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Translation types and niche translations: Comparing five Afrikaans translations

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Before the introduction of the dynamic-equivalent translation method by Eugene Nida, most Bible translations, in terms of translation type, were literal and formal correspondence translations. With the expansion of Bible translation globally over the past 60 years, alternative translation types started to appear – sometimes claiming uniqueness and even superiority. That, in turn, led to a reverse situation where 'literal only' or 'literal-superiority' claims were made. This has been a cause for significant debate and controversy. The purpose of this comparison of translation types is to indicate how translations differ from each other on a continuum and to determine if some versions in Afrikaans align with translation typology. The method followed in this article is to classify translation types in two main groupings: more literal and more dynamic; and four subtypes: corresponding translations, resembling translations, clarifying translations, and simplifying translations. In light of this classification, five publications of the Bible in Afrikaans are compared to Bible publications in English and Dutch. This study has found that each of the five Afrikaans translations does fit under one of the four types for which the criteria were laid out. The finding was that the typology applied to Bible versions in English, Dutch and Afrikaans. This typology implies that translations from different types are not necessarily in competition with each other, but that they complement each other. Each version in Afrikaans has then been compared to each other in terms of an end-user market niche and, based on that, there seems to be a continuing need for versions in all the different types. Translations do improve over time as translation theory and source-language scholarship evolve, but the validity of each type and publications in each type argue for versions of several types to endure.

Contribution: This article is not the first attempt to describe translation types. Several translators, as well as some functionalist translation studies did important scientific work in this regard. However, this article's principal contribution to translation studies is to propose a simplified yet adequate model of four translation types with new terminology, terms which do not overlap but are descriptive of function. And then secondly, to align each type with scripture engagement and the translation niche.

Keywords: Bible translation; translation studies; Scripture; translation type; style; niche.

Introduction and problem statement

On 29 November 2020, the new Afrikaanse translation, *Die Bybel, 2020-Vertaling*, was launched in Bloemfontein (hereafter referred to as the *2020 Afrikaanse Vertaling*). This marked the publication of other complete Bibles in Afrikaans: the 1933/1953 *Die Bybel in Afrikaans*; the 1982 *Lewende Bybel*; the 1983 *Die Bybel in Afrikaans*; *Die Boodskap* of 2002; the 2007 *Nuwe Lewende Bybel*; and the 2007/2008 *Die Bybel vir Almal.* This is not a complete list.[1] With the significant growth of Bible translation theory and practice over the past 60 to 70 years, new theories led to new approaches and new styles of translation, initially accompanied with an assertion that the new method is superior, and the new translation could and should replace previous publications. That in turn led to a reverse situation where 'literal only' or 'literal-superiority' claims were made (see e.g. Grudem et al. [2005]; Fee & Straus 2007; and Brunn's helpful discussion [2013] in this regard). Over time, as Bible-translation theory became more sophisticated and translation studies in general expanded, more nuanced perspectives prevailed that different styles or different types of translation might meet different requirements of Bible users. Hence, the rise of niche[2] translations – translations that fulfil a certain purpose and function in contrast to other purposes and functions.

1. There have been more publications of the Bible in Afrikaans that the author was not aware of at the time of writing this article, for instance the *Nuwe Wêreld-Vertaling* (2001), *DieBybel@* series (2002), *Die Pad van Waarheid tot die Lewe: Die Woord van JHWH in Afrikaans* (2015), *Die Aksie-Bybel* (2016), and more. These translations have not been considered in the comparison.

2. By niche translations, I do not refer to translations that are very specialised and only aimed at a very small segment of the users. Niches can be small or large. The term *niche* may have a more restricted meaning, but because of its usefulness the term is still being used, though in a wider sense as a wide segment in the end-user spectrum of Bible users.
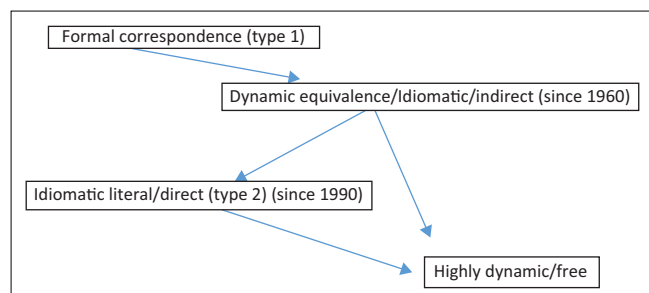
FIGURE 1: The development of translation types.

The purpose of this article is to point out some translation type categories on a continuum, and that the different Afrikaans Bibles could indeed fit into a continuum of translation types. In addition, the different versions in Afrikaans are not only points of a type of continuum, but may also point to end-user niches for each in the Bible market.

The article develops in the following way: firstly, an overview is given of how translation studies developed to the point that several translation types can be discerned. This is followed by defining four instead of only two translation types with criteria that differentiate each one. Comparing Afrikaans versions according to these criteria is a logical next step. The final argument is to link the four types with four probably niches for end-user scripture engagement, and some conclusions based on a niche analysis.

An overview of the modern history of Bible translation theory and the rise of translation types

Translation type, translation model and translation style are all terms that point to the same object of study in translation studies. Translation type will consistently be used in this article. A type is a classification based on categories and common criteria; or 'a group of things that have particular features in common' (Collins Cobuild English Dictionary 1995). In the categorisation of types, groupings of Bible translations that share common features and characteristics will be the object of this study.

Before the introduction of the dynamic-equivalent translation theory of Eugene Nida (1964), and Nida and Taber (1969), most translations followed the formal equivalence model – also called literal translation. In the English-speaking world, the King James Version (KJV [1611]), the Revised Standard Version (RSV [1952]), and New American Standard Bible (NASB [1971]) are literal translations. In Dutch, it was the *Statenvertaling* (SV) of 1637, and the *Nieuwe Vertaling* of 1951, in Portuguese the version of João Ferreira de Almeida (NT in 1681, Bible in 1821) and its many revisions (1993; 1995; 2017). In Afrikaans, the 1933 edition with its 1953 revision also falls in this category.

