

major themes). All major contexts will be given in order to point out the contextual meaning of these terms.

8. **Supplementary Items:**

Maps: a number of simple maps will present the essential geographical features of the setting of biblical accounts. A brief introductory paragraph will give guidance to the reader concerning their use. Maps will be of a historical nature, and a map index will be provided.

Charts: chronological; Jewish calendar showing seasons and festivals; genealogical; Old and New Testament time charts, and perhaps others.

Tables: biblical weights and measures, currency, and so on.

Illustrations: illustrative pictures, drawings or plans of unfamiliar items will be given: for instance, the Temple, the tabernacle, fauna and flora, and so on.

Format of the footnotes

Footnotes will be presented in the following format:

- placed below the biblical text in double column on each page
- in smaller and different type from the biblical text
- in block form (rather than a separate paragraph for each note)
- each note is marked with a raised index letter at the appropriate place in the text
- each footnote repeats the index letter found in the text, and also gives the chapter and verse reference in bold print
- index letters (a, b, c . . .) will run by chapters, starting again with each new chapter.

One of the people who took part in the Study Bible Workshop was Dr Peter Renju who was one of the translators of the modern Swahili version of the Bible called Habari Njema Kwa Watu Wote. He is now a UBS Translation Consultant, and in thinking about the types of notes required for a Study Bible he wrote the paper which follows.

COMMUNICATION TRIGGERS AS BASES FOR SOME OF THE NOTES FOR STUDY BIBLES

In these notes I want to try to give some kind of justification for some of the notes that should be included in our study Bibles.

Back in 1984, at a UBS Translations Workshop, we were given some general principles and guidelines for study Bibles. The first two recommendations relating to notes were: (a) The explanation of the text in its canonical shape should be the primary purpose of the notes, and (b) The notes should help the readers to understand the book as a whole, and the development of thought, both within the book and in relation to major biblical themes.

The task of preparing notes for study Bibles is by no means an easy one. There are of course various kinds of notes which are universally

accepted. Among these are notes showing the existence of textual variants, and notes which advise the reader that the original is obscure. These two items apply for translations in all languages. Others, also well accepted, apply to the majority of target languages: notes which seek to explain biblical cultural items, weights and measures, fauna and flora, and so on. But the use of these types of notes does not make a Bible a study Bible. It is the application of recommendations (a) and (b) above that constitutes a study Bible. But how much can and cannot be said in the explanation of the canonical text and in supplying notes which should help the readers to understand the book as a whole, and the development of its thought?

Communication triggers

I believe there is a need to exercise some control over what can be said. This will help us to avoid statements which may be unwarranted to say the least. I would like therefore to suggest an approach to be followed for some of the materials which must be included in the notes of the study Bibles we want to produce. The items in question here are those which relate directly to the **triggers** of the communication of the biblical text.

This idea of "communication triggers" is largely inspired by Victor H. Yngve's book, *Linguistics as a Science*, (Indiana University Press 1986), and also by his lecture on the same topic given at LSA Institute last summer. He uses triggers, props, linkages, and other terms in his new approach to linguistics which he calls "Human Linguistics". However, I think we may use this idea of triggers for our own purpose.

Professor Yngve proposes that communicating individuals have to be studied in the same fashion as a scientist studies the elements in order to find out their characteristics and behaviour in different environments. And communicating individuals do not communicate without cause; in other words, there are always triggers of communication that act as causes for the communication. These triggers of communication form an important part of the process of communication and of a proper understanding of the matter being said. Sometimes, especially where these are not apparent or explicit in the text, we need to point them out in notes so as to make the reader understand fully not only the meaning of the text but also of the book as a whole, which is meant to be a significant token, or to use Yngve's expression, a "prop" coupling the reader and the author in various linkages.

Triggers and notes

The triggers or, to use Professor Yngve's definition, the conditional properties that figure causally in the communicative behaviour, act as constraints for the procedure of the communication.

The triggers for communication have been pointed out in the introductions to several books in the edition of the Good News Bible with introductory helps, 1986. For **1 Corinthians**, for instance, we have in this edition: "The apostle's chief concerns are with problems such as

divisions and immorality in the church, and with questions about sex and marriage, matters of conscience, church order, gifts of the Holy Spirit and the resurrection." In **2 Corinthians** the bad relations between the apostle and the church at Corinth and the strong attacks made against him are the two triggers of Paul's communication.

In **Galatians** the trigger is the presence of some people "who opposed Paul and claimed that one must also observe the Law of Moses in order to be right with God." Perhaps a statement should have been included here stating another trigger which, together with this, caused Paul to react the way he reacted in his communication: his firm belief that one becomes right with God only through Christ.

Can we apply this idea of triggers to other books of the Bible? It may not be so easy for all the books, but I believe an attempt has to be made.

For **Genesis**, for example, we could point out at least four triggers: the belief in the existence of God, the observation or reflection on the physical world, a reflection upon the presence of evil, and the position of Israel in relation to the other nations.

Perhaps the main trigger for the communication given in **Exodus** through **Deuteronomy** is Israel's religious observances:

In time to come your children will ask you, "Why did the Lord our God command us to obey all these laws?" Then tell them, "We were slaves of the king of Egypt, and the Lord rescued us by his great power. With our own eyes we saw him work miracles and do terrifying things to the Egyptians and to their king and to all his officials. He freed us from Egypt to bring us here and give us this land, as he had promised our ancestors he would" (Dt 6.20-23).

