

Problems in Translating “Braided” Hair

Brad has been observing some exegetical checking as part of his training to become a translation consultant. 1 Timothy 2:9 says that women should dress *modestly*, “not with braided hair.” The emphasis is “women should not braid their hair with strands of gold and pearls, an extravagant, excessive and expensive hairstyle, as the local pagan women did at that time.” The problem in translation is that for local women here, “braided hair” is probably the cheapest, easiest and *most modest* hair style available. So if the meaning is, “women should have a modest hairstyle” and we translate it “women should not have braided hair” then we would be teaching the opposite of what Paul was emphasizing. In obedience to this verse in the Bible, at least one denomination here in Tanzania teaches that its women should not braid their hair! Our goal in translation is to be faithful to the “meaning” of the original text, not to translate “word-for-word” lest we be misleading and inaccurate.

National Training

Another year of Translators’ training occurred in August in our new facilities that are almost completely finished now. Though we were busy getting Bradley and Morrie off to boarding school this year, it is encouraging to see the work is moving ahead upon the foundations we helped lay in the training partnership with Word for the World and the building of the facilities that are being used for all the training events. In fact, the training center is being kept occupied more often than not! Immediately after the Translators’ training, the first Literacy Workshop was held for two of the Morogoro Cluster languages; another four weeks of training happening. The first literacy primers are currently being printed. And more consultant checking is scheduled in the new facilities over the next couple of months as well.

A Typical Day

We often get asked what a typical day is like here on the field, and we usually respond that there is no such thing. We’ve decided that most often the typical day is a day of the unexpected...

We just hosted a large work team from Brad’s home church in Indianapolis a couple of months ago, so you’d think that we’d not have to worry about maintenance issues for a while since they got pretty much everything working well before their departure, but this is Africa. Morrie’s (& guest) bathroom sink drain started leaking, so we had one of the workers clean the trap; problem solved. But the next morning we had a bit of a flood because the flexible hose to the sink tap had sprung a leak. It must have gotten bumped in the process of cleaning the trap. No problem, we just shut the water off to the bathroom until a new hose could be bought for a few dollars; Morrie is away at school, so not urgent. Then Tammie was rearranging Morrie’s room/guest room, and we noticed the head board on her bed was coming apart – no problem, just need to get the furniture clamps and some glue. It was a Friday, so Brad now had a list of things to do for Saturday; he planned ahead to get the furniture clamps from the container at the office before everyone departed on Friday, and that’s when these little things became bigger things...

John, our office maintenance guy, (who was one of our former employees whom we sent to electrician school) was at the hospital waiting for his wife to have a baby and he was the only one with a key to the storage container, as the locks had just been changed. So the bed may have to wait a few days. But this is not the end of the day ...

Some Baptist missionary friends working in an area where we are doing a translation project in the Southeast arrived unexpectedly. We knew they’d be coming through sometime soon, but they had lost our number and hadn’t been able to call ahead – hence the surprise. Now the bed had to be fixed immediately. After some text messaging, John took a motorcycle taxi up from the hospital (only 5 minutes) to get the furniture clamps. While our friends went out to supper with some colleagues, we hurriedly fixed the bed (decided to leave the clamps on overnight and hoped they wouldn’t gouge a leg in the middle of the night). Tammie also put up some curtains because she’d taken the others down to wash. And we just had to put a bucket under the sink & turn the water back on. But not the end yet ...

While attaching the clamps to the freshly glued bed frame, the washing machine stopped working. We determined it was the wall socket, so Brad created an extension cord from some wires, and we plugged the washer into another socket. Then we realized several sockets were blown: for the dryer, freezer and refrigerator. So we moved the freezer and plugged the fridge into another outlet as well. Of course, John,

our electrician was off a few days with the new baby, so it would be about a week before that electric problem could be assessed. [A junction box in the attic had caught fire and burned the wires. The circuit breaker hadn't worked properly, but we're happy the fire didn't spread.] The sink, bed and outlets are all fixed now. We were glad when that day was finally over! And in case you're thinking this sounded more like an atypical day ... Saturday morning our Baptist friends were planning on getting an early start, but woke up to a flat tire. They'd also had AC problems; it seemed to just be a belt, so Brad helped them get to our mechanic. They ended up not getting on the road until almost noon.

Brad delivered 2 babies in one day...!!!

Let us assure you that things breaking and not being able to find parts and guests showing up unexpectedly happens quite frequently. Delivering two babies in one day is a little more atypical ... delivering them home from the hospital that is! Since John's wife had delivered via a C-section, they kept her and the baby in the hospital for several days. Brad offered to give John's family a ride home from the hospital when they were released. On the way from "delivering" John's new baby to his house, our night guard called and said he'd be late for work because his wife had given birth that morning; he asked for a lift home from the hospital (a different one) as well. So Brad delivered his second baby home in the same day. Of course, when your workers have babies, you must go visit and take gifts. So the next afternoon was spent visiting our workers in their homes. Below left is Tammie holding John's new baby, Holiness.



Tammie & John's Baby, "Holiness"



Leaving Day: Rift Valley Academy

The last week of August, we took Morrie and Bradley to boarding school in Kijabe, Kenya, 18 hours drive from our home in Tanzania (above right). We've been able to communicate with them a bit, but phone service is very poor. We're working on getting a different phone service for them, but in the mean time we've been able to communicate via email pretty regularly. Thank you for your prayers for us and for them; they have settled in and are doing well and have lots of new friends. Bradley's bunkmate is from Iceland, and one of Morrie's roommates is Korean, but the majority of kids are Americans whose parents are missionaries in many different countries throughout Africa. We'll see them again at mid-term, just 3 weeks away (but whos countingJ).

Yuda is doing quite well in school too here in Morogoro; he even made a 95% on his first Math test! Bradley and Morrie being away has probably been the hardest on him. He's bored ... but reading a lot!

Coming Up ...

Brad continues to work through the application process for Leiden University; he'll visit the campus, and meet with professors and potential dissertation committee members the end of October on his way to the US for a mission conference at a supporting church.

Tammie has begun making arrangements for the All Africa Missionary Conference (AAMC 2011) that she is in charge of organizing. The venue has been secured and the speaker confirmed. Email contact details have been imported into her computer and she has been expanding the contact list; the first announcement goes out this week.