This was changed by the work of E.A. Nida and his fellow scholars with the introduction of a second translation type

called dynamic-equivalent translation. A distinction was made between form and meaning, and this distinction was given academic authenticity. Beekman and Callow (1974:25–35), as well as Mildred Larson (1984:3–6) essentially followed the same line, except that dynamic-equivalent translations are called idiomatic translations.

The *Bíblia Sagrada Boa Nova* (1993) and *Bíblia Para Todos* (1993) versions in Portuguese, the *Groot Nieuws voor Uw* translation in Dutch (1982/1996), and the 1983 translation in Afrikaans (referred to as the 1983 *Nuwe Vertaling* in this article) are all versions of this type. In English, the publication of the Good News Bible (GNB) or the Today's English Version in 1966 opened the way for this type to be dominant in the Bible translation world until the 1990s with the dichotomy of the two types already mentioned: literal versus dynamic-equivalent or idiomatic remains popular in translation studies to this day.

The theory was further fine-tuned with the emergence of the functional-equivalence theory, building on and improving earlier theories (De Waard & Nida 1986). However, from the 1990s onwards, dynamic-equivalent translation was challenged by new linguistic developments, especially in pragmatics and with the pragmatics theory of Relevance Theory (the application of Relevance Theory to Bible translation of Sperber & Wilson [1986]; and Ernst-August Gutt [2000]). This led to a third type. As described and applied to Bible translation by Gutt (2000), communication happens through inference, and translation falls into two general types: direct translation and indirect translation. Analogous to direct and indirect speech, direct translation is 'retelling' the original as close as possible, whereas indirect translation is more like describing the meaning. As Van der Merwe (2016:434) pointed out, direct translation is a new 'type' of translation, without using the term, but giving some criteria. Direct translation is different from the traditional literal or formal correspondence translation, but it is not the same as functional-equivalent either. It lies somewhere in-between.

Much has already been written concerning the application of Relevance theory on Bible translation in the context of Afrikaans,[3] especially during the process of researching a new type of translation. However, Relevance Theory is not the only influence in translation studies moving away from dynamic/functional- equivalence and the rise of a third type. Discourse studies developments in information structure (topic and focus), sociolinguistics and cognitive semantics influenced the way translators deal with word order, honorifics, social context and lexical choices.[4] For instance, lexical choices were either concordant (literal translations) or context-determined (dynamic translations). Another influence on translation types has been Skopos theory and, especially, the work of Christiane Nord (2018) on functional translation. The quality of a translation is not determined by

3. For instance, Naudé and Van der Merwe (2002), and Van der Merwe (2016) who justified a new translation based on insights into Relevance and Skopos theories.

4. The translation training manual, *Bible Translation Basics* (Hill et al. 2011), brings many of those principles together for practical translator training.

some universal standards applicable to all cases, but rather by the *skopos* [purpose] or function intended. Skopos theory (Nord 2018) has shed light on translations developed for certain specified audiences, be it young readers, the deaf, readers in a mission situation, et cetera. Arguing for only one type as the correct one is increasingly disregarded as an unacceptable, prescriptive position.

One can illustrate this development of Bible translation types as a zigzag pendulum, swinging from formal correspondent to dynamic-equivalent, and from dynamic-equivalent to idiomatic literal[5] (using a Brunn [2013] term). The very free swing has been inspired by both the dynamic-equivalent and the idiomatic literal type.

The chronology of publications, as mentioned above, confirms the trend: first the formal correspondence versions, then the dynamic/functional-equivalent versions and then the more idiomatic literal or direct translations. Highly dynamic and free translations were around from the beginning of dynamic-equivalent translations as a more extreme, freer and more explicit translation type. Figure 1 lays out graphically the historical developments of the different types.

The four types

Beekman and Callow (1974:19–32) were the first to propose four translation types: (1) unduly literal; (2) idiomatic literal; (3) idiomatic; and (4) unduly free.

They evaluated types 1 and 4 as unacceptable translation types. There are also other typologies, most notable in the functionalist school in translation studies. Newmark (1988:45) distinguishes the two main groupings: source language (SL) emphasis; and target language (TL) emphasis, and then proposed several translation types under each main grouping:

In total, Newmark (1988) distinguishes eight types. The two-fold distinction, SL emphasis and TL emphasis, agree with most theorists in translation studies. The SL emphasis categories, except the interlinear, word-for-word, seem to be on a spectrum from very formal correspondent to less so with more focus on meaning and context whilst still having an SL emphasis. The same is true for the TL emphasis categories. It is not clear, even from Newmark's definitions, how faithful and semantic SL emphasis translations differ from each other. It seems to be that it is only a matter of degree. The same can be said of idiomatic and communicative translation. The difference between 'semantic translation' and 'communicative translation' is not clear either. They seem to be very similar – again only a matter of degree. The labels of the subcategories raise a more serious question, however. They overlap in meaning and several can be used on either side of the two main groupings. The labels of faithful translation, semantic translation, idiomatic translation and communicative can be attached to both columns, for instance. But it must be said that Newmark was breaking new ground

when he, as one of the first translation scholars, went beyond the two main type categories and even beyond the four types of Beekman and Callow (1974).

The Bible Society of South Africa, whose publications in Afrikaans will be compared in this article, distinguishes between formal translation, translation in contemporary language, and easy-to-read versions. However, some of these categories overlap. The 2020 translation is not only formal, but in contemporary language, and the easy-to-read version, die *Bybel vir Almal*, is also in contemporary language. Like Newmark's categories, the categories of classification overlap. Hence, the need for more criteria to distinguish the types.

In my 2007 article, 'The four translation types and criteria to distinguish them', I raised the question that there is a need to distinguish more than only two general translation types: literal versus idiomatic or functional-equivalent. I shall briefly summarise my proposed categorisation of the four types.

