

THE WORD FOR THE WORLD BIBLE TRANSLATORS APPROACH TO TRANSLATION

In the light of our focus on pioneer Bible translation, *TWFTW* subscribes to Nida's model of Functional Equivalence, according to which translators strive to make the message of the Bible accessible and comprehensible in the common language of language communities which have never had a Bible translation (*TWFTW Draft Translation Policy*, April, 2009).

Until recently, the above statement was adequate in describing the translation approach of *The Word for the World (TWFTW)*. However, recent developments in translation studies as they relate to different approaches to translation have necessitated a more refined description of the approach followed by *TWFTW*.

As a general statement it can be said with conviction that *TWFTW* does not adhere to a model of literal translation.

Traditionally, translations of the Bible can be arranged along a spectrum of which the two extremes are literal on the one hand, and free on the other. The King James Version (KJV) is an example of a literal version. The Living Bible used to be a good example of a free translation. In recent years there have been many other versions that would also qualify as being "free", e.g. the "Message", "Word on the Street." Beyond these on the spectrum, are versions like the "Cotton Patch".

A literal translation may be characterized as giving priority to form above meaning, and following a procedure of translation that is word-based rather than meaning-based. A free translation on the other hand, is more of a paraphrase than a translation, allowing ample freedom for the inclusion of personal and subjective interpretation.

Rather than adhering to either of these two extremes, *TWFTW* chose since its inception to follow the approach developed by Eugene Nida, and described by him as dynamic equivalent. The *Good News Translation*, also known as *Today's English Version*, is held to be a good example of a dynamic equivalent translation of the Bible.

DYNAMIC EQUIVALENCE AS TRANSLATION APPROACH

Nida's *Toward a science of translating* (1964) was the first comprehensive representation of this approach. Nida and Taber subsequently developed the approach further in *The theory and practice of translation* (1969), which became even more of a standard work

for Bible translators, and was known as *TAPOT*. In De Waard and Nida (1986) the term is replaced with ‘functional equivalence’, with a statement that “the substitution is not designed to suggest anything essentially different” (vii-viii).

Nida and Taber defined a dynamically equivalent translation to be one

in which the message of the original text has been transported into the receptor language in such a way that the RESPONSE of the RECEPTOR is essentially that of the original receptors. Frequently, the form of the original text is changed; but as long as the change follows the rules of back transformation in the source language, of contextual consistency in the transfer, and of transformation in the receptor language, the message is preserved and the translation is faithful (*TAPOT* 200).

Opposite to this was the formally correspondent translation, in which

The features of the form of the source text have been mechanically reproduced in the receptor language. Typically, formal correspondence distorts the grammatical and stylistic patterns of the receptor language, and hence distorts the message, so as to cause the receptor to misunderstand or to labour unduly hard (*TAPOT* 201).

Mojola and Wendland provide an excellent summary of the ‘new attitudes’ toward receptor and source languages identified by Nida and Taber, as well as the process of producing a dynamically equivalent translation (Wilt ed. 2003, 2-3):

NEW ATTITUDES TOWARD RECEPTOR AND SOURCE LANGUAGES IDENTIFIED BY NIDA AND TABER

- * Each language has its own genius.
- * To communicate effectively one must respect the genius of each language.
- * Anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message.
- * To preserve the content of the message the form must be changed.
- * The languages of the Bible are subject to the same limitations as any other natural language.
- * The writers of the Biblical books expected to be understood.
- * The translator must attempt to reproduce the meaning of a passage as understood by the writer.

THE THREE STAGES OF PRODUCING A DYNAMICALLY EQUIVALENT TRANSLATION

1. *Analysis*, in which the surface structure (i.e. the message as given in language A) is analysed in terms of (a) the grammatical relationships and (b) the meanings of words and combinations of words,
2. *Transfer*, in which the analysed material is transferred in the mind of the translator from language A to language B, and
3. *Restructuring*, in which the transferred material is restructured in order to make the final message fully acceptable in the receptor language.

