

## **Payton, Bible Translation, Session 4, Resources from Notebooklm**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Payton, Bible Translation, Session 4, Steps in Translation, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

2. **Dr. George Payton's lecture** on Bible translation outlines the meticulous process involved. **Four key qualities** of good translation are emphasized: accuracy, natural language, clarity, and accessibility. The process includes **internal team work** involving drafting, accuracy checks, and revisions, followed by **external feedback** from community testing and consultant review. **Back translation** is used to ensure accuracy when working with multiple languages. Finally, the text highlights the use of **front translation**, a simplified version used to aid the translation process, particularly for novice translators.

**2. 16-minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Payton, Session 4, Steps in Translation – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introductory Series → Bible Translation).**

### 3. Bible Translation: Session 4, Steps in Translation

#### Bible Translation Study Guide: Steps in Translation

##### Short Answer Quiz

1. What are the four qualities of a good translation, according to Dr. Payton?
2. Why is it important to be careful about choosing words that have different connotations in the target language? Use the Swahili words "hadithi" and "habari" as an example.
3. What is the first step in the translation process after having an understanding of the source text?
4. What is the purpose of comparing the draft translation with a literal translation or the original language text?
5. What is the purpose of swapping draft translations between team members during the translation process?
6. Why is it important to do community testing during the translation process?
7. What is the purpose of a back translation?
8. What is the purpose of getting feedback from church leaders (reviewers) during the translation process, particularly if there's a Christian community?
9. What is the difference in the role of the consultant and the translator?
10. What are some of the things to consider when creating a front translation?

##### Answer Key

1. The four qualities of a good translation are that it must be accurate, with nothing added or removed that shouldn't be, and nothing changed; it uses normal, natural language; it's clearly understood; and it is accessible to the reader.
2. It is important to choose words carefully because they can carry different connotations in the target language, as in Swahili, where "hadithi" implies fiction, while "habari" implies news, impacting the perceived truthfulness of the biblical text.
3. The first step after interpreting the text is to produce a first draft, which is the first attempt at expressing the interpreted meaning in the target language.

4. Comparing the draft with a literal translation ensures accuracy by verifying that nothing has been left out, added, or changed, which could distort the original meaning of the text.
5. Swapping draft translations between team members allows for feedback and revision of different passages, helping to improve the quality and naturalness of the translation as well as catch errors.
6. Community testing is crucial to ensure the translation is understandable and natural in the target language. It also helps to identify potential misunderstandings or confusing terms and improve the communication of the text.
7. A back translation is a translation of the translated text back into the source language which allows a consultant who does not know the target language to assess the accuracy of the translation, by comparing it to the original text.
8. Getting feedback from church leaders helps ensure the translation uses familiar vocabulary and phrases used in church, creating a sense of ownership and acceptability of the translation within the community.
9. The consultant's role is to assess the accuracy of the translation, often having knowledge of the original languages and translation experience, whereas the translator's role is to render the meaning of the original text in a new language.
10. When creating a front translation, you should consider simplifying grammar and sentence length, condensing concepts, adding necessary clarifications (like "Jordan River"), and capturing the correct tone.

### **Essay Questions**

1. Explain the importance of accuracy, naturalness, clarity, and acceptability in Bible translation. Discuss how the steps in the translation process, as described by Dr. Payton, contribute to achieving these qualities.
2. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the various participants in the Bible translation process (translators, team members, community testers, consultants, reviewers). How do they collaborate to produce a quality translation?
3. Discuss the importance of community involvement in the Bible translation process. How does community testing and the review process contribute to a successful and acceptable translation?

4. Explain the concept of a front translation, including how and why it is created, and its function in the overall translation process. Give examples of how it might be used, and discuss its benefits.
5. Dr. Payton emphasizes both accuracy and naturalness in the translation process. Why is it important to achieve both, and how does the translation process aim to achieve this balance?

### Glossary of Key Terms

- **Accuracy:** The quality of a translation that ensures it reflects the precise meaning of the original text, without adding, removing, or changing any information that would distort the original message.
- **Natural Language:** The use of vocabulary, grammar, and phrasing that is normal and commonly used by native speakers of the target language, so the translation sounds natural and not stilted or unnatural.
- **Clarity:** The quality of a translation that ensures that it is easy to understand, with no ambiguous or confusing wording that could lead to misinterpretation.
- **Acceptability:** The extent to which a translation is received and embraced by the target audience, reflecting their cultural, linguistic, and religious preferences.
- **First Draft:** The initial attempt to express the meaning of the source text in the target language. This is a starting point, that will then be revised through the steps in the process.
- **Literal Translation:** A translation that aims to be as close as possible to the original text in terms of word order and grammar, which can help with accuracy checks.
- **Front Translation:** A simplified translation of the text in an intermediary language that is intended to be easily translated into a new language by the translators.
- **Intralingual Translation:** A translation that uses the same language, often done to simplify a complex text, like a text from the Bible, into a form that is easier to understand or to translate into a different language.
- **Community Testing:** The process of taking the translated text to members of the target community to get their feedback on clarity, naturalness, and understanding.

