

Diverse Voices: Hearing Scripture Speak in a Multicultural Movement

by Kevin Higgins

This paper will explore the unique potential of “relevance theory” in illuminating some of the hermeneutical dynamics encountered as a multi-lingual community of Muslim followers of Isa wrestle with the text of Luke, chapters 1–3. Following a brief introduction to relevance theory as it applies to translation, the paper will present notes taken during a one week inductive study of Luke involving 16 men from six language groups.

Translation and Relevance Theory (RT)

Translation is a complex discipline that has evolved to incorporate multiple approaches and theoretical assumptions drawn from fields as diverse as linguistics, anthropology, hermeneutics, discourse analysis, theology, and communications theory. King describes many of the facets of that complexity, especially in seeking to describe how meaning is processed.

Meaning arises out of a dynamic interactive relationship between the actual message transmitted, the signal systems used, the environment in which the message is transmitted, the people who receive it, the relationship between the people, and the manner of transmitting the message. In the end, however, it is the receptors who make the final decision on what the message means to them within their own context and cognitive environment.¹

King aptly outlines the role that the receptors play, and in particular the way that context, and what she calls cognitive environment, factors into the processing of meaning. However, this is not merely a modern concern or sensitivity.

In the 2nd century B.C.E. the translator of Ecclesiasticus into Greek summarized in a remarkably lucid way the struggle translators have always faced. After explaining the purpose with which the original author, Jesus Ben Sirach, undertook his work, the translator goes on to say the following.

You are invited therefore to read it with goodwill and attention, and to be indulgent in cases where, despite our diligent labor in translating, we may seem to have rendered some phrases imperfectly. For what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language. Not only this book, but even the Law itself, the Prophecies, and the rest of the books differ not a little when read in the original. (Ecclesiasticus, Prologue, New Revised Standard Version, emphasis mine)

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Though the translator here does not make reference to how his reader might be affected by their context, he does acknowledge that the result of even the most careful and diligent translation work can result in a text which does not have “exactly the same sense” as the original once it has been re-created in a new language. This implies that the context of the new language plays a role in how the text is received and its meaning is processed.

Cicero (106-43 B.C.E.), roughly a contemporary of the above citation and regarded by many as the founder of Western translation theory, developed his thought regarding translation primarily in the context of training orators to translate from Greek into Latin. In one of his major works on the subject, *The Best Kind of Orator*, Cicero describes his own approach to translation.

I did not translate...as an interpreter, but as an orator, keeping the same ideas and the forms, or as one might say, the “figures” of thought, but in language which conforms to our usage.²

Cicero foreshadows an approach that would in later generations be referred to as a meaning based or even dynamic equivalent approach to translation. He refers to translating ideas, not words. And in referring to “our usage” Cicero is directly referencing his concern for the receptor in his work. Cicero provides more detail about his approach.

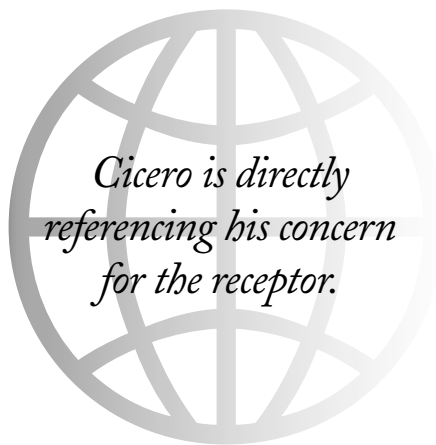
I did not hold it necessary to render word-for-word, but I preserved the general style and force of language. For I did not think I ought to count them out to the reader like coins, but to pay them by weight, as it were.³

As we shall see, one of RT’s distinguishing characteristics is its relatively greater emphasis on the receptor, and the receptor’s context. However, I have cited these three references as a means of making the simple point that although RT may emphasize the role of the receptor more than other theories of communication have done, we should not assume that sensitivity to receptor context is something new. We see it in Ecclesiasticus and in

Cicero. If space allowed we could trace evidence of this concern in Jerome and on through all the standard works on Bible translation theory and approach.⁴

In the interest of space I am going to jump over many of the various historical approaches to translation and focus on just a few of the particularly suggestive insights that might be gleaned from RT.

