"REACHED" WITHOUT THE SCRIPTURES?

■ Do all peoples deserve the Bible in their mother tongue or is it adequate to use the lingua franca? Using a second language certainly makes it easier for the communicator of the message! But what is the criteria for deciding what language should be used to communicate the gospel? Perhaps we should all consider these questions more seriously.

By Barbara F. Grimes

INTRODUCTION

Bibleless Churches

Twenty-eight years ago Donald Larson wrote in a letter that "too much missionary work has been involved in planting Bibleless churches". People who had believed in Christ were left without access to the Scriptures in any language they understood adequately.

Is Language Choice Significant?

Some questionnaires used by missiologists ask for a list of all the languages a given people speak, but neglect to ask under what circumstances and to whom each language is used, or with what degree of success. The impression is that any language on the list is equally good for communicating the Good News to those people, and that which language is chosen is no more important than something like house types. Others, who accept the importance of choosing the right language, seem to take the answer for granted; at least it is rarely mentioned in missiological literature. The result is that while questions involving anthropological considerations are usually given their rightfully important place in writings on Christian cross cultural communication, equally crucial sociolinguistic considerations are almost neglected.

Which Language?

Every person who wants to communicate across language boundaries needs to decide what language he will use. This is as true for evangelists, teachers, and preachers, as it is for Bible translators.

Too often the choice is made on the basis of what is easiest for the communicator, rather than what communicates best to the hearers. The communicator probably has to learn a national language or a lingua franca anyway, and the Scriptures probably already exist in that language. Because that language is used in an area, it is reasoned that it will be easier to use it for evangelism. It will save the communicator from having to learn an extra language and perhaps translate the Bible into it. Besides, it is further reasoned, people need to learn the dominant language anyway for educational and economic reasons. So those who already know the dominant language are expected to interpret for the others.

However, this kind of thinking does not weigh the ease to the communicator against the possibility of miscommunication to the hearers. It does not count the cost of producing churches of nominal Christians who are not equipped to carry on their ministry, to sustain spiritual depth into suceeding generations, to answer false teaching, wage spiritual warfare, reach out to others, avoid syncretism; or having people completely fail to recognize the Christian God as the universal God to whom they must answer (McKinney, in press).

MAKING DISCIPLES

We have been given the command to make disciples of all peoples. Evangelization is only the beginning. The Scriptures clarify what a disciple is and what he does. A lot of what he is commanded to do involves language (Grimes 1986a). In contrast to other religions, being a disciple of Jesus Christ involves getting to know Him personally. That requires adequate comprehension of the Good News and of God's Word. Understanding and knowledge are repeatedly emphasized throughout the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul said it was his responsibility to make the message clear (Col. 4:4). That requires the ability to communicate complex and abstract ideas clearly, and the ability on the part of the hearers to adequately understand that kind of discourse.

But being a disciple involves more than passive comprehension. He is commanded to witness to his faith, to encourage other Christians, to exhort those who need it, to pray, to give praise, to give thanks, to sing, to memorize God's Word, to teach his own children, older women to teach younger women, to instruct one another, to meditate; to exercise gifts of the Spirit given to him that involve verbal behavior, such as the utterance of wisdom, utterance of knowledge, prophecy, interpretation of tongues, fulfilling the functions of appointed messengers, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and exhorting. Some persons, at least, are commanded to read Scripture publicly, to teach, preach, and interpret any foreign language used in church services. This means that disciples need to be able to do all these things in some language.

The mother tongue is the language people learn first at their mother's knee; in which they learn to think and talk about the world around them, to interact with people closest to them, to acquire and express their values, the language which becomes part of their personality and identity, and which

expresses ethnicity and solidarity with their people (Giles 1977). There is no question about whether or not people can handle the verbal skills required for adequate comprehension of the Good News and functioning as a disciple in their mother tongue (Klem 1982). The question is whether or not they can do those things in their second language. This paper gives an introduction into what is involved in that kind of second language use.

'Adequately Bilingual'

What does it mean for an individual or a group to be adequately bilingual, so that they are not considered to have a need for oral ministry or Scripture in their mother tongue?

The term 'bilingual' is used in many ways. On the one extreme it is used to mean merely 'not monolingual'. On the other extreme it has been used to mean only 'the equivalent of an educated native speaker'.

