CHOOSING KEY TERMS

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One of the hardest choices facing Bible translators is knowing which terms to use for familiar biblical concepts. It is easy to see why, transgression or justification might be difficult to translate, but even seemingly obvious terms such as God can actually be quite difficult. Sometimes the local term for a God might communicate something very different to the Christian concept, or perhaps there may be more than one term which could actually be used. Sue found a strange problem in Bara, the term for God (which I can't reproduce here) had four syllables, and was very difficult to lip-synch in the Jesus film with the one syllable English term. In this case the translation problem wasn't difficult, but the dubbing of the film was.

In a blog post which is not about Bible translation, but about the contemporary political and religious scene, Cranmer deals with some similar issues when looking at the suggestion that Christians should use the name Allah for God to avoid offending Muslims.