

information as being the primary object when it comes to the literature of the Scriptures.

It is not that content is unimportant and need not be accurately expressed in a translation. My point is simply that content is not all that there is to so many biblical texts. Ezekiel's vision illustrates that emotive feeling, aesthetic beauty, and rhetorical impact are so very much a part of the original message. This is what sensitive translators must empathize with as they strive to re-create the text in a new language, cultural setting, and oral-literary tradition.

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TRANSLATOR TRAINING: A European Perspective

The author is a translation consultant with the Italian Bible Society residing in Rome.

The following paper looks at the training situation from the point of view of one consultant. He notes what has been the situation found in many projects in the past, as well as in more recently completed and ongoing work.

Firstly, the main features of three different situations are indicated along with some notes that are considered necessary or useful to integrate the information. The second part of the report shares "Hopes, plans, and suggestions" for the future.

Basic training

In the past this has usually been done in a short period before the translation was begun as well as during the first meetings of the project.

Often the training period has coincided partly with the seminar held over several days following which the translators are chosen from a larger group of candidates, and partly during the initial stages of the translation. More recently we have established that the training period and the translation period are clearly separated. Of course, it remains true that some exercises given during the training period can anticipate the translation, while the first stages of the translation period also continue that training. This process provides a better introduction to the project.

Length of the training period

In the past it was customary to give only a few days' full-time training to potential translators attending the translation seminar. More recently, over the first year of a project, 6 months to one year of training was given, usually of 20 hours per week. One of the practical difficulties has been that many of those who were potential translators were already heavily involved in other work and so could not devote a large amount of time to the project. All things being equal, the move has been to choose translators more on the basis of the time they can make available for the work. This has meant that they should be able to give at least half their time to the project.

Location of the training program

It has been general practice in the past to carry on the training in a location close to the translators' city of residence because of the time factor that prevented them from being away for months at a time for training courses. By choosing translators who can make more time available for the training and the translation task, it has enabled us to hold the training in a more central location, even in a foreign location.

In some cases we have made use of training offered at the Free University in Amsterdam. Training in Greek language and in the software used for translation has also been possible away from the translators' home city.

Number of persons attending the training

The training sessions have involved from three to sixteen potential translators plus one or two coordinators. The actual number depended on whether there were two or more teams working in parallel on the project. The number of attendees varies with the availability of translators with sufficient time to devote to the work. The number is also influenced by the presence of dialect and other regional differences as these may require that the number being trained is increased to ensure these issues are handled properly.

Age of persons attending the training

In many cases a minority of the translators was under 40, with very few of them under 30. The advantage of having younger translators is that they usually more rapidly acquire new skills and often create a more relaxed and friendly atmosphere within the translator group. Occasionally, however, the differences in ages can be a challenge and so the role of the coordinator is specially demanding.

Number of training meetings

In some past cases there has been just one training session that may also double as the meeting to select the translators. The more common pattern, however, is to hold a training session over several days. This may then be extended over the first year of a project, though we have to admit that often there is insufficient training before the project begins. However, on-the-job training carries on throughout the life of the project.

Basic training (its basic content)

In all cases there is an introduction to the theory and practice of (biblical) translating. Some projects may also involve the study of Greek but as the translators are usually university lecturers or pastors, often they already know the biblical languages and they already have some familiarity with other existing translations of the Bible. There are, however, occasions when the young translators have only a modest understanding of biblical languages, and even of the Bible itself. This can happen in those language groups where there are very few or even no Christians. The situation therefore is very varied and so the amount of training varies with the project.

Training materials

For most projects the standard books used for training are: *The Theory and Practice of Translation, From One Language to Another*, and *Bible Translation: Frames of Reference*.

During the training, translators are introduced to the various helps that are available as well as to the range of exegetical and other tools that are suitable for use in the project.

Pre-requisites for translators**Education level**

Given the relatively high level of education throughout Europe, a bachelor's degree is to be assumed for all translators. Almost without exception that degree is in theology/divinity, though occasionally a translator is chosen whose major has been in English or History. At least some understanding of NT Greek is required, together with English and one other modern European language.

Residence

For a number of projects it has been important that translators live in or near the city in which the translation meetings are held, for ease of access. This cannot always apply.