- **Back Translation:** Translating the draft text back into the source language to allow the consultant to check accuracy against the original text.
- **Consultant Check:** A phase where an outside expert reviews the translation for accuracy, often having knowledge of the original languages and extensive translation experience.
- **Reviewer's Check:** A final step in the translation process, that occurs before the consultant check or after, where church leaders or community members read the translation and provide feedback on the naturalness of the language.

## 4. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from Dr. George Payton's "Bible Translation, Session 4, Steps in Translation" presentation:

### **Briefing Document: Bible Translation Process**

**Source:** Excerpts from "Payton BT\_EN\_Session04.pdf"

**Presenter:** Dr. George Payton

**Date:** 2024

### **Overview:**

This session provides a comprehensive overview of the Bible translation process, outlining the various steps involved, the checks and balances in place, and the important qualities that define a good translation. Dr. Payton emphasizes the collaborative nature of the work, the crucial role of community input, and the need for both accuracy and natural, understandable language.

### **Key Themes and Ideas:**

#### **1. Qualities of a Good Translation:**

- **Accuracy:** "Accurate, and nothing added... there's no new information."
- "There's nothing removed that should be there."
- "Nothing has changed."
- This means the translation must faithfully represent the original meaning, avoiding additions, omissions, or alterations.
- **Natural Language:** The translation must use normal, natural language that sounds clean and good in the target language.
- "It's beautiful, and the word in Swahili, safi means clean, but you can say this is a safi translation. It's clean. It sounds nice."
- **Clear Understanding:** The translation must be easily understood by the intended audience.
- "Clearly understood, and that's a very important aspect, because if we didn't communicate to where somebody understands, then have we done our job?"

- **Accessibility:** The translation should be accessible to the reader, considering cultural and contextual nuances. The example of "hadithi" (fiction) vs. "habari" (news) in Swahili highlights the importance of choosing words that convey the correct meaning and seriousness.
- "...if you say this is the hadithi about Jesus, it's something that didn't really happen."
- "So, the word habari means news. So, you read the habari in the newspaper, you see the habari on TV, or you hear it on the radio..."

#### 1. Steps in the Translation Process:

- **Interpretation:** The initial step involves understanding the meaning and intention of the original text, often done collaboratively within the translation team.
- **First Draft:** The first attempt to express the interpreted meaning in the target language. Sometimes, a front translation (a simplified version of the text in a known language, like Swahili, can be used as a foundation).
- "a front translation is a simplified, or it's a translated text that's a basis for translating into the mother tongue."
- **Accuracy Check 1:** Comparing the first draft against a literal translation (e.g., ESV or NASB) or the original Greek or Hebrew to ensure no information is added, removed, or changed.
- "Did we leave anything out? Did we add anything that shouldn't be there? Or did we change any information that would make it not accurate?"
- **Revision 1 & Team Feedback:** Team members review each other's work, suggesting wording improvements for naturalness and clarity. This is iterative and goes through multiple drafts.
- "They go through all the different passages... You swap the work, yours with theirs, and theirs with yours."
- **Accuracy Check 2:** Another check for accuracy after the first revision to catch any unintentional changes.
- **Community Testing:** Testing the translation with members of the target community (young, old, male, female, etc.) to gauge naturalness and understandability.

- "First of all, can you tell us what this means in your own words?"
- **Revision 2:** The translation team makes changes based on feedback from community testing, making sure clarity is achieved and accuracy is preserved.
- **Accuracy Check 3:** This is done after any major changes.
- **Consultant Check:** An outside consultant (usually with knowledge of Greek and Hebrew) reviews the translation for accuracy using back translations to check if there are any issues with translation.
- "a consultant's main function is to help people make sure that the text is accurate."
- "So, a back translation means back into the language that they started with."
- **Reviewer's Check (Church Leaders):** Church leaders or other respected individuals in the community review the translation, providing feedback on naturalness and appropriateness for use in church settings. This can occur before or after the consultant check.
- "And you get maybe 10, 20 pastors, church elders, other people respected in the community, and you sit down together with them, and you read over the translation..."
- "And in taking their feedback, that then makes them feel like they have a stake in this translation, that they have helped with this translation, and that becomes not the translation team's translation, but our translation."
- **Final Corrections & Proofreading:** Final edits are made, and the translation is proofread for consistency and accuracy.
- **Publication:** The translated text is designed, finalized, and published.

#### 1. **Front Translation:**

- A front translation is an intralingual (within the same language family) translation designed to be easily translated into another language.
- It helps translators in languages with less developed writing systems.
- It involves simplifying grammar, shortening sentences, clarifying concepts, and establishing the appropriate tone.



