

word “God” or some variation of it. In fact, Tok Pisin itself provides a good example of the situation. Tok Pisin has no final /-d/, and the word God is actually pronounced /got/. But even though in the last few years there have been two major revisions of the way that Bible names are spelled in Tok Pisin, no one has dared to change “God” to “Got.”

Another modern example comes from the Yagaria language of the Eastern Highlands. Carol Gutwein, of the New Tribes Mission, described their search for a term for God in a memo she wrote to me in 1993:

We are now using a transliteration of “God.” I tried Bigavi De, literally “Way-up-there Being” for a while, as it was a term they used widely for Deity. But they never would accept it in writing (no doubt influence of Tok Pisin), and I don’t hear them using it any more (additional influence of writing transliteration).

Conclusion

There are many different factors to be considered when selecting a name for God. If one accepts the arguments given at the beginning of this paper, then one will agree that the place to begin the search is in the traditional belief system of the culture. To do this adequately will require careful consideration of the full range of words in the domain for “spirit being,” as well as a careful review of all of the traditions associated with these beings. As has been pointed out, the wrong choice of a name for God can lead to serious problems in the church. However, for the most part, I believe that the decision should be an informed decision by mature Christians from within the language group, rather than by missionaries or theologians who do not know the language.

Partly because the decision must be made by the people who are to use the name, there are other factors to be considered that have little to do with a linguistic or anthropological analysis of the language and culture. This has to do with subjective feelings that the people may have about their relationship to the larger culture of the country. Even though we may feel that on principle one should use a name from the language, the speakers of that language may feel that one should not! If they feel strongly this way, their opinion needs to be respected.

ERNST WENDLAND

TRANSLATION ISSUES WITHIN THE BIBLE PUBLICATION PROCESS (Part 2)

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(This is the second part of the article on Typography and Format in Bible publishing. Part 1 was published in the October 2003 issue of The Bible Translator, Practical Papers.)

Format: Duplicating the dynamics of biblical discourse in print

The biblical writers composed their texts in a meaningful way so that the text would have the desired impact, appeal and relevance, and so be remembered.

This intention most certainly related to the form as well as the content of their various messages to the people of God. It was not just form on the level of sentence construction, but also concerning the discourse as a whole. In recent years biblical scholars have begun to look at these larger aspects of a text more seriously. They are interested to know what such features as development of a theme, cohesion within the text, demarcation of units, arrangement, and emphasis have to tell us.

The point is that the biblical authors shaped their texts so that they would be understood in a certain way. They carefully chose the paragraph structure, points of emphasis, parallel passages, repeated words, and so forth. Translators and typesetters today have the responsibility of reproducing these same aspects of meaning also in their translations. But to what extent is this possible? To be sure, there are many limiting factors that may prevent such a goal, however worthwhile, from being carried out. For example, the skill and expertise of the translation staff, the time allocated for the project, financial resources (production costs would inevitably be higher), the abilities of the target audience to interpret the meaning of the formatting features, all will place limits on this element. However, each project must deal with such issues.

Two examples in prose and poetry are given below to visually illustrate how formatting can highlight the discourse elements in a text. It is not possible to fully explain these discourse structures and print formats here (see the examples and discussion in Wendland and Louw, *Graphic Design and Bible Reading*, Bible Society of South Africa, 1993). However, in brief, each pericope is set out on the page in such a way that it suggests some of the main elements of the biblical text, along with certain terms and passages that seem to be highlighted in the original Hebrew or Greek.

Prose: Matthew 25.31-46 (“Christ judges the sheep and the goats”)

- 31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, A
and all the angels with him,
he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.
- 32 All the nations will be gathered before him,
and he will separate the people one from another
as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.
- 33 He will put the **sheep** on his right
and the **goats** on his left.
- 34 “Then the King will say to those on his right, B
‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father;
take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you
since the creation of the world.
- 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, C
I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you invited me in,

