

Using the Reviewers' Guide—Walkthrough

(Materials: A portion of the RG to use in the exercise, printed scripture in a translation to “review,” and a source text of the same Scripture passage. A set of materials to practice a review in English is available in files.)

Intro: Once a translation team has completed the translation of the New Testament using the eight step translation process, that team has done everything within its ability to make the translation accurate and clear. The time has come for that team to seek the help of others in affirming the quality of the translation. The Reviewers' Guide collects feedback from other mother-tongue believers about the translation. This module will train leaders to use the Reviewers' Guide (RG).

Ask: Why do you think it is important to ask for others to give input on the quality of the translation? (Write their ideas on the board.)

Explain that getting feedback from others is important for several reasons. These two are the most important:

1. Feedback helps improve the quality of the translation.
2. Asking for feedback also gains community support for the translation.

To conduct a review session, the translation team will need to choose a leader and seek other mother-tongue believers willing to help review the translation. There should be at least 2 reviewers, but not more than 4 reviewers, for each session.

Choosing a Leader: It is recommended for the translation team to choose their own team leader or another person on the team to conduct this process.

- The leader for the review sessions should have some biblical background. This will help him or her to adjust questions and to clarify responses from the reviewers.
- The leader should also have a good reputation and demonstrate leadership skills.
- The leader should have a good relationship with the translation team, because he or she will need to share suggested changes with them after the review sessions.
- The leader should have a gateway language Bible open to the passage to assess answers to the questions. Although suggested answers are given in the RG, these are only suggestions. Scripture in the gateway language is necessary for comparison.
- The leader needs to have strong bilingual skills, as the RG will only be available in the gateway language.

A full page of instructions for the leader is included in the RG right after the Table of Contents. It should be given out to each leader.

Choosing Reviewers: The translation team will ask other believers from their church or community to participate in the review. They can ask 2 to 4 mother-tongue believers who will work with them through all the passages, or they can ask different people to be

reviewers for different passages. Ideally, reviewers will speak the gateway language as well as their own language. Reviewers should not have any prior connection to the Bible translation project. They should be Christians in good standing who have a desire to see the Scriptures translated and accessible to the community.

How to Conduct the Review: Once a leader has been selected and at least two reviewers have agreed to participate, they should plan a time to gather for a review session. The leader will need to find a place to meet and prepare these materials:

- A printed copy of the Reviewers' Guide
- Printed, translated Scripture for the leader and the reviewers
- Access to the gateway language Scripture
- Pen and paper

The leader should take the time to look at the translated passage and the Reviewers' Guide questions, to prepare in case any questions need to be adjusted or reworded.

(Use the slides or a printed page of the RG to practice a review of Matthew 3:13–17.)

During the review of a passage, the leader starts by sharing any background information. *(Read the “Background” information on the slide.)*

Then the leader reads the passage aloud in the translated text. The text should be available for each reviewer to follow along as it is read. *(Read Matthew 3:13–17 aloud.)*

Next, the leader asks for a summary of what was read. *(Say to them, “Tell in your own words what you just read in the passage.” Have them summarize the passage.)*

The leader will listen and mark the box by each item in Part 1 that was included in the reviewers' summary. *(Discuss what boxes would be checked after hearing the summary they gave on the passage.)* If points are missing, the boxes for those points will be left blank. The leader may also take notes about what the reviewers said.

Next, Part 2 contains specific questions. Reviewers should answer in their own words. If a specific question was already covered in the summary, the leader may skip it. If a question is answered in an unexpected way, the leader should ask more questions to determine if the text is unclear or confusing—for example, “Can you show me in the text where it says that?” *(Have them answer the first 4 questions. Ask them to answer only from what they see in the passage. Discuss how their answers compare to what the RG shows. Discuss what notes they might write about how the answers were given.)*

Part 2 also has some questions about implied meanings. This kind of question includes words like “Why do you think,” “How do you think,” and “What do you think.” This means the answer is **not** stated explicitly in the text. (Often this is because the Bible uses many word pictures.) Reviewers should think about the whole passage and answer the best they can. These questions are the only ones that may be answered using information from other passages or from what each reviewer knows from being a Christian. A possible answer is given for each of the suggested questions. The reviewers' answers

may vary, and the leader should still note anything unexpected in the answers and should ask additional questions as explained earlier. If the reviewers start to spend more than 5 minutes on any implied meaning question, the leader should make a note and move on to the next question. (*Have them answer question 5. If they immediately answer, "It was God the Father," ask them to explain whether they could understand that from any of the words in the passage.*)

All through the review session, the leader should make notes about any questions, concerns, or possible errors that are uncovered. The leader will keep these notes to share with the translation team.

