

Spanish: A Window to the Hispanic World

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A long time ago a missionary attending his first missionary conference naively suggested that translation from English to Spanish is easy and that there were dozens of people in the church who had studied Spanish and who could participate in the process. It was just a problem of organization. Perhaps stunned by his ignorance the veteran missionaries just listened.

I was the fellow who made that foolish suggestion. Since I had only begun to speak Spanish, I did not understand the issues involved in producing materials in another language. Two decades later I've come to think of the process of learning and using Spanish as opening a window to another world.

I. A Window to a Different History

Latin Lives

That old ditty "Latin is a language as dead as can be, first it killed the Romans, now it's killing me" is wrong. Latin didn't die. Cicero and his complex style passed into history. Latin students might find consolation in learning that the average person in the street didn't speak like Cicero and might well have had trouble understanding his speeches. Called Vulgar Latin, the everyday language of the common people was mispronounced, misspelled, favored prepositional phrases to indicate the relationship between words rather than relying only on inflections, and generally tended to simplify the grammar and structure favored by the rhetoricians and educated upper-class. The Roman senators may have complained about the provinces, but they did not visit them. The Roman soldiers did. So the Latin learned by the indigenous populace of Gallia, Hispanic and the other far-flung reaches of the Empire was the register spoken by the lower class and the slaves.

Hispanic became one of the most loyal parts of the Empire. The people adopted Latin to the point that, with the apparent exception of the Basque language in the far north, almost all traces of the languages spoken before the Roman conquest were lost. But Hispanic too was eventually isolated from the dying empire. The Visigoths advanced through the peninsula from Germany on their way to North Africa in a circuitous route to Italy. While they were to control Hispanic for centuries, they absorbed the Latin vernacular, giving it only a limited number of words like "*guerra*" (war) but adjusting the Celtic-influenced pronunciation further to their Germanic heritage. Then in 711, the most profound event since the coming of the Empire occurred on the peninsula when an entirely new civilization invaded from North Africa. The Moors, who brought their Islamic faith and their Arabic derived civilization, conquered almost all of Hispanic. Only the northern most reaches, including Leon and part of Castile survived. Now entirely separated from Italy and engaged in a titanic struggle that would last more than seven centuries to liberate their peninsula from a foreign power, the Latin language changed so much that it could no longer have been understood by a Roman soldier of the first century. Vowels and consonants changed, syllables were dropped, and the grammar became even more simplified. Perhaps the kind of English spoken by the illiterate or poorly educated would be comparable to the Latin spoken in northern Spain at the end of the first millennium. But the language was growing again as it adopted Arabic words like "*almacen*" (store room) and "*ayunar*" (fast) and recovered some of the Roman and Hellenic culture that was lost during the dark ages. The Latin and Spanish students among us will find common ground when they read a

fragment of some of the earliest Spanish text, written about 1040 AD: “*Como si filio alieno, non más adormes a meu seno*” (*Como si [fueses] hijito ajeno, ya no to duermes más en mi seno*).ⁱ

It could be argued that English evolved even more from its Anglo-Saxon origins. Recall how much our language has changed just since the Fourteenth Century when Chaucer composed the *Canterbury Tales*, in what we call Middle English. While English has eliminated almost all of its verb endings, Spanish still retains a highly inflected verb with “62 distinguishable forms”ⁱⁱ to signify person, number, tense, and mood. Following the precedent of Vulgar Latin, the modern speaker of Spanish still resists the noun streams so typical in English and uses prepositions and even relative clauses to define the relationship between the parts of speech. Thus, a noun stream like “Civil War Authors” must be defined in Spanish as authors *who wrote during* the Civil War, *about* the Civil War, or *who fought* in the Civil War.ⁱⁱⁱ

Influenced by the highly-developed Arabic culture during the Thirteenth Century, Spain enjoyed a cultural revival under Alfonso X that was unmatched at the time in northern Europe. Besides borrowing words from Arabic, Spanish now reclaimed words like “*argumento*” and “*crucifixión*” from classical and church Latin, borrowed other words like “*filosofía*” and “*geografía*” from Greek and added still more vocabulary from neighboring European vernaculars like French and Italian. During the Sixteenth Century the conquistadors discovered more than gold and silver in the new world. They also enriched their language with new Amerindian terms like “*tomate*,” “*chile*,” “*papa*,” and “*guajolote*.”

