

CHAPTER 7

SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

A. Processes of Semantic Analysis

Regardless of whether semantics is to be treated as part of "deep structure" as in generative-transformational grammar, or as the top stratum as in stratificational grammar, Nida sees the recent emphasis on meaning (as an integral part of language and an essential component in any analysis of structure) to be of immense importance for translation theory. In particular Componential Analysis of semantic structures, stimulated by Katz and Fodor's (1963) application of a TG model to the structure of meaning and by Lounsbury's studies of kinship systems (1955, 1956), became an essential element in his translation theory (Nida 1975:1052), and is reflected in the chapters in TAPOT on Referential Meaning (ch. 4) and Connotative Meaning (ch. 5).

Most studies in semantics concentrate on the ambiguities of language but Nida rightly emphasizes how remarkably few they are, especially on the discourse level. With a mere 25,000 or so lexical units people can communicate with each other about millions of topics. This means that these lexical units have relatively large potential domains which can be efficiently delimited by the context to signal precise meanings.

The Marking of Meaning

Meaning is marked by: (1) syntactic structure as in e.g. "She drank the water" vs "She will water the plants" and by (2) semotactic structure as in, e.g.

1. The man runs.
2. The water runs into the tub.
3. The motor runs well.
4. The vine runs along the fence.
5. The bus runs between New York and Albany.

In these sentences five different meanings are marked by certain semantically definable classes of co-occurring words. Note, however, that one cannot assume the same extensions of meaning in other languages. French, for example, cannot say: a motor runs. Rather "it walks": "Le moteur marche" In Telugu^u (South India) "it plays".¹

The five sentences above all exhibit intransitive uses of "run". When "run" is used as a transitive verb it is causative and Nida provides an interesting set of correspondences (TAPOT: 60).

1. He ran the animal in the last race (i.e. he caused the animal to run).
2. She ran the water into the tub (i.e. the water did the running).
3. He ran the business well (i.e. he caused the business to run efficiently).
4. He ran the vine over the trellis (i.e. he caused the vine to grow over the trellis).

If, then, these uses of "run" are added to the original five we introduce the syntactic structure transitive/intransitive as a marker of meaning in addition to the semotactic structure which distinguishes the meanings of the first five sentences. With regard to those five intransitive sentences Nida analyzes out five different meanings of "run":

1. pedal action of an inanimate being involving relatively fast movement in space;
2. movement of a mass;
3. internal action of a mechanism;
4. action or position of something capable of extension;
5. habitual movement.

These five different meanings are marked by certain semantically definable classes of co-occurring words.

¹ This example was supplied by my colleague Dr. Vasant Kumar.

The Analysis of Related Meanings of Different Words

For the translator, however, the analysis of related meanings of a single term is not as important as the analysis of the meanings of words having related or competing meanings (TAPOT: 63, cf. Nida 1972d: 85 and Nida 1975: 88). The different meanings of single terms are less of a problem because they are actually further apart in semantic space i.e. they share fewer components than do related meanings of different words. The translator must be able to distinguish between such sets as 'walk' and 'run', 'walk' and 'stroll', 'stroll' and 'amble'. They are terms which in certain of their meanings compete with each other for semantic space. Nida proposes that there are three different types of meaningful relationships: (1) contiguous, e.g. 'walk' and 'run'; (2) included, e.g. 'walk' and 'stroll', and (3) overlapping, e.g. 'stroll' and 'amble'.

A fourth structure, 'polar opposition', describes such series as 'good'/'bad', 'tall'/'short', and 'generous'/'stingy'.

Such sets are analyzed in terms of their minimal contrasting features. An example frequently cited by Nida is the set 'chair', 'stool', 'bench', 'hassock', all of which share the common components 'manufactured object' and 'for sitting'. With the aid of diagnostic components it is possible to contrast the essential elements of meaning in these competing terms.

chair	stool	bench	hassock
a. with legs	a. with legs	a. with legs	a. without legs
b. with back	b. without back	b. with or without back	b. without back
c. for one person	c. for one person	c. for two or more persons	c. for one person

But what would be the status of chair whose back was broken off? Would it become a stool?

The Analysis of Related Meanings of a Single Word

Having analyzed the componential structure of the related meanings of different words, Nida turns to the analysis of related meanings of a single word (TAPOT:77-87). Again three basic types of components are distinguished: Common components, Diagnostic components and Supplementary or Optional components. An appropriate warning is given that "what is distinctive about a particular meaning may not be one or more components which it possess exclusively but rather the particular assortment or configurations of components (p.78). Kinship sets with their cross cutting components (e.g. sex, lineality versus collaterality, and generations) are a good example as each term is defined by a unique combination of components.

