CLOSING CEREMONY

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Category: Observations

God speaks every language - after all he created them.

In Bamenda a few days ago, I attended the closing ceremony of the final workshop of the Introduction to Translation Principles Course. Edward and David from Bamunka completed the course and got their certificates. Pastors and various influential people from each of the five language groups participating in the course were invited. I was watching the audience when Luke 22:24-27 was read: first in English; then in Bamunka, Bambalang, Aghem, Pinjin and Awing. People reacted - some with surprise, others with delight - when they heard the passage in their own language, perhaps for the first time.

I was impressed by the speech given by Pastor Ezekiel, one of the Bambalang translators, to the invited guests on behalf of all the participants:

"God is not the God of the white man, but of all heaven and earth and therefore of your language group. Bible translation is a difficult and hectic task - but it is a task for everyone. If you have put effort into learning to read the white man's language (either English or French), how much more should you put effort into learning to read your own language."

He urged everyone to support the translation projects: learn to read, encourage others to learn to read, join the team, become a literacy teacher, give financially, pray.

And on behalf of the trainee translators, he said, "We promise to do our best on our part."

The same message was reinforced when all the course participants sang a song which went:
"Talk to Jesus in your tongue, he will hear - he will hear as your countryman!"

John Hamilton in Ndop, NW Cameroon