Therefore, the Spanish language itself—its vocabulary, grammar and structure—is a window through which someone can experience something of the Roman Empire, the Gothic invaders, Islam and the ancient civilizations of Mexico, Central America and the Andes.

What’s in a Name? Politics

So why is modern Spanish not called Latin? For historical and national reasons. The ancient form was retained with much less modification by churchmen and scholars as the international language known to educated people through the Middle Ages. The Latin spoken by the lower classes evolved into other forms besides modern Spanish; it also became Portuguese/Galician, Catalan, French, Italian, Romanian and others, all of which have equal claim to their common Roman ancestor. At least some of these vernaculars are similar enough that an occasional short article written in Portuguese by our mission field in Brazil can be printed in *El Spanish Mensajero Luteran*^{iv} with only a short glossary included to assist the Spanish reader. Some would argue that Cockney and Southern English are less mutually intelligible than Spanish and Portuguese. The separation of and naming of languages are partly the result of nationalism.

The vernacular spoken in the north-central area of Spain, in Leon Castile, and called Castilian (“*castellano*”) still today, became known as Spanish (“*español*”) during the Seventeenth Century when Madrid centralized its control over the rest of the peninsula, including even Portugal for a few decades.^v The Franco dictatorship during the Twentieth Century centralized power even to the point of persecuting minority vernaculars like Catalan in the northeastern part of the country. Recently, the trend was reversed when the current constitution recognized that the minority vernaculars could also be considered Spanish languages.^{vi}

It is partly because of the history of Spanish that an English-speaker of the WELS today faces difficulties in teaching the Bible to a Spanish-speaker. Because our language is essentially Germanic with many words borrowed directly from Greek and especially from Latin or indirectly from Latin through French, we frequently have two words to describe different

nuances of the same thing such as deer and venison, or cow and beef. Similarly, the Spanish theological vocabulary tends to have one word, such as “*justicia*,” where English uses two words: “justice” from “*iustitia*” and “righteousness” from “*Gerechtigkeit*.” When a novice of our fellowship discusses “self-righteousness” in Spanish, he is tempted to use “*autojusticia*,” a term that has little currency and no adjectival form. By studying Spanish religious literature, he learns that self-righteousness is best translated and explained with other expressions. For example, a self-righteous person is “*farisaico*” (pharisaical), a “*santurrón*” (sanctimonious) or “*alguien que confía en sus propias obras*” (someone who trusts in his own works).^{vii}

Some Misunderstood Advice

When I began working in the Spanish publications program a decade ago, the evangelism office of our synod obtained an invitation for several people in our fellowship to attend a Hispanic Writer’s Workshop. The experience proved seminal for the way we have developed our translation and writing program in El Paso, but we also received some advice that we were not ready to use well. We were encouraged to study *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White, which several editors of another Lutheran synod carried in their pockets.^{viii} While an educated native speaker of Spanish could apply well the principles of conciseness and clarity advocated in that little handbook, we tried to apply the principles literally—to the confusion of the native-speaking translators in our fellowship. Conciseness, clarity and style are produced differently in Spanish.

Consider the following paragraph from a contemporary, popular narrative by a respected author in Mexico.^{ix} A translation that slavishly follows the form of the original is almost unintelligible in English.

Of all the provinces of North new-spain none suffered so much as the New Vizcaya the prolonged war against the “indian barbarians”. The tobosos and the tarahumaras rebelled themselves against the cross and the spade during good part of the century XVII. Later surged on the horizon the nightmare that survived the Colonial (period) and assaulted the north of Mexico up to the final (stages) of the century XIX: the apaches. Between those centaur nomads and their rival mexicans not only was entabled a war to death but also an escalated macabre of the instruments of death. This scene soulless and ferocious, “always flying”—as explained the chronicles—was a school living of the man whose epic incarnates the zone profound of the soul mexican, its most obscure and vengeful courage, its most innocent aspiration of light: Francisco Villa.

If we were to try to convey the meaning of this text, we would change the form considerably and write something like the following:

No province in northern New Spain suffered more than New Vizcaya during the prolonged war against the “barbaric Indians.” The Tobosans and Tarahumaras rebelled against cross and spade during much of the Seventeenth Century. Then another nightmare, which would outlast the colonial era, emerged on the horizon when the Apaches ravaged Northern Mexico until the end of the Nineteenth Century. Nomadic horsemen, they engaged their Mexican rivals in ever bloodier and grotesque combat that became merciless, savage and—as the chroniclers saw it—chaotic. This was the environment that trained Francisco Villa. For his epic life revealed the dark-side, the vengeful rage, of the Mexican soul, along with its innocent quest for light.