The six techniques for determining the relevant components are:

- (1) isolate and "discard" the universal component(s) since they are not distinctive;
- (2) isolate the components which occur in one or more but not all meanings;
- (3) arrange these components in parallel columns under each meaning, marking as much similarity and difference as is needed;
- (4) of the remaining components, reject for the moment supplementary components i.e. those which can be excluded without destroying the meaning, and add to each column those which are necessary to define the meaning;
- (5) indicate the extent of parallelism or agreement between senses;
- (6) determine which components are distinctive, individually or collectively, for each meaning.

In summary it is claimed that this kind of componential analysis enables us to know why we can substitute certain terms in certain

contexts but not in others. All can be clarified in terms of the components which the meanings share or do not share.

The Problem of Figurative Meaning

The figurative sense of any term rests on the fact that it has an almost/distinct set of components but that it also has a link to the primary sense through some one component, usually a supplementary one. This supplementary component can be actually relevant to the referent of the primary sense or only conventionally assigned, but in either case it is not one of the essential, distinctive features by which the primary sense is distinguished from others. (TAPOT:88).

entirely /

This definition seems appropriate when Nida applies it to the single figurative use of "fox" by Jesus in Luke 13:32 with reference to King Herod. The main components present in literal usage (viz. animal, canine, genus Vulpes) are not present here. The link is through a supplementary component "cunning" which is culture specific. In non-Western cultures this trait is assigned just as arbitrarily to another animal (e.g. rabbit or spider).

However, the definition does not seem equally apt for other biblical idioms to which it is applied. For instance frequently occurring terms such as "flesh" and "blood" seem to have figurative extensions of more central components. To preserve these figurative uses in translation may be unnatural to the receptor language but I doubt that they would ever be incomprehensible within the context of the biblical corpus. Similarly when Nida argues that "circumcised" and "uncircumcised" would be better translated literally "Jews" and "Gentiles" in Galatians (TAPOT: 89) because the reference is to ethnic groups and not to a physical operation, he seems to miss the point that the whole letter is about circumcision. Paul is opposing those who argue that Gentile Christians need to be circumcised. "Circumcision" like "flesh" and "blood" is a central concept in Scripture in both literal and figurative meanings and in that total context the meaning is never obscure.

Nida's contention that Semitic idioms such as "sons of disobedience" (meaning "people who disobey God"), "Children of the bridechamber" ("the bridal party"), "to close one's bowels" ("to fail to be compassionate"), need not be retained in translation, is unobjectionable. Unlike terms such as "blood", "circumcision", these idioms do not contribute to the "cohesion" of the whole corpus.

Connotative Meaning

The analysis of a SL text must not be limited to a study of syntactic relationships between linguistic units or to the Referential (or denotative) meanings of these same units. The Connotative (or emotive) values of the text must also be analyzed (TAPOT: 91 cf. Nida 1964: 70ff). This is crucial because DE translation seeks to attain equivalent emotive responses on the part of the receptors (ibid: 98).

Traditionally connotative meanings have been associated only with individual words or short phrases but it is pointed out that: (1) pronunciation, (2) words, (3) the discourse (involving connotative reaction to the style of the utterance), and (4) the themes of the message, may all have associated meanings (ibid. 96).

Nida and Taber begin by mentioning examples of negative reactions to such words as the famous four letter words in English, which refer to certain body organs and functions:

The fact that the taboo is against the word and not the referent can be seen from the fact that there are quite innocent scientific terms which refer to the same things and which are perfectly acceptable. But the feeling against the words is such that even though everyone knows them, they are not used in polite society, and even many dictionaries refuse to print them. Such words are thought to defile the user (ibid: 91).

All societies have their "vulgar language" as distinct from ordinary popular language: "vulgar language is a universal phenomenon" (ibid: 91).

Other examples of words with connotative meanings are given:

for instance "toilet" (i.e. in American English) which is replaced by euphemisms such as "washroom", "comfort station", "lounge", "powder room"; or the word "garbage man" which is replaced by "sanitary engineer", and "undertaker" that is replaced by "mortician".

Connotative meaning is said to derive from three principal sources: (1) the speakers associated with the word; (2) the practical circumstances in which the word is used, and (3) the linguistic setting characteristic of the word (TAPOT: 92-94). Firstly, words acquire a connotative meaning closely related to our attitude towards their users. Words used primarily by children or in addressing children are not appropriate for adult usage. Similarly certain words become associated with certain classes. In British English much has been made of upper class (U) and non-upper class (non-U) speech.

Educational levels may also be involved so that educated persons use what is regarded as standard speech while others use "substandard" words, pronunciation and grammar. Some words acquire special connotations through association with members of one sex. There are also regionalisms. In the Christian community, Nida points out, expressions such as "the blood", "the cross of Jesus Christ" and "in the heavens" mark particular Christian constituencies (and one might add "born again" in view of the recent U.S. Presidential campaign) just as surely as terms such as "existential", "dialogue", "confrontation" mark others. The attitude that one has towards the person that uses that vocabulary becomes an attitude to the vocabulary, i.e. it becomes a connotation of that word (TAPOT: 93). Words such as "bunny", "alkaloid", "case the joint", "it's real cool", "ontological", "peekaboo", "sublapsarian", and "dogey" are offered as examples of expressions that are associated with different types of people.

