

Checking a Translation by email

A sample issue from Luke 5:39

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The translation itself is in another document. This is only our notes file. Our translation software uses \v to mark a new verse and \p to mark a new paragraph.

\v 39

\p BEN: This last sentence should say that the old wine is better than the new wine, not only that the old wine is good.

1. Our Luke Chapter 5 notes file had traveled from PNG to me in Florida, to Beth Fuller in Thailand, and then to Ben Pehrson in Wheaton, IL. Ben found an opportunity for improvement* as he was checking over the Arop

\p JN FOR EMIL: Sorry wanam, here's another problem to fix in this chapter. Maybe we can say something like this, but you have to fix my grammar: "Pene niy taako keiyn wain pokon ono, yi lin kolon awpiyl wain awuaw. Yi awes pene wain pokon toko winim wain awuaw."

2. In Florida, I read Ben's note and looked at the Arop translation to verify that we had a problem. I wrote to Emil, calling him "wanam" (brother), offering a suggestion about how we might fix it. I sent the file to him by email as the work day ended in Florida.

\p EMIL for JN: I changed it and the translation reads: 'Ke pene niy aweiyn wain pokon ono awnuiyn, yi lin kolon awpiyl ektek iyn aweiyn wain owuaw ono, kopene yi awes pene, "Wain pokon ono ko winim wain owuaw."

3. A few minutes later, the following work day was just beginning in Papua New Guinea as Emil received the file over a radio email link. He read our comments, adjusted the translation, and reported the change back to me in Florida. The underlined parts show where he added or changed my suggested Arop sentence to make it sound more natural.

4. When we were satisfied the Arop translation was as good as we can make it, Emil gave it to the men from the three related languages to use as a basis for their translations.**

This is just one aspect of one verse. We sometimes have several 'issues' to deal with in each verse, so a whole chapter could have dozens of notes like this. Sometimes the discussion can get long as we all wrestle with what the text means and how we should translate it.

* I guess some people would call these "mistakes."

** How we use this translation as a basis for translations in unrelated languages is another topic for another time.