is not my word a hammer?), proverb, riddle, or other type of figure of speech found in text or overheard in conversation. Give examples of *new* similes and metaphors that are accepted in the language. What limitations are there upon these, especially as regards new metaphors?

8. List a few innocent-looking combinations of words that give a different over-all meaning from what one would predict from the meanings of the component words. (e.g., I'll give you a red banana, meaning, I'll give you a licking.)

9. What sort of things are not talked about in polite society or are considered to be 'dirty talk'? (Note that in the native culture these may be quite different from what are considered to be in this category in our culture; e.g., words like ankle bone, armpit, blood, etc. may be taboo in the native culture though not in ours.)

Phrases

10. List the kinds of phrases you have in your language (e.g., noun phrases, verb phrases). What are the basic components of each kind? How can each type be expanded? In what order do the components normally occur? What variations in order can you have?

11. How is possession expressed (bound affix, phrase)? How is the idea of attribution or description expressed, noun phrase, same as possession, adjective plus noun)? Can possession and attribution be expressed in more than one way? What is the order of elements in a phrase which has both a possessive and an attributive (e.g., my house vs. big house vs. my big house)? Give illustrations of each type.

12. Describe the function of articles, adjectives, numerals and classifiers in noun phrases. Do they function only as modifiers? Also as head? Can several of these occur together? In what order?

13. What elements can occur with a verb to make a verb phrase? Auxiliaries (have, going to)? Adverbs? Particles of mood, aspect or tense? Can two verbs combine into a coordinate verb phrase (e.g., came and went)?

14. Does your language have anything comparable to prepositional phrases (e.g., at the store, in a minute, by horse, with a gun)? Are any of the prepositions borrowed from the national language? Give illustrations from native text. Can more than one preposition be used together? Are some relational ideas expressed without prepositions (e.g., 'his throne David' for 'the throne of David')? Illustrate.

15. What sort of phrases, if any, may be relatively long and complex? How frequently do such long phrases occur in native text? Is there a tendency to shift such long phrases to the fore of the clause? To the rear of the clause?

16. Which kinds of phrases are most common in native text and conversation? Which are most rare? Do you have any kinds of stereotyped phrases that occur frequently? Illustrate.

Clauses

17. List the basic obligatory components of a clause (or of the distinctive clause types) in your language (e.g., subject and predicate, predicate only, verb only). Do all clauses in your language have to have subject and predicate? Can a clause consist of just predicate? What kind of clause would it be? Is the predicate always a verb?

18. Describe the different kinds of independent clauses (or simple sentences) in your language. Is there a difference between transitive and intransitive clauses? Do you have a way of expressing passive voice or are clauses always active? How does your language express ideas of state, quality (shown by adjectives in English), equation or identification (e.g., John is a small boy)? Which kinds of clauses occur most frequently? Which are most rare?

19. Give the most common word order (of subject, verb, object) in clauses involving objects (i.e., transitive). Under what conditions is this word order varied? Does a transitive clause have to have an object expressed? Under what conditions can the object be omitted?

20. Give the most common word order of obligatory items in clauses not involving objects (e.g., intransitive, stative). Under what conditions is this word order varied?

21. Give the most common word order in clauses expressing equation or identification (e.g., That woman is my mother).

22. List the additional items, besides the obligatory components, that can be expressed within a single clause (e.g., time, location, indirect object, means or agent of the action). How are these ideas expressed? By single words? If so, by what word classes or parts of speech? By phrases? How many of these additional items can occur together in a single clause? How many *normally* occur in a single clause? In what order do they occur in relation to each other and to the obligatory components? Do the obligatory components tend to occur central in the clause, towards the beginning, or towards the end, if additional items are present? Is the order relatively fixed or quite free? Which occur most frequently in native text, long clauses or short clauses?

23. Do compound subjects or objects occur (e.g., John and Mary, salt and chile)? How is a series of objects expressed (e.g., beans, tortillas, salt, chile, eggs, and goat meat)? Must connectives be used? Used between some items but not others? Omitted? Must some other element of the sentence, such as the verb, be repeated in the series?