The analysis stage included determining:

- * the meaningful relationships between words and combinations of words
- * the referential meaning of the words and special combinations of words (the idioms), and
- * the connotative meanings, i.e. how the users of the language react, whether positively or negatively, to the words and combinations of them.

In their evaluation of the TAPOT approach, Mojola and Wendland note the following points.

It was called “subversive” by some (Robinson), in that it “dethroned” some Bible versions at the time which, although widely accepted, were really not easily intelligible to most readers. Nida’s “subversive act consisted in opening the word to new audiences, as well as empowering new groups to have direct access to the Scriptures without mediation from the religious elite, the clergy, theologians or the biblical scholar” (Mojola and Wendland, 2003:5).

As limitations of TAPOT, Mojola and Wendland discuss the following:

1. Its focus on sentence-level-and-below linguistics

Although it is true that TAPOT focused on linguistic discipline, in all fairness it has to be emphasized that Nida and Taber themselves realized the limitations of a purely linguistic approach to translation, and pointed to the importance of the study of “discourse structure” (1969:152ff). Indeed, “an overview of Nida’s work indicates that he was certainly not locked into a ‘linguistic approach’ to translation. His focus on linguistics in TAPOT was complemented by many other writings espousing a multi-disciplinary approach to translation, a perspective fully embraced and vigorously promoted within the emerging field of translation studies ...” (Mojola and Wendland, 2003:6).

2. Portraying translation in terms of the dichotomy between formal correspondence and dynamic equivalence

Subsequent translation studies have led to a realization that the matter of division in translation approach is much more complicated than a distinction between formal correspondence and dynamic equivalence.

3. The “conduit metaphor”

Nida and Taber define translation as follows: “Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style” (1969:12). The assumption here is that it is possible to objectively and comprehensively access meaning in the source text, and then to find an absolute closest equivalent in another language.

The communication model on which TAPOT is based was developed in Nida’s *Message and Mission* (1960).

Reddy identifies this as the “fallacy of the conduit metaphor” (1979:209, quoted in Mojola and Wendland, 203:7):

- * Language functions like a conduit, transferring thoughts bodily from one person to another;
- * in writing and speaking, people insert their thoughts or feelings in the words;
- * words accomplish the transfer by containing the thoughts or feelings and conveying them to others, and
- * in listening and reading, people extract the thoughts and feelings once again from the words.

According to this model, “communication consists in finding the right word-container for your idea-object, sending this filled container along a conduit or through space to the hearer, who must then take the idea-object out of the word-container” (Johnson, 1987:59).

However, translation theorists generally have come to recognize that “the reading, interpretation and translation of texts are influenced by presuppositions and assumptions, prejudices and biases, value systems and belief systems, textual traditions and practices, world views, ideology and interests. Readers have no access to the pure original, or to the pure thought of the original author. They interpret text through the lens of language, their experience, language, belief system, circumstances, interests, needs, and agendas” (Mojola and Wendland, 8).

The conclusion is that “translation is ... a rewriting of an original text” (Bassnet, in Gentzler 1993:ix).

The use of the term “dynamic equivalence” is seen to be another disadvantage under which TAPOT labours. Mojola and Wendland point out that it was wrongly interpreted by some to emphasize “the psychological impact of a translation and diminishing the importance of fidelity to the source text” (2003:9). This was clearly not what Nida intended.

CONTEMPORARY TRANSLATION APPROACHES

Mojola and Wendland (2003:13-25) mention seven contemporary translation approaches. For the sake of perspective, the distinguishing characteristic/s of each one will be briefly mentioned here.

FUNCTIONALIST

The focus in this approach is on the function that a translation is intended to perform for the target audience. The translator’s function is important in determining the manner and style of translation within the target-language setting.

DESCRIPTIVE

This is not really an approach to translation. Instead, it is a study of processes involved in translation. Rather than attempting to formulate rules, norms or guidelines for the evaluation of translations or to develop deictic instruments for translator training (Hermans 1999:7), descriptive translation studies theorists would rather be ‘diagnostic’, and describe the phenomena that are manifested during the translation texts. The idea is to establish principles that will predict and explain the occurrence of the phenomena (Hermans 1997:29).

