

PUTTING THE TRANSLATION TO THE TEST

It is not enough to create a translation at the desk only. If it is to be dynamic, speaking to the heart, it has to be written in the language of the people. The language of the common people, the men and women who have never learned a second language, the pagans, the Christians and the non-Christians, the fortune-teller and the idol-worshipper, the market-woman and the yam farmer. Somebody has to go and ask them how they would say it.

It is not enough to hand over the translations to the churches. They may be stuck in deep traditional linguistic ruts, without even knowing it. The people in the churches have to be involved in the translation from a very early stage.

It is not enough for the churches to enjoy their translation, not enough to use it in their church services only. They have to be shown how to use it as a tool to spread the good news of Jesus who has power and who saves. They have to be aware of the deep chasm existing between the social club called 'church' and the masses outside its doors.

From the very start of the project, Paul had been planning how to achieve this, how to combine these three requirements, how to enlist the help of a large variety of people.



Samuel reading from the Izi translation in the market places

The case for Izi, of course, was different. There was no church yet waiting for the translation. There were a few groups with a handful of believers. But we had Samuel who went into schools and markets; he preached to any kind of group, and in this way tested the text of the translation.

But in Ikwo and Ezaa, we intended to involve the existing two protestant denominations who had seemed keen to have the Scriptures. However, once

again we were surprised and disappointed to still find some sceptics.

At a meeting, a visiting Ibo pastor asked:
"Wouldn't it be better if we Ibo people all spoke the same language?"

"Certainly, it would be ideal," Paul answered, "but how do you want to achieve this? The government has tried for 30 years in the schools where the children have to struggle to understand their Ibo teacher from the first year. Later they have to learn English as well. And the results? When they leave after 6 years of primary school, they do not know English properly, are not at home in Ibo, and are even confused about their own language! Very, very few make it to higher education. And secondly, who is to say which language should be chosen to be learned by everybody else? Why should it be my neighbor's and not my own?"

None of the Ikwo-evangelists present asked a question - but to Paul their taciturnity spoke louder than any words.

Another question was on the mind of that pastor:

"We central Ibo people do understand each other's dialects like those in Umuahia, Owerri and Onitsha. And we do not need three translations. Why couldn't Izi and Ikwo and Ezaa not just do with one translation, too?"

This was a question asked very frequently, and not only by church leaders. We ourselves had been studying that question as one language differed not more than 5% in vocabulary from the other language. And the people really did seem to understand each other well. Yet we had to explain our findings to the pastor:

- 1) the three clans live in an area without villages or towns. The population does not move as much as in the central Ibo area. Linguistic differences do not disappear very easily without a high degree of contact.
- 2) There are very few cases of intermarriage. The three clans have a strong, historic self-image, distinctive cultural features and cling strongly to their own soil.
- 3) As far as development goes, our areas have reached a standard which the central Ibo area had already reached 50 years ago. Even the schools have not been able to bring about any economic development.
- 4) None of the three areas would be satisfied with using a translation in the neighboring language.
- 5) Linguistically, there are too many expressions and idioms which sound similar in the three dialects but have different meanings. So they can be totally misunderstood.

To illustrate the last point, Paul told of an experience he recently had in Ikwo. He was driving along a narrow bushpath - just wide enough for the car. Some of our translators were with him.

One of the ladies going to market on that path had heard the engine rather late, and when Paul hooted, she quickly ran into the high grass at the side. Paul, wanting to reassure her, started his apology with the words: 'Ge ndzu ta gushi ngu!' meaning: 'Do not be afraid!' This is an idiom in Izi and literally means: Don't be hungry for life.

To Paul's astonishment, the woman gave Paul such a hurt look that he was quite confused. As they were driving on, Thomas asked him:

"Do you realize what you said to that woman?"

"Well, I saw that I must have said something wrong. What did I actually say?"

"You told her: just perish, just die!!" replied Thomas, explaining that in Ikwo this same sentence is not used figuratively as in Izi, but in its literal sense: don't be so hungry for life; in other words, just die...!

Later we came across many other words and expressions which were pronounced the same in two of the languages, but had a very different meaning. To have just one translation for all three languages would therefore cause too many misunderstandings.