Secondly, words used by the same people in different circumstances carry quite different connotations (e.g. "damn" used in a church as against a beerhall). TAPOT treats the situational level of language e.g. technical, formal, informal, casual and intimate later (p. 128-129). The nature of the total environment has its effect on the connotations of words too, and the example cited of the different connotations of colours in Africa, is also valid in Indonesia, where different ethnic groups have different emotional reactions to different colours. Thus Chinese in Central Java, as elsewhere, regard "red" as the appropriate colour for festivities as it has connotations of happiness and good luck. For the local Javanese, however, red symbolizes all that is bad (e.g. anger, blood, etc.) and many would not buy Bibles with red covers.

Thirdly, the linguistic setting in which words tend to occur give them various connotations. Nida suggests that "green" in English suffers from its occurrence in "green with envy", "green at the gills", "a green worker" and "green fruit". Again one could contrast the Indonesian context where this colour, for many, arouses very favourable reactions because of the association with Islam. Linguistic setting includes the time dimension and literary setting too (ibid. 94). Thus phrases such as "Uncle Tom", "Mary's little lamb", "Thus says the Lord" are inevitably associated with the literary works in which they are found.

Measurement of the connotative values of words is important for Bible translators. Of all the methods tried so far the matrix of Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum is said to be the least inadequate (ibid. 93-94).

B. Some Issues

As he acknowledges in the preface to his more recent book, Componential Analysis of Meaning: An Introduction to Semantic Structures (1975), Nida was inspired by the structural semantic insights of the two American anthropologists Lounsbury and Goodenough, who - inter alia through the study of American and Indian Kinship terms - made a componential analysis of meaning on a socio-cultural basis. That Nida acknowledges his debt to these two scholars in particular is understandable when one remembers that his qualitative reference point for Bible translation is the socio-cultural differentiated "closest natural equivalent". The larger the socio-cultural and typological distance between the SL and the RL, the more difficult this is to attain.

Although Nida's basic theoretical orientation at this point is of the generative-semantic type, we can be grateful that he has abandoned the use of complicated tree diagrams in presenting linguistic data and has developed a descriptive relationship which guarantees comprehensibility.

As always this is the strength of Nida's exposition. It lucidly presents a wealth of observational insights reflecting a life-long acquaintance with a variety of practical problems that confront a director of a society for Bible translation. But comprehensibility does not necessarily guarantee scientific stringency.

Componential Analysis would seem to be a potentially useful tool for defining the differences between respective meanings and Nida's treatment has much that is suggestive and valuable.

Margaret Master^{MAN}ten makes the interesting comment, however, that Nida's method "does not work well for the great key words of the Bible" (TLS 19.3.70: 301). Certainly I agree with her when she points out

the inadequacy of Nida's analysis of the three sets: (a) repentance/remorse/conversion; (b) prayer/meditation/communion/worship, and (c) Holy/good/righteous (TAPOT: 66-71), not however, because of any failure to recognize certain components of religious mystery as she seems to imply. My problem is rather that at this point, the authors seem to abandon their scientific approach. No linguistic context is supplied for the terms under discussion. The terms themselves are a funny hotchpotch. 'Repentance', 'remorse', 'conversion' and 'salvation' are introduced as English words and their meanings are discussed without reference to any possible sentences in which they might occur. Worse still, 'repentance' is singled out for exposition in terms of the Greek word metanoēō that is said to be behind it (TAPOT:67).

In the discussion of contrast in semantic areas and levels the set 'prayer', 'meditation', 'communion', 'worship' are introduced as Biblical terms but no contexts are supplied to justify the analysis. In fact 'meditation' and 'communion' are not Biblical terms as any concordance of the English Bible will show and the discussion of these words is more in the nature of a theological argument than an exercise in linguistic analysis.

The next set: 'holy', 'good', 'righteous' (in Matthew) and 'righteous' (in Paul) is composed of Biblical words which are said to share common components such as socially approved, religiously appropriate qualities and characteristics of personality. The distinctions said to be revealed by diagnostic components are quite plausible but no examples are given (TAPOT:71).

The discussion of overlapping semantic areas is illustrated with the series: 'grace', 'favor', 'kindness', 'mercy'. The authors apparently drift back into general English usage and the analysis is once again carried out and discussed without being anchored in linguistic contexts (TAPOT:74).