'Adequate', however, is better defined in accordance with the needs of a disciple. Sometimes the label 'adequate' is assigned without asking all the relevant questions to guarantee its accuracy.

Careful study of how different languages are used in multilingual societies has given important insights to sociolinguists in recent decades (Fasold 1984). Multilinguals use each of their languages in different circumstances, with different people, to talk about different topics, with varying degrees of success in speaking and understanding, and with different psychological connotations. It is important for those who want to communicate the most important message in the world to be aware of these factors, lest both they and their message not be understood, be misunderstood, or be rejected.

Spread Across the Population

Because the second language is learned in certain situations, and depends on the amount of contact an individual has had with it, and his desire and need to learn it, there are differences in fluency across a population. It is not possible to judge the bilingual proficiency of a population by looking at only a small sample, especially because the more bilingual people are usually the ones who come forward first to

interact with outsiders. It is necessary to investigate how different age groups, both sexes, different regions, and different educational levels use their languages, and to look at other factors which may influence contact with the second language in that culture. The importance of reaching everyone for Christ, including women, older people, the uneducated, and those in remote areas, justifies the time and effort needed to carry out a reliable investigation of these differences.

Levels of Bilingual Proficiency

A useful scale to describe levels of bilingual proficiency has been developed by the United States Foreign Service Institute (FSI). That scale has become widely known and used in many countries during the last forty years. It describes six levels of proficiency. Brief descriptions are given here; the full descriptions and explanations are given in SIL SLOPE (1987).

> *Level 0+.* (MEMORIZED PROFICIENCY) Able to satisfy immediate needs using rehearsed utterances.
> Level 1. (ELEMENTARY PROFICIENCY) Able to satisfy minimum courtesy requirements and maintain very simple face-to-face conversations on familiar topics.
> *Level 2.* (LIMITED PROFICIENCY) Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited requirements in other domains.
> *Level 3.* (GENERAL PROFICIENCY) Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and occupational topics.
> *Level 4.* (ADVANCED PROFICIENCY) Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to needs.
> *Level 5.* (FUNCTIONALLY NATIVE PROFICIENCY) Speaking proficiency is functionally equivalent to that of a highly articulate well-educated native speaker and reflects the cultural standards of the country where the language is natively spoken.

The method FSI uses to evaluate a person's bilingual proficiency was modified slightly in 1987, under the guidance of the head of testing of FSI,

in order to have a method which could be used among illiterate and uneducated speakers of vernacular languages, and which could thus result in a statistically valid profile of the bilingual proficiency of each language group where bilingualism appears to be extensive (Grimes 1987b).

What Threshold is Needed?

The question of what threshold of bilingual proficiency is needed for adequate understanding of the Good News and use of Scripture is crucial. It can be clarified by examining some of the proficiency level descriptions given above in more detail. Levels 3, 3+, and 4 are the ones which might be adequate for a maturing disciple. The full descriptions are from Grimes 1988a.

LEVEL 3 (GENERAL PROFICIENCY)
ABLE TO SPEAK THE LANGUAGE WITH SUFFICIENT STRUCTURAL ACCURACY AND VOCABULARY TO PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY IN MOST FORMAL AND INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS ON PRACTICAL, SOCIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL TOPICS.

> Nevertheless, the individual's limitations generally restrict the special interest contexts of language use to shared knowledge and behavior understood cross-culturally. Discourse is cohesive. The individual uses the language acceptably, but with some noticeable imperfections; yet, errors virtually never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. The individual can effectively combine structure and vocabulary to convey his/her meaning accurately. The individual speaks readily and fills pauses suitably. In face-to-face conversation with mother-tongue speakers of the standard dialect at a normal rate of speech, comprehension is quite complete. Although cultural references, proverbs, and the implications of nuances and idiom may not be fully understood, the individual can easily repair the conversation. Pronunciation may be obviously foreign. Individual sounds are accurate; but stress, intonation, and pitch control may be faulty.
> *Examples*: Can typically discuss particular interests and special fields of

competence with reasonable ease. Can use the language, for example, in any of several domains in order to answer objections, clarify points, justify decisions, understand the essence of challenges, state and defend accepted ways of doing business, conduct meetings, convey information, or other extended and elaborate informative monologues. Can reliably elicit information and informed opinion from native speakers. Structural inaccuracy is rarely the major cause of misunderstanding. Use of structural devices is flexible and elaborate. Without searching for words or phrases, the individual uses the language clearly and relatively naturally to elaborate concepts freely and make ideas easily understandable to native speakers. Errors occur in low-frequency and highly complex structures.