TEXT-LINGUISTIC

Hatim and Mason (1990, 1997) provide a theoretical framework as well as a methodology for applying insights from text linguistics to translation. The occurrence of phonological, lexical, syntactic and textual forms have implications for ‘markedness’. The use of marked linguistics structures in texts characterised as ‘argumentative’ or ‘evaluative’ is also of interest to proponents of this approach, as also the degree of structural modification required in terms of the cultural factor.

RELEVANCE THEORY

The central claim of relevance theory is that human communication crucially creates an expectation of *optimal relevance*, that is, an expectation on the part of the hearer that his attempt at interpretation will yield *adequate contextual effects at minimal processing cost* (Gutt 1991:20, original italics).

Mojola and Wendland remark succinctly:

Behind the technical expression is a rather common-sense principle: speakers are generally expected to convey what they have to say in a way that makes it easiest for their hearers to understand (minimal processing effort), in order to achieve the desired communicative information, impact and appeal (adequate cognitive/emotive/volitional effects) (2003:21).

A central question is how much information should be left implied or assumed to be known, and how much should be made explicit.

POST-COLONIAL APPROACHES

These are

primarily concerned with the links between translation and empire or translation and power as well as the role of translations in the processes of cultural domination and subordination, colonization and decolonization, indoctrination and control, and hybridization and creolization of cultures and languages (Mojola and Wendland, 2003:22).

LITERALIST

This approach is part of an ancient tradition of translation. A contemporary development is the focus on spoken rather than written language.

FOREIGNIZATION VERSUS DOMESTICATION

This view on translation is helpful in identifying the tensions that arise when meaning-based translation risks “domesticating” the biblical text to the extent where fidelity to historical and geographical situations is sacrificed. On the other hand, translators may “foreignize” texts through translation models that are foreign to the target language.

A LITERARY APPROACH TO BIBLICAL TEXT ANALYSIS AND TRANSLATION

THE BIBLE IS LITERATURE

The Bible has been approached from many different viewpoints. Some view it as a purely historic account of a certain period of human history. Some would like to see it as an exact scientific account of creation. Others think of it mostly as a theological work, containing facts about God. These are but examples of the attitudes different people through the ages have adopted towards the Bible.

Among Bible translators, there have been those who focused almost entirely on the meanings of individual words as a means of interpreting Scripture. This is an emphasis on the lexical aspect of a text. Others have believed that the answer to every question of interpretation lies in the grammar. Fortunately, most Bible translators would now agree that so-called rhetorical features are just as important as purely lexical features. The expression “rhetorical features” refers to the manner in which any volume of text is arranged. It also refers to the devices which any language employs to convey meaning by more than just lexical or grammatical means.

Some important implications of this viewpoint are the following:

Meaningful interpretation or translation of the text cannot begin and end with the word, or the sentence, or any other artificially imposed limitation. Rather, suprasentential¹ considerations such as context, as well as the large number of rhetorical devices are just as important as that which happens at the word or sentence level. Most importantly, the Bible should be viewed as literature in its own right, not simply as something that needs to be translated. This is not to say that grammatical and semantic analysis is not important. Rather, the implication is that all procedures that can be applied in discovering and translating the meaning of the text of the Bible should be applied bearing in mind that the Bible is literature.

The following quote sums it up very effectively:

“The Bible is literature, that kind of writing which attends to beauty, power and memorability as well as to exposition. It is like a rich chord compared to a single note.... The Bible requires profound attention to style when it is translated ... [W]hen the original is beautiful, its beauty must shine through the translation; when it is stylistically ordinary, this must be apparent” (Hargreaves 1993:137-138, quoted in Wilt, 2003, 179).