Only in the analysis of the Greek word agapao and phileo (both translated 'love') do we find a relatively scientific treatment. Many Biblical scholars have seen important distinctions of meaning but Nida shows that in one key passage, John 21:15-17, there is no semotactic frame to distinguish such meanings (p. 75-76).

Again, componential analysis is applied to the Greek term soma (this time with reference to actual Biblical contexts) and five meanings are distinguished (p.80). This is undoubtedly instructive for Biblical interpretation and translation but raises a problem, viz. what about the "common element" that links these five notions together in the New Testament documents? How does the translator do justice to the integrating factor in the SL term? In technical terminology, in particular, this could be crucial.

Some Biblical references are supplied to illustrate the "distinctions in meaning between "God" and "gods", "a unique singular and a genetic plural", but the argument is unnecessarily weakened by failure to clarify whether the case is being based on the original Hebrew and Greek texts or on the English Bible's usage. Hebrew terms are mixed in with the English ones (TAPOT: 82-83).

Almost as if anticipating this objection, Nida goes on to emphasize that because a term may have a number of different meanings in Scripture it is imperative to specify the context (TAPOT:81).

This point has been receiving increasing attention in Biblical research (Barr, 1961, 1969; Sawyer, 1972; Thistleton, 1973). However, Nida's analysis of the two terms given as examples: "redeem" and "God/gods" fails at this point. Three meanings of "redeem" are offered on the basis of Scripture usage: (1) redeem a slave, (2) redeem Israel from Egypt, (3) redeem by Jesus Christ. All three meanings include the common components of "alien control" and "release" but only the first, it is claimed, includes the notion of payment of a price.

However, no linguistic contexts are supplied.

With regard to the analysis of figurative meaning summarized in part A above, we have already seen that Nida's treatment is more subjective than he would care to admit. In particular the analysis of terms like "blood" and "circumcision", central concepts in the biblical corpus, leaves much to be desired.

Because of the need to elicit an equivalent emotional response from the receptors in DE translation, ^S connotative meaning is extremely important, and Nida stresses this factor not only in the ^S semantic analysis of the ST but also in his later chapters on Transfer and Restructuring. His treatment is always interesting and usually convincing. We have already seen the relevance of his discussion of the connotations of colours to the Indonesian situation. Of particular interest too is his reference to the linguistic setting, characteristic of a word, as an important source of connotation. Nida cites phrases such as: "Uncle Tom", "Mary's little lamb", and more importantly "Thus says the Lord", which are associated with the special literary setting in which they are found. One might suggest that this point has relevance for the translation of cultic words and for biblical language generally. How does one retain such associations in the RL if one's theory of translation dictates "naturalness" in the target language?

Nida has been criticized for his explanation of "verbal taboos". We read in TAPOT (p.91) that in the case of such expressions as the four letter words "the taboo is against the word and not the referent". But Siertsema would seem to be correct when she says that our negative reaction is in fact to the referent. That is why euphemisms are so ephemeral and may be replaced two or three times in one lifetime. For as soon as their meaning becomes so well known that their camouflage

function is lost, a new camouflage is looked for in the form of a new euphemism for the unpleasant referent. In fact "undertaker" and "toilet" were once euphemisms (Siertsema 1974:319). Likewise, negative reactions to four letter words would seem to involve more than Nida admits. These are surely not just a matter of taboo in a certain social setting - a case of non-U language (cf. Nancy Mitford 1956). Anthropological research would indicate that there is a unanimity in the use of widely different languages reflecting a unanimity of attitude towards the things meant (Siertsema 1974:321-322).

In retrospect Nida and Taber's treatment of connotative meaning, though stimulating, seems too broad and imprecise. Geoffrey Leech's Semantics offers sharper and more useful analysis. Leech suggests seven types of meaning. The first - Conceptual Meaning coincides with Nida's Referential meaning. But Nida's Connotative Meaning is subdivided into Connotative, Stylistic, Affective, Reflected and Collocative meaning. Leech also adds Thematic Meaning - what is communicated by the way in which the message is organized (Leech 1974:10-27).

Finally, one might add that an evaluation of Nida's semantics will be largely dependent on our assessment of the value of Componential analysis. A componential approach to semantics has been advocated not only by mentalist theorists such as Chomsky and Katz, but also by linguists of different presuppositions such as Hjelmslav and Jakobson. Lyons, who has a good discussion of the topic, describes Componential analysis as "a technique for the economic statement of certain semantic relations between lexical items and between sentences containing them" (Lyons 1968:476). But he draws attention to a theoretical problem in the approach in so far as the semantic features themselves have the status of lexical units. This means that the analysis is dependent on features which actually should only be the result of componential analysis. Hence "one cannot avoid the suspicion that the semantic

components are interpreted on the basis of the linguist's intuitive understanding of the lexical items which he uses to label them" (ibid. 480). Certainly as we have seen above Nida's analysis is not free from subjectivism.

