

## **Payton, Bible Translation, Session 5, Roles in Translation**

### **Resources from Notebooklm**

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

#### **1. Abstract of Payton, Bible Translation, Session 5, Roles in Translation, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

This lecture by Dr. George Payton discusses the various roles involved in Bible translation, focusing on the distinctions between translators, translation advisors (or facilitators), and translation consultants. He details the specific skills and responsibilities of each role, highlighting the importance of cultural competence and effective training for advisors. The lecture also compares and contrasts the advisor's focus on people and skill development with the consultant's product-oriented approach. Finally, Dr. Payton describes relevant training programs available at Dallas International University, emphasizing the need for specialized training in each area of Bible translation.

#### **2. 24-minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Payton, Session 5, Roles 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 5, Roles in Translation

#### Bible Translation: Roles and Responsibilities

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each:

1. What is the primary role of a translator in the context of Bible translation, as defined by Dr. Payton?
2. According to the lecture, what are some non-translation skills that a translator needs to possess?
3. What is the main difference between a Translation Advisor and a Translation Consultant?
4. Why does Dr. Payton not prefer the term "Exegetical Advisor" for a Translation Advisor?
5. What are some of the key linguistic skills that a Translation Advisor should have?
6. What is the difference between cultural awareness and cultural competence, as discussed in the lecture?
7. In what ways does an advisor train a translation team?
8. What are some of the cons of having a translation advisor also serve as a supervisor for the team?
9. How often does a translation consultant typically visit a translation team?
10. What is the key difference in focus between a translation advisor and a consultant?

#### Answer Key

1. The primary role of a translator is to be a native speaker of the local language into which the Bible is being translated. They are the ones who actually render the text into their language, using their knowledge of language and culture to communicate the message effectively.
2. Translators need non-translation skills like computer skills, including general computer use, specific software (e.g., word processing), email software, and a broader understanding of the language of wider communication, and study skills.

3. A Translation Advisor is primarily people-oriented, focusing on training and building up the skills of the translation team, whereas a Translation Consultant is product-oriented, focusing on the accuracy and final quality of the translation.
4. Dr. Payton doesn't prefer the term "Exegetical Advisor" because it implies that their role is limited to exegesis, while in reality, they help with many other aspects of the translation process, including training, linguistic guidance, and project management.
5. A Translation Advisor should have linguistic skills that include understanding grammar, being able to understand linguistic reports, knowing how to communicate, and being able to recognize language patterns like subject-object-verb order, and understanding the principles of transfer and translation styles.
6. Cultural awareness is simply knowing about the customs and practices of a culture, whereas cultural competence means engaging with and respecting those customs, actively adopting them in order to show appreciation for the culture.
7. Advisors train the team in areas like computer skills, linguistic understanding, orthography, translation principles, and accessing biblical resources and by helping them practice the process of exegesis and interpretation, assisting in drafting and revisions, and creating back translations.
8. The cons of having an advisor also serve as a supervisor include less time for advising, a hierarchical structure that can inhibit relationships with the team, and can create the perception that the translation process is controlled by outsiders, making it difficult for the local community to embrace ownership.
9. A translation consultant typically visits a translation team roughly twice a year. These visits are primarily focused on checking the progress of translation, editing, and advancing the translation of large portions of scripture.
10. A translation advisor focuses more on people and the training of the translation team, seeking to build their skills in various areas. A consultant has a focus on the product of translation itself with an emphasis on checking the accuracy of the final translation.

### **Essay Questions**

1. Discuss the importance of training and cultural competence for a translation advisor, using examples from the lecture. How do these qualities contribute to the overall success of a translation project?

2. Compare and contrast the roles of the translator, translation advisor, and translation consultant, highlighting their distinct responsibilities and areas of expertise, explaining how their roles overlap to ensure an effective translation.
3. Examine the challenges and benefits of having the translation advisor also function as a supervisor, considering both the impact on the translation team and the progress of the project.
4. Analyze the complexities of distance consulting and the importance of in-person interaction. Describe the challenges and how relationships with translation teams can be established from afar, or if they even should be.
5. Explore the long-term impact of culturally sensitive and accurate Bible translations in communities, and how does proper training and cultural understanding by the translators and other roles help with a lasting impact?