RT could be summarized this way: Communication takes place as recipients make inferences about a communicator’s intentions based on what they



deem to be relevant as determined by their cognitive environment. The specific elements of RT are covered in the literature which I will cite below and in my references. In this paper I will focus on the last element, that of cognitive environment, and its potential insights for translation upon which I will focus in this paper.

Cognitive Environment

The seminal work for RT is the book by Sperber and Wilson, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (1986). In a subsequent revision the authors responded to critiques and further clarified their thinking (2nd Edition, 1995).⁵ In the course of developing their theory, Sperber and Wilson interact with the code model of communication (e.g., Shannon and Weaver), its subsequent application and modification in semiotics/semiology (e.g., Saussure), the linguistic approach to semiotics (e.g., seeing meaning as

the “grammar” of a culture, Chomsky 1954),⁶ and the application of semiotics in structural anthropology (Levi-Strauss). They also give extended attention to an earlier inferential model developed by Grice (1989).⁷ As such, RT is developed within the broader movement of interest in human cognition evident in a variety of disciplines including psychology, anthropology, linguistics, and philosophy.

“Cognitive environment” has already been referred to several times as a key term in RT. As Sperber and Wilson state it, “A cognitive environment is merely a set of assumptions which the individual is capable of mentally representing and accepting as true” (1995: 46). Thus cognitive environment includes a person’s current and potential matrix of ideas, memories, experiences, and perceptions.

New assumptions and thoughts that occur in the communication process might reinforce existing assumptions, or could lead to changes in the receptor’s cognitive environment. Since it is only partially possible to predict the new thoughts and assumptions that will result in the receptor as a result of this altered cognitive environment (1995:58), the success of communication cannot be measured by an exact transfer of thoughts from communicator to receptor, a standard assumption in code models of communication. As Sperber and Wilson put it, “We see communication as a matter of enlarging mutual cognitive environments, not of duplicating thoughts” (Sperber and Wilson 1995: 193).

So, in RT, accuracy in communication is described as an increasingly shared cognitive environment. Note that one of the implications here is that in communication both communicator and receptor will have their cognitive environments changed, and the goal implies a process of increasing understanding.

Ernst August Gutt (1989, 1992, and 2000) was the first to apply RT to Bible translation.⁸ Following his discussion of other theories of translation, Gutt

develops a line of argument that leads him to conclude that RT is sufficient in and of itself as a theoretical framework for translation of the Bible (2000: vii and 22). Gutt goes to great length to demonstrate that every principle found in current theories of translation can be explained by reference to RT (2000: 198). As such he accepts the definition and description of cognitive environment discussed above.

However, because Gutt approaches RT as a Bible translator, he is attuned to the even greater complexity involved in this particular type of communication. Translation theories and approaches share an awareness that in translation the communication event involves not only a communicator (which would be the original author) and a recipient (the original audience), but also a new recipient (the translator's audience) and a new communicator (the translator).⁹

One of the key arguments in RT is that the cognitive environment of a recipient of any given communication is what determines how the recipient processes the meaning of the communication they receive. This does not mean that the intention of the communicator is not a factor, and Sperber and Wilson address this. However, for the receptor, the cognitive environment rules the day.

My purpose in the remainder of this paper is to describe in concrete ways how the preceding discussion of cognitive environment and communication sheds light on understanding what takes place when a group of Muslims from different language groups engage scripture in a group discussion.

In particular, I will highlight:

1. How people process the meaning of the Biblical text from within their own cognitive environment, highlighting how cognitive environment shapes meaning and frames questions that are brought to the text.
2. Ways in which the interpretation of scripture involves a process that results in readers increasingly sharing the cognitive environment of the original text.

The five day gathering included 16 men from two countries and six mother-languages (not including this author).

3. The reality that translation is itself an iterative, interpretive process.

With this summary of RT, albeit extremely brief, and with these three points serving as lenses for what follows, I turn to my record of the process questions, and insights gleaned from the week-long study of Luke 1–3.

Following that discussion, I will return to summarize a few conclusions.

Study of Luke, July 19–23, 2009

The five day gathering included 16 men from two countries and six mother-languages (not including this author). The studies were conducted in the lingua franca of the country, and each man in this group was literate though the levels of literacy ranged widely.

