

**Position Description for Bible Translator**  
Bibles International, the Bible Society of Baptist Mid-Missions

**Objectives of Position:**

1. Maintain good functional and personal interaction with participants in Text Production and in other relationships with Bibles International, Baptist Mid-Missions and national groups.
2. Facilitate the production of translation manuscripts and translation helps which are of the highest quality, conforming to Bibles International standards and policies.
3. Incorporate Scriptures into the life of the churches and their host society.

**Responsible to:**

1. For field tasks, the Field Translation Coordinator (where applicable); otherwise, Chief Language Consultant
2. For non-field tasks, the Director of Bibles International and the BMM Administrator

**Responsible for:**

Engaging in both church planting or related activities and the translation of the Scriptures with the aid of national believers, both benefiting from their expertise and also training them to eventually take over the translation work, if possible. (This position description envisions a missionary church planter who has few, if any, mature national believers to work with him/her.)

**Duties and Procedures to Fulfill the Responsibility:**

1. Exercise of the translation process: orthography development, language analysis, Bible translation, field testing, revisions, within the guidelines of and with the help of qualified Bibles International Bible translation consultants.
2. Use of computers and other technical resources to facilitate the process.
3. Publication and distribution of Scriptures, including trial portions and larger units such as the New Testament, with the help of Bibles International.
4. Coordination with the BMM Ministry Team for support services and ministry interface.
5. Local-church ministries as part of the BMM Ministry Team.

**Qualifications:**

The objectives of the position will be fulfilled most successfully by a person with these qualifications.

1. Character and gifts:
  - a. Personal commitment to Jesus Christ, to His commission and to His Word.
  - b. Deep burden for the ministry of Bible translation
  - c. Spiritual and emotional maturity demonstrated by integrity, objectivity and intellectual honesty.
  - d. Understanding Bible translation art and science, its philosophy, and proper methodology.

- e. Ability to resolve interpersonal conflicts biblically.
  - f. Ability to work with consultants and other translators, administration, and be a team player.
  - g. Willingness to travel and operate for weeks at a time under less than ideal conditions.
  - h. Ability to communicate thoughts clearly and to teach effectively.
  - i. Consensus-builder and unifier.
  - j. Demonstrated ability to manage multiple projects and to spend long hours on detail work.
  - k. Interest and ability in biblical exegesis, linguistics, and teaching.
2. Demonstrated exceptional ability to learn new languages (BI will work with you to determine this).
3. Academic preparation:
- a. Undergraduate degree, with the following degree concentrations preferred:
    - i) Bible
    - ii) Missions
    - iii) Biblical languages
    - iv) Communication (especially cross-cultural)
    - v) Cultural Anthropology (from a Christian perspective)
  - b. Specific areas of coursework (courses completed or sufficient capacities demonstrated):
    - i) Biblical studies
      - (1) Bible and theology, with emphasis on exegesis/hermeneutics
      - (2) Communication, both verbal and written, including cross-cultural communication
      - (3) Historical and cultural background of the Bible
      - (4) Missions (especially cross-cultural dynamics)
      - (5) Biblical language(s)

The minimum standard expected is a basic knowledge of the morphology, syntax and discourse structure of the language; the ability to make use of lexicons, other technical reference materials (e.g., grammars, word studies), and technical commentaries (i.e., commentaries that discuss the original language); the ability to read the original text with understanding (with minimal help from reference tools); and a commitment to use and develop this knowledge. Such proficiency usually requires at least two years of graduate level training in the language.

- ii) Translation studies and linguistics
  - (1) Translation theory and practice with focus on Bible translation
  - (2) Phonetics and phonology
  - (3) Morphology and Syntax
  - (4) Discourse analysis
  - (5) Semantics and pragmatics
  - (6) Sociolinguistics
  - (7) Cultural anthropology (from a Christian perspective)
  - (8) Language acquisition
  - (9) Linguistic field methods
  - (10) Literacy—preferred but not required

- (11) Lexicography—preferred but not required
- iii) Others
  - (1) Foreign language
  - (2) Psychology, especially educational psychology
- iv) Graduate degree (such as a Master of Arts in Bible Translation) is preferred but not required.
- v) Ordination expected for men.
- 4. Experience
  - a. Fruitful experience in local-church ministries and leadership.
  - b. Biblical exegesis and teaching.
  - c. Previous cross-cultural experience is preferred.
  - d. At least one overseas trip to observe and/or participate in a Bible translation ministry (BI internship is preferred)
- 5. Missionary appointment by Baptist Mid-Missions.

*Revised May 2020*