First, the question must be asked, why four types instead of only the original two (literal vs. dynamic or idiomatic [Nida & Taber 1969; Beekman & Callow 1974:19-32]; documentation versus instrumentation [Nord 2018], etc.), as still maintained in general translation studies. There is widespread consensus that the two main types remain a valid distinction. The above discussion has provided a brief overview of the rise of four different translation types. The inadequacy of only two types will be developed further in this section:

- The two categories are too wide. There is a wide range in each category. Literal translations that correspond more to the original form, differ significantly from translations that resemble the original form and meaning but, instead, is in a contemporary language.
- These wide categories confuse. What is for some an idiomatic literal translation, like the New International Version (NIV), is for others a dynamic or even free translation.

As translation types are on a continuum, differing from each other by degree, it is necessary to identify criteria to sub-differentiate and rename the types. I still distinguish two main types, but to capture this more elastic typology, reflecting the degrees of literalness or idiomaticity, the one main type is called *more literal* translation, and the other *more idiomatic* translation:

- More literal = a source-language orientation.
- More dynamic/idiomatic = a receptor-language orientation.

For each main type, two subtypes are suggested and named. The following four verbs are suggested for the four types:[6] corresponding; resembling; clarifying; and simplifying.

A more literal translation is more source-language oriented, and there are two subtypes:

- Corresponding translation
- Resembling translation

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5. The idiomatic literal translation type is the same as the modified literal translation type as defined by Beekman and Callow (1974:23–24).

6. The labels for each type used in Floor (2007) has been replaced by a new set of more accessible terms. The four type labels are corresponding, resembling, clarifying and simplifying. These labels were first suggested in a paper at the Bible Translation Conference (cf. Floor 2015).

A more dynamic/idiomatic translation is more receptor-language oriented, and there are two subtypes:

• Clarifying translation
• Simplifying translation

Why all the new terms? The terms need to be accessible for the Bible public and Bible users to quickly grasp what some of the basic issues are in terms of translation type choices.

It is now necessary to differentiate the four types. Eight criteria are proposed, based on syntactic (1–3), semantic (4–6) and discourse-pragmatic features (7–8):

1. order of words, clauses and phrases
2. sentence length
3. reference disambiguation and tracking
4. concordance of lexical items
5. unknown terms and idioms
6. literary features: figurative usage and idioms
7. transition marking
8. information structure.

Each of the four types will now briefly be characterised.

Type 1: Corresponding translation

In corresponding translations, the translation corresponds to the original form and meaning. This means a high level of concordance of terms – if not a full concordance – transferring idioms and figurative language directly without adjusting much to the receptor language. It keeps clause order, transition marking and sentence length as far as possible. Type 1 is normally referred to as literal translation. Literal means that there is a direct, conventional, expected correspondence between a term and what it denotes.

Examples of type 1 translations are KJV, NASB, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), and the English Standard Version (ESV). With strict form and meaning correspondence, the source meaning and forms are as 'transparent' as possible. There is a minimum of explication. Priority is given to correspondence of form and meaning.

Type 2: Resembling translation

As the second of the more literal types, this type has traditionally been called modified literal (Beekman & Callow 1974:23–24) and idiomatic literal (Brunn 2013:66). The term *idiomatic literal* is maybe somewhat infelicitous because of the contrastive ideology behind each of the terms. 'Resembling' is such a type's main function or aim, not exactly corresponding, but only resembling the original form and meaning. Resembling is less precise, less exact than corresponding. Adjustments have been made to accommodate receptor language and culture features. As long as there is some recognisable resemblance to the original form and meaning, there is the freedom to make adjustments towards more explicitness, more natural and idiomatic language, more clarity, and so on.

Representative examples of type 2 translations in English are the NIV and Revised English Bible (REB) or the New English Bible (NEB).

Type 2 resembling translation is increasingly popular in places where translations in the language of wider communication are available and in use, and where there is some church tradition. Type 2 translations are gaining in popularity.

Type 3: Clarifying translation

The designation of type 3 is the most complicated. Idiomatic, dynamic equivalence or functional equivalence is the current academic designations and the most widely known. Other terms have been meaning-based. These terms are not altogether satisfying. Which word will describe type 3 in a way that excludes type 2 and type 4? What is the real distinctive of type 3? As this is still such a popular type in the translation movement, the designation and characterisation of type 3 are important. The term *clarifying* expresses the basic and comprehensive aim of such a translation type. Clarity of content or accessibility of the meaning is the main characteristic of this type. Its function is to clarify. The syntax does not resemble the original syntax, and the original literal meaning, especially in literary features such as idioms and figures when obscuring clear understanding, is rendered in an idiom that makes them as clear as possible.

Examples of type 3 translations are the Today's English Version (TEV), also referred to as the Good News Bible (GNB) and the New Living Translation (NLT).

Type 4: Simplifying translation

Translations of this type are sometimes called free translation or even a paraphrase. I prefer to reserve the term *paraphrase* for translations that are so free that they add, delete or change aspects of the original's meaning. Type 4 is not a paraphrase, but it can be a valid and authoritative translation, as it is very explicit, clear and in familiar idiom. However, it must be admitted that there is a fine line that distinguishes type 4 from paraphrase.

Examples of type 4 translations are the English Contemporary English Version (CEV) and the new Dutch *Bijbel in Gewone Taal* (BGT).

The function of type 4 translations is presenting biblical content in familiar language and thought without adding, deleting or changing the perceived original meaning. Sometimes such a version is more explicit in meaning for maximum clarity and accessibility for certain target groups, and sometimes parallel thoughts in the original are combined into easily comprehended sentences.

Table 1 to Table 6 layout the the application of the different criteria to distinguish translation types. They have been copied from Floor (2007).

TABLE 1: Summary of Newmark's translation types

Emphasis	Type name	Description
SL	Word-for-word translation	Interlinear.
	Literal translation	Formal correspondent, closest equivalent in target language.
	Faithful translation	Formal correspondent, but allowing for some contextual adjustments.
	Semantic translation	Only differs from 'faithful translation' only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value (i.e, the beautiful and natural sounds of the SL text, compromising on 'meaning' where appropriate).
TL	Adaptation	Beyond translation, for instance for plays. Only distant reference to the original.
	Free translation	Freedom from both the form and meaning of the original. Paraphrase.
	Idiomatic translation	More contextual translation, 'reproduces the "message" of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms'.
	Communicative translation	'Renders the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership.'