These men were leaders in an insider movement: followers of Jesus, remaining Muslim. As leaders, they meet several times in a year for sharing each other's stories and problems, encouraging each other, and studying together. Studies have included topics (such as Quranic verses regarding Jesus), and books of the Bible, studied for the most part in an inductive way.

Of the 16 men, two have received considerably more training than the others. They have studied the Bible regularly, are familiar with Christian terminology and teachings such as the Trinity, and have been introduced to basic interpretation methods and concepts as well as a one week introduction to "manuscript Bible study" (MBS) using the Gospel of Mark.¹⁰

The text of the Bible studied together was characterized by the following major elements:

1. The language was the lingua franca, the trade language or national language of the country.

2. The text was translated for Muslim readers. In keeping with MBS, there were no verse numbers, though we did add chapter numbers.
3. Each new section began with the Bismillah, "In the Name of God the Compassionate and the Merciful I begin..." Again, this is in keeping with Islamic style.
4. As reference material for this new translation the main team of translators referred to two other projects within the country. Both can be said to belong to the meaning-based or dynamic equivalent school of translation. One of the two works used as reference has been published with an explanatory translation on one page and an inter-linear version on the facing page that incorporated Greek and the receptor language in a word for word version. The version used in this study, however, was far more Islamic in its style and terminology than either of the two versions used in reference.

The format of our studies needs some description. Each day, for five days, we met together from about 9:30 a.m. until about 3:30 p.m., with breaks for tea. However discussions frequently continued avidly through the tea breaks.

Before commencing, prayer was offered, first in a very Islamic style by one leader, in Arabic, standing and holding a stick. Then followed more spontaneous prayers by the group.

The first two days I suggested a set of simple questions to serve as starting points. Before beginning the study I told them to be looking for and listening for: Who did what? Where? When? How? Why? After that, the format had become pretty internalized and there was little need for me to repeat the key questions or process.

Then one person read aloud an entire chapter. The others followed along.

Then we gave them one smaller section from the chapter to discuss in detail, using the questions as a guide. We divided into two groups, with the two leaders who had received more training serving as facilitators for each group. They did not direct the groups. I listened carefully, sitting to one side and not joining or visiting the groups. Sometimes the two leaders did the same so as to avoid overly guiding the process.

We gave no time limits,¹¹ the groups simply discussed and re-read and discussed until they felt “satisfied.” Then each group presented their insights, as well as a list of new questions which had emerged as they read. As will be clear in what follows, these questions normally had nothing at all to do with the original suggested questions. After both groups shared feedback, which was delivered with frequent interruptions and clarifications from men in both groups, and after both had been able to share all their questions, we re-divided and they were told to search for answers to these new questions in the text. If nothing was found they were told to simply place their questions on the “side” as it were, and consider them not yet answered. Only rarely did we allow answers to such questions to be brought in from other Biblical books or other reference material.¹²

Then the men presented the answers they had found, or not found. This too, frequently led to considerable debate and discussion. As the notes will reveal, I as the resident “expert” did not escape being questioned. In at least one case, documented in my notes, my suggested answer was vigorously disputed and overturned by the group.

The following descriptions of the discussions and insights and questions have been distilled. These notes are not technically attempting to be a verbatim. As such, I fully appreciate that my own selectivity will shape how this material is presented, what was included, what was passed over.

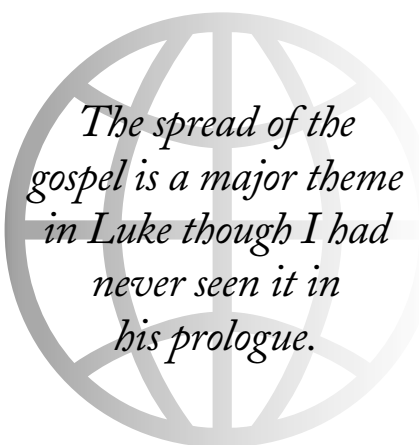
Having said that, the material relating their insights is far more subject

to my editing than the lists of their questions as those emerged. I preserved their questions very much intact and I repeated them back to the group before they began discussing them so that they could state whether I had captured the question well or not.

In the notes which follow, since my purpose in this article is to highlight the concept of cognitive environment, I will take space from time to time to make references to this along the way.