- 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me,
I was sick and you looked after me,
I was in prison and you came to visit me.'
- 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, **D**
'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you,
or thirsty and give you something to drink?
38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in,
or needing clothes and clothe you?
39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit
you?'
- 40 "The King will reply, '*I tell you the truth, E*
whatever you did for one of the least of these
brothers of mine,
you did for me.'
- 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, **B'**
'Depart from me, you who are cursed,
into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.
- 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, **C'**
I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,
43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in,
I needed clothes and you did not clothe me,
I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'
- 44 "They also will answer, **D'**
'Lord, when did we see you hungry
or thirsty
or a stranger
or needing clothes
or sick or in prison,
and did not help you?'
- 45 "He will reply, '*I tell you the truth, E'*
whatever you did not do for one of the least of
these,
you did not do for me.'
- 46 "Then they will go away to **eternal punishment,** **A'**
but the righteous to **eternal life.**"

Poetry: Job 28 ("Where can true wisdom be found?")**28 WHERE CAN TRUE WISDOM BE FOUND?***The successful search for wealth*

- 1 There is a mine for silver
and a place where gold is refined.
- 2 Iron is taken from the earth,
and copper is smelted from ore.
- 3 Man puts an end to the darkness;
he searches the farthest recesses
for ore in the blackest darkness.
- 4 Far from where people dwell he cuts a shaft,
in places forgotten by the foot of man,
far from men he dangles and sways.
- 5 The earth, from which food comes,
is transformed below as by fire.
- 6 Sapphires come from its rocks,
and its dust contains nuggets of gold.
- 7 No bird of prey knows that hidden path,
no falcon's eye has seen it.
- 8 Proud beasts do not set foot on it,
and no lion prowls there.
- 9 Man's hand assaults the flinty rock
and lays bare the roots of the mountains.
- 10 He tunnels through the rock;
his eyes see all its treasures.
- 11 He dams up the sources of the rivers
and brings hidden things to light.

The unsuccessful search for wisdom

- 12 **But where can wisdom be found?**
Where does understanding dwell?
- 13 Man does not comprehend its worth;
it cannot be found in the land of the living.
- 14 The deep says, "It is not in me";
the sea says, "It is not with me."
- 15 It cannot be bought with the finest *gold*,
nor can its price be weighed in silver.
- 16 It cannot be bought with the *gold* of Ophir,
with precious onyx or sapphires.

17 Neither *gold* nor crystal can compare with it,
 nor can it be had for jewels of *gold*.
 18 Coral and jasper are not worthy of mention;
 the price of wisdom is beyond rubies.
 19 The topaz of Cush cannot compare with it;
 it cannot be bought with pure *gold*.

20 **Where then does wisdom come from?**

 Where does understanding dwell?
 21 It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing,
 concealed even from the birds of the air.
 22 Destruction and Death say,
 “Only a rumor has reached our ears.”

God—the only source of wisdom

23 **God understands the way to it
 and he alone knows where it dwells,**
 24 for he views the ends of the earth
 and sees everything under the heavens.
 25 When he established the force of the wind
 and measured out the waters,
 26 when he made a decree for the rain
 and a path for the thunderstorm,
 27 then he looked at wisdom and appraised it;
 he confirmed it and tested it.
 28 And he said to man,
 “**The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom,
 and to shun evil is understanding.**”

Seven key goals in typesetting a biblical text

The discussion and examples above suggest that translators and typesetters would do well to keep the following interrelated qualities in mind as they prepare their translated text for publication. It is not generally possible to achieve all seven in every publication, but they can stand as the ideal to aim for with regard to typography and format (T-F). Achieving that goal depends on the temporal, technical, financial, and human resources available at the time.

- ◆ Integrity – The T-F should allow readers to appreciate the overall wholeness, completeness, and unity of the pericope being read, enabling readers to view this text portion as a wholly independent paragraph or unit.
- ◆ Harmony – The T-F also serve to blend the various paragraphs together so that they are seen to be harmonious with one another to form an integrated whole.