PROMINENT STYLISTIC AND RHETORICAL FEATURES OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE

Wendland’s presentation of stylistic features identified in the Bible demonstrates the fact that the Bible is literature. The factors are grouped as follows (Wilt, 2003, 181)²:

General and foundational factors

1. *Unity* – the basic unity or compositional integrity of the text
2. *Diversity* – the wide range of literary devices that complement the overall unity of a literary discourse³

¹ Also sometimes referred to as “suprasegmental”. These are aspects of discourse that are not determined by grammatical and lexical requirements as much as by artistic elements.

² From here on, references to pages in the prescribed chapter will be indicated by the number of the page only.

³ “Discourse” is used throughout in the sense of an occurrence of language usage of any length.

3. *Rhetoricity* – the aspect of persuasion, producing “proofs”, or argumentation

Factors pertaining largely to the macrostructure of a text

4. *Structure* – the organization of the text into different genres; different kinds of prose; categories of biblical poetry
5. *Patterning* – the basic patterns of discourse design, e.g. repetition
6. *Foregrounding* – emphasizing certain aspects of the discourse through devices like prominence and progression

Factors associated more with the microstructure of a text

7. *Imagery* – pictorial imaging techniques in discourse
8. *Phonicity* – the use of audible patterns, such as alliteration, assonance, rhythm, rhyme, etc.
9. *Dramatics* – real life texts presented in the form of direct discourse

As Wendland points out, these features are complementary and closely interrelated, sometimes even overlapping. Translators would do well to recognize the ways in which these features are incorporated in the biblical text, and work towards finding equivalent devices in the language into which they are translating.

For the sake of easy reference, Wendland’s numbering will be followed in the notes, except for the marking of the three groups as A, B and C, and also for ease of reference. Examples inserted by the author of this document will be indicated by (VK).

GENERAL AND FOUNDATIONAL FACTORS

1. Unity

The unity displayed by the biblical text is one of the strongest indicators that the Bible is indeed literature.

Three basic characteristics of a text contribute to unity in the text. These are:

* *Connectivity*

Discourse connectivity is the manner in which any piece of literature is bound together as a unit. This may also be called intratextuality, that is, factors which operate within the same text (see intertextuality in the next section).

Intratextuality has two components:

- *Cohesion* refers to the manner in which a text is bound together by means of the following techniques:

- *Phonological* (e.g. by repetition of sounds or sound patterns)
- *Lexical* (repetition of key words)
- *Syntactic means* (e.g. repetition of grammatical constructions) bind a text together. Examples of this are recursion (or repetition), cataphora (forward reference, or when something is referred to or implied beforehand), and deictic words (indicators of time or space).

An example from the New Testament is the repetition of the expression “Blessed are...” in Matthew 5.3-11, and the grammatical construction giving the reason: “...for they will be...” (VK).

- The second component of discourse connectivity is *coherence*. This refers to the underlying semantic and pragmatic aspects that bind a discourse together. “Semantic” refers to aspects of meaning (e.g. how the content of the discourse is grouped in terms of semantic fields). “Pragmatic” refers to the use of conventionally related situations to facilitate understanding. Examples are the storm at sea (Jonah 1), fervent prayer (Jonah 2), etc.

* *Intertextuality*

The unity of Scripture is enhanced by cross-references within the text of one book of the Bible to elements that are contained in other texts in the Bible as well as other recognized texts. Sometimes these are overt (e.g. when Scripture is quoted, like the references to Psalms in Jonah). Sometimes, however, they come to mind from the reader’s knowledge of the rest of Scripture. An example of this is the similarity between Jonah’s longing for death, and the feelings Elijah had in 1 Kings 19.4. The irony is strengthened by the context, of course: one longs to die because of “success” (a whole city repenting), the other because of apparent lack of success (I Kings 19.10).

A challenge to the translator is the extent to which implicit background knowledge should be made explicit in the translation. For the sake of preserving the original content of the text as much as possible, translators should probably make use of footnotes for this purpose, rather than to make implicit information explicit in the text.