CHAPTER 8

TRANSFER AND RESTRUCTURING

A. Significant Factors in Transfer

Having dealt with the processes of both Grammatical and Semantic analysis, Nida and Taber address the problems involved in transferring the results of the analysis from the SL to the RL.

Before the actual process of transfer is discussed there are some wise words on practical problems that often arise in connection with personnel involved in that transfer, whether the translators are foreign or national (TAPOT:99-104). For example, theologically trained persons often have real problems learning how to translate for a level other than the one in which they habitually operate. Again, some national translators have such a deep sense of insecurity about their own language that they may feel obliged to imitate the forms of other languages which they regard as having more prestige.

The transfer is made at the near kernel level - that is at the point where the kernels have been connected in such a way as to indicate their precise relationships. Nida claims that the relationship between kernels may be of three kinds: (1) temporal, (2) spatial, and (3) logical. Transfer on this near kernel level is less likely to distort the message because relations between the linguistic units of a message are more clearly marked at this level and because languages exhibit far greater similarity of structure at the near kernel level than they do in their surface structures (Nida 1975a:91).

i. Semantic adjustments

Transfer will necessitate both Semantic and Syntactic adjustments. If the form of the original message can be preserved well and good. But it is the content which must be preserved at any cost; the form, except in special cases such as poetry, is largely secondary, since

within each language the rules for relating content to form are highly complex, arbitrary and variable. "It is a bit like packing clothing into two different pieces of luggage: the clothes remain the same, but the shape of the suitcases may vary greatly, and hence the way in which the clothes are packed must be different" (TAPOT: 105). What counts is that the clothes arrive at the destination in the best possible condition, i.e. with the least damage. The analogy is somewhat crude. That it is used in a translator's manual such as TAPOT is perhaps understandable. That it should be repeated in a presidential address to the Linguistic Society of America is more surprising (Nida 1975a:91).

In any translation there will be some loss of Semantic content. The commonest problems of transfer arise in the area of: (1) idioms; (2) figurative meanings; (3) shifts in central components; (4) generic and specific meanings; (5) pleonastic expressions; (6) special formulas (e.g. epistology); (7) redistribution of semantic components, and (8) provision for contextual conditioning (e.g. by adding classifiers or descriptive phrases). Helpful examples of each are provided (TAPOT:106-111).

In the process of transferring the referential content of the message there are three different types of redistribution of the componential structures (TAPOT:109 cf. Nida 1975a:92): First, there may be a complete redistribution. This is especially true in the transfer of idioms: for example a literal transfer of the biblical idiom heap coals of fire on his head normally involves a distortion of meaning. One Congolese tribe considered that this was a reference to some new method for torturing enemies to death; they had not thought of such a technique before. The meaning of this idiom - that is, its componential structure - must be completely redistributed, so that

it can be transferred in a form such as "to be so good to one's antagonist as to make him ashamed". Second, the process of transfer may involve an analytical redistribution of the components. This means that what is carried by one lexical unit in the source language is distributed over several terms in the receptor language. For example disciples may be transferred as 'those who followed him', saints may be 'the people of God', and phylacteries may be rendered as 'little leather bundles with holy words in them'. Third, the process of transfer may involve a synthesis of components. An expression such as brothers and sisters may be transferred as siblings; and in the Moré language of the Haute Volta, what is sixteen words in English - in the morning, a great while before day, (he) rose and went out to an uninhabited place (Mark 1:35) - becomes only one word for all the componential features of meaning are included in the single Moré term.

ii. Structural adjustments

Attempts to preserve Structural form in transfer usually result in complete unintelligibility or at least awkwardness. Nida discusses those modifications dictated primarily by the obligatory contrasts in the respective near-kernel structures. The optional modifications figure at a later stage as one undertakes to restructure the message by forward transformation to the appropriate level.

An important section on the provision of contextual conditioning (TAPOT:109-111) is followed by a good discussion of the kind of structural adjustments often found necessary in the RL. These structural adjustments are classified in terms of four levels:

1. Discourse Structure: Common problems in adjustment include the handling of direct and indirect discourse, pronominal forms, identification of participants and sequence of tenses.

2. Sentence Structure: The most important problems here are: (a) word and phrase order; (b) double negatives; (c) number agreement; (d) active and passive structures; (e) co-ordination and subordination; (f) apposition; (g) ellipses, and (h) specifications of relationships.

3. Word Structure: The relationship of word structure to the problems of transfer are of two principal types. Firstly, translation often demands changes in grammatical classes (e.g. from noun to verbs where the noun expresses an event). Secondly, there are numerous subtle problems of morphological categories involving e.g. aspects, tenses, inclusive and exclusive pronouns, honorifics and distinctions between people who are dead and alive.

4. Corresponding Sounds: For instance in re-casting borrowed words, particularly proper names, the phonological structure of the receptor language is normally followed. But often further adjustments are necessary as for instance when the transferred term sounds like an indigenous word having a different association altogether.