Source: Adapted from Newmark, P., 1988, *A textbook of translation*, p. 45, Prentice Hall, London

SL, source language; TL, target language.

TABLE 2: Explicatures expressed.

Variable	Type 1: Corresponding	Type 2: Resembling	Type 3: Clarifying	Type 4: Simplifying
Concordance	Almost full concordance	Partial concordance: by senses only	Mixture limited concordance by senses, and context-driven	Minimal concordance: mostly by senses and context-driven
Unknown terms and historicity	Maintained	Minimally adjusted for clearer communication	Optimally adjusted for clearer communication	Generally not maintained
Idioms and figures of speech	Literal resemblance of semantic forms	Some literal resemblance of semantic forms; but also minimal interpretative resemblance	Minimal literal resemblance; optimal interpretative resemblance	No literal resemblance; optimal interpretative resemblance

Source: Floor, S.J., 2007, 'Four translation types and criteria to distinguish them', *Journal of Translation* 3(2), 17

TABLE 3: Implicatures made explicit or not.

Variable	Type 1: Corresponding	Type 2: Resembling	Type 3: Clarifying	Type 4: Simplifying
Assumptions (premises)	No	No	No or minimal	Yes, optimal
Conclusions (effects)	No	No	No	Yes, but rarely

Source: Floor, S.J., 2007, 'Four translation types and criteria to distinguish them', *Journal of Translation* 3(2), 17

TABLE 4: Syntactic adjustments made or not.

Variable	Type 1: Corresponding	Type 2: Resembling	Type 3: Clarifying	Type 4: Simplifying
Sentence length	No, or few	Yes	Yes	Yes
Clause order	No	Some	Yes	Yes

Source: Floor, S.J., 2007, 'Four translation types and criteria to distinguish them', *Journal of Translation* 3(2), 17

TABLE 5: Discourse-pragmatic adjustments made or not.

Variable	Type 1: Corresponding	Type 2: Resembling	Type 3: Clarifying	Type 4: Simplifying
Participant reference	Some, when grammatically required	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transitions	No, only resembling source language forms	Yes	Yes	Yes
Information structure	No, only resembling source language forms	No and yes, a mixture	Yes and no, a mixture	Yes and no

Source: Floor, S.J., 2007, 'Four translation types and criteria to distinguish them', *Journal of Translation* 3(2), 17

TABLE 6: Comparison of translation qualities.

Variable	Type 1: Corresponding	Type 2: Resembling	Type 3: Clarifying	Type 4: Simplifying
Level of clarity	Meaning sometimes more difficult to retrieve because of unnatural idiom	Meaning, even the deeper meaning, is clear or at least accessible, but sometimes harder to retrieve	Meaning is in most cases relatively clear, but in some cases at the expense of access to deeper or ambiguous meanings	Meaning is generally clear, but at the expense of access to deeper or ambiguous meanings
Level of acceptability with churches	High	(Normally) high	Slightly lower, unless it is an alternative second Bible in the language complementing others	Low, unless it is an alternative Bible in the language complementing others, or unless it is the only Scriptures known in the area
Level of accuracy	High, but meaning sometimes inaccessible	High	High, but some deeper meanings may be less accessible	Can be high, but some deeper meanings may be less accessible or additional explicit, or implicit, information is introduced
Level of naturalness	Low	Average, but can be high with skill	Can be very high	Can be very high

Source: Floor, S.J., 2007, 'Four translation types and criteria to distinguish them', *Journal of Translation* 3(2), 19

Comparative examples of the four types in English and Dutch

Below follows an overview of Bible translations in English and Dutch, comparing versions[7] according to the translation type continuum as stated above (see Table 7).

English

Example 1

1 Timothy 3:16: καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον· Ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι:

- **Corresponding:** Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit (ESV).

- **Resembling:** Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit (NIV).

7.Here is a list of abbreviations used for the different versions in English and Dutch: BGT – *Bijbel in Gewone Taal*, in Dutch; CEV – Contemporary English Version; ESV – English Standard Version; GNB – Good News Bible, Dutch; GNB – *Groot Nieuws Bijbel*, in Dutch; GW – God's Word; HSV – *Herziene Statenvertaling*, in Dutch; KJV – King James Version; NBV – *Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling*, 2004, in Dutch; NKJV – New King James Version; NLT – New Living Translation; REB – Revised English Bible; SV – *Statenvertaling*, Dutch.

TABLE 7: Translation type comparison of English and Dutch versions

Language	Type 1: Corresponding	Type 2: Resembling	Type 3: Clarifying	Type 4: Simplifying
English	KJV; NKJV; ESV	REB; NIV	GNB/NLT	CEV
Dutch	SV; HSV 1951	NBV 2004	GNB	BGT

HSV, Herziene Statenvertaling; NBV, Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling; KJV, King James Version; NKJV, New King James Version; ESV, English Standard Version; REB, Revised English Bible; NIV, New International Version; SV, Statenvertaling; GNB, Good News Bible; NLT, New Living Translation; CEV, Contemporary English Version; BGT, Bijbel in Gewone Taal.

- And great beyond all question is the mystery of our religion: He was manifested in flesh, vindicated in spirit (REB).
- **Clarifying:** No one can deny how great is the secret of our religion: He appeared in human form, was shown to be right by the Spirit (GNB).
- Without question, this is the great mystery of our faith: Christ was revealed in a human body and vindicated by the Spirit (NLT).
- **Simplifying:** Here is the great mystery of our religion: Christ came as a human. The Spirit proved that he pleased God (CEV).

Compare the different renderings for the τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον: mystery is consistently maintained, except for 'secret' (GNB), but notice the shift from godliness to faith to religion. Several of the translation type distinctiveness criteria, as raised above, can be distinguished here: sentence length, transition marking, for instance, clause transitions at the beginning of verses, key term differences, degrees of explicitness, degrees of clarity, the different treatment of unknown terms, like godliness, mystery, and vindication, disambiguation, and so forth.