The presentation lasted for two hours and Samuel also added some valuable points and examples. The pastor kept his last argument of doubt for the end:

"What I am always afraid of, is that this translation will split our church."

It was not the first time that Paul had heard this objection and he explained that this was only a theoretical danger. If the Christians became strong and mature through using the translation, and understood with their hearts what Jesus meant by being "one in Him", this would no doubt be far more preferable to having weak and immature Christians, not understanding anything about the gospel, trying to remain under one roof.

"Our unity is not founded on a common church language," Paul closed, "but on our Lord Jesus Himself. And if we wanted to avoid everything that caused splits, then we couldn't preach the Gospel anymore at all. We have seen for ourselves how the Gospel has caused rifts in families all over the world."

Although the young evangelists had not dared to speak in front of their older leader, their eyes and faces clearly showed on whose side they were. They were ready to help us, but in the following months it became clear to us that their standard of education was not far enough along for us to count on them to evaluate the translation and write down their comments.

There was now only one way left: to send out our own translators to do the testing of the Scripture portions in the villages. And this in turn would mean the whole project would take longer and the budget would be increased...

For the Izi translation, we had already adopted this method. Samuel had gone out to test it whenever there was a portion or a book ready to be checked. It was not easy for him. He had to ride on his bicycle for long stretches, in heat or rain. But the Lord went before him and led him to places where he found open doors and

hearts. His joyful character won him the favor of the people, and their responsive reaction in return rejoiced his heart and spurred him on. He wrote about such testing trips:



Samuel reading the newly translated passages in one of the compounds

"Often the people said they wished the whole translation was finished already. Questions like these were always asked:

'When are you going to print this book so that we can read it?'

'How are we going to learn to read so that we can use this book?'

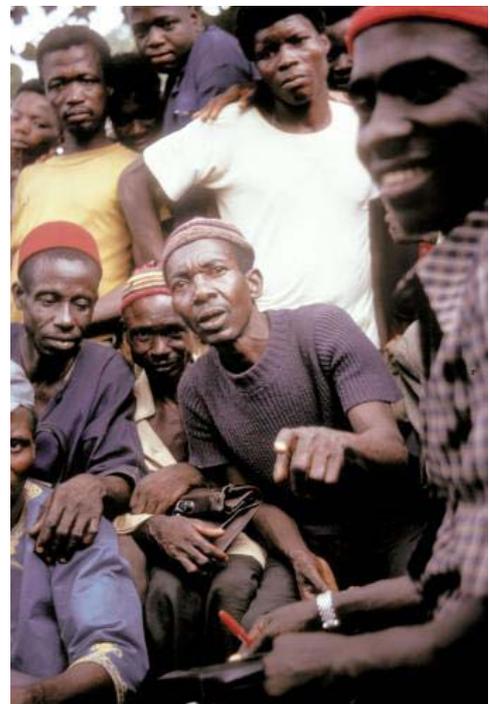
'Why can you not introduce the reading of Izi in the schools so that children can learn how to read Izi and teach others at home?'

"In answer to the last question, I said that we have indeed approached the government on this matter, but that the officials so far insist that the Izi children learn Ibo.

"The Izis did not like to hear that. One old man suggested that all the old men should meet together and after discussing the problem go to the Abakaliki Schoolboard and tell them that the Izis want to have books in their own language.

'We want them to know that the Izi people are hungry for books in their language and that it is not just the white man doing his own thing!'"

"When I go out testing, many villagers invite me into their compound. There I usually play a cassette so that a group of people come together. I introduce myself and tell them why I have come. They welcome me and send their children away, or force them to keep quiet, so that there will be no noise. On Sundays, they invite me to speak in their local (catholic) church building. I do go and speak to them. The poor Izi men in the church, who have never heard the Word in their language, always jump up with joy when they hear me read the Gospel and explain it in the Izi language. One man said: 'I have been to this church five years now, but today is the first time that I am touched, and now I know that Jesus really died for me!'



questions always came with such testing

"An unbeliever who helped me test 1 Cor. 15 asked me: 'Listen, friend, are these things which you read really true? If they are true, please tell us what to do, for we live a life which does not please God.' I explained how he and his family could be saved. They believed, and their joy was great. They pleaded with me to start a church in their home, but I had to say no, because that is not my present work.

