# Translation Guide

## Translation and Review

We suggest the following translation process:

1. Make a translation and make notes of any changes, issues, questions, etc.
2. Send back these questions for discussion, and discuss translation until happy with a first draft.
3. Read the translation with a couple of others, for their feedback.
4. Discuss feedback and adapt script as needed.
5. Send script to someone who is new to the drama, and ask for their understanding of the script’s meaning and dialogue. This helps us know how well the original meaning is communicated through the translated script.

Tips for translator:

* Read through the Series Overview, to help you understand the theological and educational goals. The translation must communicate these as a priority.
* Read through all the scripts first, to gain an overall understanding of the series (the tone, characters, story arc, etc).
* Read carefully each episode’s section in the Series Overview document, to help you understaind the main point and learning outcomes.
* Some scripts have ‘Translator notes’ commenting on specific lines, to clarify the purpose behind specific wording or guide the translation. Please look out for these and follow them.
* Translating an audio drama is different to translating other content such as a theological essay. The script must be written to be *spoken*, not read silently like a book. The characters must sound like the way people in the local culture normally speak. People generally speak in shorter sentences, and grammar is less formal than in writing. They typically use a simpler vocabulary. Abbreviations like “it’s” and “she’s” are common. Naturally, we have written the English script in this way, and you will need to follow this pattern in the audience language. We have included more commas than we would for purely written material, to guide the actors’ pacing.
* Select appropriate names for each of the characters. The scripts are provided with English names for the characters, but we expect you to change these to names appropriate in your local context. If you provide us with the complete set of names, we can replace these in the scripts for you.
* The dialogue should have emotions that the actors can bring out. This helps the audience engage with the story.
* Read out loud each sentence as you translate it, to test how well it sounds when spoken.
* The characters have different personalities, ages, social status, and even spiritual maturities. Please ensure this comes across in the translation, so that the audience can get to know each of them from their words.
* Avoid translating word for word, because that would result in dialogue that sounds inauthentic and the original meaning won’t carry across. Rather, read the Series Overview to understand the theological and educational goal of each episode, and then write a translation of the whole line that will carry the meaning and tone.
* The script contains several bible verses read out by the characters (e.g. the memory verses). These are sourced from the English NIV translation. Do not translate the text from the script. Rather, please replace these verses with the text from the bible translations that your audience would typically use. The producer and/or director should be involved in choosing the Bible translation you use.
* In the review of the memory verse at the start of the bible study with the ‘fill in the gaps’ exercise, pick the corresponding significant words in the local bible translation for the gaps, as much as possible.
* The script often has the characters reading the bible passages aloud and together, because this is common in some cultures (and is a good exercise). Feel free to adapt the script if this is not helpful for your audience.
* The pastor’s daughter calls him ‘dad’. Adapt this as appropriate in your culture.
* In audio questions, the answer must be translated as is. It must be a simple repetition of the correct option, as said in the question. Further explanations can be made after. It’s important that the audience hears the correct answer immediatedly after they’ve said it. For example, the practice question in the series introduction is “Who likes music? Is it *Sam*, *Ruth*, or *Ben*?” The answer is “Ruth. Ruth likes music.” rather than “The character who likes music is Ruth”.
* Scripts sometimes use words that are not the most common in English, but are chosen because they carry the meaning best. Please use words and phrases that communicate this meaning and are as common/appropriate as practical in your context.
* Some words are shown in *italics*, to signal to the actors to emphasise that word. Please keep this, as appropriate in the audience language.
* Together with the producer, decide what content other than the scripts needs translating, and when. You will probably translate just the first two episodes first, for a trial. Then you might translate the rest of the scripts. Once you’re ready to promote the series, you might translate the Series Overview, flyer, etc.
* Use the Word styles in the template. These ensure that the styling will be consistent across the scripts.
* Specific template files for translation may be provided in the Production Pack.
* Read the annotated sample script, and note the different sections of the script, and how the characters act and talk.
* There are ‘transitional phrases’ that signal to the audience the movement from one scene to another. For example, “This is what happened” is typically spoken by the host when the script transitions between listening to the host talking to the audience into listening the life situation of the characters. It’s important to translate these consistently across the series, to help the audience recognise these transitions. Early trials showed it’s critical to help the audience understand the different scenes of the script.
* We suggest you make a copy of the original English scripts. You can then press Enter at the end of each line you’re translating, write your translation below it, and then deleting the English line once you’re happy with your translation. This is only a suggestion, however, please use the method that suits you best, as long as you keep the styles consistent.
* The translation of this production guide is optional, depending on the English skills of of the producer and director (the roles it’s aimed at). Sections of it can be translated, if these are to be distributed more widely.