This is the subject of ongoing discussions among Bible translators worldwide (VK).

* *Archetypes*

This refers to themes, character types, images and symbols that are repeated throughout Scripture. The examples from Genesis 1-2 and Revelation 21-22 (185) illustrate this very well.

Archetypes may refer to themes, etc. that occur in the Bible, but also in the literature and verbal traditions of cultures around the world. The challenge to the translator is to identify biblical references to such archetypes in the culture and language in which the translator is working, and to determine how best to convey the meaning expressed by the use of such archetypes.

Archetypes contribute to the understanding of Scripture by broadening, as it were, the frames of reference of the reader (VK).

Two terms that are used by Wendland that may need some clarification:

- *Denotation* – the more or less literal reference a term may have to some aspect of human experience or reality
- *Connotation* – when a term refers to some aspect of human experience or reality more by indirect association than by direct reference

2. Diversity

Good literature is characterized by diversity as a necessary complement of unity. “Diversity” here refers to differences in the text. Wendland points out (189) that this is necessary for the overall beauty (“aesthetic variety”) of the text; to mark the different genres and patterns in the discourse; to mark certain parts of the discourse as especially important; and to make literature easier to remember or even to memorize.

An example of this is when a pattern of discourse is changed, e.g. the contrast between Jonah running away in Jonah 1.3 and going to Nineveh in Jonah 3.3.

Diversity sometimes takes the form of the use of contrasting themes. An example here is the manner in which women in the Old Testament are sometimes depicted as being stronger than their male contemporaries. This is effective, because of the fact that males generally dominated the culture of those times. The ministry of Jesus in contrast to that of other religious leaders, and the message of Paul as being totally different from religious philosophers, are also examples of the use of diversity to lend weight to biblical discourse.

3. Rhetoricity

Rhetoricity refers here to the devices utilized in literature to effect persuasion. “In one sense, *persuasion* in the form of an explicit or implicit *argument* is an objective of all discourse” (193).

Wendland focuses on persuasive devices that involve argumentation. His description of an enthymeme on page 194-5 should be studied along with the examples quoted.

“Enthymeme” is a term used in the subject of logic to describe a “syllogism”. “Syllogism” is a form of reasoning in which a conclusion is typically formed from two propositions or statements.

An enthymeme consists of three parts:

- * *A major premise* (an assertion or proposition that forms part of a logical argument) – marked (M)
- * *A minor premise* – marked (m)
- * *A conclusion* – marked (C)

Many statements in Scripture are really enthymemes – see the examples Wendland quotes, from Jonah and Luke 21.

The problem is that one or more of the premises are often omitted in Scriptural discourse, because the original authors expected the original recipients to be familiar enough with the context that they would be able to deduce them. Recipients who are the contemporaries of the Bible translator, on the other hand, will often miss the implication.

As already noted, the question of the extent to which implicit information should be made explicit in translation, is a real challenge to translators.

Of particular importance are the various stylistic devices described on pages 197-199. They are listed below, with a brief description of each one, in which the essential principle is highlighted. Examples are also provided.

- * *Rhetorical question* – a question which is asked more for effect than to elicit information. E.g. “How often have I longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks ...?” (Luke 13.34) (VK)
- * *Irony* – one meaning is stated while another, usually the opposite, is intended. E.g. Jonah’s pious confession of the mercy of God while he is upset about the mercy of God towards Nineveh (Jonah 4.3-2).
- * *Sarcasm* – like irony, but used in rebuke or ridicule. E.g. “You believe that there is one God? Good! Even the demons believe that...” (James 2.19) (VK)
- * *Enigma* – deliberate ambiguity. E.g. John 6.26-51.
- * *Paradox* – an apparent contradiction. E.g. Mathew 10.39.
- * *Hyperbole* – deliberate overstatement. E.g. “Look how the whole world has gone after him!” (John 12.19) (VK)
- * *Proverb* – a wise saying
- * *Oxymoron* – apparently irreconcilable or contradictory terms are combined. E.g. the manner in which Paul uses references to wisdom, foolishness, weakness and strength in 1 Corinthians 1.25.