The Mexican author used longer more complex sentences, and he ordered his thoughts in this opening paragraph to rise in a crescendo to the epic figure of the entire book: Francisco

Villa. Although English has a larger vocabulary and exploits its ability to use virtually any word, including descriptive nouns and adjectives, as verbs, English style will permit and even encourage the repetition of key nouns for the sake of clarity. To the Spanish reader, this would betray a “poverty of vocabulary.” Articles are used differently, punctuation is slightly different and proper adjectives are not capitalized in Spanish. Because both languages share many words inherited from Latin and Greek, there is a temptation for the uninitiated to use them indiscriminately in both languages, but in many cases the words have slightly different, sometimes contradictory meanings. If the form and vocabulary of the freely translated paragraph were translated back into Spanish, the paragraph would sound strange, awkward and perhaps even verbose to the Spanish reader.

The idea of being clear and concise and the need for a style guide are the messages we should have picked up from those Hispanic editors. But Spanish requires its own “Strunk and White.”

II. A Stained Glass Window

At fellowship activities members of the Lutheran congregation in Monterrey invite people to declaim poetry they have memorized or have written themselves. It is difficult to imagine that occurring in the Midwest, perhaps partly because Spanish lends itself to rhyme and rhythm. It is naturally poetic. Spanish is melodic, English is rapped. Spanish is specific, it can describe ideas precisely; English is elliptical, it is the language of commerce and technology. Spanish is conservative, as it is guided somewhat by a Royal Academy, so that borrowed words tend to be recast into Spanish phonetical spelling and given Spanish grammatical signifiers; English easily incorporates new words and expressions from any language. Each language in its own way is fully capable of expressing any concept. Each language is beautiful in its own way, like a stained glass window.

A mosaic of small pieces of glass is fitted together to create a beautiful scene. Step back from the window and the scene becomes clearer. Like mosaics Spanish and English are formerly colonial languages spoken by hundreds of millions of people in many countries around the world; they are multifaceted languages spoken or written in a kaleidoscope of variations by many different population groups around the globe. Even so, step back from the window and observe that there is a common form of each language that is understood by most of its speakers.

The beginning speaker of Spanish is confused by pieces of the mosaic because at times he receives conflicting advice: he learns to say “*nieve*” to buy ice cream in Mexico and then is told he is wrong in Puerto Rico that he should say “*helado*.” The Hispanic writers and translators who work with the Spanish publications program also have to face the issue of regional differences. Each person may be tempted to think that the Spanish spoken in his area is “correct” Spanish; or he may think that the Spanish spoken in certain regions, such as Spain or Colombia is “proper” Spanish. An Anglo editor or Hispanic translators who live in an English-dominant area may also become so zealous about eliminating Anglicisms from Spanish copy that they handcuff others who are merely using the inventiveness that naturally wells up in those who are writing with the confidence that comes when one knows his own language and culture.^x

Spanish Like English Was a Colonial Language

In this regard the American missionary has an excellent frame of reference to help him through a sometimes difficult issue. He understands that being all things to all people includes language; and he was educated in a nation that conditioned him to accommodate his language

according to the age, education, region and even the gender of his audience. While he appreciates the importance of correct grammar, precise vocabulary, appropriate register and good style, he also knows that there is no universal standard in the English-speaking world that applies equally in every situation.

Consequently a missionary needs only to understand that a similar situation obtains in the Spanish-speaking world. Like English, Spanish is spoken by an enormous number of people, estimated at 350 to 400 million; and the language is used in many nations over a vast expanse of territory, including the United States that now has the fourth largest Spanish-speaking population in the world, a population estimated at 23 million.^{xi}

The Spanish spoken in the United States is, of course, influenced considerably by English. The largely bilingual population along the Mexican border intermingles both languages in a process called code-switching, incorporating English words like “*wátschelo*,” “*typear*,” and “*parquear*” into Spanish and using English grammatical forms along the way.^{xii} But the United States is not the only place where Spanish interacts with another language. Nahuatl vocabulary has become part of the Spanish spoken in Mexico; Quechua is spoken by a large portion of the population in Peru; Guaraní is used widely in Paraguay; Italian, Portuguese and German influence Spanish in the southern part of South America; and French, Portuguese and Catalan influence Spanish in Spain. Thus, like English, Spanish is an international language that enables people to communicate in the media, the marketplace and workplace while other vernaculars are still spoken in some ethnic communities and especially at home. And like English, remnants of other vernaculars have been incorporated into Spanish.