For the **Gospel of Luke**, the author himself seems to suggest the trigger (or triggers) in his prologue:

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us . . . Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

At least two triggers seem to have been involved: "the things that have been fulfilled among us", and the existence of many accounts which were unsystematic if not spurious and therefore not wholly adequate for confirming a person in the instructions given about the events. The New International Study Bible points out in the introduction to this Gospel that it was presented to displace disconnected and ill-founded reports about Jesus.

The examples just given apply to whole books. Other triggers relate to sections and paragraphs in which the communicative procedure of the author is altered. In **2 Corinthians 2.14**, for instance, Paul drops the informative style of discourse and passes on to a hymn of thanksgiving (expressive function) triggered by the implied failure to take up what would have been a very effective missionary activity in Troas. A note to

this effect can be helpful in that it will show readers the development of thought within the book. Similarly at 3.1, the shift to rhetorical questions is triggered by a reflection on the part of Paul on his previous statement about being a sincere minister of the word of God in contrast with the false preachers—something which could have been misinterpreted by others as boasting.

Certain notes found in some study Bibles are either irrelevant or at least they do not help very much the process of understanding effectively the line of thought of the author. Take, for example, **Isaiah 7.3**. In the NIV Study Bible we have a note on the name Shear-Jashub. NIV Study Bible directs the reader to see the NIV text note where we simply have: the name “means a remnant will return”. Then the note continues: “see also 10:21-22. Isaiah gave each of his sons symbolic names (see 8.1,3,18).” Nothing more is said in the footnote about the name. In my view, however, that is not enough. We need here to point out the trigger for this particular symbolic action directed to King Ahaz. Isaiah was firmly convinced (from his prophetic point of view) that God would intervene to save, even if only a few were to be left over after destruction.

Similarly, in the same **chapter 7**, we have in the NIV Study Bible a general note introducing the background of the chapter, the Syrio-Ephraimite war, but no note is given with regard to one of the most important triggers: Isaiah’s prophetic conviction that human alliances are not a solution to the problem. The solution was trust in God (see 7.14 where an adequate note is given in NIV concerning the expression Immanuel which “was meant to convince Ahaz that God could rescue him from his enemies.”) The Syrio-Ephraimite war triggered the behaviour of Ahaz (he was terrified) and this behaviour was interpreted by Isaiah (who was also triggered by his state of being a prophet of God) as amounting to lack of trust in God: “If your faith is not enduring you shall not endure,” (8.9b, GNB).

The most important trigger for the entire Bible, needless to say, is God, and this must be mentioned in one way or another in the general introduction for the entire Bible, or for the Testaments if these are published separately. Incidentally, pointing out these triggers can also help in the task of exegesis.

Conclusion

Among other things, then, we should watch out for the **triggers** as we prepare our study Bibles. This is not really a new approach, of course.

It is practically the same as specifying the background, the setting of context or the *Sitz im Leben* we have been so familiar with. By using a new label I have sought to emphasize some of the things which may have actually played a role in the communication and acted as constraints in its formulation. Identifying and making use of communication triggers as bases for some of the notes we must use in our study Bibles may look like moving towards pragmatics, but I think this type of approach can

protect us from adopting unhelpful notes. It can help also in the task of deciding how much can and should be said in the introductions.

NOTE

Getting the “story” straight in Acts 20.9

As Norman Moss’s *The British/American Dictionary* warns us, when Americans refer to the “first floor”, they are talking about what Britons call the “ground floor”. And when Britons refer to the “first floor” they are talking about what Americans call the “second floor”. We might add that it’s the same story with the “first stor(e)y” or “second stor(e)y”—they don’t refer to the same thing in the two countries.

So somebody has to be wrong when translations on both sides of the Atlantic translate “the third stor(e)y/floor” in Acts 20.9. American translations and dictionaries have consistently translated the Greek word *tristegon* as “third story”. I refer specifically to Goodspeed, Montgomery, C. B. Williams, the Revised Standard Version, the Amplified New Testament, Beck, the New American Standard Bible, the New American Bible, the Good News Bible, the New International Version and the American translation of Bauer’s lexicon by Arndt and Gingrich as well as Barclay Newman Jr’s dictionary.

This “third story” is what Britons would call “the second stor(e)y/floor”, the French *le deuxième étage* and the Germans *der zweite Stock* or *das zweite Stockwerk*. But that is not what we generally find in British translations and other works, which usually have “the third stor(e)y” or “the third floor” in Acts 20.9. This is the case with the Twentieth Century New Testament, Weymouth, Moffatt, Knox, Phillips, the New English Bible, Barclay, the British edition of the Good News Bible, the Translator’s New Testament, the translation in the British translation of Haenchen’s commentary, and the Liddell-Scott-Jones lexicon.

French translations and dictionaries likewise refer to (*le*) *troisième étage*. The ones I refer to are *Segond, Nouvelle version Segond révisée, Synodale, Bible du Centenaire, Maredsous, Bible de Jérusalem, Benoit, Français courant, Bible de la Pléiade, Traduction œcuménique de la Bible, Parole vivante, Le Livre*, and Bailly’s and Carrez-Morel’s dictionaries. In German Luther has *vom dritten Stockwerk*; the first edition of *Die Gute Nachricht* had *der dritte Stock*. The above mentioned French translations and dictionaries, and two German translations and common language translations in Dutch, Spanish, Italian and Brazilian Portuguese all refer to what Americans would call the “fourth story”. Other British translations give the same impression: Rieu has “. . . fell three storeys to the ground”; Schonfield’s *The Authentic New Testament* has “. . . fell three floors below” and the Jerusalem Bible (1966 edition) has “. . . fell to the ground three floors below”. The American Kenneth