## Glossary

- **Back Translation:** A literal translation of a translated text back into the original source language, done to check the accuracy of the translation.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Knowing about the customs, traditions, and practices of another culture.
- **Cultural Competence:** The ability to effectively interact with people from different cultures, adopting a culture's norms and values, and respecting their viewpoints.
- **Exegesis:** The critical interpretation and explanation of a text, especially of scripture.
- **Form-based Translation:** A translation philosophy that focuses on maintaining the original language's word order and structures in the translated text.
- **Hermeneutics:** The theory and methodology of interpretation, especially the interpretation of biblical texts.
- **Language of Wider Communication:** A language used for communication between different groups of people who speak different languages within a country or region, like Swahili in East Africa.
- **Mother Tongue Speaker:** A person who has spoken a language from early childhood.

- **Orthography:** The study of spelling and writing systems of a language; the way words are spelled within an alphabet.
- **Paternalistic:** The practice of treating people in a way that suggests that you know what is best for them, often implying a lack of respect for their autonomy and knowledge.
- **Receptor Language:** The language into which a text is being translated, also called the target language.
- **Skolpos:** A Greek word meaning aim or goal.
- **SOV Language:** A language in which the typical word order is subject-object-verb.
- **Target Audience:** The specific group of people for whom a translation is intended.
- **Translation Advisor (Facilitator/Specialist):** A person who supports and trains the translation team, providing guidance on language, translation principles, and cultural issues, sometimes called an "Exegetical Advisor."
- **Translation Consultant:** A person who checks the accuracy of a translation and provides feedback to the translation team, with expertise in translation and biblical languages, who is more concerned with product than process.
- **Translator:** A native speaker of the local language who is responsible for translating the text into that language.

## 4. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Payton BT\_EN\_Session05.pdf":

### Briefing Document: Roles in Bible Translation

#### Introduction:

This document summarizes Dr. George Payton's lecture on the various roles involved in Bible translation, specifically focusing on the distinctions between translators, translation advisors (also called facilitators), and translation consultants. The lecture emphasizes the importance of clarity in understanding these roles to facilitate effective and accurate translation.

#### Key Themes & Ideas:

##### 1. The Three Primary Roles in Bible Translation:

- **Translator:** Typically a native speaker of the target language (the language into which the Bible is being translated). The primary role is to render the source text into their language. Payton emphasizes, "if they're the speakers, they are the translators, and I am not." This clarifies that those who are native speakers of the target language are the true translators, not the field linguist or others helping in the process.
- **Translation Advisor (Facilitator/Specialist/Exegetical Advisor):** This role involves training and supporting the translators. Advisors are not usually mother-tongue speakers but have linguistic, translation, and cultural expertise. Payton notes that the term "Exegetical Advisor" is limiting because advisors often do much more than just exegesis. They may be involved in managing the project and supporting the language development program.
- **Translation Consultant:** This role is primarily focused on checking the accuracy of the translation and ensuring it meets quality standards. Consultants have extensive experience across different languages and projects. They are "product-oriented" but also mentor translators and advisors. They often visit teams a few times a year, while the advisor may be present all the time or more frequently.

##### 1. Translator Responsibilities:

- **Non-Translation Skills:** Computer proficiency, use of translation software, skills in the language of wider communication, and study skills.

- **Translation Duties:** Understanding the passage, interpretation, utilizing Bible resources, using translation software, drafting, applying translation principles, teamwork, giving and receiving feedback, accuracy checks, and proofreading.
- The process includes multiple attempts and improvements: "Ability to look at your own work and think, okay, I can improve this. This is my first try, but I think I can do better."
- Emphasis is placed on collaboration and feedback: "this thing of working with others on a team, giving feedback to each other is a part of the process that translators should be able to do."

#### 1. **Translation Advisor (Facilitator) Responsibilities & Skills:**

- **Linguistic Skills:** Understanding grammar and linguistic concepts.
- **Translation Skills:** Comprehending how meaning is transferred and different translation styles, and applying translation principles to difficult passages.
- **Project Understanding:** Understanding the goals and target audience of the project.
- **Bible Skills:** Knowledge of biblical background, exegesis, hermeneutics, and ideally, at least one biblical language (Greek for NT, Hebrew for OT).
- **Cultural Competence:** Moving beyond cultural awareness to actively participating in and appreciating the target culture. "Cultural competence means you lean into their culture and you do things their way because that way you're showing you appreciate their culture and you want to function in that society in an appropriate way."
- **Training Skills:** Understanding adult learning principles and focusing on building existing skills. "Adults are there because they want to learn. Adults are there because they want to gain a particular skill."
- **Practical Assistance:** Supporting translators with computer skills, linguistic training, orthography, and accessing biblical resources, especially those in English. "This is the big thing that we do, is the application of translation principles, not just simply knowing about them and which one to use when and why."
- **Drafting and Revision:** Helping with draft production, revisions, and back translation.