Example 2

Matthew 23:2: λέγων, Ἐπὶ τῆς Μωϋσέως καθέδρας ἐκάθισαν οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι:

- **Corresponding:** saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat (KJV).
- **Resembling:** in these words: 'The scribes and the Pharisees occupy Moses' seat' (REB).
- **Clarifying:** The scribes and the Pharisees teach with Moses' authority (GW).
- **Simplifying:** The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law are experts in the Law of Moses (CEV).

The phrase *sitting on Moses's seat* has been increasingly made clear. The implication of 'Moses' in this case has been made explicit in type 3 and 4 versions. Notice the difference between the literal 'sit' in the KJV and 'occupy' in the REB, type 2. But even in type 2 resembling translation, the literal concepts are not far removed. In types 3 and 4, the concepts are expanded on.

Example 3

Ruth 2:12: שְׁלֵ֥ם יְהוָ֖ה פָּעֳלֵ֑ךְ וּתְהִ֨י מַשְׂכֻּרְתֵּ֜ךְ שְׁלֵמָ֗ה מֵעִ֤ם יְהוָה֙ אֱלֹהֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל אֲשֶׁר־בָּ֖את לַחֲס֥וֹת תַּֽחַת־כְּנָפָֽיו:

- **Corresponding:** The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust (KJV).

- **Resembling:** May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge (NIV).
- **Clarifying:** May the LORD reward you for what you have done. May you have a full reward from the LORD God of Israel, to whom you have come for protection! (GNB).

  May the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done (NLT).
- **Simplifying:** I pray that the Lord God of Israel will reward you for what you have done. And now that you have come to him for protection, I pray that he will bless you (CEV).

The idiom of 'wings' for refuge has been maintained in type 1 and 2 versions, as well as in one of the type 3 versions (GNB). The wording of the type 2 version is in more contemporary language than the KJV, and clearer. The reordering of clauses is another interesting point of differentiation. The wording in all five versions varies considerably.

Dutch

Example 1

1 Timothy 3:16: καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον· Ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι:

- **Corresponding:** *En buiten alle twijfel, groot is het geheimenis van de godsvrucht: God is geopenbaard in het vlees, is gerechtvaardigd in de Geest* [And outside all doubt, great is the mystery of the godliness: God is revealed in the flesh, is justified in the Spirit] (HSV).
- **Resembling:** *Ongetwijfeld is dit het grote mysterie van ons geloof: Hij is geopenbaard in een sterfelijk lichaam, in het gelijk gesteld door de Geest* [Without doubt is this the great mystery of our faith: He is revealed in a mortal body, and proven as right through the Spirit] (NBV).
- **Clarifying:** *Groot is het geheim van onze godsdienst: dat is boven alle twijfel verheven: hij is geopenbaard als mens, rechtvaardig verklaard door de Geest* [Great is the mystery of our religion: that is exalted above all doubt: he is revealed as a human, declared righteous through the Spirit] (Dutch GNB revision of 1996).
- **Simplifying:** *We weten allemaal wat het grote geheim van ons geloof is: Christus kwam op aarde als mens, en de heilige Geest liet zien wie hij werkelijk was* [We all know what the great secret of our faith is: Christ came to earth as a human, and the Holy Spirit showed who he really was] (BGT).

Notice the change from *godsvrucht* [godliness] to *geloof* [faith], to *godsdiens* [religion], and also *geloof* again in the simplifying version. Interesting enough is the pronominal reference 'he' unpacked and disambiguated in the type 1 version. In the type 4 translation, participant reference is explicit, but the exegetical choice has been made that it refers to Christ. Holy Spirit instead of Spirit only occurs in the type 4 version. The theological concept of justification is significantly different in all four versions.

Example 2

Matthew 23:2: λέγων, Ἐπὶ τῆς Μωϋσέως καθέδρας ἐκάθισαν οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι:

- **Corresponding:** *De schriftgeleerden en de Farizeeën zijn gaan zitten op de stoel van Mozes* [The experts of the scriptures and the Pharisees went to sit on the chair of Moses] (HSV).
- **Resembling:** *De schriftgeleerden en de farizeeën hebben plaatsgenomen op de stoel van Mozes* [The experts of the scriptures and the Pharisees took their places on the chair of Moses] (NBV).
- **Clarifying:** *De schriftgeleerden en de Farizeeën hebben zich bekleed met het gezag van Mozes* [The experts of the scriptures and the Pharisees clothed themselves with the authority of Moses] (Dutch GNB).
- **Simplifying:** *De wetsleraren en de farizeeën vertellen hoe je je moet houden aan de wet van Mozes* [The law teachers and the Pharisees tell you how you must keep the law of Moses] (BGT).

There is not much of a difference tween the HSV and the NBV, except that the NBV changed the idiom of sitting to *plaatsgenomen* [taking a place], which resembles the Greek, but somewhat moved away from the literal idiom. The NBV is close to corresponding type 1, but not altogether. The Dutch GNB adopted a change of idiom: *hebben zich bekleed* [clothed themselves] instead of the sitting metaphor. Interesting is that no version resembled the order of the Greek: 'on the chair of Moses sat the teachers of the law and the Pharisees'.

Example 3

Ruth 2:12: ־יְשַׁלֵּ֤ם יְהוָה֙ פָּעֳלֵ֔ךְ וּתְהִ֧י מַשְׂכֻּרְתֵּ֛ךְ שְׁלֵמָ֖ה מֵעִ֣ם יְהוָ֑ה אֱלֹהֵ֣י יִשְׂרָאֵ֔ל אֲשֶׁר־ בָּ֖את לַחֲס֥וֹת תַּֽחַת־כְּנָפָֽיו:

- **Corresponding:** *Moge de HEERE uw daad vergelden, en moge uw loon volkomen zijn van de HEERE, de God van Israël, onder Wiens vleugels u gekomen bent om toevlucht te nemen* [May the LORD repay your deed, and may your reward be perfect from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you came to find refuge] (HSV).
- **Resembling:** *Moge de HEER je daarvoor rijkelijk belonen – de HEER, de God van Israël, onder wiens vleugels je een toevlucht hebt gezocht* [May the LORD richly repay you for that – the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you came to find a refuge] (NBV).
- **Clarifying:** *Laat de HEER, de God van Israël, je belonen voor wat je hebt gedaan. Laat hij je rijklik belonen. Bij hem heb je immers bescherming gezocht* [Let the Lord, the God of Israel, reward you for what you have done. Let him richly reward you. With him, after all, you sought protection] (Dutch GNB).
- **Simplifying:** *De God van Israël zal je daarvoor belonen. Bij hem heb je hulp gezocht, en hij zal je beschermen* [The God of Israel will reward you for that. With him you looked for help, and he will protect you] (BGT).