Computer

Although it is not yet a universal requirement, having a computer (usually a laptop for ease of transportation) and being familiar with the latest in translation software, is a basic necessity.

Does training include theological training, and biblical languages?

Most projects can assume theological training and competence in at least one of the biblical languages. Where there are cases in which potential translators have not had any previous theological training at an academic level nor knew any biblical Greek, they are required to undergo special training. This involves studying basic NT Greek by making use of an appropriate program selected for them by the Consultant, and improving their biblical understanding by some private guided reading.

Involvement of other responsible persons?—computer training, publishing etc?

Increasingly, resource persons in both the computer and publishing areas are being involved in the training of translators. As the tools available to translators become more sophisticated, it is increasingly important that translators are given adequate training in their use.

Training done co-operatively with other organizations?

Depending on the specific situation of each project, it may be possible to carry out a training program with assistance and involvement of other organizations, but this is not always possible.

Specific to one language or family of languages?

Many language groups have a sufficiently large population that training is confined to one language community. Where there is a range of dialect differences in a language, it is common for someone with linguistic competence to treat this issue when translators are being given their initial training. It is important for translators to be aware of these regional differences and take them into consideration when doing the translation so that the final text can be read and understood by the majority of speakers of that language.

Including reviewers, exegetes, church leaders?

It has not been customary for reviewers and church leaders to participate in the translator training. However, they are consulted and informed about the nature of the translation proposed. They are kept up-to-date with progress of the project.

Is there a nominated person responsible for training or does each Bible Society translation officer do his/her own thing?

For the most part, each TO does his or her own training of the translators. Apart from Computer Assisted Publishing and some specialist help, the TO carries the whole responsibility for training, both initially and ongoing. There are cases in which another TO might be invited to assist in a training session, and even to share the entire training program.

Monitoring the training period

Where there has been only an initial training session, the TO has been responsible for ensuring that the training curriculum has been followed. Where formal training has been on a continuing basis, whether done by the TO or by another, the TO needs to monitor the progress. With the advent of email communication, TOs are developing forms for sharing information about training and its progress. This is enabling the TO to ensure that each translator receives the kind and level of training that is required for the successful completion of the project.

Hopes, plans, and suggestions

In the light of my experience(s) I would suggest that every translation project be preceded by a period of training which preferably has the following features:

- Number of participants (the translators + a team coordinator): minimum 3+1; maximum 6+1.
- Length of the training period: 4 to 6 months.
- Place: at the Bible Society office itself, in the same room where the team will meet during the translation period. (This would obviously apply only to those projects where there is a Bible Society office. In other cases I would recommend that training be held in the same place as the team will regularly work.)
- The person responsible for training: it would seem best if the same TO who will be consultant to the project also conduct the training.

- Age of the trainees: 23-40 years.
- Content: the trainer should have a written training syllabus available; at the beginning it should be explained carefully to the trainees so that they know what is to be covered. The written material is also for their further and future reference.
- Tools: the trainer should prepare a written list of all necessary tools such as a computer, and helps such as a range of dictionaries, translation theory and linguistic materials, and exegetical tools, including the series of UBS Handbooks.
- The team coordinator:
 - his/her age should be close to that of the translators;
 - he/she needs to be particularly good in human relationships within a team;
 - he/she should be able to organize and chair a weekly meeting with the team;
 - English language skill is necessary;
 - as to the monitoring of the team, he/she is specifically trained by the training officer. The team coordinator must be reliable in the performance of their duties.
- The monitoring by the TO will be conducted face to face (in some sessions of the meetings between the TC and the team) as well as by email (exchanging messages that contain a scheme pre-established by the TC and sending it, filled, as a weekly report).

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TRAINING PROGRAM FOR TRANSLATORS IN LATIN AMERICA

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The translation program for Bible translators in the Latin American region is an exciting endeavor. It is a multifaceted program that features matters of culture, exegesis, communication, diverse religious backgrounds, different levels of academic training, and last but not least, a tremendous desire to learn so as to communicate the message of the biblical text in the best way possible.

History

During the year 2000, at the request of Dr Bill Mitchell, I began to pursue translator training alternatives that might be implemented in the Latin American region. I had already been Academic Dean of two theological seminaries in the previous 20 years. During 2001, I did extensive research on available training programs that existed in other parts of the world. Subsequently I began a dialogue with the leaders of the Universidad Bíblica