Bible translators need to familiarize themselves with these rhetorical features, so as to recognize them in the source text. The challenge is then to find stylistic devices in the

target language that provide suitable vehicles to convey the meaning of the original in rhetorical terms in the target language. This implies, of course, discovering the meaning intended in the original as well as a clear understanding of the use of rhetorical devices in the target language.

FACTORS PERTAINING LARGELY TO THE MACROSTRUCTURE OF A TEXT

4. Structure

This section provides an introduction to the organization of the text in terms of different genres, different kinds of prose, and categories of biblical poetry.

Genres

It is important for the translator to recognize the type of text that must be translated. This is because the choice of text type (also called discourse genre) employed by the original writer provides clues as to interpretation (Nida et al, 1991, 56).

“Genre” may be defined as a “category of *artistic* composition...marked by a distinctive style, form, or content” (Soukhanov 1996:656, quoted on page 200).

Not identifying the genre correctly can lead to what Barr calls “a literary category mistake” (Barr, 1963, quoted on page 201). E.g. not identifying the genre of the discourse in Judges 9.7-15 as allegorical may result in a statement that, according to the Bible, trees can talk! (VK)

It is also important to recognize the fact that many, if not all books of the Bible contain a selection of different types of text, rather than being characterized by one type of text only.

Genres are generally recognized as belonging to one of two large groups: prose and poetry. The latter is generally typified by ample use of so-called “poetic” devices (e.g. metre, rhyme, etc. as well as figurative language). Wendland gives a detailed description of the distinction between poetry and prose on pages 202-203.

The most obvious distinction between poetry and prose is in terms of linguistic categories, such as rhythm, rhyme, meter, line length, balanced lines, etc. In actual fact, the distinction is much broader, and should be viewed in light of the use of poetic elements (phonic and auditory elements, and visual imagery) in poetry, compared to prosaic elements (a more propositional presentation of material).

Texts should be classified as more or less poetic, rather than absolutely poetic or prosaic. For the purposes of the translator, classification is not as important as recognizing the different kinds of elements, and attempting to convey the meaning as effectively as possible by means of stylistic techniques available in the target language.

Prose

Wendland gives the following examples with brief explanations of different kinds of prose (203):

- * *Narrative* (historical, fictional),
- * *Hortative* (prophetic, epistolary),
- * *Predictive* (revelatory, apocalyptic),
- * *Descriptive* (scenic, panoramic),
- * *Legislative* (juridical, instructional),
- * *Explanatory* (to clarify, justify, define, etc.),
- * *Enumerative* (genealogical, listing).

Poetry

Similarly, Wendland enumerates four major categories of poetry (205). The comments in parentheses after each type are short selections from Wendland's notes):

- * *Lyric* (highly expressive and emotive, realistic imagery, e.g. many Psalms)
- * *Didactic* (informative and commemorative in nature, e.g. Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes)
- * *Paraenetic* (encouraging, admonishing, e.g. most Old Testament prophetic texts)
- * *Apocalyptic* (visionary and evocative, "other-worldly" imagery, e.g. Ezekiel 38-39, Daniel 6-12, Joel 3, and most of Revelation).

The scheme for classifying various types of literature in the Old Testament which Wendland provides on page 207 is helpful, and warrants detailed study. The scheme attempts to show the overlap between prose and poetry.

PROSE	-	<i>Law</i>
	-	<i>Report</i>
	-	<i>Narrative</i>
Prosaic	-	<i>Prophecy</i>
Poetry		<i>Apocalyptic Visions</i>
		<i>Salvation oracles</i>
		<i>Judgment decrees</i>
	-	<i>Wisdom verse</i>
		<i>Proverbial</i>
		<i>Didactic</i>
	-	<i>Lyric Verse</i>
		<i>Lament</i>
POETRY		<i>Eulogy</i>

5. Patterning

“Patterning” refers to the manner in which units of discourse are combined in different ways to construct the discourse.