"Some women listened to me as I read the manuscript of a booklet Inge had prepared about pregnancy, birth and child rearing. One of them said: 'Why did God not bring these people here earlier? Many children who died need not have died!'

"These are some of the examples of my testing tour. I am more than ever convinced that the Izi hunger for the Word of God in their own language. Once the New Testament is ready in Izi, God will be able to do the same work as with Jonah in Niniveh."

We had asked Samuel to write us a report after each of his testing trips. In fact, two reports. In the first, he could describe where he went and what passages he tested, the reactions of the people and any interesting experiences he had. In the second, more technical report, we expected him to write in detail, verse by verse, what the people had proposed to be changed, which words were misunderstood, which passages hard to understand etc. In order not to waste time and keep people waiting while he wrote his notes, we asked him to record everything on cassette and work on his report when he came back.

As Samuel was one of their own men, people did not hesitate to point out any weakness they found. Such criticism which would have been hard to accept from Paul or from his colleagues, Samuel accepted without complaining. Here are some examples from Samuel's technical report:

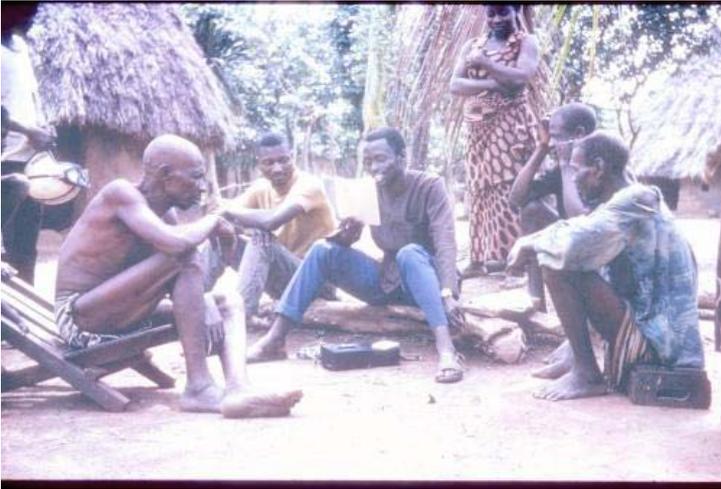
1 John 3:16

REN (=rendered) "How we know what it is to love, is that Christ has let go of his life for our sake: therefore it is fitting that we also let go of our life for the sake of the brothers."

VC (= village comment) 'to let go of one's life' is not natural to the people. Secondly, they thought 'brothers' were literal brothers.

SUG (=suggested) "This is how we know what it is to love, it is that Christ allowed for our sake that one killed him. Therefore, it is also due for us to allow that one kill us for the sake of the ones with whom we are together in God's hand."

Samuel's reports and experiences convinced us more and more that this kind of testing produced valuable results and feedback, and was indispensable for a dynamic translation. We recognized that this was also the only way for the Ikwo and Ezaa translations to be tested out.



Daniel Eze in one of the Ezaa compounds to test the translation

So the other translators were sent off, too, Thomas and Elias for Ikwo and Daniel for Ezaa. Not having the same outgoing character and gift for making friends as Samuel had, it was very hard for them. They also encountered more opposition than Samuel had experienced. The long trips on their bicycles sapped their strength. They often returned discouraged or even sick, or took some days off in their family homes to recuperate. They started complaining about the hardships, one instigating all the others. Soon

they banded all together and demanded a motorcycle for their work.

We sympathized with them, we knew their hardships, we realized that a motorcycle would not only ease the tension and facilitate their task, but also speed up the work. But we had no money. We had never held back any of our own resources, but even so we were constantly on the brink of debt. The persistent demands for increased salaries, the rising costs of paper and other materials, travel etc. never did let us breathe easily! Our African co-workers could never believe this, to them every white man had heaped up treasure safely overseas and possessed an unlimited source of money flowing into his pockets!

Nevertheless, we presented our problem to the Swiss Church supporting the Ikwo and Ezaa project and also to our own friends. There was a great rejoicing when the telegram from Switzerland announced that the funds would come for the purchase of a motorcycle for the Ikwo and Ezaa project! A few weeks later, a large gift from a personal friend made it possible to buy a second, less powerful, motorcycle for the Izi work.

