

making, we still find that there are places where the translators or editors did not apply it as carefully as they should have.

The problem comes in passages where the text refers both to the idea of payment and to the idea of weighing. In Genesis 23.16, the RSV tells us that "Abraham weighed out for Ephron...four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weights current among the merchants." Now of course it might be argued that when four hundred are in question it is easier to weigh than to count, but it seems unlikely that this was really the position of the GNB translators. The GNB says that "Abraham...weighed out...four hundred pieces of silver, according to the standard weights used by the merchants." When we consider that it is most unlikely that four hundred separate pieces are really intended by the Hebrew, and that the reader is likely to wonder why Abraham had to weigh the 400 pieces, it seems clear that the context here calls for an actual weight—perhaps four and a half kilograms.

The case is perhaps even clearer in Jeremiah 32.9, where Jeremiah weighs out seventeen shekels of silver to pay for his cousin's field. Here the GNB tells us that Jeremiah "weighed out the money to him; the price came to seventeen pieces of silver." This seems to imply that only after doing the weighing did Jeremiah discover that it took 17 separate pieces to reach the correct weight. But this is hardly the point the Hebrew is trying to make. The Hebrew means that the agreed price was silver weighing a total of seventeen shekels. Again, it would be better here to omit the reference to "pieces" and simply say "the price came to 195 grams of silver" (or whatever modern equivalent the translator feels is correct).

It may be useful to point out problems like this, so that other translators do not follow the GNB and fall into the same trap. But it is even more important to recognize that even when a decision has been made as to how a particular concept or term is to be handled in a translation, every passage must still be checked individually, to make sure that the agreed translation really does fit.

NORM MUNDHENK

Write in good royal style

In your Good News Bible read 2 Kings 18.13-37. In this section, King Hezekiah is referred to as: King Hezekiah, Hezekiah, and the king. This may be good royal style in the English language, but in the Bokyi language of Nigeria that I am familiar with it is not good style at all. What about your language?

In Bokyì a king (*otu*) is always referred to by either his title and his name (*otu* Agbo) or only his title (*otu*). But no one would ever just call him Agbo.

What is good royal style in your language? This may seem to be a small problem when you translate in the New Testament, but it becomes a very big problem when you start translating in the Old Testament. Be careful that you do not fall into the trap of following the style of English or Hebrew or Greek. In order to always follow good style, use your concordance to check all references to kings in your translation.

A second problem in royal style in Bokyì may also alert you to problems in your language. In your Good News Bible read 2 Kings 18.1-2. In Bokyì the first time the name Hezekiah is mentioned in this context, he should not be referred to as King Hezekiah because he has not yet been crowned king. What is good royal style in your language?

This problem is, of course, very common whenever a new king is crowned in the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah (1 Kings 12-22; 2 Kings 8-25; 2 Chronicles 10-36). But also be careful in 1 Chronicles 11.1-3 and 2 Samuel 2.1-5 where David becomes king.

There is a third question that you should consider for good royal style. In your language, should the title "king" be capitalized? Perhaps it should be capitalized in some contexts and not in others.

What is good royal style in your language? Remember that kings also will read your translation.

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FOCUS ON TRANSLATORS

The New Testament for children

(The following article about an experimental project in Indonesia has been written for us by Daniel C. Arichea Jr., a UBS Translation Consultant working in that country.)

During the early years of the 1980s the Indonesian Bible Society planned the preparation of a New Testament for children, to be printed and distributed in 1984, which was designated by the Indonesian Bible Society as the Year of the Child. The responsibility for selecting and translating the passages was given to the Translation Department of the Indonesian Bible Society.