- **Review and Recommendation:** Providing an extra layer of review before the text goes to the consultant: "it's a check and balance piece in place where the advisor adds another level of fine-tuning of the text."
- **Understanding of the local worldview** "It's particularly important when we get to the view of the community of the unseen world."
- **Advocacy:** Encouraging community involvement in the project. "Hey, we're working on your translation. Would you like to come help us in this checking session?"

#### 1. **Translation Advisor as Supervisor: Pros and Cons**

- **Pros:** Ensures project continuity, acts as a liaison with the sponsoring organization, understands local context.
- **Cons:** Administration reduces time spent on training and direct support of translators. It can lead to a hierarchical relationship, hindering the partnership with the translation team. Also can be perceived as a paternalistic method of control, hindering local community ownership: "having a translation advisor can be seen as a paternalistic way of maintaining control from the outside. We need to be very careful with that."

#### 1. **Training of Advisors:**

- Historically, training was "learn as you go." Payton notes this is not sufficient for current accelerated translation goals, and there is a lack of formal in-country training programs.
- Pre-field training programs like the one at Dallas International University are vital for equipping advisors and accelerating the whole process.
- "the more training that the advisor gets in how to mentor and how to facilitate before they get into this role, the more quickly they can get up to speed once they get there."

#### 1. **Distinction Between Advisor and Consultant:**

- **Focus:** The advisor is people-oriented, focusing on training and skill development of the translation team. The consultant is product-oriented, focusing on checking the accuracy and quality of the translation. However both do some mentoring. "The advisor focuses more on the training side and the consultant focuses more on the product side."



- **Frequency of Interaction:** Advisors have regular interaction with translators, often living in or near the community. Consultants visit less often, roughly twice a year, for intensive checking and revision. “It’s occasional interaction versus regular.”
- **Location:** Advisors are usually nearby the translation work. Consultants are often in the capital city or even another country and are increasingly working remotely.
- **Training Scope:** Consultants focus on translation-related training, while advisors offer a broader range of support, including computer skills and accessing resources.
- **Language Proficiency:** Consultants may or may not know the national language or the target language, while advisors usually know the national language and are familiar with the target language.
- **Experience Base:** Consultants have a broad range of experience across different languages and projects, while advisors have a deeper knowledge of the specific language they are working with.

#### 1. **Team Dynamics:**

- Translation teams are comprised of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, genders, and skillsets, all working collaboratively.
- The consultant brings their experience, the advisor deep knowledge of their translation language, and the translator the native speaker language knowledge of the target language. “They all work together. The goal is to produce a good translation.”

#### 1. **Job-Specific Training at Dallas International University (DIU):**

- DIU offers specific training programs for different roles in translation, including:
- **Descriptive Linguistics:** Focus on linguistic analysis, dictionary work, and language documentation.
- **Applied Linguistics (AL) with Bible Translation Concentration:** Linguistics training with a focus on translation.
- **AL in Translation Advising:** Focus on both translation and linguistic skills required for advising translation teams.
- Payton emphasizes the difficulty and importance of the role of mother tongue translators and the value of supporting them with well-trained advisors.

### **1. Personal Calling and Role:**

- Individuals should consider their gifts, strengths, and personal preferences when choosing a role in translation. "What do you enjoy the most? What brings you the most satisfaction?"
- Payton emphasizes the importance of aligning one's work with God's calling and their part in God's mission: "What does God want you to do, or what is your part in God's mission to extend his kingdom around the world?"
- Roles may evolve over time.
- The ultimate goal is to run the race that God has called them to, utilizing their God-given gifts.

### **Conclusion:**

Dr. Payton's lecture provides a clear framework for understanding the distinct roles within Bible translation, emphasizing the critical contributions of translators, advisors, and consultants. The lecture underscores the need for specialized training, collaboration, cultural competence, and a focus on both the process and the product to produce meaningful and accurate translations of the Bible.