Again, in the process of transfer, first priority is given to the referential conceptual burden of the message. Next in importance is its connotation, emotional flavour and impact. Finally, if one can carry over something of the Form, one should do so but not at the expense of the other priorities (ibid. 119).

B. Significant Factors in Restructuring

Having transferred the message from the SL to the RL the translator is faced with the task of Restructuring. Three perspectives must be taken into account:

1. the varieties of language or styles which may be desirable;
2. the essential components and characteristics of these various styles;

3. the techniques which may be employed in producing the type of style desired (TAPOT: 120).

1. Varieties of Language

Firstly one has to determine the style at which one should aim in the process of restructuring. For within each language there are variations according to geography (dialects), time (older vs. newer forms), socioeconomic classes or castes, circumstances of use, oral or written usage, types of discourse and literary genres. From the standpoint of the translator, a language's literary tradition is also very significant. Nida acknowledges that in English the KJV continues to exert significant influence providing many literary associations and well entrenched stylistic usages (TAPOT:122-123).

In deciding which situational level is appropriate, the translator is confronted with three principal alternatives: technical, formal and informal. For some literary genres there are also casual and intimate levels of language. The greatest mistake is to reproduce formal or informal levels in the SL by something which is technical in the RL. Nida claims that this has happened consistently in the case of Paul's letters which in translation turn out as highly technical treatises rather than the pastoral letters that they are (TAPOT:129 cf. Nida 1975a:93).

There is an instructive discussion of language levels and their significance for Bible translation in societies which have a literary tradition (TAPOT:120-123). Not only does a scientific orientation mean distinguishing clearly between the oral and the written language, it must also delineate the respective ranges of "producer language" and "consumer language". The spread of consumer language is greater than that of the producer language. In other words, people are able to hear and read more than they can say or write.

In the following diagram, X and Y represent two typical speakers, one from the higher language level and the other from the lower language level. "Higher" and "lower" relate to educational levels or socioeconomic status. Solid lines represent the producer language. Broken lines represent the consumer language. Although the total range of X's language is greater than that of Y, he does not usually understand the total range of Y's language. The extension of the written language above the oral language shows that the written language has a literary accretion coming from its historical traditions. Of particular interest to Nida is the area of the overlap represented by the lines A-B and C-D. This is the "common language" or that part of the total resources of a given language common to the usage of both educated and uneducated people (cf. Wonderly 1968:3). We shall return to this concept in our discussion of the TEV.

RESTRUCTURING

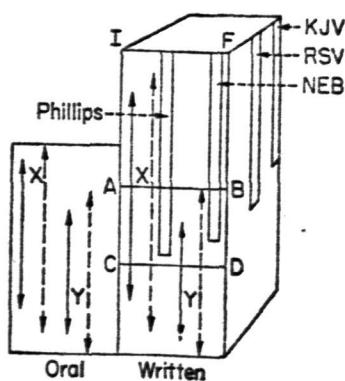


Figure 3

Several features of this diagram should be noted:

1. The historical depth has been indicated only for the written language, since the oral language, though it was spoken in the past, exerts no such continuing influence upon the present.
2. We have also added a dimension of "informal-to-formal" (I to F), going from left to right, and thus are able to plot such divergent translations as the NEB and Phillips, which are both on a relatively high stylistic level but differ essentially in the degree of informality. The NEB is, however, somewhat higher in its literary style (as will be seen very clearly from some of the problems discussed later in this chapter).
3. The King James Version is listed at the extreme of the historical dimension, even though, of course, it was preceded by others. However, it is the only translation from the early period that exerts a significant continuing influence.
4. The RSV represents a somewhat middle position between the King James Version and contemporary usage. As far as vocabulary usage is concerned, however, it is not on such a high literary level as the NEB. On the other hand, the NEB is stylistically much simpler in sentence structure, so that in some measure these two factors produce an average which makes the RSV and the NEB somewhat parallel. It is, of course, quite impossible to represent all the finer grades of contrast in a diagram of this type.
5. Phillips' translation may be said to dip a little further than the NEB into the language of overlap between the upper and lower languages.
6. To avoid overburdening an already complex diagram, the bar which represents each version is in reality a composite of all linguistic features of that version, including both grammatical structure and vocabulary. But different versions may be at different levels in terms of structure and vocabulary. (TAPOT:123-124).

There follows an equally interesting and convincing section on language levels and dialects in societies where the language has either no literary history or only a brief one, and the appropriate

translation strategies (TAPOT:124-133). But these are not relevant to us here.

