



- LIBERIA**
- BANDI** Old Testament Translation  
M: Dr. Becky Grossmann
  - GREBO** Language development
  - MAAN** Full Bible Translation
  - Liberia Translation and Literacy Organization



Most people wear many hats throughout their lifetimes or even in the course of a day. Missionaries are no exception. In addition to the expected or obvious career role, or as a spouse or parent, I have found myself acting as a trainer/trainee, author, courier, traveler, mentor, and communicator. (There may be more, but this letter will get lengthy!)

*Trainer/trainee:* When I work with the translation teams online, I try to show them various shortcuts they can take with their computer programs. For instance, CTRL-Z to undo an unwanted action can save hours of work redoing something lost. Or, how to use the mouse more efficiently. Another time we redid about an hour of work because a dialog box went ignored and the wrong option was checked hastily. That was a lesson! Sometimes caution is needed. Every Monday an online group meets who teach different tools we can use in our translation software. I have acquired a few new skills with arranging my notes so I can see more than one set at a time instead of bouncing between windows. I also learned about some more checklists that allow me to compare the formatting in the translated text with the formatting in the model text. I can filter so it shows me only the places that differ. That too saves time, and I can easily find errors that I may miss as I read. I keep trying to learn all I can to make checking easier in order to make the translations better. I hope to show the teams how to use these checklists when we are in-person this month.

*Author:* A call went out a couple years ago for a need to write a book about how participatory methods are effective in linguistic work. I used participatory methods when I conducted surveys in the potential areas for starting up translation projects in Liberia. Participatory methods focus on the target audience eliciting what they see as their problems and needs and what the solutions might be. Such methods foster understanding, culturally appropriate solutions, and ownership of any programs or projects that develop as a result. Participatory methods also reveal insider knowledge that partners from the outside may miss or not be aware. The book will be a collaborative effort written by specialists in various areas of linguistics including sociolinguistics, phonology, grammar, dictionary development, and discourse. My contribution is a case study about how participatory methods used in a workshop facilitated an understanding of narrative structures in the languages of Liberia. In fact, without the input of the native speakers, those of us conducting the workshop analyzed the storyline incorrectly because we are not cultural insiders. We hope the book will encourage others in the methods and effective use of participatory methods in translation and language development.

*Courier:* When I travel, I am allowed 2-3 pieces of luggage at 70 pounds each. I leave a suitcase in Liberia with things I use regularly making most of my luggage allowance free to carry things for other people. I regularly carry computers for the Bible society to distribute as necessary to the translation teams. I am carrying some audio-visual equipment this trip as well. Other times I have also carried personal items like blood pressure monitors or glucose strips. I have carried graduation gowns, phones, books, and school supplies. One time I even carried an artificial limb for a local clinic.

*Traveler:* My job entails travel obviously. I travel to Liberia and Cameroon regularly. I have to make sure I have documents like a passport, visas, and Covid tests up to date. Travel requirements are changing frequently these days, so keeping informed helps. I register with the state department before every trip. This summer I will travel to three LWML conventions: Indiana in Ft. Wayne, English in Ann Arbor, MI, and Michigan in Frankenmuth. Should be fun. I enjoy putting faces to the names of my supporters and explaining our mission to those who have yet to learn about the impact on people when they hear God tell his plan of restoration in the language they best understand. Do stop at the LBT booth at your LWML or LCMS district conventions.

## PRAY

**Praise:** Praise for completion of Luke in Dan and Exodus in Bandi. Praise LBT has found our next Executive Director.

**Pray:** for my trip in May. Pray as I balance many responsibilities and roles. Pray that my communication will be clear and edifying. Pray for all those transitioning to new job roles this year.

## Who I am

Becky is YOUR HEART IN ACTION. She serves you as a consultant for translation teams in Liberia and Cameroon, West Africa by using your prayers and support to fulfill your desire to "PUT GOD'S WORD IN THEIR HANDS." Becky rejoices that she is part of your Lutheran Bible Translators team and values this special relationship.

## Contact/Support

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Designate  
Grossmann or Bandi  
OT project

**Mentor:** I was contacted recently to encourage and advise a translation team in another country in Africa. LBT does not work there at present. The team has a complete New Testament drafted and now are stuck because the original entity assisting them is no longer doing so. We were able to discuss various resources and tools they can use to make their translation better and to clarify what they hope to accomplish. After I was able to connect them to the Bible society in their area, the team is now conversing with personnel to see how best to finish checking the draft. Your prayers are requested for perseverance for the team as they make the decisions moving towards publication.



**Communicator:** Every aspect of my work involves communicating. Sometimes keeping track of all this communicating is a challenge as we have so many platforms these days: email, Facebook, WhatsApp, OneDrive, Google Drive, snail mail, phones, texts, messaging, etc. Keeping it all organized can be challenging. I enjoy communicating about the work we are doing together as we communicate through word, deed and the written translated Word so that others can know our Savior Jesus and grow in their faith. The map above communicates what your partnership is doing. (I know it is small. Write to request a bigger copy.) Thank you for your faithful work.

**So, what hats do you wear?** I know and feel the support you personally offer to me. How often I have been encouraged by hearing from you. LBT supporters have shared technology and travel hacks. *Thank you, my trainer/trainees.* Others have shared writings or even single phrases that end up in newsletters or updates. *Thank you, my authors.* Still others make sure my luggage is always filled with prayers to carry to team members impatient to share a finished Bible. Others entrust me with funding support so I may carry on LBT's work. *Thank you, my couriers.* Some have volunteered to accompany me on my journeys overseas or to local speaking opportunities. *Thank you, my travelers.* How many years would it take to list the names of those who have been teachers along my path. Daily, I learn new skills, not just in language use, but in approaching people, developing teams, trusting Jesus. *Thank you, my mentors.* And here I revert to my educator role. "Communicate" by its very definition demands the sharing of information. These newsletters are not meant to be a one-way street. I may not always respond immediately, but your questions, comments and suggestions increase my effectiveness in sharing God's word with many people around the world. *Thank you, my communicators.* Perhaps your question or suggestion will become the next prayer letter.

May the joy of our recent Easter celebrations reflect in all we do.

*Becky*

A reminder: Used stamps continue to support my ministry. Please continue to save your stamps and send them c/o Renita Wollburg 8463 Wolf Rd, Bellevue, MI 49021. Do not send plain Forever stamps. **Old, foreign and commemorative** stamps are **desirable**. Trim, leaving 1/8 inch around the edge of the stamp before sending.