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

### FAQ on Bible Translation Roles

1. **What are the primary roles involved in the Bible translation process, and how do they differ?** The three primary roles are the translator, the translation advisor (or facilitator), and the translation consultant. The translator is typically a native speaker of the target language into which the Bible is being translated, and they are responsible for the actual act of translating. Translation advisors/facilitators are often not native speakers, and they train and assist translators in various aspects of the translation process, including linguistics, translation principles, and computer skills. The translation consultant, on the other hand, is primarily focused on the accuracy of the translation itself, checking the final product, and providing feedback. While there's some overlap in these roles, the primary focus differentiates them: the translator translates, the advisor facilitates, and the consultant checks.
2. **What specific skills are essential for a translator to be effective in their work?** A translator needs a variety of skills, including strong study, interpretation, and critical thinking abilities. They must be able to understand the source text, use biblical resources effectively, and apply translation principles to their work. They also need computer skills for word processing and using translation software. Additionally, translators need to be able to draft, revise, and self-evaluate their work, as well as give and receive feedback within a team setting. Accuracy in checking for omissions or errors is crucial, along with proofreading for spelling and other writing conventions.
3. **What are the main responsibilities of a translation advisor (or facilitator)?** Translation advisors are responsible for providing training and support to translators in a variety of areas. This includes linguistic training, helping translators understand the grammar of their language and apply translation principles. They also offer training on accessing and using biblical resources, understanding software, computer skills, and assisting with the orthography (alphabet) of a language. Additionally, advisors play a role in helping teams produce drafts, revisions, and accurate back-translations and are responsible for helping the team understand the process of exegesis and interpretation of the text. They are crucial in fostering teamwork and building the capacity of local translators.

4. **How does the role of a translation consultant differ from that of a translation advisor?** While both consultants and advisors work in the Bible translation process, their focus differs. A translation consultant primarily focuses on the *product* – ensuring the accuracy and quality of the final translation. They typically visit teams a couple times per year to check their work, provide guidance on translation related issues and help with editing. While some training may occur during these visits, it is not their main emphasis. Conversely, a translation advisor is more *people-oriented*, focusing on developing the skills and capacity of the translation team. Advisors generally live in the community and interact with the team regularly to help build skills, access resources, and do much of the training that goes into the project.
5. **What is the significance of cultural competence for a translation advisor, and how is it different from cultural awareness?** Cultural competence is crucial for a translation advisor because it goes beyond just knowing about a culture; it requires the advisor to actively embrace and integrate into the local culture, respecting its norms and practices. This is more than cultural awareness, which is merely recognizing different cultural practices. Cultural competence involves actually behaving according to the cultural norms to foster better relationships and ensure the translation is culturally appropriate and well-received, thus showing appreciation for the people they serve.
6. **How should adult learning principles influence the training of translators and translation teams?** Translation advisors should use adult learning principles when training translators. Adults are self-motivated and learn best when they can apply new skills to their work. This means that training should focus on developing skills rather than solely conveying information. Advisors should build upon the translators' existing knowledge and create opportunities for them to actively figure things out, offering guidance instead of just telling them what to do. This approach fosters more independent and capable translators.

7. **What are the potential downsides of a translation advisor also being a supervisor, and how should organizations handle this?** Having a translation advisor act as a supervisor can lead to several drawbacks. First, it can take away time from their primary responsibilities of training and advising, as administrative tasks consume valuable time. Additionally, it can create a hierarchical dynamic that limits the friendship and relationships with the translation team, especially in hierarchical cultures, and it can contribute to a paternalistic approach where the outside advisor appears to have ultimate control. Organizations should consider carefully whether to combine these roles to ensure that the advisor's core duties are not undermined and the project remains community driven.
8. **What kind of training is recommended for individuals aspiring to become translation advisors, and how does this training impact the translation process?** Training for translation advisors should be comprehensive and include linguistic principles, translation methods, project management, and adult training techniques. Pre-field training is crucial as it provides advisors with a framework to facilitate translation projects more effectively. The more preparation an advisor has prior to arriving on site will enable them to begin serving the team with less of a learning curve. This pre-field experience allows advisors and their teams to get up to speed faster, ultimately leading to a better and more quickly completed translation project. In-country training programs, though ideal, are currently limited, so pre-field preparation becomes especially vital.