

in any one context (for the more frequent it is, the more predictable it is; and the greater its predictability, the greater its redundancy).

One must not imagine that information theory (or communication engineering, as this field of science is also often referred to) will completely upset all basic principles of translating as employed in the past. On the contrary, what information theory provides us is a scientific basis for describing and justifying the fundamental principles used by all good translators throughout the centuries.

Our present circumstances are somewhat similar to what happened when the physicists began to study music, on the basis of analyses of the vibration frequencies of various musical notes, the system of harmonics involved in such series of vibrations, the relationship of certain types of sound timbre, and the bases of harmony (in terms of mathematically describable relationships between frequencies). This does not mean that music is now any less of an art. We are, however, better able to understand the scientific basis of this art, and anyone who desires to develop skill or proficiency in the production of music will profit materially from the insights which come from the scientific analysis of this artistic medium. The same is true of language. Not only may writers become more proficient in the use of language as they understand its scientific basis more thoroughly, but those who must deal with multiple-language communication (pre-eminently the translators) can both discover the basis for the principles which they have been employing intuitively or as rules of thumb, and also can refine their techniques, generalize their principles, and produce with greater consistency more satisfactory results.

In order to develop such a program of research and writing in the Translations Department, it is quite obvious that we cannot expect any overnight results. In fact we have now set up a fifteen-year schedule to include continued study, renewed appraisals in future "workshop" sessions, and the enlistment of others who are interested in joining in the exploration of one of the most fruitful fields of contemporary research. Through the pages of *The Bible Translator* we shall from time to time try to keep our readers and co-workers informed of progress, and at the same time we would deeply appreciate comments from those on the field, for only in this way can we hope to focus our attention on the most relevant areas of mutual concern.

E. A. N.

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## 'I Know' Equals 'I Can'

In French there is an interesting use of 'to know' (*savoir*) in the sense of 'to be able'. (*Connaitre* is used primarily of persons.) *Savez-vous nager?* = 'Know you to swim?' = 'Can you swim?' There are examples of this usage in the Greek New Testament, some of which have been overlooked. Moreover, one is surprised that neither Abbott-Smith (*A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*) nor Souter

(*A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*) deals adequately with it; they both allow that *oida* may mean 'I know how', but are silent as to *ginôskô*.

Matt. 16:3. 'Ye know (*ginôskete*) to judge the face of the sky'. The AV here has "ye can discern," while the RV gives "ye know how..." That the AV is preferable is shown by the fact that in the very next sentence, in contrast, Jesus asks, "Can ye (*dunasthe*) not...?"

Luke 12:56. We take this next because it is the parallel of the Matthew passage. But the striking thing here is that *oidate* is used (which incidentally is another example of the dangers of unduly distinguishing between words of similar import—see *The Bible Translator* Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 47-48). AV has "ye can"; RV, again, "ye know how."

Matt. 27:65. 'Make secure as ye know' (*oidate*), said Pilate to the Jewish authorities. AV and RV have "as sure as ye can."

Acts 21:37. *Hellênisti ginôskeis* is elliptical; evidently "to speak" must be supplied. So AV has "Canst thou speak Greek?" The RV gives "Dost thou know Greek?" but this fails to take care of the form *Hellênisti*.

1 Thes. 4:4. Both versions here give "know how" for *eidenai*. We submit that the idea here is of ability: 'that each one of you should be able to possess his own vessel...'. What would be the value of knowing how to do this apart from being able to do it?

1 Tim. 3:5. Surely the meaning here is 'If a man cannot rule his own household...?'

James 4:17. 'To one knowing (*eidoti*) to do good'. Again, surely here it is a matter of being able to do good and yet not doing it. Simply 'to know to do good' is not very illuminative.

2 Peter 2:9. In this passage also it seems to be a question of God's ability; He 'guarded' Noah and 'rescued' Lot, which shows that He is able to rescue pious souls out of trial, not merely that He 'knows how' (*oiden*) to do so, but that He 'can'.

Alfred Marshall

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## How Do the Speakers Do It?

In developing new terms or new forms of expression necessary for translating the Bible into languages which have not had long contact with the concepts and culture of the Bible, the translator should watch very carefully for what the people do. One translator invented the expression 'king's country belonging to God' for 'Kingdom of God'. The preachers and Bible School students, however, although they had been repeatedly taught this new expression, never used it. They talked of 'God's town'. The translator insisted that this was not an adequate translation, but he missed the main point: that his own invention was completely unacceptable to the speakers of the language. If he wanted something better than 'God's town', he would have to search for it. His own proposal had been voted down. It did not fit the productive grammatical patterns of the language.