LEVEL 3+ (GENERAL PROFICIENCY PLUS)

IS OFTEN ABLE TO USE THE LANGUAGE TO SATISFY NEEDS IN A WIDE RANGE OF SOPHISTICATED AND DEMANDING TASKS.

Examples: Despite obvious strengths, may exhibit some hesitancy, uncertainty, effort, or errors which limit the range of language-use tasks that can be reliably performed. Typically there is particular strength in fluency and one or more, but not all, of the following: breadth of lexicon, including low- and medium-frequency items, especially sociolinguistic and cultural references, and nuances of close synonyms; structural precision, with sophisticated features that are readily, accurately, and appropriately controlled (such as complex modification and embedding in Indo-European languages); discourse competence in a wide range of contexts and tasks, often matching a native speaker's strategic and organizational abilities and expectations. Occasional patterned errors occur in low frequency and highly-complex structures.

LEVEL 4 (ADVANCED PROFICIENCY)

ABLE TO USE THE LANGUAGE FLUENTLY AND ACCURATELY ON ALL LEVELS NORMALLY PERTINENT TO NEEDS.

The individual's language usage and ability to function are fully successful. Organizes discourse well, using appropriate rhetorical speech devices, appropriate cultural references and understanding. Language ability only rarely hinders him/her in performing any task requiring language; yet, the individual would seldom be perceived as a mother-tongue speaker. Speaks effortlessly and smoothly and is able to use the language with a high degree of effectiveness, reliability, and precision for all representational purposes within the range of personal and occupation related experience and scope of responsibilities. Can serve as an informal interpreter in a range of unpredictable circumstances. Can perform extensive, sophisticated language tasks, encompassing most matters of interest to "well-educated" native speakers, including tasks which do not bear directly on any occupational specialty.

Examples: Can discuss in detail concepts which are fundamentally different from those of the target culture and make those concepts

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clear and accessible to the native speaker. Similarly, the individual can understand the details and ramifications of concepts that are culturally or conceptually different from his/her own. Can set the tone of interpersonal verbal exchanges with a representative range of high and low status native speakers in a variety of audiences, tasks, and

settings and with a variety of purposes. Can play an effective role among native speakers in such domains as the home, courts and government, religion, education, and debates on matters of disagreement. Can advocate a position at length, both formally and in chance encounters, using sophisticated verbal strategies. Understands and reliably produces shifts of both subject matter and tone. Can understand native speakers of the standard and other major dialects in essentially any face-to-face interaction.

Proficiency Threshold Needed:
A Psycholinguistic Question

The question of which bilingual proficiency threshold is needed is basically a *linguistic* and a *psycholinguistic* one. Linguistically it involves the question of what *kinds of discourse* are involved. Psycholinguistically it involves the question of what *kind of comprehension* is needed for those kinds of discourse. In addition, it is recognized that *interactive use* of a second language is needed for teaching, encouraging, exhorting, and other verbal behavior enjoined by Scripture, if the second language is to be an appropriate means of communication for a group.

There are at least four basic reasons why Level 4 is needed as the threshold for adequate long term use of Scripture.

(1) *Domain.* In multilingual societies, people ordinarily use one language with their family and close friends, and a different language with cultural outsiders. Sociolinguists identify classes of situations, or *domains*, in which different forms of speech are used; such as home and family, close friends, traditional culture, religion, school, work, trade, and outside culture. Domain usage changes depending on the participants in the conversation, the topic, and the place. A second language is learned through contact in certain domains, and a speaker's ability often limits him to functioning in those domains in that language.

FSI points out that if a person cannot handle all domains, he cannot be above a Level 2+. A Level

3 person can handle all domains, but not necessarily effectively ('most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and occupational topics'). Level 4, on the other hand, can handle all domains effectively ('fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to needs', and 'all representational purposes within the range of personal and occupation related experience and scope of responsibilities', and 'a range of unpredictable circumstances'). For example, in some instances involving child abuse among minority language speakers in the U. S., English-speaking counsellors have had difficulty communicating with parents whose first language was not English. The parents could understand the behavior being discussed, but could not understand why it was wrong. FSI says that kind of bilingual proficiency would be 'a kind of Level 3'.

