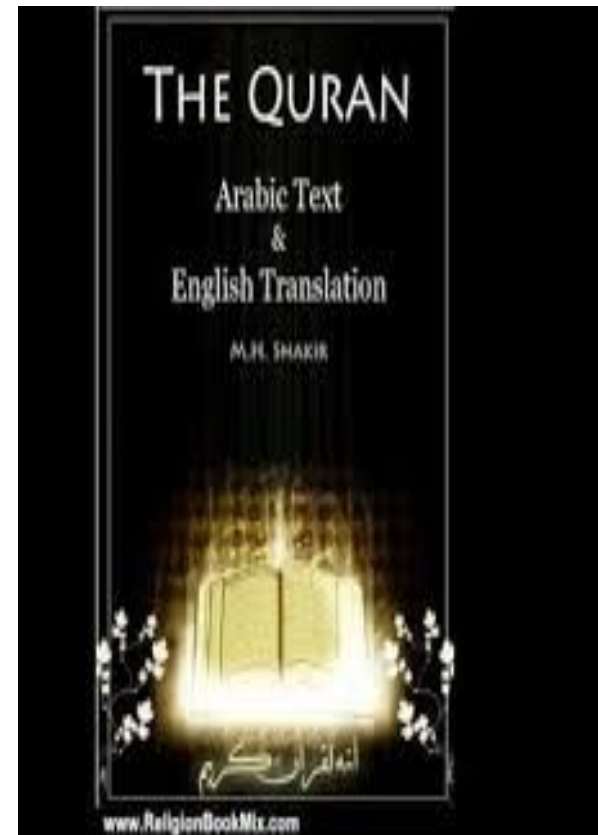
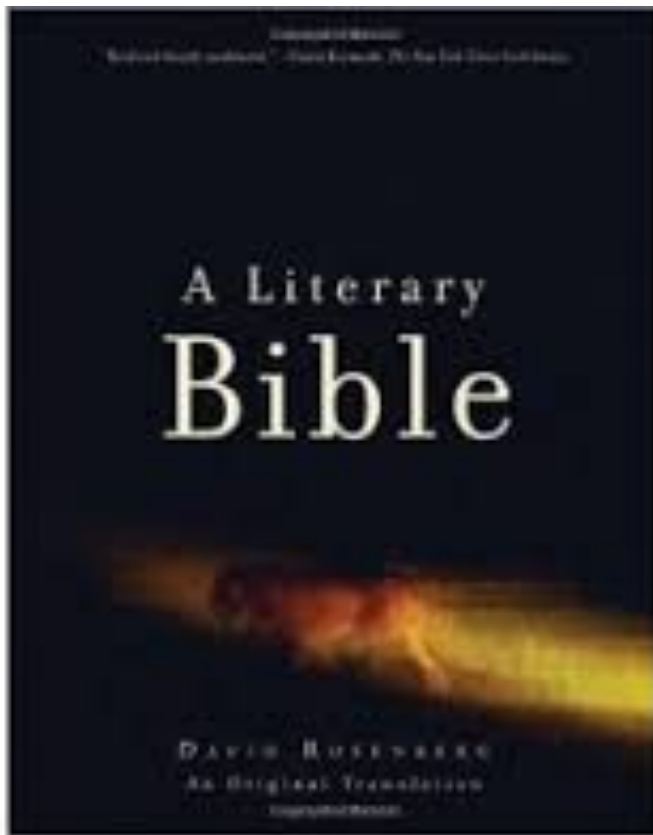


TRANSLATION AND RELIGION



Key vocabulary

- Ambiguity
- Aramaic
- Bigot- bigoted
- Dichotomy
- Esoteric
- Exoteric
- Extralinguistic
- Greek
- Hebrew
- Interpretation

Key vocabulary

- public; suitable to be imparted to the public; hence, capable of being readily or fully comprehended
- division into two parts, groups, or classes, esp. when these are sharply distinguished or opposed
- the possibility of more than one meaning being understood from what is heard or read

Key vocabulary

- of or relating to worldly things or to things that are not regarded as religious, spiritual, or sacred; temporal
- intolerant, prejudiced person, extremist, fanatic, maniac
- going beyond ordinary limits; surpassing; exceeding, beyond, direct apprehension; outside consciousness

Key vocabulary

- The possibility to be turned from one language into another
- Impossible to be turned from one language into another
- The original languages of the Bible
- not included within the realm of language or linguistics



Religious text has no meaning

until somebody reads it and
interprets for themselves

WHY? What are the arguments?

Watch the video, give your
comments



TRANSLATION AND RELIGION

1. **A sacred text, its definition**
2. **Translatability of a sacred text, dichotomy of the issue**
3. **The Bible Translations**
4. **Translation difficulties and strategies**



Introduction

**Is translation important for religion ?
Why?**

**How can we classify religions on the
principle of their evaluation of
translation ?**

Two groups of World Religions

ACCEPT THE
SIGNIFICANCE OF
TRANSLATION

e.g. CHRISTIANITY

the Bible translated
into more than
2000 languages)

DON'T ACCEPT THE
SIGNIFICANCE OF
TRANSLATION

e.g. ISLAM
the Quran, the holy book
in Arabic considered by
Muslims to be the only
authentic

A SACRED TEXT, ITS DEFINITION

**a body of writing
representing the core
of a religious
belief system**

**Eclectic set of texts
of no distinct genre**

E.G. THE BIBLE

- the account of God's action in the world
- amazing collection of 66 books with very different styles
- canonical text differs depending on traditions and groups

TRANSLATABILITY OF A SACRED TEXT, DICHOTOMY OF THE ISSUE

Untranslatable

- Esoteric, of transcendent origin, (cannot be fully apprehended in secular language by human beings)