The joy of the translators comes through in their letters to the donors:

"Let me first of all thank Mr. and Mrs Meier who left their place of comfort in the white man's land to come and suffer with us here and battle with the scorching sun and the unwanted visitors of the tropics - the mosquitos, tsetse flies and sand-flies. They have come to suffer with us just as Christ left His glorious splendor, debased Himself and died for the relief of mankind. The battle to finish the New Testament in the three languages has been vigorous...

"I will just give you the gist of how the vehicles have been used so far. The plan is that every translator should be allowed to travel out to the village and test his

translation. He should remain in the village for 8 days. No testing tour is to be undertaken for less than 6 chapters or 180 verses at a time.

"I must first of all describe my conditions before, when I went with a bicycle. I used to leave Echara around 6 am. I never arrived at my home before 11 o'clock. I was already a worn out fellow wearing a haggard look. On several occasions this bicycle broke down and I had to trek... When I enter people's homes in this condition, I was looked upon as a man of little value and perhaps was made an object of ridicule. Sometimes I got home safely, but what next. I was sick and very tired. I was unable to ride from village to village. I was therefore forced to remain at my home Idembia throughout the whole period of testing, and it goes without saying that a prophet is not without honor except in his own country and among his own kin...



Daniel Eze on the new motorbike

"With the motorcycle it is completely different. You are welcome in every compound and given the utmost assistance. New areas are touched and new friends are made. Often now the people I meet complain that they never knew there was such a program. They are not to blame, for no one ever told them. But you have now made it possible for me to enlighten my people, to let them hear the Word of God and be saved."

Our translators themselves saw how very important it was to test the passages with non-Christians. Most weaknesses of the translation came to light in a circle of older men who still possessed the richness of the vocabulary and depth of cultural knowledge which those younger ones, who had spent a lot of time in school, did not have in the same measure. Often it happened that a text which seemed perfectly correct at the translation desk, even to our native speakers, sometimes had other connotations which they had missed.

In Phil. 1:13, the translator had correctly translated 'I always keep thanking my God for you whenever I remember you...' To the hearers, however, the expression 'my God' had a very specific cultural meaning: it implied that this God was the God of the apostle Paul alone, his personal spirit, his anima. In their thinking, every person has his personal god, which is however a kind of sub-god and not the supreme God. So this phrase 'my God' had to be changed to 'the God whom I serve'.

One day the translator read his version of James 1:27 to an old man: 'The being a person of God which is the one which the father agrees that it is genuine and blameless, is caring for orphans and helping widows...'

"Good," said the old man, "that place is very good. Don't change it. You have spoken truly how it used to be in the olden days. In the past, when a woman's husband died, it was right for her to receive friends who would act as a husband to her and make her pregnant. The woman would bear a child to her dead husband. It isn't like that today. Young boys help widows no more. They only go to widows to satisfy their desires, but not to help them get children. It is the one who goes to the widow and makes her pregnant that has helped her. That is the thing God wants..."

"No, no," cried the translator, "that is not what God wants. That is not what we wanted to say here!"

The translation had, of course, to be changed. It now reads: '...caring for orphans and coming to the rescue of widows who are in difficulties...'



We have become so used to certain idioms and expressions in the Scriptures that we do not think of their original meaning. But where the text has to speak to non-Christians, no 'church language' should be allowed.

"Look," said Paul, when going over his draft with a translator, "you have written here: 'I know that you are neither cold nor hot...' Are you really sure that you can say, of a person, to 'be hot or cold' in your language?"

"Yes," came the answer, "I am certain that we have this idiom. A person can be indeed either hot or cold."

"But I want you to make a note to test this very carefully with some older people. Please ask several to tell you exactly what they understand by a cold or a hot person."

This he did, but the answer was not at all what he expected!

"A cold person in Izi," said the people, "is someone who does not do things very quickly. Someone who is sluggish. But a hot person is someone who, when you send him on an errand, would come back in the twinkling of an eye. What you have written here in your test means that these people are just right, they are not too hasty and also not too slow..."