An important consideration with respect to domain limitations in minority language situations is that the last domain in which speakers usually begin to use the second language is the interpersonal domain; yet that is the most crucial domain in Scripture. The understanding of reconciliation as an interpersonal relationship between God and man, rather than as the result of the religious performance of certain prescribed acts, and the extending of that reconciliation to human relationships which affects every domain of life, is basic to Christianity. Scripture involves all domains: home and family, close friends, religion, government, education, various occupations. Christian faith is personal and intimate as well as corporate and public. If the second language is not learned and used extensively in interpersonal relationships, its effective use as a disciple will be very limited.

Rivera says (1983), "When a child uses one language for some social purposes, and his or her second language for other social purposes, as is commonly the case in bilingual communities, that functional differentiation will be reflected in vocabulary that is specialized in each language. This differentiation will also be encountered in semantic constructions and discourse formats that are controlled in one language, but not in the other." The language of Scripture, even in a good translation, may be basically unknown to a bilingual person who uses the second language mainly for work, school, trading, and other outside cultural situations.

(2) *Unfamiliar information.* A Level 3 'individual's limitations generally restrict the special interest contexts of language use to shared knowledge and behavior understood cross-culturally.' 'Cultural references may not be fully understood.' Scripture has much *unfamiliar information* to convey, and much of it is *cross-culturally unfamiliar.* This involves not just material culture, but basic concepts, such as the nature of God, evil, forgiveness, and reconciliation. The description of Level 4 shows that such a person can handle new information which is not cross-culturally familiar ('using appropriate cultural references and understanding', and 'the individual can understand the details and ramifications of concepts that are culturally or conceptually different from his/her own').

Some persons have thought that because they themselves can get a lot out of Scripture in their second language, even though they do not have Level 4 proficiency in that language, that therefore Level 4 proficiency is not needed for adequate use of Scripture. They have, however, overlooked the fact that they have an extensive previous background in understanding Scripture through the translation in their own mother tongue, and therefore they are not dealing with unfamiliar, but with familiar discourse in their second language. Their situation is quite different from that of a person who has no previous exposure to Scripture in his mother tongue; for him it is mainly unfamiliar discourse.

(3) *Complex structure and discourse.* Level 3 has 'errors [which] occur in low-frequency and highly complex structures'. 'In face-to-face conversation with mother-tongue speakers of the standard dialect at a normal rate of speech, comprehension is quite complete.' However, written discourse, where an individual does not have opportunity to 'repair the conversation' or ask for clarification, is more difficult to understand. The parents referred to previously did not understand why a certain behavior was wrong, because they could not put together the *higher level discourse propositions.* A Level 3+ speaker 'may exhibit some errors which limit the range of language-use tasks that can be reliably performed'.

(4) *Abstract speech.* The kinds of discourse we are concerned with include not only narrative, but exhortations, expositions, and explanations; not only events and simple propositions, but *complex concepts and arguments.* For a Level 3 speaker, 'proverbs, and the implications of nuances and idiom may not be fully understood'. Although the person may 'repair the conversation' in 'face-to-face conversation', that is not always possible when reading Scripture. A Level 4 person 'can discuss in detail concepts which are fundamentally different from those of the target culture and make those concepts clear and accessible to the native speaker'.

In addition, Brewster and Brewster (1976) point out that anyone involved as a cross culture change agent needs to have Level 4 proficiency to be effective.

Quotas: An Administrative Question

When the question of a threshold comes up, it is not uncommon for that to give way to questions of quotas; that is, 'What percentage of speakers should be at Level X, Y, or Z before we can say that they do not need to be reached in their own language and Bible translation?'

While the question of what level of proficiency an individual needs for adequate use of Scripture involves considerations which are psycholinguistic and linguistic in nature, the question of what percentage of speakers should be at that level involves considerations which are mainly administrative in nature. These administrative decisions involve priorities in the allocation of available personnel, the order of alloca-

tion, what organization or individual will carry out a given program, the relative size of a group, its present openness, and cultural factors apart from bilingualism, among others. These questions are related to, but are not the same as, the psycholinguistic question of what kind of bilingual proficiency is needed for adequate functioning as a disciple and use of the kinds of discourse found in Scripture. Some of the issues related to the question of quotas are often overlooked or misunderstood.