It is not surprising, therefore, that different words such as “*carro*,” “*auto*” and “*coche*” are used for a car, or “*guagua*,” “*camión*,” or “*bus*” for a bus, or that Mexicans call asphalt (“*asfalta*”) “*chapopote*.” Nor is it surprising that a translator of the *People’s Bible* who currently lives in Mankato, Minnesota, where her husband serves primarily Mexican-Americans, is concerned about making the translations equally understandable for Lutherans that speak both Spanish and Quechua in her native Peru.

One of the challenges that the Publications program faces, therefore, is to use a vocabulary, style and register of Spanish that fits the needs and expectations of the intended readers. A well-educated translator in Bogota Colombia or Cuba^{xiii} may want to use vocabulary and a complex sentence structure that are too challenging for less educated readers in other areas of Latin America. But if the style is too simple, it may repel the more educated readers whose interest we would also like to earn.

Overcoming Regional Differences

Even as it is possible to write a style of English that will be appreciated across the United States and even beyond the regions of the world where English is the primary language, it is also possible to use a vocabulary and style that will be understood and enjoyed by a broad portion of the Spanish-speaking world. Certain expressions and forms will either be avoided or used in a way in which they can be understood in context, so that a balance is achieved between local color and clarity. The Publications program is attempting to achieve this balance by developing its own style guide, conducting workshops, surveying readers about style, submitting samples of its work to a recognized professional translator and working with Hispanic translators from a variety of backgrounds.

III. Opening the Window

When our oldest son was assigned to serve as a missionary in Mexico he had the uncomfortable feeling that people in the Midwest assumed he was a fluent native-speaker of Spanish because he could communicate at a simple level in Spanish and was somewhat accustomed to Spanish pronunciation. It has been a common experience that those who are not fluent in a second language tend to underestimate the training and practice needed to communicate in another language and assume that virtually any attempt to communicate in another language is successful. The naivete extends beyond vocabulary and grammar to social issues related to language.

To Speak or Not to Speak in Spanish

When our son visited El Paso from Mexico City he assumed at first that he should continue to speak Spanish in the stores, just as he would be expected to do in Mexico City. To his surprise some Mexican-Americans reacted negatively, as if he were insulting them. He experienced a phenomenon called diglossia: in a bilingual area one language may be used for cross-cultural communication, the other reserved for the home or for people of the same culture. To use the wrong language in the wrong situation may cause unintended results.^{xiv} It is not surprising, therefore, that all five congregations in the El Paso/Las Cruces area count Mexican-Americans in their Sunday worship attendance, while only one congregation uses Spanish in its worship services. The vast majority of the population is of Mexican origin and only a small percentage is monolingual Spanish. While it is helpful for Anglo pastors in the border region to have some familiarity with Spanish, it is not required that they should become fluent in Spanish in order to reach out to much of the Mexican-American population. Nor should pastors and congregations apologize if in a bilingual area they mix both languages in their ministry: our purpose is to share the gospel, not preserve language in some particular form. If mastery of Spanish is not required for successful outreach, neither should the ability to communicate well in Spanish be disparaged, for it remains the first language—the one spoken in the home and the one that best touches the heart—for much of the population. The ability to communicate in that language remains an important advantage in a bilingual since it enables a missionary to communicate at another level. Moreover, recent immigrants, little children and the elderly—those who have little contact with the community outside of their homes or ethnic group—are likely to be monolingual Spanish.

Creative Writers Needed

Another misunderstanding occurs when one assumes that his ability to communicate at a certain level in Spanish qualifies him to translate or write copy that could be used anywhere in the Spanish-speaking world. It is obvious to English-speaking pastors that not everyone is able to write for the *Northwestern Lutheran*. It may seem obvious that future church workers should develop their skills in English composition from grade school through college and even at the seminary. Yet that experience is sometimes ignored when communication in a foreign language is attempted. Spanish has a body of literature that is just as comprehensive and impressive as that which we enjoy in English. Hispanics have just as high expectations upon picking up something to read in their language, as do Anglos. A professor of linguistics at Stanford University remarked that, although he could lecture about his field in Dutch at a university in the Netherlands, he refused to write assignments on the chalkboard. There is something about making written mistakes before a critical, unforgiving audience: the mistakes stand out for all to see.