24. Are some of the items listed in No. 22 also expressed by subordinate clauses? Are there any ideas which have to be expressed by subordinate clauses? How do you tell a subordinate clause from an independent one in your language?

Sentences

25. Describe how clauses are joined into sentences. By simple juxtaposition, (e.g., I came, I saw, I conquered)? With conjunctions, (e.g., He came but I didn't see him)? With certain sequences of conjunctions (e.g., We went for a walk and then we ate some bananas)? Which patterns of combination occur most frequently? Which most rarely?

26. How many clauses can occur together in a single sentence (two or three at most, almost any number)? Are conjunctions (or connectives) likely to occur more often in a sentence composed of many clauses or just between two clauses? Are clauses just strung together without connectives if there is a large number of clauses in a single sentence? How do you distinguish a single long (multiple clause) sentence from a series of short sentences? How frequently do such long sentences occur in native text? (Usually? Rarely? Quite frequently? Almost never?)

27. When several clauses are joined into a single sentence, is the relationship usually coordinate (he came, *and* then we talked, *and* later John arrived) or subordinate (*when* he came we talked, after *which* John arrived)? How many subordinate relationships may appear between clauses in a single sentence?

28. Are sentences usually introduced by conjunctions or particles, or is this rather rare? Roughly what proportion of sentences are introduced by conjunctions or particles?

29. Are there particles which typically close sentences? Is this true of only conversational style? Of only narrative?

30. State briefly how the following are expressed: (a) negation of various sorts, (b) questions of various sorts, (c) commands, positive and negative, ordinary and polite, (d) purpose and/or result, (e) cause, (f) conditions of various sorts, (g) comparison (he is like a . . . , she acted like a . . .).

31. Are quotations typically direct (he said, "I must go now"), or indirect (he said he had to go now)? How is a quotation introduced? How closed? How attributed to its author?

32. Is a sequence of clauses predominantly, seldom, or always in the chronological order of the events narrated?

Sequences of Sentences

33. How is subject or actor of a succeeding sentence identified as same or different from subject or actor in preceding sentence? When, if ever, can a pronoun in one sentence be used to refer back to a noun of a preceding sentence? How is it kept straight who is doing what in such sequences as: He hit him, They told them?

34. Can logical connections (such as sequence of events, result, cause) be indicated by simple sequence of sentences or must there be some type of connective or introductory word to indicate the relation between the sentences? Do any of the sentences in a sequence have a different type of structure from the usual narrative sentence?

35. Are answers to questions always full sentences or can they be less than a full sentence (e.g., "I'm going home" vs. "Home," in answer to "Where are you going"?)

36. Is there any kind of particle or other word to show paragraph closure in conversation or narrative?

37. Is there any special type of word or phrase or stereotype to mark the end of a narrative? Illustrate.

While this questionnaire in the above form has had limited use, its value has already been seen in the few cases where it has been applied. It has been a definite time saver to the consultant in alerting him to potential problems in certain suspect areas which otherwise would have been discovered less directly. At the same time, the questionnaire information assures him of the validity of constructions which otherwise would be unnecessarily questioned. In one of the Mayan languages it has been the basis of breaking down long sentences into shorter ones. In another, the need for a closing quotative in the translation was discovered on the basis of its obligatory occurrence in native text. In still another a compound object to a verb was ruled out as impossible. In another a somewhat high occurrence of Spanish loans was considered legitimate. In another, the consultant was not only able to suggest similes in place of metaphors, but was able to suggest their approximate, if not exact, form.

It is expected that as the above questionnaire is given wider application, examples of its merits and usefulness will be multiplied. It is also expected that some of the questions which have been included may be considered of less relevance than some which have not been included, so that revisions in the list will be made from time to time.

THIS ISSUE

This issue of *The Bible Translator* has eight more pages than usual because the Editor does not wish to delay unduly the appearance of articles which he has received. Even so it may be some time before all articles which he has in hand can be published. However, this does not reduce the need for a steady flow of new articles, and the Editor is always glad to receive contributions from readers.