The 'Language Broker' Fallacy

Administrative decisions may also be influenced by differing philosophies of missiological strategy: to what extent does one accept the idea of a *language broker* who acts as an intermediary between the message and those who do not understand the language it is given in, as one of the primary strategies not only for evangelism but for nurturing?

The language broker model has been used extensively in missions, in which a bilingual person hears the message or reads Scripture in his second language, and then is expected to *transfer the meaning* into his first language for the benefit of those who do not understand the other language. Unfortunately, few people are able to do that kind of transferring without extensive training and experience in that skill. It requires a special linguistic awareness of distinctions and equivalents between the two languages that people sometimes acquire in a language classroom. However, most speakers of minority languages who are bilingual have learned their second language through direct oral contact, and lack training in language transfer. A few seem to be able to do it without special training, but those people are relatively rare.

There are many situations in which pastors have been trained in seminary or Bible school in a second language, but are not able to make the transfer of terminology and abstract or complex concepts back into their first language. They feel more comfortable teaching or preaching in the language in which they were trained, which is the second language of the congregation. Too often

people in the audience receive little spiritual nourishment from those presentations.

The Scriptures are all too often available to those churches only in the second language. The language broker model avoids having to translate the

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Scriptures into the first language, but it assumes that spontaneous, off-the-top-of-the-head paraphrases of Scripture are adequate, usually without the quality control of background study, revision, and checking by trained consultants that ensures that the translation is both faithful to the original text and phrased in the closest meaningful equivalent in the first language. There is no guarantee that such impromptu paraphrases done repeatedly by various speakers in different situations are at all accurate. This is the "planting Bibleless churches" model that Donald Larson was referring to; something very different from the model presented to us in Scripture. If sufficient preparatory study is made to produce careful oral translations for preaching and teaching, then those oral translations should also be written, to preserve them for consistency and availability for future use.

The language broker model often results in a bilingual elite in the church being the only ones eligible to become leaders. Others to whom God may have given the gifts of teaching, preaching, and other gifts involving using language may be hindered from exercising those gifts by lack of sufficient bilingual proficiency to function in the second language.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES
Diglossia

The language used in close interpersonal relationships is almost always the mother tongue. It is often thought of as

a 'low' language; whereas the language used for outside cultural situations is usually the second language, and is thought of as the 'high' language. This situation is called *diglossia* (Ferguson 1959). The 'high' language has prestige and is used for more formal situations: education, government, white collar jobs, and for a formal or ritualistic religion. The 'low' language is used for close interpersonal relationships, the traditional culture and community, and for personal religion. The 'high' language is usually considered to be superior to the 'low' language.

Negative Attitude Toward the Mother Tongue

Sometimes the speakers or an outside power group have negative attitudes toward a language, even when that language is the only one its speakers can understand well enough for use as disciples. Diglossia often stimulates negative attitudes toward the 'low' language, especially for use in literature or religion (Grimes 1986b, 1989). In that case, rather than settling for a language the hearers do not understand, the messenger needs to carry on a program of promoting the prestige of the vernacular and vernacular Scriptures (Grimes 1982, Fishman 1987). Such programs require dedication, but have been successful in many cases (Sandefur 1984). Promotion programs are not nearly as time-consuming as teaching a group the second language. Missions are not set up to bring people up to a level of bilingual proficiency sufficient for use as disciples (Echerd 1980).

Negative Attitude Toward the Second Language

In other cases, because of a history of bad relationships between two groups, a group may have negative attitudes toward a second dialect or language which they do understand well. Or because of strong ethnic attitudes and not wanting to identify with that other language, they do not want to use literature in it (Grimes 1984). In those cases it is important to accept the importance of those attitudes and to use their mother tongue for oral and written ministry, including Scripture translation.