No, that was not the meaning of the text! The translator had to take the verse back to the desk and work it over with Paul. They had to abandon the picture of hot and cold and express it as follows:

'I know that you do not say on which side you stand: neither do you follow me with your whole heart, nor do you say that you don't belong to me. But I would rather that you stand on one side or the other: either that you follow me with your whole heart, or that you don't belong to me. Therefore, since you neither stand for following me with your whole heart nor do you stand for not belonging to me, I will utterly reject you.'

Paul never actually translated himself, neither did he write down what needed changing. No, he felt that it must be the translation of the team and not the white man's. It must be their work from beginning to end. Only then would the work go on, and the Scriptures be used, even if one day we would have to leave. When Paul went over the drafts with one of them, he acted rather as consultant and guide, discussing, challenging, questioning, suggesting. But it was the translator who had the manuscript in front of him, it was he who wrote the changes and improvements.



Thomas Uzim translating a model version of Izi into Ikwo

This did not mean that the translator could write whatever he wanted, nor that the work was moving on more quickly. Discussions and arguments over certain terms could go on for hours, but Paul would not force it on them. Neither would he accept, as definite, a term that he felt did not get the right meaning across. He had to remain firm. On occasions he had to wait for a long time until at last he felt the choice of a term was right.

One such term was the word for 'to believe'. All our translators for the three dialects had taken over the equivalent from the Ibo language, 'kwe' = to agree, to take as true. Paul felt that this expression was too weak, not conveying the elements of trust and surrender. But our translators did not want to change it. If that word had been good enough for the translation of the Ibo Bible, wouldn't it be good enough for Izi, Ikwo and Ezaa? If this word had been used in the churches for 30 years in their area, surely people would not want to use a new word, as they knew what it meant. There was no use arguing. But Paul had been looking out for another expression for months, for years already. One day, finally, we found an expression for 'trust'. It had been hidden in an Izi folktale and was expressed as 'taking oneself and putting oneself into the hands of another person'.

"This is it," thought Paul. Still, the translators did not want to use it. "It is too long and clumsy," they said.

"Take both expressions and make a test," Paul argued. "Use them in the translation and see how people react."

Even so, it took a long time. At last, we rejoiced when one day we read the following part of Thomas' report:

"... After I had read verse 20, the soothsayer asked: 'Will God do this for me too, that I could wake up from death and live again?'

"I answered: 'Yes, he will, if you believe!' and he quickly replied: 'I do believe!' Only now I realized that I had answered with the word 'kwe' for believing and he had used the same word in his reply. I knew immediately that this was not the right word to use. To the man, it just meant adding Jesus to the host of his other jujus. So I corrected myself and said: 'If you take yourself and put yourself into the hands of Jesus, the Son of God...' I saw the difference it made to him! He sat thoughtfully for some time and then said: 'I will think it over until you come again...' I am convinced now that the new rendering for 'to believe' is much more meaningful to the people."



Checking the Ezaa translation with church people (Daniel Eze)

Testing the translation with Christians, and with church groups, brought surprises too, but it was the audience that was surprised! Our translators were always thrilled when their reading brought some misunderstanding to light that the translation could clear up.

Daniel tried to teach the Lord's prayer in Ezaa in his own church. All church-goers had, of course, memorized the version in Ibo, though some without understanding the meaning.

"I had just read the Lord's prayer in Ezaa when a woman started to speak. She argued that my version of the prayer was a complete distortion of what her pastor had taught them. She said that the Ibo version was much 'sweeter' than that which I had just read. I then asked her to recite it to me the way she had learned it and to explain the meaning sentence by sentence. In this way it came to light that because of similar words in Ibo and Ezaa, it was a request to God to let them go to a certain village and swear there by the big Ebo juju. Some words of which she couldn't make any sense, were understood as some magic words of invocation to God.

"I was then able to explain her misunderstanding verse by verse and to tell her that there was no big Ebo juju mentioned in the Bible, that no juju at all could take care of her life as God could do it. In the end the woman exclaimed joyfully: 'I was always taught this prayer without any explanation, but today the translation into my own language has made it clear to me that we should worship God alone and He will take care of our life!' So she invited some other Christians to her compound and together they destroyed the symbol of the Ebo juju which had been dominating her life."