2. Components of style

A special problem confronted by Bible translators is the wide variety of discourse types found in the biblical text, e.g. epic poetry, proverbs, parables, exposition, historical narrative, personal letters and ritual hymns. Though languages with long literary traditions have much more highly standardized literary genres, even some of the most seemingly primitive peoples have quite elaborate forms of oral literature, involving a number of distinct types; hence there is much more likelihood of formal correspondence than most people imagine. However, the real problems are not in the existence of the corresponding literary genres, but in the manner in which such diverse forms are regarded by the people in question. For example, epic and didactic poetry are very little used in the Western world, but in many parts of Asia they are very popular and have much of the same value they possessed in biblical times. But for most persons in the Western world, presenting the prophetic utterances of the Old Testament in poetic form, as the closest formal equivalence, often results in serious lack of appreciation for the urgency of the prophet's message, which was put into poetic form in order to enhance the impact and to make the form more readily remembered. Such poetic forms are often interpreted in the Western world as implying a lack of urgency, because poetic forms have become associated with communications which are over estheticized and hence not relevant to the practical events of men's daily lives.

Nida sets out to analyze the Components of Style by comparing selections from the Gospel of Luke and the letter to the Hebrews in three different versions viz. the Revised Standard Version (RSV) - a

formal correspondence translation; the New English Bible (NEB) - a modern literary translation; and the Today's English Version (TEV). On the basis of these passages he notes such features as: discourse-transition markers, discourse-type markers, elimination of pleonasm, semotactic appropriateness, intradiscourse transition, semantic simplicity, pronominal reference, subordination of clauses, connotative equivalence, length of sentences etc. All these are examples of formal features which combine to produce certain styles (TAPOT: 133-145).

In addition to this analysis of formal stylistic features, however, DE translation theory focuses on the functional dimension in restructuring. A translation is judged to be adequate only if the response of the receptor is satisfactory. Hence Nida is concerned to analyze which features of style serve to increase efficiency in communication and which devices increase impact by enhancing interest (TAPOT:145-152, cf. Nida 1975a:93-94).

Recent studies in Discourse Structure are seen to be highly significant for translation. Accordingly the basic techniques for analyzing Discourse Structure are explained with examples. The eight universals of discourse are also elaborated viz:

1. markers of the beginning and end of discourse;
2. markers for internal transition;
3. markers of temporal relationship;
4. markers of spatial relationship;
5. markers of logical relationship;
6. the identification of participants;
7. highlighting, focus, emphasis, etc;
8. author involvement (TAPOT:152-157).

The remainder of the chapter on Restructuring (p. 157-162)

consists of practical wisdom with regard to the kind of persons who make good stylists; firstly, in the case of languages with long literary traditions, and secondly in languages lacking such a tradition.

TAPOT's final chapter (chapter 8) "Testing the Translation" includes some material one might have expected to find in the section on restructuring. For instance, we are told that there is tendency for all good translations to be somewhat longer than the originals. This is because of the necessity to make explicit in the RL what could remain implicit in the SL since the original receivers had more background information. The expansions required can be divided into syntactic and lexical categories.

In syntactic expansions the RL will often require: (a) identification of the participants in events; (b) identification of objects or events with abstracts; (c) more explicit indications or relationals, and (d) filling out of ellipses. The most common lexical expansions, on the other hand, consist of: (a) classifiers (e.g. "city of Jerusalem", "cloth linen", "sect Pharisee"); (b) descriptive substitutes (e.g. synagogue may be described as "the worship-house of the Jew"), and (c) semantic restructuring (e.g. Nida thinks that "I am a jealous God" (Exodus 20:5) might be restructured "I am a God who demands that my people love no one else other than me", to avoid misunderstanding). Other information regarded as necessary to an understanding of the message, e.g. from the general cultural background, can be inserted in marginal notes.

This whole section is an important and helpful one even though sometimes one feels that Nida is doing a rewrite of the original text in his concern to get the message across.

While good translations are normally longer than the originals, Nida mentions seven types of expressions that are often reduced in the process of transfer:

1. Doublets such as "answering he said" become "He answered";
2. Repetitions in the original Greek e.g. "Verily, verily";
3. Specification of participants e.g. the TEV does not reproduce many of the occurrences of "God" so frequently subject of sentences in the original text of Genesis ch.1:
4. Removal of conjunctions where hypotactic structures are reduced to paratactic ones;
5. Reduction of formulas e.g. TEV changes "for his name's sake" to "for his sake";
6. Sometimes the RL requires more extensive ellipsis than is found in the SL;
7. Highly repetitive style marking e.g. importance of the theme in SL may seem awkward in some RL.

After discussing a number of procedures for testing translations (e.g. Close technique, reading aloud, publication of sample material)

Nida and Taber conclude by asserting:

The ultimate test of a translation must be based upon three major factors: (1) the correctness with which the receptors understand the message of the original; (2) the ease of comprehension and, (3) the involvement a person experiences as the result of the form of the translation (p.173).