Luke 1:1-4

The basic question intended to help



lead them into the inductive process was, “Why did the writer write this? Why is this text here? What is the purpose of the writer?”

Here is a summary of the types of responses given after the group discussions:

- He wrote to people who were not present for these events so that they could know what really happened.
- He wrote in order to guard these things. The phrase used to refer to this was, literally, “keep them safe.” This is a term related to a Hafiz-ul-Quran, a person who guards the Quran by memorizing it. So this respondent was seeing the writing of Luke in a similar way: to make sure it was not lost. This is an example of how cognitive environment shapes what we see and how we describe it.

- He wrote to make sure future generations would know about these things.
- He wrote to encourage other people to also share these things with other people.

This last point is not something explicit in the text at all. My theory is that these men see this point in the text because of their background. Many of them are from an Islamic movement, Tableeq-i-Jamaat, that sees spreading the message of Islam as a sixth pillar of their faith. This is part of their context, their cognitive environment, and as such has shaped how they read the text.

It is worth noting that exegetically, the spread of the Gospel is in fact a major theme in Luke though I had never seen that theme in his prologue. The insight of my Muslim brothers, based on their cognitive environment, may well be illuminating something my cognitive environment had not prepared me to see in these verses. As such this is a case of RT’s concept of communication as an increasingly shared cognitive environment. In this case, mine was enlarged by this process.

Questions

There were no real questions after this section, however, at the break, one of the two group leaders came to me and said something like this, “When we used the traditional _____ Bible or other Bible society Bibles in other languages, it would take us forever to get the people studying the scripture with us to actually discuss the meaning like this. Instead, when we read those versions, everyone was arguing or asking about why we were reading a Christian book, and why the Prophets were not written about with respect, and why there was such strange terminology, etc. But today, we just got right into talking passionately about what the words mean and the message.”¹³

Luke 1 and 2

We actually took this section in a number of smaller divisions but I have condensed the feedback into one.

In this case, the groups went almost immediately into asking questions. They were getting the main flow of the narrative and who did what, and where, etc. But the narrative prompted many questions. I am fascinated by how many of these are questions I never would have thought to ask. On reflection I saw how this process also prompted me to ask the text new questions as well, and to see things I would never have considered being part of Luke's purpose. I did not see Luke's environment as clearly as some of these questions illuminated if for me.

Questions

1. *Why was Zacharia afraid when he saw the angel?* Some comments included these:

He was a holy man, an Imam. He should have known better. This ties to Islamic ideas of holy men as perfect or nearly perfect. That is, this question arose because of the cognitive environment. However the Quran clearly shows even Muhammad having questions and doubts about things [Surah 10:94]. This raised some questions for me: *Is this a place where the Quran can help us in Bible translation? Would it be a reference in a footnote? Is it too sensitive a subject to handle that way?* But at the least this seems an example of where the Quranic cognitive environment overlaps more with the Biblical cognitive environment than it does with the common Muslim cognitive environment in this country.

Which prayer was answered when Jibril (Gabriel) said to Zacharia, "Your prayers have been answered"? Was Zacharia praying for a child right then? Or was it before this?

2. *Why did Mary go to see Elizabeth and not her own family?* The answer to this ended up being discovered when the groups went back to the text: Elizabeth IS family, etc. So, it was a normal thing. The process of circling back to the text over and over and of the way in which interpretation can happen as a process is highlighted in this example.

T*his seems as an example of where the Quranic cognitive environment overlaps more with the Biblical cognitive environment.*

There was also curiosity about Jibril's message concerning Elizabeth.

3. *Why did Elizabeth stay in her home for five months?* As the respondent went on to say, "No woman would do that. It seems very strange."

Of all the questions that I might have foreseen or guessed would arise (so-called theological questions, etc.), it was this last question about why Elizabeth remained in her house for five months that prompted the most passionate, heated, intense, and lengthy discussion. Clearly this was something important, though I have never found any other group in my studies in the USA who thought so!

As the groups went round and round three possible answers emerged as the main contenders:

1. Perhaps this was their culture? This took a long time to come to, until one man related how he had become aware that women in peoples within his country other than his own cultural group did have different customs after the birth of a child.
2. I suggested that perhaps since Elizabeth was elderly, she was worried that too much exertion would endanger the baby (it seemed so natural a possibility to me, given my cognitive environment).
3. She remained five months as an offering of special thanks and praise to Allah for this special child.

