



Nipawin Bible College
BI3133 Introduction to Bible Translation
Winter 2024
3 Credit Hours
Instructor: Mr. Dave Brunn
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to give the average Bible reader a clear window into the incredibly complex process of Bible translation from the perspective of a career Bible translator with 40 years of translation experience. The course will consist of lectures, class discussions, and breakout group activities. The primary focus of the lectures will not be abstract, philosophical translation theory, but rather hundreds of compelling examples from various English Bible versions and from other languages. The breakout group activities will give the students a practical, step-by-step overview of the translation process and allow them to experience some of the challenges faced by Bible translators all around the world.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Ward, Mark. *Authorized: The Use & Misuse of the King James Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018.

Strauss, Mark L. *40 Questions about Bible Translation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2023.

FORMAT FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Most of the written assignments for this course will follow the “five-paragraph essay” format. For an explanation of this format, see the following links:

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/five-paragraph-essay/>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Five-Paragraph-Essay>

THE BIG QUESTION

What does it mean to translate the Holy Word of God faithfully and accurately?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Articulate the appropriate relation between the form of the message and the meaning of the message in Bible translation.
2. Explain how the issue of “ideal versus real” impacts the debate about various Bible versions.

3. Describe accuracy in Bible translation.
4. Contrast over-contextualization, under-contextualization, and appropriate contextualization.
5. Differentiate grammatical features from semantic structure.
6. Illustrate skewing between the semantic structure and the grammatical structure of language.
7. Describe the hierarchy of semantic units.
8. Identify meaningful relationships between semantic units.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Textbook #1 (Reading and Writing due Monday, January 8) – 15%

- Ward, Mark, *Authorized: The Use & Misuse of the King James Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018. **140 pages.**
 - Read the entire book.
 - Choose a topic covered in this book that you found to be impactful or interesting and write a five-paragraph essay about it.

Article (Reading and Writing due Monday, January 8) – 5%

- Brunn, Dave, “Contextualization in Balance” (article, 2009). **15 pages.**
 - Read the article and answer the Questions for Reflection, p. 16.
 - Print out your answers and bring them to class on Monday, January 8 for class discussion.

Translation Project – 10%

- The Gospel of Mark, chapters 1 and 2 (**Due Tuesday, January 9**)
 - Read these chapters in at least one *literal* English version, and one *nonliteral* English version.
 - Also read these chapters in any other language you are able to read, other than English.
- Group Application Exercises (**Due last day of class, Friday, January 12**)

Five-Paragraph Essays (Due Friday, January 19) – 45%

- Each of the following essays will be written *after* the related topic has been covered in class:
 - Essay 01 – Translating Idioms and Figurative Language (5%)
 - Essay 02 – Ideal versus Real in Bible Translation (10%)
 - Essay 03 – Translating Words (5%)
 - Essay 04 – King James Version (5%)
 - Essay 05 – Young’s Literal Translation (5%)
 - Essay 06 – Gender in Bible Translation (5%)
 - Essay 07 – Accuracy in Bible Translation (10%)

Textbook #2 (Reading and Writing due Friday, January 26) – 25%

- Strauss, Mark L., *40 Questions about Bible Translation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2023. **261 pages.**
 - Read Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this book (pp. 1–261).
 - Parts 5 and 6 (pp. 262–end) are not required.

- Answer assigned Reflection Questions listed in the **Appendix** below.
- NOTE: I prefer that you *not* try to answer the Reflection Questions for this book until after the first few days of this course since your understanding of Bible translation will likely be expanded, which may affect the way you answer the questions.