C. Form and Meaning

The main issue to arise from Nida's treatment concerns the significance of the Form of the original message for translation. TAPOT seems to assume a "vehicle theory" of meaning: "It is a bit like packing clothing into two different pieces of luggage: the clothes remain the same, but the shape of the suitcases may vary greatly, and hence the way in which the clothes are packed must be different" (p.105) - a

truly startling analogy from a linguist of Nida's stature.

More recently, the translator of the German common language versions has explained that in the matter of the relationship between content and form TAPOT was a bit one-sided but this exaggeration is understandable if one keeps in mind the dominance of the FC approach to Bible translation at the time. When DE theorists turned to the task of translating the Old Testament "it became obvious . . . that an understandable rendering of the information is not necessarily a satisfactory translation. The Old Testament, with its greatly differing types of literature, forces the translator to seriously consider its forms." But then Kassuhlke goes on to explain that it is not the exact reproduction of the form used which is important but its equivalence.¹ Another DE theorist, Jacob Loewen, has sought to define some limits and controls for adjusting the SL form in translating because some translators "anxious to get the real message across to tribal societies, are preparing translations which treat the historico-cultural setting of the Bible as irrelevant and which recast the biblical message into the cultural framework of a contemporary aboriginal society" (Loewen 1971:170).

Others, however, are prepared to go much further than Nida himself. For instance, some have suggested that the salutations and introductory material of the NT letters should be transposed to the end of each Epistle as is the modern custom. Barclay Newman says that the Epistle is a total discourse unit and meaning has priority over form (1974:240-245). He has also suggested that the genealogy

1

"Medium and Message - The Form and the Meaning" by Rudolf Kassuhlke in the Bulletin of the United Bible Societies, no. 108/109, 1977.

from Abraham to Joseph in Matthew 1:2-17 be replaced by a simple list of names such as would be natural today (Newman 1976:121-127). DE translations in some languages (e.g. Malay and Indonesian) have implemented such ideas. The problem is that such restructured translations are in danger of obliterating the real historical distance between ourselves and the original situation. The result is an artificial construction. It is unnatural to let that temporal and cultural distance fall away, a danger against which Nida himself warns (TAPOT: 134).

Nida's emphasis on utilizing the natural resources of the RL is salutary and as usual he provides a wealth of illustrative material. Nor is there virtue in retaining Semitic idioms which are peripheral to the message e.g. "the fruit of his loins" (Acts 2:20) and "children of the bridechamber" (Mark 2:19), if they are too burdensome for the reader or misleading. Thus the literal translation in Indonesian of Luke 2:23 has been abandoned in recent versions because of the misleading connotation. "Every male who opens his mother's womb shall be called holy to the Lord" has been replaced by "Every first born son shall be dedicated to the Lord."

However, one often feels that the restructuring recommended is far more radical than is necessary, and amounts to a rewrite of the ST. The treatment of the redistribution of semantic components (TAPOT: 109) raises the issue of the fate of technical terminology in DE translation. Many of the words chosen by Nida for analytical redistribution are arguably technical terms ("the saints", "inheritance", "redemption", "propitiation", "justify") which serve as important signposts to the universe of discourse of the NT writers and their original readers.

In summary, Nida's treatment of Transfer and Restructuring strengthens the impression gained from the earlier chapters of TAPOT that his theory of language is unsatisfactory at two points: It underestimates the complexity of the relationship between form and meaning on the one hand, and on the other the flexibility of language systems and their users.

With regard to the question of form and meaning, the translation theorist cannot think in terms of disembodied meanings. His task is to establish correspondences between expressions of the different languages. He must operate with expressions, not with wordless ideas:

He is not transferring wine from one bottle to another.
Language is no receptacle, and there is nothing to transfer.
To produce a likeness is to follow a model's lines. The
language he works in is the translator's clay (~~Haas 1962:86~~).
Haas 1968:108

The Bible translator then must not see the BL in which he is working as a system of unbreakable rules. The KJV, which is said to have had such a profound influence on the English language, was written, as we shall be seeing, in Hebraized English. Languages are capable of being influenced and renewed just as the humans who use them are:

Darlene Bee and Vida Chenoweth were checking their translation of the calming of the tempest in the Usarufa language. Their translation helper, Nogo, came to Mark 4:39 and read, ' . . . "Be quiet," He said, and right away the wind and the water obeyed and stopped raging.' Nogo stopped abruptly. 'No, no!' he exclaimed, 'Wind and water don't obey.' Thinking that they had used the wrong term, the translators went back over the account . . . 'Now how can we say in Usarufa that the wind and the water did what Jesus told them to do?' they asked the tribesman. Smiling in wonder, Nogo said, 'Oh, I see. It obeyed.' The translators had used the right word after all. In Usarufa no one had ever said that the wind obeyed . . . (quoted in Yallop 1974:220).