Suggestion number two was vigorously debated and in the end rejected with great fervor, drawing on the argument that Elizabeth could not possibly be afraid for the welfare of the child. The reasoning proceeded like this:

Jibril had already told Elizabeth what Allah was going to do in this child's future, so that meant that this future would happen. There was no risk.

Answers 2 and 3 are wonderful examples of how our cognitive environment shapes even the things we think are conceivable answers, let alone what we settle on.

In the end they left this as an open question. If we had voted I think #3 would have beat out #1 as the favored answer. It might have been a close vote, but #3 would have won the debate. Again, in a culture where men elect to go on various lengths of tableeq trips in order to fulfill vows or compensate for a sin, or gain favor, or draw near to Allah, and where Sufis travel from one place to another as a part of various rituals and initiations, the idea of someone deciding to remain five months at home for a religious reason would be a natural contender for understanding Elizabeth's actions.

Luke 3

The summaries of main points more and more tended to turn into mere repetitions, verbatim, of things that happened in the passage. One man even simply started to read the whole passage again when asked to summarize it. I want to ask more about that in the future. The important and unique insights came in the questions:

Why did Yahya live in the desert and how old was he? The participants found the answer when they went back to the text: God had told him to live there, and it was spoken earlier by another prophet that he would do this. They could not figure out his age. In part this was a translation issue: the text they had made it sound like John began to live there in his childhood. When the group pressed me to say if I knew anything, I began to reply, "This is a translation issue..." One of the leaders gently and subtly tapped my arm and it was clear I should not go down that road. I don't recall what exactly I said to change gears.

Later the leader and I processed this interchange. There were two concerns behind why he stopped me:

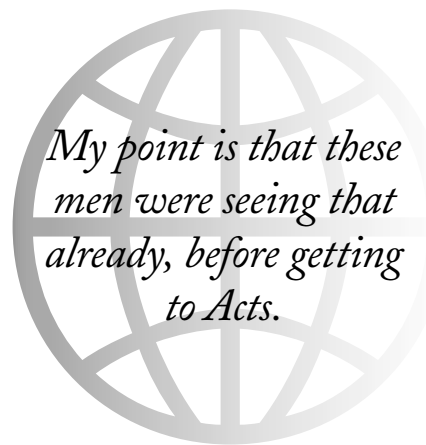
1. He did not want the men in the room to know that others in the room were doing this translation work, especially since he was heading up the translation team. This was a security matter in a place where although we were meeting with believers, we have had people turn against the work later and it is wise if not everyone knows what everyone else is doing.
2. In a Muslim context, talking about this as a translation problem and implying that we could change it would raise major questions. This is an extremely touchy issue in Islam. Already the Bible is seen as changed, corrupted, and unlike the original. This leader was worried that my explanation was going to inadvertently raise questions about the authenticity of the Bible in front of the whole group. He is fully aware that the original Greek text is the one that matters, and it would seem that in Islam with its high value on the original Arabic Quran this would be easy to explain.¹⁴ But it is not.

The discussion proceeded. Although is a possible, though unlikely reading of Luke's Greek that Yahya lived in the desert from his childhood, later someone did put it together that if Isa started at about 30 (stated later in Luke), and he and Yahya were about 6 month apart, then maybe Yahya was older than a child when he went to live in the desert. This became a great example of how scripture builds its own context and also of the way in which translation needs to focus on translating ideas and meaning not just words.

This further highlights a point about cognitive environments we made above. The goal of communication is an increasingly shared cognitive environment. In this case, the cognitive environment of our readers was changing, growing, and increasingly sharing that of the text.

More Questions

What did he eat out there? I realized how I, as a Christian, immediately supplied an answer in my head: locusts and wild honey. But it is nowhere in Luke, not even in chapter 3. I automatically supplied it from other Gospels. Luke apparently does not care, or assumes his readers know. Most Western readers would either assume the answer based on prior knowledge (their cognitive environment would include biblical information perhaps), or even more likely, just would not be interested in that ques-



tion. It would not occur to them to wonder about it. But these men, many of whom had spent lots of time in the desert, were keenly interested in what Yahya would have eaten. Cognitive environment arises again.