To review: The leader gives the background information. Then the leader reads the translated passage. The reviewers listen and read along. In Part 1, the leader asks the reviewers to tell back the passage in their own words. The leader marks boxes for the points that were covered. In Part 2, the leader asks specific questions. The reviewers look back at the passage and answer the questions, while the leader makes notes.

The leader should understand the following points. (The first 4 points should be told to the reviewers from the beginning, and repeated later, if necessary.) The other points may come up during the review process, and they can be explained then, if needed.

Review of Key Points:

1. This is a review of the translated text, **not** of the reviewers. No one's knowledge is being tested. (The leader should repeat this point as many times as needed.) The leader should encourage reviewers to give short answers. If they start to discuss other parts of Scripture, the leader should bring them back to the text under review and ask for answers only from the translated text.
2. The reviewers will not be asked to correct or edit anything in the text. They only need to respond to the questions from what is now in the text. If they think something is missing, they may point that out. If unclear passages are found, the leader will make notes and take them back to the translation team for discussion and correction. **Ask: Why do you think the reviewers will not edit the text?** (*Answer: The translation team is responsible to make the decisions on what needs to be changed.*)
3. For each question, a verse is specifically referenced. This is to help the reviewers look back at that section and give the response from the text, not quoting directly but saying the answers in their own words.
4. Reviewers should answer most questions based on what they read (or hear) in the text.
5. Some questions ask for implied information. These are the "What do you think?" or "Why do you think?" questions. Reviewers will answer these questions using their own knowledge and reasoning, because the answer is not explicitly stated in the text.
6. Some verses have simple questions and can be answered quickly. Other questions are more complex, but a leader should try to move to the next question after about 5 minutes of discussion.

7. The guide does not cover every verse of Scripture. Instead, it covers specific passages. A short background summary will sometimes be given to help orient the reviewers before the questions are asked.
8. The passage should be read (or listened to) in its entirety before any questions are asked. If reviewers can read in their language, they should have a copy of the translated scripture so that they can read along.

Ask: Why do you think that not every verse of Scripture is covered? (All of the verses have already been checked. This is a spot check that helps the community get involved and may uncover problems the translation team did not see.)

Exercise Session: Using the Reviewers' Guide

(Preparation: For this exercise, choose a section of the NT Survey RG and print that page. Also print the Scripture passage you will review in the Source Text—one copy per 4 people, and print the Scripture passage in the translation you will be testing—one copy per person.)

Instructions:

1. Break the participants into groups of 3 or 4.
2. Assign one person in each group to the role of “leader.” The others will be “reviewers.”
3. Give each leader the correct section of the NT Survey Reviewers’ Guide for the passages to be reviewed, the source text passage, and the translated passage.
4. Give each “reviewer” in the group a copy of the translated passage.
5. Instruct the groups to follow the same pattern just demonstrated with the large group to conduct a practice review of the translated scripture. Allow about 20 minutes for the groups to practice.
6. After they have finished, discuss their experiences, what they learned, what was difficult, and if they understand the process better.

Ask: How prepared do you feel to explain this process to the leaders who will use it?

Explain: After the review, the leader will schedule a time to meet with the translation team. The leader should go over the notes with the team, and the team will determine what kinds of corrections need to be made. It is best to make sure a typist is also present, with the translation on a laptop. Then the team can go through and make any necessary changes in BTT Writer, and those corrections can be saved. Then the corrected text can be uploaded to WACS.

Conclusion: Conducting a review of the Bible translation will allow the community to provide feedback that can improve the quality of the translation. It may also increase the acceptability of the Scriptures by the community.

Note to Trainers in Gateway Languages: For the exercise, use the Reviewers' Guide in your GL, if available. Print the pages for Matthew 13:44-46 and Romans 9:30-33. Print Matthew 13:44-46 and Romans 9:30-33 in the Gateway Language for each leader of a group of 4 people. Print the same passages in a different translation for the participants to practice reviewing.