The HSV follows the word order of the Hebrew closely. It is also the only version that maintained the two Hebrew clauses

for the concept *recompense*: 'may he recompense you' and 'may your reward be'. The others only translated one.

There are indeed some types that are mixtures of the types mentioned. It is also true, as Brunn (2013:85–98) pointed out, that absolute consistency of type is impossible. However, it is possible that a translation can generally reflect a certain type. That is the purpose of these type of distinctions: to assist stakeholders and end-users to wrestle with the issues in accessible terms, knowing that there will be renderings that reflect a mixture of types and that a full type of consistency is not possible.

Five Afrikaanse versions compared according to the four translation types

The history of the Bible and Bible translation in Afrikaans have been described elsewhere (Van der Merwe 2012; 2016; 2020; Naudé & Van der Merwe 2002; Naudé 2005). The purpose of this comparison of five versions in Afrikaans is to show how they differ from each other in light of the typology suggested above, and that, in Afrikaans, we now have a version in each of the four types.

The 1933/1953 version is a type 1 translation, and the 1983 version a type 3. It is also not too difficult to show that *Die Bybel vir Almal* meets the description of a type 4 simplifying translation. But where on the continuum is the new *2020 Afrikaanse Vertaling*? A full type 1, or maybe more to the right on the continuum towards type 2? Or maybe in between type 1 and type 2 with characteristics of each? Or maybe a full type 2, leaning a little towards type 1? The SL orientation and the inclusion of the original context and its cognitive environment make it a more literal translation, but, at the same time, the contemporary and clear language points to a sharp inclination to type 2 resembling translation. According to the criteria of each type as laid out above, the *2020 Afrikaanse Vertaling* leans towards type 2, but with some type 1 characteristics.

For the 2020 *Afrikaanse Vertaling* the definition of a type 2 translation is therefore proposed. The *skopos* of the translation can be described as in-between type 1 and type 3. As a direct translation, it attempted to overcome the distance of time and context in a few cases, keeping the formal correspondent rendering (e.g. the idiom *julle lendene omgord* in 1 Petrus 1:13. For some difficult words, military ranks and measures the original was transliterated and a footnote provided to explain the meaning. An example is *parakleet* in John 14:16. In most cases, a series of adjustments were made in line with the eight criteria listed above. Instead of full one-for-one concordance of lexical items, partial concordance has been implemented. Sentences have been shortened where better reading demanded it, original transitions and connectives, particles such as the Hebrew *hinneh* [look, behold], as well as marked word-orders were not rendered in a full concordant, one-for-one way, but

were translated with a sensitivity for the meaning and function of the original. The 2020 translation is more in line with the type 2 criteria than with the type 1 criteria, but, of course, type 1 and 3 renderings also feature.

The *2020 Afrikaanse Vertaling* came to fill a gap in Afrikaans, a good, standard type 2 translation prepared according to clear *skopos* requirements and based on the latest linguistics and translation studies.[8]

Five Afrikaans versions are compared according to this classification of types[9] (Table 8).

Here follows specific comparative examples of the four types in Afrikaans.

Example 1

1 Timothy 3:16: καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον· Ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι:

- **Corresponding:** *En, onteenseglik, die verborgenheid van die godsaligheid is groot: God is geopenbaar in die vlees, is geregverdig in die Gees* [And, without denying, the hiddenness of the godliness is great: God has been revealed in the flesh, is justified in the Spirit] (1933/1953).
- **Resembling:** *En die geheimenis van die ware godvresendheid is sonder twyfel groot: Hy is geopenbaar in 'n menslike liggaam, regverdig bewys deur die Heilige Gees* [And the mystery of the true fearing of God is without doubt great: He has been revealed in a human body, justified through the Holy Spirit] (2020).
- **Clarifying:** *En dit staan bo alle teenspraak dat die geopenbaarde waarheid van ons godsdiens groot is: As mens het Jesus in die wêreld gekom, deur die Gees is bevestig dat die reg aan sy kant is* [And this stands above all contradiction that the revealed truth of our religion is great: as human Jesus came into the world, through the Spirit it is confirmed that the right is on his side] (1983).

Sonder twyfel is dit die groot geheim van ons geloof: Christus het as mens verskyn en is deur die Gees as regverdig bewys [Without doubt this is the great secret of our faith: Christ appeared as a human and has been proved through the Spirit as righteous] (NLB).

- **Simplifying:** *Ek wil reguit sê: Ons het nie geweet hoe om God te dien nie, maar God het vir ons kom sê hoe om dit te doen, en dit is wonderlik. God het mens geword, Hy was Christus, die Heilige Gees het gewys wie Christus waarlik is* [I will say this straight: We didn't know how to serve God, but God came to tell us how to do this, and it is wonderful. God became a human, He was Christ, the Holy Spirit has shown who Christ truly is] (BVA).

8.The justification of the latest version has been well described in several publications by Van der Merwe (2012; 2016; 2020). A special symposium was held to discuss the need for a different translation in Afrikaans, with the papers published in 'Contemporary translation studies and Bible translation: a South African perspective' (2002).

9.This comparison is not the first of such a comparison of translation types in Afrikaans. Van der Merwe's article of 2020 titled *Nog 'n hervertaling in Afrikaans, wat maak dit anders?*, provides several examples on the use of certain words such as '*banvloek*' [total destruction], '*siel*' [soul], the Hebrew connective *ki* and discourse marker *hinneh,* comparing several versions in Afrikaans.