Wendland’s list of patterns of structural development on pages 209-210 should be studied in detail.

- * *Parallelism* - recurrence of two or more similar or identical elements
- * *Alternation* - similar to parallelism but longer
- * *Chiasmus* - repetition of significant elements in inverted order past a structural midpoint

An example of chiasmus (VK):

Matthew 7.6

A DO NOT GIVE DOGS WHAT IS SACRED
B DO NOT THROW YOUR PEARLS TO PIGS
B ... THEY TRAMPLE THEM UNDER THEIR FEET
A ... TURN AND TEAR YOU TO PIECES

A way to remember this pattern, is to imagine an X where the two top points are - A and B respectively, with the diagonally opposite points at the bottom - B and A.

- * *Intercalation* – insertion of one literary unit within another
- * *Inclusio* – repeating material at the beginning and end of a discourse
- * *Contrast* – combining text units that are dissimilar, contrary, or opposite in meaning
- * *Comparison* – associating text units that are similar
- * *Causation* – *Substantiation* – showing the logical relationship of cause and effect
- * *Climax* – showing the development in the discourse from lesser to greater intensity
- * *Pivot* – marking a sudden change on the conceptual direction of the discourse
- * *Particularization* – *Generalization* – becoming more specific or more general in the line of reasoning
- * *Purpose* – showing the movement from means to an end
- * *Anticipation* – including material early on in a discourse to prepare the recipients for something significant in later portions
- * *Retrospection* – reverse of the preceding
- * *Summarization* – an abridgement of the content
- * *Interrogation* – a crucial question is followed by its answer or resolution

Whether or not these patterns should be retained in the translation, depends ultimately on what the most effective way of conveying the intended meaning in the target language is. What should be identified clearly, is what their function in the original is: emphasis, demarcation, joining together, foregrounding, embellishment, indication of logical sequence, etc. It is the job of the translator to ensure that these functions are effectively served by stylistic elements in translation that are true to the idiom of the language into which the translation is being made.

6. Foregrounding

This refers to the emphasis of certain aspects of the discourse through devices like prominence and progression.

* *Prominence*

Prominence marks certain segments of the discourse as being of relatively greater importance than others. There are two types of foregrounding: topic and focus.

- The *topic* of a text is usually the principal subject being talked about. It is also sometimes called “given” or “old” information. The process by which this function is fulfilled, is referred to as “topicalization”.
- The *focus* of a text is what the author wants to draw particular attention to among other elements of the discourse related to the topic. The process by which this is achieved, is known as “focalization”.

* *Progression*

Meaningful verbal discourse consists of a set of linguistic or literary units (e.g. sentence, paragraph, etc.). These units are linked in some order through semantic relationships (e.g. condition-consequence, stimulus-response, topic-comment, specific-general). Good literature displays some form of dynamic development as the discourse “unfolds from beginning to end” (214). This is what Wendland calls progression as a stylistic device in foregrounding.

In dramatic prose, the progression is often in terms of the unfolding of a plot. Putting it simply, a “plot” is simply the manner in which a story develops from what may be termed the initial state, affected by some complication or crisis, which develops into a climax, and is resolved by some means.

It is important that the various ways in which the original identifies and emphasizes the development of the plot be recognized by the translator, in order that the translation will endeavour to lend the same emphasis as the original.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED MORE WITH THE MICROSTRUCTURE OF A TEXT

7. Imagery

Authors make use of pictorial imaging to help readers understand the intended meaning as well as eliciting an appropriate emotional response. Imagery may also lend particular emphasis to something in the text.

The most important types of linguistic imagery in the text of the Bible are the following:

Comparative types of imagery

- * *Simile* – an explicit comparison between two entities, in which it is hoped that comparing the first to the second will make the meaning of the first clearer. E.g. “The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn” (Pr 4.18) (VK).
- * *Metaphor* – like simile, but implied rather than explicitly stated. E.g. “The Lord is my shepherd” (Ps 23.1). The parables of Jesus are actually extended metaphors (VK).