Identity and Ethnicity

Attention needs to be given not only to the *cognitive* use of language to impart knowledge, but also to the *affective* use; how language choice affects the emotions, identity, ethnicity, and solidarity. If God speaks to a people only through Hausa, and that is their second language, is it then a Hausa religion? Does the use of English speak only to second language speakers' intellect, or also to their hearts and wills? Is a message in French relevant to second language users' lives where they are?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
Size of a Language Group

The Scripture does not indicate that any group smaller than a certain size is too small to be reached. The Good Shepherd went to the one sheep, and left the ninety-nine in the wilderness; he went to the 1%, leaving the 99%. He does not want anyone to perish (2 Pet. 3:9). Paul was concerned that every person become mature in Christ, not just the bilingual elite (Col. 1:28-29).

The median size of language groups differs in different parts of the world; a group of 5,000 may be considered large in South America or the Pacific, but small in Africa or Europe. If 'only 10%' of a group needs a vernacular ministry and Scripture, that 10% may amount to 10,000 people, or 5,000, or 500. We do not consider a church of 100 or 200 people to be too small for a pastor to serve. Must a group be "significantly large" to be eligible to be reached? Where does the Lord of the Harvest give us a cutoff?

Cohesiveness of Those Not Functionally Bilingual

Some discussions have made it a requirement that a group be a cohesive unit and not scattered, in order to qualify as having a need for vernacular Scripture. However, if those who are not adequately bilingual are mainly women, as is often the case, they are not likely to form their own cohesive group or church. The same might be true of those above a certain age, of the uneducated, those in cities, or refugees who might not be adequately bilingual.

Number of Generations Constituting a Need

Other arguments have been given that if only one or two generations are predicted to continue using the vernacular, then a vernacular ministry and Scripture are not worth the investment of personnel and time. This consideration is also one of some people's priorities rather than of need of the people, inasmuch as the Scriptural mandate is given to us for the time we live in. We are responsible for the four or so generations alive now; the harvest is now (John 4:35). We are not to neglect the present generations because of uncertain predictions about the future (2 Cor. 6:2).

Predicting Language Shift

Sociolinguists have given us abundant cautions against thinking it is simple to predict language shift (Lieberson 1981, Rickford 1983). Certain characteristics present in societies which have undergone complete language shift have also been shown to be present in other societies which have retained their language. Shift is often not complete in all domains, especially in the interpersonal domain so important for Christian discipleship. Trends may continue, speed up, slow down, level off, or regress.

For example, Heath and Laprade (1982) say, 'In terms of ways in which modern planners view the variables associated with cultural diffusion, the cases of Aymara and Quechua provide particular cautions. Language spread does not correlate with demographic units in predictable ways in all settings. The interrelatedness of language spread with factors such as group identity, historical verification of the role of language in group identity, and the specific preference of some groups for a language which does not have high status or correlate with socioeconomic mobility are conditions of language maintenance and spread which planners rarely acknowledge. Therefore, an effective program of language spread should make use of detailed knowledge of the groups involved.' It does not seem prudent, therefore, to try to make formulas which could presumably be applied universally, because each case needs to

be evaluated individually, considering other factors in the light of today's profile of bilingual proficiency.

CONCLUSIONS

Jesus and the apostles did not follow a model of a few people in a special elite becoming mature in Christ, while the majority of Christians remained spiritual babies. There is good evidence that they ministered in the mother tongue of their audience, and that the New Testament was written in common Greek (not literary Greek) because that was the mother tongue of most of the audience in Asia for which the books were written (Grimes 1987a). Paul said he proclaimed Christ, warning every person and teaching every person in all wisdom, in order to present every person mature in Christ. To that end he worked night and day, working with all the energy God gave him (Col. 1:28-29). That includes every person, bilingual or not. It may be necessary for a person from outside a society to bring the Good News into that society. If so, it is necessary for him to use a language adequately understood by his audience. But the job is not over when a few people have responded and been taught. It is necessary to leave them with the primary tool that is needed to make disciples who can become mature in Christ. That tool is the Word that God has left us, which is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, that the man and woman of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16).

Can a group be considered truly reached if they have been contacted only through their second language, and there are few, if any, highly bilingual people in the group? Can they be considered reached if they do not have the Scriptures in a language they understand adequately? We have to answer that ministry in the mother tongue and mother tongue Scriptures are two of the prerequisites for nearly all peoples in order for them to be accurately described as 'reached'. ■

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