- ◆ Clarity – The T-F is intended to contribute to the readability (legibility) and hence also to the intelligibility of the text. This is especially so when it is “performed” (for example, proclaimed, recited, sung) publicly in a formal worship setting.
- ◆ Consistency – The various T-F devices need to be used consistently and uniformly throughout a given publication so that they become familiar “signs” and do not confuse or frustrate average readers of the Target Language constituency.
- ◆ Suitability – T-F features, especially any new or unusual ones, ought to be thoroughly tested both before and after being used in a publication so that their appropriateness and relevance for a particular target audience is assured.
- ◆ Rhythm – The T-F qualities of a pericope must be fine-tuned to the point that they establish a definite, perceptible “rhythm of print.” This enables it to be read accordingly, especially when being read publicly for the benefit of a listening audience.
- ◆ Beauty – This concerns the artistry of the printed page. It should reflect the key thematic, aesthetic, and rhetorical features of the original text as much as is possible and feasible in the target language.

Conclusion—Towards a more creative, communicative typography, and format

No Bible should have to look dull, imposing, “scholarly,” even academic in nature. There is no reason to continue to reproduce Scripture texts in the same old ways simply because of past convention and the present economy. Our primary aim is to convey the Word of God as *best* we can, given a particular audience with specific needs, desires, abilities, and also liabilities. The goal of any translation is to help the audience to encounter the text and be informed by it. Is it possible to re-present the biblical text more creatively in terms of our typography and format, as well as in the style of the translation itself? This question needs to be asked with regard to each language, culture, and medium of communication in which the Word is embodied.

Of course it all depends on that fundamental translation question, “For whom?” *Who* are the actual intended readers and hearers of a particular version. This necessitates some serious research—not only *testing* the potential consumer group, but also *educating* them with regard to the different print options that are available. Such instruction is needed because most Bible-reading audiences tend to be conservative. They do not always react positively to changes in “their Scriptures.” However, our responsibility to them is to help them appreciate that any proposed revisions in typography and format are stylistic features that can help them to read and understand their Bibles better. The goal is to achieve a greater overall level of effective communication that is in keeping with the function of the specific biblical text. That function may be to teach, to narrate, to praise, to lament, to admonish, to encourage, and many more such motivations,

depending on the literary genre and section concerned. Translation teams take great pains to reproduce the original message in their language so that their people can understand, enjoy, and apply it to their lives. Why should the text subsequently be spoiled by poor or unhelpful publishing?

Clearly there is a great need for all Bible agencies to hold regular workshops so that project organizers, monitors, implementers, and evaluators have a chance to agree on their various action plans. These should take place ideally *before* an actual translation is begun. Certainly they should happen before the translated text is finally sent off for typesetting. Such meetings should involve not only general discussions between the translators and production staff, but they must also consider some of the more complex, language- and version-specific issues. What can be done to display the translated text in a manner that best suits the Word of God in general and its many different discourse types in particular? This question applies to all Scripture from the simple genealogies of Genesis to the deeply symbolic prophecies of Revelation. Workshops can be extended to include as many receptor groups as possible—at local conferences, conventions, retreats, seminars, workshops. An excellent educational model that can be followed is the program operating in Latin America. Its basic course of study is set forth in Roger Omanson (ed.), *Discover the Bible: A Manual for Bible Study*, United Bible Societies, 2001. The more people who know the main issues involved in the translation and publication process and can teach others about them, the more fully the Christian community as a whole will regard themselves as “stewards” of the Scriptures that have been entrusted to them. It will aid their own use of Scripture and preserve it for the next generation (Deut 4.9-14; Col 3.16).

FOCUS ON TRANSLATIONS

[*In this article by Alfredo Tepox—a translation officer of the Bible Society of Mexico, living in Mexico—about the new Spanish translation, Biblia en Lenguaje Sencillo, the author describes the attempt to render the book of Lamentations into Spanish, preserving its special literary form called Acrostic.*]

Translating Acrostics as Acrostics

Introduction

The new Spanish *Biblia en Lenguaje Sencillo* will be publishing the book of Lamentations in acrostic form, thus becoming the first Spanish version of the Bible to render the Hebrew acrostics as acrostics. What follows is a report on the process that led to this.

It was during the translation process of the Spanish *Dios Habla Hoy* Bible that there was an initial attempt to reproduce the alphabetic order of the Hebrew acrostics following the order of the Spanish alphabet. The Ronald Knox version was probably the only Bible that had done something similar in English. The attempt failed. In spite of having been persuaded that content was more important