TABLE 8: Translation type comparison of English, Dutch, and Afrikaans versions.

Language	Type 1: Corresponding	Type 2: Resembling	Type 3: Clarifying	Type 4: Simplifying
English	KJV; ESV	REB; NIV	GNB; NLT	CEV
Dutch	SV; HSV 1951	NBV	Dutch GNB	BGT
Afrikaans	1933/1953 Ou Vertaling	2020 Afrikaanse Vertaling	1983 Nuwe Vertaling; Nuwe Lewende Bybel (NLB)	Bybel vir almal (BVA) 2008

Notice the shift from less clarity to more clarity with *godsaligheid* [godliness], an older word, to *godvresendheid* [God-fearing] to *godsdiens* [religion] to *geloof* [faith] to *om God te dien* [to serve God]. Notice the progression from *vlees* [flesh] to *menslike liggaam* [human body] to *mens* [human] (in two versions). The same with *geregverdig in die Gees* [justified in the Spirit] to *regverdig bewys deur die Heilige Gees* [proven justified through the Holy Spirit] to *die Heilige Gees het gewys wie Christus werklik is* [the Holy Spirit showed who Christ really is].

Example 2

Matthew 23:2: λέγων, Ἐπὶ τῆς Μωϋσέως καθέδρας ἐκάθισαν οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι:

- **Corresponding:** *Die skrifgeleerdes en die Fariseërs sit op die stoel van Moses* (1933/1953) [The scribes and the Pharisees sit on the seat of Moses] (1933/1953).
- **Resembling:** *Die Skrifgeleerdes en die Fariseërs sit op die stoel van Moses* [The scribes and the Pharisees sit on the seat of Moses] (2020).
- **Clarifying:** *Die skrifgeleerdes en die Fariseërs het die gesag om die wet van Moses te vertolk* [The scribes and the Pharisees have the authority to interpret the law of Moses] (1983).

Die skrifkenners en die Fariseërs is die amptelike vertolkers van die wet van Moses [The scripture experts and the Pharisees are the official interpreters of the law of Moses] (NLB).

- **Simplifying:** *Die skrifgeleerdes en die Fariseërs is die mense wat die Wette van Moses kan verduidelik* [The scribes and the Pharisees are the people who explain the Laws of Moses] (BVA).

Notice the shift from *stoel van Moses* [chair of Moses] (both type 1 and 2) to *gesag om die wet van Moses te vertolk* [authority to interpret the law of Moses] to *mense wat die Wette van Moses kan verduidelik* [people who can explain the Laws of Moses].

Example 3

Ruth 2:12: יְשַׁלֵּם יְהוָה פָּעֳלֵךְ וּתְהִי מַשְׂכֻּרְתֵּךְ שְׁלֵמָה מֵעִם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־בָּאת לַחֲסוֹת תַּחַת־כְּנָפָיו:

- **Corresponding:** *Mag die HERE jou daad vergelde, en mag jou loon volkome wees van die HERE, die God van Israel, onder wie se vleuels jy kom skuil het* [May the LORD repay your deed, and may your reward be perfect from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you came to hide] (1933/1953).
- **Resembling:** *Mag jy vir alles wat jy gedoen het, ruim vergoed word deur die HERE, die God van Israel, onder wie se vleuels jy kom skuil het* [May for everything that you have

done, generously be rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you came to hide] (2020).

- **Clarifying:** *Mag die Here jou beloon vir wat jy gedoen het. Mag jy 'n welverdiende beloning ontvang van die Here die God van Israel onder wie se vleuels jy kom skuil het* [May the Lord reward you for what you have done. May you receive a well-earned reward from the Lord, the God of Israel under whose wings you came to hide] (1983).

  Mag die Here, die God van Israel, onder wie se vlerke jy kom skuiling soek het, jou ten volle beloon. [May the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you came to hide, fully reward you] (NLB).

- **Simplifying:** *Jy het gekom na die Here, die God van Israel, sodat Hy jou kan beskerm. Ek bid dat die Here goed sal wees vir jou omdat jy dit gedoen het* [You have come to the Lord, the God of Israel, so that He can protect you. I pray that the Lord will be good to you because you did this] (BVA).

The above examples show several of the distinguishing criteria in operation: sentence length differences; clause order changes; a move away from the literal idiom (only in type 4, however); changing *mag jou loon volkome wees* [may your reward be perfect] (type 1) to *ruim vergoed* [amply reward] (type 2) en *goed sal wees vir jou* [be good to you] (type 4). The metaphor of hiding under wings has been maintained in all types.

Example 4

Psalm 103:8: רוּם וְחַנּוּן יְהוָה אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חָסֶד׃

- **Corresponding:** *Barmhartig en genadig is die HERE, lankmoedig en groot van goedertierenheid* [Merciful and gracious is the Lord, patient and great of loving kindness] (1933/1953).
- **Resembling:** *Barmhartig en genadig is die HERE, geduldig en oorvloedig in troue liefde* [Merciful and gracious is the Lord, patient and overflowing in faithful love] (2020).
- **Clarifying:** *Barmhartig en genadig is die Here, lankmoedig en vol liefde* [Merciful and gracious is the Lord, patient and full of love] (1983).

  Die Here is barmhartig en genadig, geduldig en vol onfeilbare liefde ['The Lord is merciful and gracious, patient and full of unfailing love'] (NLB).

- **Simplifying:** *Die Here is goed vir mense wat swaarkry, Hy is genadig en geduldig, Hy doen altyd wat Hy belowe het* [The Lord is good to people who suffer. He is gracious and merciful. He always does what He promised] (BVA).

Notice the *groot van goedertierenheid* [great of loving kindness] – an archaic word (type 1), *oorvloedig in troue liefde* [overflowing in faithful love] (type 2), *vol liefde* [full of love] and *vol van onfeilbare liefde* [full of unfailing love] (both type 3), and *Hy doen altyd wat Hy belowe het* [He always does what he has promised] (type 4).