Not only must English-dominant workers understand their own limitations in communicating effectively in another language, they must also recognize that, as in the English-speaking world, not every native-speaker of Spanish communicates with equal effect in every region, medium and register. Some years ago the Ethnic Resources editor of another Lutheran publishing house did us a great favor by honestly and frankly reviewing our Spanish publications. He urged that *El Mensajero Luterano* be reviewed by a native-speaker of Spanish before it was printed. What he didn't know was that we were already doing that. The problem was that the fine Christian person who was performing that service did not have the benefit of the education needed to edit well. The person was so used to English-dominant missionaries, that the person may have even felt that their unusual way of writing Spanish was normal for Lutheran religions materials.^{xv} The Spanish copy of the *Mensajero* improved when an editor was found who was more certain of her Spanish and trained to distinguish the characteristic lexical and structural differences between Spanish and English.

It is often easy to identify a text that was written by an English-dominant writer. The choice of vocabulary and structure seem strange and at times awkward for the Spanish-dominant reader. Frequently, I find myself interpreting Spanish copy written for the *Mensajero* by English-dominant writers: the message is perfectly clear to me, but much less so to a Spanish-dominant editor.

The Right Word Fitly Spoken

Beyond vocabulary and structure is the even more subtle and challenging issue of register. Register means to speak or write in such a way that the message seems appropriate for the receptor and the context in which the message is communicated.^{xvi} We might tell our children at home: (please) be quiet; but in the work place we might say something more oblique and polite: I'm sorry, I'm having a bit of a problem concentrating; could you turn down the radio please? Copy written for a visual medium, like television, is different from that written in a newspaper, which is different from that written in a book. The receptor expects a certain style and level of formality according to the mode in which the message is communicated. We speak differently to children than we do to adults, to friends differently than to strangers. Register is one of the most difficult areas of language to learn, and the person best suited to negotiate the issues for a particular vernacular is the one who was raised and educated in that language. For me it was not surprising to hear our translator/editor say that when she attended Michigan Lutheran Seminary to learn English, she felt thoroughly confused at times when her friends would edit her work in seemingly contradictory and eclectic ways. I have often felt like a weather vane when educated native-speakers of Spanish have gone over the materials I have tried to produce in their language. The nuances escape me.

A Solution: Team Translation

Therefore, the concepts taught by Dr. Ernst Wendland and advocated by Missionary Pieter Ried apply to translation work from English into Spanish even though these languages and cultures share far more in common than English and Chichewa or another non Indo-European language.^{xvii} Reduced to its simplest terms, good translation involves a dialog: The speaker of the source text, for example English, says, "I mean..."; the speaker of the receptor language, for example Spanish, asks, "Do you mean...?"; to which the Anglo replies, "Not exactly, I mean..."; to which the Hispanic exclaims, "Oh! you mean ...!"; to which finally, and hopefully, the Anglo responds in delight, "Yes, that's right!"

The final result is a text that follows the meaning of the source text, not the form. In fact, were the form to be followed slavishly, the translation would not only be awkward, it would be misleading. More than form, the message at times must be adapted so that it references the geography, literature, social conditions or illustrations that make sense to the Hispanic reader. Since the People's Bible commentaries explain a Bible text without entering into many culturally specific illustrations and applications, the commentary can generally be translated without a great deal of adaptation. But some adaptations do need to be made. The Spanish version of the commentaries is based on a much more literal translation of the Bible, rather than the New International Version. Since many Christian hymns, the Lutheran Confessions and some of Luther's writings have already been published in Spanish, the Hispanic reader should read those quotations from familiar, published sources rather than receive new translations. Some geographical and political references do need to be changed. Our adaptations are not as drastic, however, as are the ones that are apparently being made in Indonesia, perhaps because the Hispanic and Anglo cultures share much in common. Nor do we find it necessary to rewrite the English commentary first in order to make it intelligible to the Hispanic translator, largely because there are many genuinely bilingual people in our own fellowship who are capable of translating English texts into Spanish. In Indonesia, Latin-based English vocabulary tends to be simplified, or clarified into Anglo-Saxon equivalents. If we were to provide this service for the Spanish translator, we would have to do the opposite: if we were to create a glossary of simplified English, it would be the Latin-based English vocabulary that would be the most understandable to the Hispanic translator. English-speaking missionaries still have a role to play in translation work, not only in the many unpublished Bible studies and other materials that they produce for their congregations, but also in highly edited materials such as *El Mensajero Luterano* and the *People's Bible*. Missionaries are needed to read the materials to make sure that the final translations accurately reproduce the meaning of the source text, and that when the text has been adapted, it is still accurate and doctrinally correct.