Replacement types of imagery

- * *Metonymy* – replacement of one term with another with which it is associated, e.g. the glory of the Lord, for the Lord Himself (VK).
- * *Synecdoche* – a specific type of metonymy, in which a part of something is referred to instead of the whole, e.g. the blood of Jesus for his death (VK).
- * *Euphemism* – replacement of something considered to be too shameful or sad to mention by something less so, e.g. “covering his feet” for relieving himself.

Imagery is found in all good literature. In addition to the functions it fulfills in many other pieces of literature, it also serves in the Bible to refer to what cannot be understood in normal terms, e.g. the nature of God.

8. Phonicity

The fact that much of Scripture originated as oral compositions, or was intended for aural reception, is reflected in the frequent use of audible patterns in the discourse of the Bible. Wendland refers to the use of this phonological element in discourse as “Phonicity.”

Examples of Phonicity

- * *Alliteration* – the repetition of selected vowels (assonance) and/or consonants (consonance) often foregrounds the concepts concerned.
- * *Rhyme* – using similar endings of word to interrelate elements in the discourse.
- * *Punning* or *Paronomasia* – using a significant sound pattern in words with different meanings often highlights the differences in meaning.

Wendland points out that, in addition to underscoring important theological elements in the text, the use of phonicity enhances the overall auditory impact of the discourse.

This element assumes greater importance in light of the recent developments towards orality in Bible translation (VK).

Bible translators should attempt to represent phonological devices in the original in the language into which they are translating, in order to achieve the same end result.

9. Dramatics

This term refers to the expression of the texts of Scripture in direct speech. Much of the Bible is, in fact, in direct speech: Old Testament prophetic books, Psalms, the Gospels that contain much of Christ's teaching and dialogue, and even the Epistles as apostolic instruction and pastoral exhortation.

Translated texts should be tested for naturalness of sound as well as use of words. This can best be done by reading translations aloud to determine how idiomatic, realistic, even dramatic the text sounds. The question translators should ask themselves is: How effectively does the translated text convey the feelings, moods and attitudes of the original?

Direct speech often makes use of more colloquial forms than written text. While translators need to take this into account, the criterion should be naturalness with respect to a certain genre of literature rather than everyday conversational language usage.

CONCLUSION

Wendland advocates what he calls "literary functional equivalence" ("LiFE") in translation. This is characterized by:

- * *A discourse-centred, genre-based perspective*, in which the parts of a text are viewed in light of the whole, and vice-versa.
- * *A prominent pragmatic-functional component*, in which the form and content of a text is arranged to convey specific communication goals.
- * Taking into account how the overall *situational frames of reference* (the intra-inter- and extratextual environment) of any passage would have influenced the original interpretation, and how contemporary elements will affect the understanding of Scripture.
- * A focus on the *artistic and rhetorical* dimensions of discourse.
- * Special interest in the *oral-aural* dimension of the text of the Bible.

A RELEVANT COMMENT

Dr. Philip Stine served in the Bible translation program of the United Bible Societies (UBS) for almost thirty years. Of these he spent fifteen years in Africa as a translation consultant, nine years as the global translation coordinator, and more than five years as UBS Director for translation. In a lecture on things he had learned in his career in translation, and on what he might have done differently, published subsequently in *Notes on Translation*, Vol 13, No 1, 1999, he makes the following point regarding literary considerations: “If I were to start again, I would study literary criticism in depth. There is probably no field which has made a more important contribution to my own understanding of the Bible and which has more relevance to Bible translation” (p1).

CONCLUSION WITH REGARD TO *TWFTW*’S TRANSLATION APPROACH

Wendland’s “literary functional equivalence” (“LiFE”) approach to translation seems to be a logical development from functional equivalence. It therefore seems that *TWFTW* would do well to adopt that approach as the basic point of departure in our training of Bible translators as well as the execution of the task of translating the Bible.

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