

THAILAND TRANSLATOR'S CONFERENCE

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The third Thailand translators' conference was conducted March 6-11, 1961, at the McGilvray Theological Seminary, Chiangmai, Thailand, under the auspices of the American Bible Society. Assembled at the sessions were more than twenty persons either presently engaged in translating the Scriptures or interested in such work, in Thailand and Laos.

Under the leadership of Dr. William A. Smalley, Associate Secretary for Translations of the American Bible Society, the conference continued along the themes of the previous gatherings (see *TBT*, Oct. 1958, p. 183) in providing help in solving problems of linguistic analysis and translation as well as further exploration of problems and processes in communicating God's message through translating the Scriptures. All sessions were held on an informal basis in order to afford those present opportunity to question or comment on any point, thus contributing to the value of the conference. The daily study of problems in White Miao (Meo) syntax and translation of the Gospel of John gave continuity to the conference, and stimulated those working in other language groups to use the methods so demonstrated in solving problems in their languages.

After a short devotional period the morning sessions were devoted to an hour of various topics, followed by an hour checking the Miao translation of the Gospel of John with the Miao informants and missionaries. For three of these morning hours Rev. Herbert Grether reported on problems and aspects of the Thai Bible revision which may have some bearing on tribal translations. Dr. Smalley gave lectures on the communication of the Biblical message to those we seek to reach, translation procedures and helps, and the relation of semantic classes to the translation of the Scriptures.

The afternoon sessions were spent in examining Miao syntax, and checking problems which other language groups are having in translating the Bible.

Evening discussions were well attended and covered a wide range of subjects. One evening was spent in discussing each of the following subjects: the Northern Thai language, American Bible Society policies in relation to printing translations, problems in changing tribal orthographies from romanized script to Thai script, and cultural problems encountered in the proclamation of the Christian message and the guidance of young tribal churches.

As the conference closed we all felt a greater understanding of some of the problems and solutions in translating the Scriptures, a greater insight into each other's joys and problems, and a more fervent desire to make God's message of love and redemption meaningful to each speaker of the languages in which we work.