- "producing a front translation, you would break up the sentences and you would make them a reasonable length..."
- "...we're translating the tone of Paul's message in addition to the content of Paul's message"

#### **1. The Role of the Consultant:**

- The consultant is a senior editor and a resource for the translation team.
- "the consultant is usually a senior editor, or they function like a senior editor, and they help the team to produce a good draft"
- They help the team understand the original text better, communicate more effectively in their target language, and apply appropriate translation principles.
- "the consultant is there to help the team to a, understand better, b, communicate well in their language, and c, apply the appropriate translation principles where needed"
- They provide advice based on their experience and knowledge, including solutions from other language translations.
- "So, this is what people look to the consultant for, is this advice on how to make a final edit that's really accurate"
- They are not simply an English teacher; they work collaboratively with the team to achieve a good text.

#### **1. Importance of Community Buy-In:**

- Community testing and reviewer feedback are essential for ensuring the translation is natural, understandable, and acceptable.
- Involving community members and church leaders gives them a sense of ownership, transforming the translation from "the translation team's" to "our" translation.
- "And in taking their feedback, that then makes them feel like they have a stake in this translation... this is our translation. This is our language. This is for our church people."

**Key Takeaways:**

- Bible translation is a rigorous, multi-stage process involving interpretation, drafting, revision, and community feedback.
- Accuracy, natural language, clarity, and community buy-in are paramount for producing a quality translation.
- Front translations can be helpful in languages with less developed systems to help translators in producing a draft that is easier to understand.
- Consultants play a vital role in ensuring accuracy and providing expert guidance to translation teams.
- The process is collaborative, iterative, and sensitive to the nuances of both the original text and the target language and culture.

This document provides a concise summary of Dr. Payton's presentation. It highlights the importance of each step in the process and the qualities that need to be considered when completing Bible translations.

## 5. FAQs on Payton, Bible Translation, Session 4, Steps in Translation, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### FAQ: Bible Translation Process

1. **What are the key qualities of a good Bible translation?**
2. A good Bible translation is characterized by four essential qualities: accuracy, naturalness, clarity, and acceptability. Accuracy requires that nothing is added, removed, or changed from the original text; implied information can be added for clarity but should not alter the meaning. Naturalness refers to using everyday language that sounds smooth and easy to understand. Clarity means the translation is understandable and avoids ambiguity. Acceptability ensures the translation resonates with its intended audience, often determined through community and reviewer feedback.
3. **What are the initial steps involved in translating the Bible?**
4. The initial step is to thoroughly interpret the text and internalize its meaning. This often involves a translation team discussing the text's intent and producing a first draft, which is the initial attempt to express the text in the target language. Sometimes, a translation in a related language serves as the basis for this draft. This is followed by an accuracy check comparing the draft with a literal translation. Then, the draft is revised based on internal team member feedback.
5. **How is the accuracy of a Bible translation ensured throughout the process?**
6. Accuracy is checked at multiple stages. Initially, the first draft is compared with a literal translation (such as ESV or NASB) to ensure nothing has been added, removed, or changed. After each revision, another accuracy check is performed to verify that no unintended changes occurred. Consultants and other experts also participate in the process and do a final accuracy check in the final feedback stage. The consultant often uses a back translation to ensure that the meaning is accurate.
7. **What is 'community testing' and why is it important in Bible translation?**
8. Community testing involves sharing the translation with individuals or small groups from the target community. The translators read the text aloud and ask people to explain what it means in their own words. This helps identify if the text is understandable, sounds natural, and if any concepts are being misinterpreted.

Feedback from diverse community members is crucial for ensuring the final translation will be accepted and clearly understood.

**9. What is the role of a translation consultant in the process?**

10. A translation consultant is usually a senior editor who is typically very knowledgeable and often knows the original languages of the Bible (Greek and Hebrew). The consultant is an outsider who reviews the team's work, focusing on accuracy and the overall quality of the text. The consultant is there to help the team understand better, communicate better in the language, and apply appropriate translation principles. They help guide the team in addressing complex issues in translation and drawing from their own experience with other similar languages.

**11. What is a 'back translation' and why is it used in Bible translation?**

A back translation is a translation of the newly translated text back into the language the translation was based on, like Swahili. For example, if a team in Tanzania is translating the Swahili Bible into Malila, they would translate their Malila translation back into Swahili. This helps consultants who don't know the target language understand the translated meaning and assess its accuracy. Back translations act as a tool to make sure that the consultant understands the text accurately. **7. What is a 'front translation' and when is it used?**

A front translation is a simplified, intralingual version of the biblical text (for example, Simplified English from English, or simplified Swahili from Swahili) designed to be easier to translate into a new language. It helps new translators who may find the original text complex to navigate. It can break down long sentences, simplify grammar, condense concepts, and add clarifying information. It is also a way to get something on paper so the team can work with a model and not face a daunting blank page.

**12. How does the translation process ensure the text is not just accurate, but also culturally appropriate and acceptable to the target audience?**

13. The process ensures cultural appropriateness and acceptability through community testing and reviewer checks with church leaders or other respected community members. This includes assessing the naturalness of the language, the appropriateness of vocabulary, and the overall tone. It's important to gain community buy-in to ensure that the translation becomes a resource that belongs to and is embraced by the community rather than feeling like an external imposition. Acceptability is one of the 3 main qualities of a good translation.