Recommended Follow-up Reading

- Brunn, Dave. *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barnwell, Katherine. *Introduction to Semantics and Translation*. Horsleys Green, England: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1974, 1980, 1984.
- Beekman, John and John Callow. *Translating the Word of God*. Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1974.
- Brunn, Dave. *One Bible, Many Versions: Are All Translations Created Equal?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013.
- Callow, Kathleen. *Man and Message: A Guide to Meaning-Based Text Analysis*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1998.
- Carson, D. A. *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism*. Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 1979.
- _____. *The Inclusive Language Debate: A Plea for Realism*. Grand Rapids MI: Baker Book House, 1998.
- Larson, Mildred L. *Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence*, rev. ed. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1998.
- Strauss, Mark L. *Distorting Scripture?: The Challenge of Bible Translation & Gender Accuracy*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Appendix: Assigned Reflection Questions for: 40 Questions about Bible Translation (Mark L. Strauss)

Page	Qu Num	Question	Reflection Questions
Part 1: The Necessity, Goals, and Methods of Bible Translation			
20	Qu 1	<i>Why Do We Need Bible Translation?</i>	Answer Questions
27	Qu 2	<i>What Should Be the Goals of Bible Translation?</i>	Answer Questions
35	Qu 3	<i>What Are the Main Philosophies or Methods of Translation?</i>	Answer Questions
44	Qu 4	<i>What Are the Strengths and Weaknesses of Formal Equivalence?</i>	Answer Questions
50	Qu 5	<i>What Are the Strengths and Weaknesses of Functional Equivalence?</i>	Answer Questions
—	Qu 6	<i>Are There Approaches That Go Beyond Formal and Functional Equivalence?</i>	SKIP
Part 2: Preparing to Translate			
—	Qu 7	<i>Which Books Should Be Included in a Bible Version?</i>	SKIP
76	Qu 8	<i>Which Manuscripts Should a Bible Version Follow?</i>	Answer Questions
82	Qu 9	<i>What Other Decisions Must Translators Make?</i>	Answer Questions
Part 3: Challenges for Translators			
A. Lexical Issues			
91	Qu 10	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Words?</i>	Answer Questions
99	Qu 11	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Collocations?</i>	Answer Questions
B. Figurative Language			
110	Qu 12	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Idioms?</i>	Answer Questions
118	Qu 13	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Poetry and Metaphorical Language?</i>	Answer Questions
125	Qu 14	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Other Figures of Speech?</i>	Answer Questions
C. Cultural Differences			
133	Qu 15	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Implicit Material?</i>	Answer Questions
141	Qu 16	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Euphemisms and Other Cultural</i>	Answer Questions
149	Qu 17	<i>What Are the Challenges of Translating Weights, Measures, Money, and Time?</i>	Answer Questions
D. Gender Issues			
—	Qu 18	<i>What Are the Issues Related to Gender Language in Bible Translation?</i>	SKIP
—	Qu 19	<i>What Are the Main Translation Issues in the Gender-Language Debate?</i>	SKIP
—	Qu 20	<i>What Are Some Controversial Issues Related to Gender Translation?</i>	SKIP
E. Issues of Style, Structure, and Format			
186	Qu 21	<i>How Do Translators Determine Chapters, Verses, Paragraphs, and Sections?</i>	Answer Questions

193	Qu 22	<i>What Challenges Arise in Translating Language Related to God?</i>	Answer Questions
Part 4: The History of (English) Bible Translation			
204	Qu 23	<i>What Were the Earliest Translations of the Bible?</i>	Answer Questions
211	Qu 24	<i>What Were the Earliest English Translations of the Bible?</i>	Answer Questions
220	Qu 25	<i>What Is the King James Version (KJV), and How Did It Come to Be?</i>	Answer Questions
230	Qu 26	<i>Is the King James Version the Most Accurate English Version Today?</i>	Answer Questions
237	Qu 27	<i>What's Wrong with the NT Manuscripts Behind the King James Version?</i>	Answer Questions
—	Qu 28	<i>When Was the KJV Revised and Why?</i>	SKIP
—	Qu 29	<i>What Have Been the Main Roman Catholic Versions of the Bible?</i>	SKIP
261	Qu 30	<i>What Were the Earliest Natural-Language English Versions?</i>	Answer Questions
The Remainder of the Book is not Required for this Course			