Translatable

- Exoteric - open to all believers (accessible and readily comprehensible to all)

A DICHOTOMY IN RELIGIOUS TRANSLATION

**translating in a literal
way, reproducing the
source text as faithfully
as possible**

**finding equivalent
translations in the
target language in order
to convey their meaning**

THE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

The source languages
of the Bible are Greek,
Hebrew, Aramaic.

the full Bible has been
translated into 531
languages

Greek Septuagint or LXX, or Greek Old Testament

- the late 2nd century BCE

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ΤΩΝΗΑΤΤΙΟΝΤΗΟΙΟΥΑ



LXX

TRANSLATION OF THE SEVENTY

Symbol	Latin name	Value
I	<i>unum</i>	1
V	<i>quinque</i>	5
X	<i>decem</i>	10
L	<i>quīnquāgintā</i>	50
C	<i>centum</i>	100
D	<i>quingenti</i>	500
M	<i>mille</i>	1,000

Latin Vulgate - "commonly used translation"

- late 4th-century

St. Jerome



Importance

- The Vulgate's influence was even greater than that of the King James Version in English;
- for Christians during these times the phraseology and wording of the Vulgate permeated all areas of the culture.

German Bible translated by Martin Luther (1483 –1546)

- the New Testament 1522
- the Old Testament in 1534



English translations of the Bible

- 450 versions
- interlinear glosses
- Wyclif's Bible
- Tyndale's Bible
- King James Version (KJV) or King James Bible (KJB)

Mainstream Translations

- *King James Version (KJV)*
- *The Revised Standard Version (RSV)*
- *The Amplified Bible*
- *New American Standard (NASB)*
- *New International Version (NIV)*
- *New Living Translation (NLT)*
- *The Message*
- *Sacred Name Versions*
- *Restoration Study Bible*

THE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS into ENGLISH (watch and answer)

- What languages are considered the source languages of the Bible?
- What is meant by *historical distance*?
- What are the main types of translation?
What are the challenges of those types of translation?
- Which English translations represent the main types of translation?
- What is the difference between them?

Difficulties

- **From the 6th century to the 10th century, Jewish scholars, - Masoretes created a unified, standardized text - Masoretic Texts.**
- **The Masoretes added vowel points to the text**
the original text only contained consonant letters
meaning can be ambiguous, vary in accordance with the vowels chosen

Difficulties



Linguistic



Extralinguistic



Difficulties

institutional and ideological restrictions

the lack of corresponding vocabulary in the target language

the lack of specific cultural connotations of words in the target text

very different cultural and historical settings

Difficulties

Chronological factor, copying and translating procedure no direct

Lexical peculiarities of the original

Stylistic peculiarities of the original

Methods of Translation

**Formal Equivalent
(word-for-word)**

**Dynamic Equivalent
(thought-for-thought)**

**Free Translation (idea-
for-idea) Paraphrase**

Reasons for the different English Bible versions

1) Language development

2) Different translation methodologies

I) Language development

Over time, the English language changes/develops, making updates to an English version necessary.

- If a modern reader were to pick up a 1611 King James Version of the Bible, he would find it to be virtually unreadable.
- Everything from the spelling, to syntax, to grammar, to phraseology is very different. Linguists state that the English language has changed more in the past 400 years than the Greek language has changed in the past 2,000 years.
- When the Bible was written, it was written in the common language of the people at that time. When the Bible is translated, it should be translated into how a people/language group speaks/reads at that time, not how it spoke hundreds of years ago.

2) Different Translation Methodologies

There are different translation methodologies for how to best render the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek into English.

- Some Bible versions translate as literally (word-for-word) as possible, commonly known as formal equivalence.
- Some Bible versions translate less literally, in more of a thought-for-thought method, commonly known as dynamic equivalence.
- All of the different English Bible versions are at different points of the **formal equivalence vs. dynamic equivalence spectrum**.

PROS AND CONS OF FORMAL EQUIVALENCE

The advantages

- minimizes the translator inserting his/her own interpretations into the passages

The disadvantages

- often produces a translation so woodenly literal that it is not easily readable/understandable

PROS AND CONS OF DYNAMIC EQUIVALENCE

The advantages

- produces easily readable/understandable text

The disadvantages

- results in subjective interpretation of the original

PROS AND CONS OF FREE TRANSLATION

The advantages

- produces easily readable/understandable text

The disadvantages

- subjective, very far from the original

WATCH AND ANSWER

- What Bible translation is the best?
- What influences the criteria of the translation quality assessment?

Summary

Religious text is a body of **eclectic** texts of no distinct genre representing the core of a religious belief system.

Relevant to Translation studies is the division of religious beliefs into two groups: accepting the significance of translation and not accepting it.

Summary

The issue of **translatability** of a religious text shows the **dichotomy** of the problem. On the one hand, a religious text is believed to be untranslatable into **secular language** as bigots claim for its **transcendent** origin. On the other hand, a religious text should be **exoteric** (open, accessible, comprehensible to all believers)

Summary

The source languages of the Bible are **Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic**. The full Bible has been translated into 531 target languages.

The most famous translations are: Greek Septuagint (Greek Old Testament), dated by the late 2nd century BCE; Latin Vulgate, created by St. Jerome, dated by late 4th-century; King James Bible (KJB)

Summary

The difficulties of translation can be presented as **extralinguistic** (chronological factor, technical aspect, institutional and ideological restrictions, different cultural and historical settings) and **linguistic** (vocabulary, grammar and style).

Summary

The existence of different versions of the Bible translation can be explained by language development and different methods of the Bible translation (**Formal Equivalent** (word-for-word), **Dynamic Equivalent** (thought-for-thought), **Free Translation** (idea-for-idea) Paraphrase). All of them have advantages and disadvantages, and can be assessed according to the **functional principle**.