Niche translations

'Highly literal' and 'unduly free' are concepts used in Beekman and Callow (1974:21–23) to refer to the two fringe types. They define these translations as either too literal to be understood well or too free and at risk of not being accurate.

'Unduly free' and 'highly literal' are value statements and therefore can be interpreted as prescriptive. There are several points in this regard to be made:

- All types are essentially valid. It all depends on the *skopos* of the translation. One type should not be prescribed as the preferred type.
- All translations will be somewhat inconsistent and will have examples of all four types regardless of the predominant type. Most translations are inconsistent in terms of typology with characteristics of both sides.
- In any one version, one type will be predominant, and it will be good to determine which one type is preferred in the translation brief process.

In light of this preamble, a concluding niche analysis may be helpful.

Type 1: Corresponding translation niche

Type 1, as a church Bible for general use, is popular for the more conservative users. For them, 'older is better'. This includes the phenomenon that type 1 translations often serve an older generation who grew up with type 1 translations and became used to it. Often favourite scripture verses or portions have been memorised from these versions, and to let go of such, would be hard.

For better or for worse, type 1 translations always do well where there are perceptions that the 'higher despite being unclear' religious language means that it is closer to the original. Both young and old can be influenced by such perceptions. The older, difficult and even strange language in versions such as the KJV somehow communicates originality and genuineness against which no argument for a scientific translation will prevail.

The enduring popularity of the KJV in English, Louis Segond in French, the SV and its revision in Dutch and *Almeida* in Portuguese all point to this niche. In South Africa, the older translations in Afrikaans and African languages continue to be popular and are available in bookshops.

The perceived dignified language use of type 1 translations also makes it a good Bible for the pulpit; in other words, for liturgical use. The last point in favour of type 1 translations, which would also be true for type 2, is that the 'defamiliar language' of type 1 makes it easier to memorise. Dynamic-equivalent language is harder to memorise.

Type 2: Resembling translation niche

Type 2 translation meets the need for a church Bible that can be used in the liturgy, but also for Bible students who need some 'access' to the original, but, at the same time, prefer contemporary language. With the advancements in linguistics, hermeneutics exegesis and translation studies, it has become increasingly possible to do a source language-oriented translation with, at the same time, literary and idiomatic language.

This holds for both group Bible study and personal devotional use. If the *2020 Afrikaanse Vertaling* can be seen as such a type 2 translation, it came to fill a niche for Bible readers in Afrikaans.

The niche of type 2 overlaps significantly with that of type 1 such as a church Bible for liturgical use, but with the one distinctive difference that type 2 translations are more attractive for their idiomatic and modern, and therefore more accessible language use. This was the reason for the success of the English NIV.

Type 3: Clarifying translation niche

The niche for type 3 translations includes people, often the younger generation, who increasingly lack Bible literacy and literary skills, and who find literary language difficult, requiring a Bible that reads easily and has idiomatic language. New believers who lack adequate Bible literacy, or second-language users also fall in this niche. This may explain the popularity of the Good News translation among non-English mother tongue end-users.

Younger people and people increasingly not churchgoing, do not always have the Bible background and Bible literacy that make it easier to understand types 1 and 2 translations. The footnotes of the *2020 Afrikaanse Vertaling* will certainly help, but will not be able to completely solve the problem. The same is true for new believers for whom the world of the Bible is new. They would initially prefer a more clarifying translation and at a later stage switch to a type 2 or even a type 1 version. The same is true in missional situations where the gospel only recently arrived and churches are being planted.

Besides, type 1 and 2 users choose to use a clarifying translation complementary to what they normally use, sometimes to clarify difficult texts and to compare. This is an indicator that there always will be a need for type 3 clarifying translations.

Type 4: Simplifying translation niche

Type 4 translations are one step further on the continuum. What is true for the niche of type 3 translations, is also true for type 4 translations. It is a matter of degree.

A clear niche for type 4 translations is where a specific target group has been identified in the *skopos,* for instance the *Bybel vir Almal* [also called the Bible for the Deaf] in Afrikaans, and the BGT, which has been specifically prepared for a new generation of Dutch people with a lower level of Bible literacy and background knowledge, coupled with lower deep reading skills – all phenomena of our modern times.

In terms of trends in the Bible translation movement, there is a clear move away from type 3 translations – in many cases a move to type 2, and another move further down the continuum towards type 4. The needs of special interest groups such as children, oral translation for unreached or little-reached groups of people, and the loss of Bible literacy in post-Christian contexts will call for this.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this analysis is that the translations in one language may be on different points of the continuum. They are not necessarily in competition with each other, but rather to be seen as complementary. The different types are not exclusive. Different end-user requirements and preferences have made it possible for different types meeting specific niche markets.

This, in turn, implies that there will still be a need for type 1 very literal, formal correspondent translations, as well as type 3 dynamic or functional-equivalent clarifying translations. The newer types 2 and 4 have not rendered the older types redundant. The demand for them continues as their availability in bookstores and their sales show, and therefore also the need to continue revising them for new generations. This also means that revisions of type 1 and type 3 translations cannot be excluded.

Could it be that eventually there will be demand for a revision of the 1953 type 1 translation in Afrikaans? There was a demand in the Netherlands for a revision of both the SV and the 1951 *Nieuwe Vertaling*. Such a revision of the 1933/1953 version will probably only entail a modernisation of the language use for words such as *goedertierenheid* [loyal love], and maybe to revise a few errors and thus not the full-scale move to a new translation theory as was the case for the 2020.

The same can be said for the 1983 *Nuwe Afrikaanse Vertaling* – a type 3. In many of the European languages, those type 3 versions were also revised or parallel versions published. An example is the NLT that appeared next to the GNB – different, but typologically close.

A second practical implication of this type and niche analysis is that multiple Bible use, in the sense of a person or a group using different types and not one type exclusively, can and even should be encouraged for the wider benefit of the Body of Christ and its mission in the world. Bible users will benefit from reading or listening to the Scriptures of complementary types.

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