

Surveying the need



Be a trailblazer: discover the needs for Bible translation.

The information gatherers

Language assessment is the task of gathering information about language communities and their as yet unwritten languages, so that Bible translation projects can move ahead and Vision 2025 can become reality.

It's a strategic role; opening the door for others by

answering vital initial questions. How many translations are needed in this country or region? Where and how should a translation project be started? What language or languages are the best ones to use to reach this people group with the Word of God? Who are potential key partners in any translation project?

Why do survey?

Since there are around 2,400 languages in the world that do not have any Scripture at all, you may think that it's just a matter of 2,400 translation projects being started.

But it's more complex than that! Many languages in the world are similar to each other, and it's not always clear whether two varieties of speech should be labelled as separate languages, needing separate writing systems and translations, or if they should be treated as dialects of the same language.

What about people who are bilingual? Or even multilingual? Do they speak another language well enough to read the Bible and other books?

Moreover, people groups often have very definite attitudes towards the languages they

know, and this will influence which language they would accept as the medium of Scripture.

Language assessment work delves into all these issues, and more, for the many languages of the world that still need survey.

"Language assessment is not cold-blooded data gathering but primarily mission, reaching people who have never heard the gospel or who want to hear more... Adventure is part of it too, as we travel on foot, by canoe, motor boat, helicopter, plane and 4x4. We are privileged to eat, sit, talk and work with the people."

Leoni Bouwer, Language Assessor



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Language Assessment - surveying the need



Qualifications

You would normally already have a degree or similar level qualification. A knowledge of sociolinguistics, scientific methods or statistics would be a bonus, but training is given.

You would be a committed Christian, playing an active part in a local church, and willing to serve God wherever he sends you.

After 4 months of training, you would typically take up a 2-year overseas assignment as part of a language assessment team.

Training

Training is offered through the European Training Programme.

First you will gain a broad understanding of what language work is, and pick up a comprehensive toolkit of language learning and cultural adaptation tools through the *Language and Culture Acquisition* course.

After that you would take *Assignment Related Training* which would train you for the work you'll be involved in, through a specific language assessment track.

Science, adventure and people

Assessment is basically sociolinguistic field work. It is scientific research into the interactions between language and society, in the form of real, solid data that is collected on the spot, in the regions where the communities live.

Once on the job you will spend some time planning research trips, and also writing up the results on your return.

Survey trips themselves are a challenging combination of:

- adventurous travel, sometimes to remote places,
- handling equipment and recording data, and
- meeting and working with a lot of people from different cultures and finding out about their way of life.

Are you up for the challenge?

Language assessors need to be prepared for a job that is physically, intellectually and spiritually demanding, and that involves a good deal of travel to remote and undeveloped areas.

You'll also need to be able to work well on a team, and cope with meeting a lot of new people. Flexibility and a good sense of humour are also assets, to say nothing of the occasional need for a strong stomach!

If you have a sense of adventure and understand the key role which survey plays in the Bible translation task, we would like to talk to you.

Contact us on 01494 682256 or at recruitment_uk@wycliffe.org

Or complete the enquiry form at www.wycliffe.org.uk/assessment



For further information about the European Training Programme go to www.eurotp.org/luk

Finance

Costs vary depending on where in the world you are working. We will help you draw up a budget for your particular situation.

Wycliffe positions are not salaried. Wycliffe personnel trust God to meet their needs through a team of prayer and financial partners.

Mission is done in partnership with the local sending church, and in reliance with God, who has proved himself faithful to hundred of Wycliffe members over many years.

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