This kind of testing of the translations consumed an enormous amount of time and effort, but also brought amazement and excitement for all of us. In the following three years, one or two of the translators were constantly on the road, testing, discussing, preaching.

But it was also worth it! At the beginning, not one of our team members would have ever thought of entering the building of another denomination, let alone preach there! The first step had been, of course, to accept each other's denomination within our team. This had taken several months. After that it became a common experience to go and test the translation with a group from another church, the Catholic one included. It had been the Lord's doing and we marveled.

The Lord had to teach them yet another lesson: not only to accept each other with their differences in taste, character and denomination, but also to actually accept into their midst an outcast, an invalid. Such a person was - in their culture - looked down upon, despised, hardly a human being, but rather a curse.

This person was John. For financial reasons, he had not been able to continue his secondary school education. Thomas, our Ikwo translator, knew that he was looking for a job and had invited him repeatedly to join our team as a typist. Soon also John was one of those who returned full of joy from their preaching weekends.

He hadn't been with us for long when he started to complain about back aches. He returned to his family to have a good rest. But soon the back aches turned into paralysis and finally his father allowed us to get him and drive him to a mission hospital. But John stayed paralyzed from his hips downwards. He suffered even more when his family forbade him to come back to us, but instead dragged



John Ovuoba in his father's compound sick and paralyzed

him for a whole year from one medicine man to another supposedly more powerful.

We kept in contact and tried to encourage him with books, letters and visits. His faith grew. One day, when his father asked him to sacrifice and swear by a famous juju, he refused. His father promptly disowned him. A secret messenger brought us his cry for help and we immediately went to bring him back to us.

But where should he sleep? Our translators were not ready for John to come back to their bungalow...

In the rice mill was a big, unused storage room. We had it cleaned out and John's bed and belongings put in. Should he really live alone in there? To whom could he turn in case he needed help? No one volunteered, every one backed out. Not that they did not like John, not that they wanted to withhold their help from him. It was rather a deep-seated fear which stemmed from their background. Maybe they assumed unconsciously that sickness was connected with the anger of the spirits? Paul explained in one of our devotions the Christian viewpoint, and at last, with much coaxing, one of them moved to John's room.

Much later, John told us: "I was so amazed about the attitude your children had towards me. They did not shun me as the Ikwo children did. They came and talked to me as if I was an ordinary man and treated me with respect and love. You don't know how much good this did me."

After a while his family agreed to release the young son of his older brother to come and care for him. He was about 10 years old and was extremely happy that by staying with John, he was allowed to attend the nearby school!

John flourished and gained weight. He resumed his typing, but more and more we recognized his special gifts in other areas and assigned different tasks to him. He became a very conscientious proofreader and, as he had read a lot of English books while sick and thus improved his knowledge of English considerably, he translated the Ikwo manuscripts back into English so that our consultant, Dr. Katy Barnwell, could check them against the Greek. During the months of sickness he had matured through his suffering and grown in his faith, and was now eager not only to translate some of Samuel's Izi sermons into Ikwo, but also to write some messages himself. Soon, from his newly earned salary, he bought himself a radio - which became a 'talking friend' during his lonely hours when the others were away.



John is a changed man !

God blessed John, comforted him, changed him into a different person. Two years later, he wrote to us:

"Dear father and mother,

...I remember when I was forced to quit school ... I lamented and grumbled and complained..., but a few weeks later I was employed by you. How that happened, I cannot explain until this day! Now I have understood that this was wholly God's plan. Maybe it would have been terrible if this sickness had come while I was still at school. But now I have understood that He has called me to serve Him. It may well be that I would not have listened to His voice if I had been able to finish school. Therefore I always remember that known verse of Romans 8:28. And each time I remember, my heart just melts before the fear of the Lord. And each time I rejoice inwardly and outwardly - never mind the circumstances. For I know that God knows what He is doing.

"I want to thank you that you have brought me up in the way of the Lord. For without this I would not have accepted my present physical condition. The loving words which you used to show me the way of the Lord, have been a great encouragement to me, and also the many Christian books which you gave me for my spiritual growth during these years. Today I am glad! All lamenting is over, the thought of ending my own life are gone, all the rebellion against God has disappeared, the false idea that God is not a loving God or else He would not have allowed me to be sick - has vanished! Now I am happy in the Lord and PRAISE HIM for it."