When Not to Translate

Not everything should be translated. Indeed, as the Lutheran Church in Latin America develops, it will run the course already covered by Lutherans in the United States who brought with them materials in other European languages, translated some of them into English and finally reached the point where the former languages disappeared and everything was written in English. Harold Essmann, coordinator for the Multi-Language Publications Program, questions, for example, whether it would even be desirable to try to translate the Teachings of the *People's Bible* into other languages since the doctrinal series contains so many references to American culture. Patti Fernandez and I agreed to revise a series of radio spots that were translated into Spanish in Puerto Rico, only to realize later that the series is full of cultural illustrations. One spot talks about Yogi Berra:

The baseball great Yogi Berra commenting on a banquet he attended, said, "You couldn't keep a conversation goin'. Everyone was talkin' too much." "It ain't over 'til it's over," or "A person can observe a lot just by watchin'," are typical Yogisms. But Yogi hit on something when he said "You couldn't keep a conversation goin'. Everybody was talkin' too much."

People might know about Yogi Berra in Puerto Rico because so many have lived in New York. Imagine trying to use that illustration in other areas of Latin America which have much less contact with the United States. And imagine trying to translate the style and register into something equivalent in Spanish. It was necessary to rewrite the paragraphs:

You've heard this saying before: "You couldn't hold a conversation because everyone was talking too much."

A famous baseball player in the United States, Yogi Berra, was well loved not just because he was a good ball player but also because of his odd way of speaking: he'd manage to say something really profound in very simple language. But when he said: "You couldn't hold a conversation because everyone was talking too much," he stumbled onto something really important.^{xviii}

Translated radio spots may work for now, but the day will come when our synod, like other churches, has Hispanic writers producing their own materials using their own literary and historical traditions. And the materials will prove more effective in their cultures.

So Is Spanish Worth the Trouble?

The message could be drawn from the preceding that an English-dominant writer has no business translating or writing in another language. That would be an unfortunate conclusion. Rather we are pleading for more sensitivity about what it means to communicate well in another language. If it would be extreme and unfortunate to take the position that only educated native-speakers can write or translate into Spanish, it is also counterproductive to overestimate our skills or to underestimate the challenges we face to produce good material in another language. The best solution is to carefully pick those projects that most need to be published, to find both Spanish-dominant and English-dominant people who understand the principles of translation and have a strong understanding of each other's language, and to engage them in a team effort so that their relative strengths and experiences are used in the most productive ways possible.

Aside from the ability to share the gospel with the growing Hispanic population in the United States that may now have reached 12% of the entire population, the study of Spanish offers important advantages to the church workers of our synod. If that person is also studying classical Latin, Spanish vocabulary and structure still have enough similarity so that the student can be taught to observe the links. To study both languages is to give the student an opportunity to observe language evolving over time. But much more important is the opportunity that Spanish presents to both student and worker to appreciate the importance of meaning-oriented rather than form-oriented translation. He experiences the foolishness of trying to use English grammatical and syntactical patterns in Spanish and comes to appreciate that language involves much more than vocabulary. As the window to another culture with a different history and set of images opens to the student, he also understands why machine (or computer generated) translation may work for translating email messages or some technical texts, but would not be helpful for translating material that must earn the reader's interest and touch his heart. As the student grows in his understanding of the Hispanic world, he also has a frame of reference to help him appreciate that when he is reading the Bible, especially in its original languages, he is also entering into another time and place, that he needs to understand and appreciate that world in its own terms, and that however much he learns about that world, he, as Luther once said, is merely scratching the surface.

A student of a foreign language may wonder why God has not blessed us with the gift of tongues, even as he miraculously enabled the disciples in Jerusalem to proclaim the gospel in every vernacular spoken that Pentecost Sunday so many centuries ago. A missionary after many years of work in another language will know the answer: there is a blessing in not being able to speak immediately in another language. Since the missionary does not know how to speak, he

has to listen. The more he humbly listens, the more he learns about the people with whom he would share the gospel, and the more he is finally able to communicate when his moment finally comes. May the Lord continue to bless our synod's efforts to proclaim the gospel, now in more than twenty different languages. Let Spanish be a means to accustom English-dominant workers to the issues involved in communicating in another language.