These were no empty words or pious clichés. No, he lived them and everybody could see the joy in his face. He had a smile for everyone who entered his room, a contagious smile.

The only sad moments came over him when he thought of his family, especially his father who had rejected him. He never came to visit him. His mother had died when he was a child and one of his father's other wives had brought him up - but they had neither money nor the time to come and see him. A number of times John recorded a message on cassette, telling them that he had no grudge against them, explaining how they could become Christians and urging them to do so.

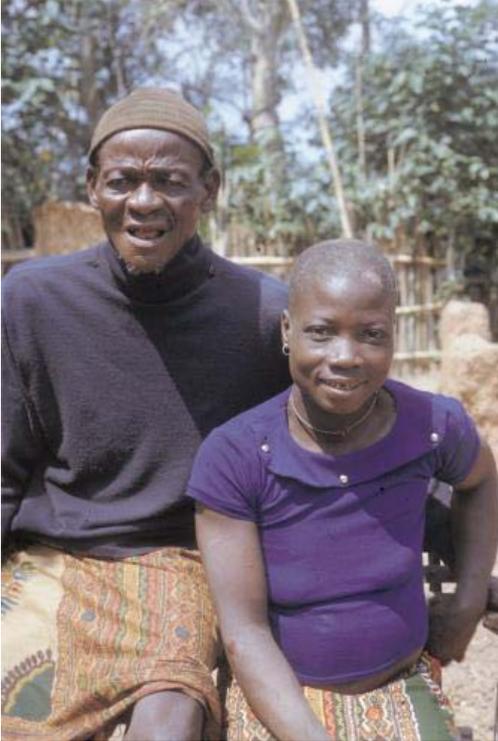
One day when I came into his room he was heartbroken. He had just got a letter from home. It read like this:

"John, I have to tell you that your father is very sick. He may not get better. The truth is that he has already died. But don't lament too much..."

"Who wrote this letter, John?" I asked him, "it is one of your brothers?"

"No," he answered. "Of all my brothers, only one can write; the others have not gone to school. Even if they knew how to write, they would not be allowed to. It is expected of them to be so sad that they cannot say anything."

After I had expressed my sympathy to him, I asked him:
"John, what is it that burdens your heart most at this time?"



John's father and stepmother

"There are two things that make me feel as if a stone is laid on my heart. The first is that my father has now no more opportunity to receive a new life in Jesus Christ. Several times I sent him a personal message on a cassette, but he did not want to accept it. My second concern is the fate that will await my brothers and sisters and also the wives of my father. Even if he wasn't a good father, they were somehow protected. As we say it: 'he was the skin that covers the blood'. Now they are helpless. The oldest wives whose children have grown up, will be cared for, and the youngest wives will be married again and not suffer so much. But I am concerned for those who have half-grown children and are too old to be married, for they will have difficult times ahead. The children will suffer, too, because any relative can now come and say: 'I want to have this or that child to work for me' and the mother can say nothing, but just be happy that she has one less child to feed. My father had eight wives and more than twenty children. I can just see one little ray of hope: now everybody is free to go to church, which before, my father had not allowed any family member to do."

"Tell me, John," I inquired further, "your father was a rich man. Will his wives not inherit anything from him so that they can bring up their children?"

"That's just the sad thing," he explained. "We have no such customs. On the contrary. There will be a big family gathering in our compound. All the wives have to bring their possessions out of their huts, even what belongs to them personally. The oldest son has the right to get my father's wealth and anything his wives possess. He goes from one hut to the other and chooses for himself whatever he wants. So the wives become even poorer than when my father was alive."

More than ever John's mind was set on giving his family the Word of God. During the following months he tried to help the most needy ones among his young brothers with his salary, but he fully realized that the best help he could give - new life in Jesus - they had not yet accepted. If only he could visit them more often! By

that time we had moved away from Echara and it was now too far to visit his family. More and more now his thoughts turned to the only substitute for a personal visit: the talking box, and he regarded us as his new parents for counsel and encouragement. The Lord was tracing a path for a fruitful cassette ministry and John eagerly stepped into it to follow His footsteps.