ⁱ Anonymous. Ca. 1040. *Poesía mozárabe: Jarchas*. Class notes, Spanish 3301 (Alberto Bagby, UTEP: 1992, p. 4).

ⁱⁱ Ramsey, Marathon Montrose. 1984. *A Textbook of Modern Spanish*. Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., pp. xii, 329. (The same grammar counts a maximum of 395 forms in the Latin verb.)

ⁱⁱⁱ For a discussion of the History of Spanish see Stevenson, CH (1970. *The Spanish Language Today*. London: Hutchinson, pp. 1-3; 115-136); Penny, Ralph (1991. *A History of the Spanish Language*. Cambridge: University Press); Mar-Molinero, Clare (1997. *The Spanish Speaking World* (New York: Routledge, pp. 3-14).

^{iv} The bimonthly publication (*The Lutheran Messenger*) of WELS Latin American missions, 900 copies distributed to over 140 addresses.

^v To encourage communication and maintain the influence of Spain over an empire that now spread far beyond the peninsula to cover much of the Western Hemisphere, the Spanish Royale Academy (Real Academia Española, RAE) was founded in 1713. Making spelling more consistently phonetical, and regularizing grammar and vocabulary, the academy still strives toward those ends through a loose federation of national academies in the twenty countries where Spanish is considered the official language today.

^{vi} Mar-Molinero, pp. 7, 119-124.

^{vii} Recalling the tendency of Spanish to be more explicit, the reader should not be surprised that at times English tends to use one word for several concepts, Spanish prefers a different vocable for each concept. In English we belong to a church, Spanish-speakers participate in a denomination or a congregation; we go to church, they attend a worship service; we worship in a church, they in a temple; but all of us are part of the Holy Christian Church.

^{viii} Strunk, William Jr. and White, EB. 1979. *The Elements of Style*. New York: MacMillan.

^{ix} Krauze, Enrique. 1987. *Entre el ángel y el fierro: Francisco Villa*. México, DF: Fondo de Cultura Económica, p. 7.

^x Something like this was observed among Mexican-Americans living in San Antonio during the 1970's. See Conklin, Nancy Faires and Lourie, Margaret A. 1983. *A Host of Tongues*. New York: The Free Press, p. 191.

^{xi} Mar-Molinero, p. 160.

^{xii} For example, using the Spanish gerund as a present participle, using infinitive phrases when Spanish would use relative clauses, or dropping the Subjunctive form.

^{xiii} Only Cuba and Uruguay are considered monolingual countries in the Western Hemisphere.

^{xiv} For a simple definition see Mar-Molinero, p. 10. The technical terminology associated with bilingualism is defined by Romaine, Suzanne. *Bilingualism*. 1989. Oxford: Blackwell.

^{xv} While the literal Reina-Valera (1960) translation of the Bible is still widely used by Evangelicals in Latin America, it is unfortunate that the Book most read and memorized by missionaries does not correspond to the style and vocabulary people normally use in conversation or in other written materials.

^{xvi} A clear definition of register in the Spanish context is found in Mar-Molinero, pp. 71-84.

^{xvii} The presentations given by Dr. Ernst Wendland at a translation seminar in Milwaukee sponsored by the Multi-Language Publications Program in 1997 are summarized in the Multi-Language Publications Newsletter, published by Pastor Harold Essmann, (1997-1998). Some of Dr. Wendland's presentations are taped. Missionary Ried's paper is entitled *Clarify the English to Be Used by the Translator* (Pastor Pieter Reid, 1999). The materials can be borrowed from the World Mission Collection.

^{xviii} Translation by Patti Fernandez:

Ha oído esto antes: "Fue imposible mantener una conversación porque todos estaban hablando mucho."

El famoso jugador beisbolista norteamericano Yogi Berra fue muy famoso no sólo por ser un buen jugador sino también por su manera de hablar tan peculiar. Se expresaba de manera tan simple pero a la vez sus palabras llevaban un profundo mensaje. Pero al decir: "Fue imposible mantener una conversación porque todos estaban hablando mucho", tocó un punto importante."