How did the news spread so fast about Yahya? The easy answer would be that we just don't know. But I noted that they had picked up again on a major theme in Luke: the rapid and ongoing spread of the message. He even seems to construct Acts around that theme to some degree by referencing at various points the numerical growth in the number of believers. But my point here is that these men were seeing that already, before getting to Acts, as a key thing. I have already suggested that this is due to their own context as men involved in the Tableeq movement.

Where was this happening? They found the answers in the text.

Why the 8th day for circumcision? "We do it on the 6th day, according to Shariah. *Why the 8th back then?*" Again, for Muslims, all the biblical prophets were Muslims. So they would assume these good people in Luke, such as Yahya and Isa, are Muslims. Muslims circumcise on the 6th day. Thus the question comes, why the 8th day?

The translation of Luke 2:21 we were using says they circumcised on day 8 "according to their custom." This reference to custom was added to explain the ceremony. But as we observed the discussion, the main translator suggested to me in a side conversation that he realized we would need to strengthen the translation to show that the "custom" was not just cultural, but was a part of the Shariah of Musa (Moses). Verse 22 makes it clear that the family followed the Law of Moses relative to the offering for purification. We realized we need to make it clear for circumcision as well in our context.

This is a good example of the living and ongoing, iterative translation process. Even in studying the scripture new insights come for improving how it communicates. Indeed there are even deeper insights into what it means. So, the next edition will say "8th day according to the Shariah of Musa." It is perfectly acceptable that there could be changes in the Shariah given to Muhammad, compared to an earlier Shariah given to, say Musa. This again points to the importance of cognitive environment in the interpretive process.

Who was the first person Yahya actually spoke to? We held that to see if we would find out later, but there was no clear answer in the text.

Why does the verse say "Lord of Israel?" And why does it mention only help for His chosen people, and not for all people? Isn't He Lord of all things? Answers came as we read on and people saw Luke's references to the universal concern of Allah: all nations, all people, etc. Again, it was worthy of note that scripture was pro-

viding the answers directly, though in a process that took time.

How did Zacharia tell Elizabeth what to name Yahya? This is not in the text, but clearly she already knows when it comes time. They applied logic and decided that in the same way he wrote it for the crowd that was there, he might have written it for her too. Others thought maybe the angel told her too.

Did Yahya have disciples/companions? If so, who? This is left unanswered in Luke, though the issue resurfaces later, as in Paul's discovery of disciples in Acts who knew only the baptism of John/Yahya. We did not go to John's Gospel.

Was Yahya married? General assumption was "of course."

Was Yahya only preparing a way in the desert? Nowhere else? At first this was seen very literally, as a real road, a path. Only after ongoing discussion did someone suggest, and others agree, that it was a religious, spiritual thing.

Summary

I began by introducing the reader very briefly to RT. In particular I highlighted RT's notion of cognitive environment. I suggested that I would focus on three aspects of how RT sees cognitive environment's implications for communication. I used those three aspects as lenses for my record of the study of Luke I have just outlined. Those three lenses were:

1. How people process the meaning of the Biblical text from within their own cognitive environment, highlighting how cognitive environment shapes meaning and frames questions that are brought to the text.
2. Ways in which the interpretation of scripture involves a process that results in readers increasingly sharing the cognitive environment of the original text.
3. The reality that translation is itself an iterative, interpretive process.

I have paused at various points to draw attention to how the study of

The cognitive environment of the recipient of communication determines what the recipient will assume to be the meaning of the text.

Luke illuminated the task and process of translation when viewed through those lenses. Rather than repeat those insights here, I will instead attempt a few concluding and encompassing summary statements:

Translation Is a Process.

Translation as a process includes many of the same elements as are common to communication theory.

Translation is also an interpretive or hermeneutical process.

So far, nothing I have said would be new at all, much less controversial, for translators. However, what RT suggests, and what is borne out in my survey here to at least some degree, is that the cognitive environment of the recipient of communication (in this case, a translation of the Bible) in fact determines what the recipient will assume to be the meaning of the text. As the translator of Ecclesiasticus put it centuries ago, "what was originally expressed in Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language." As that same translator also said, no amount of diligence in translation effort will make this to be less true.

At best the translator aims at a process whereby his or her own cognitive environment, and the cognitive environment of the recipient, might over time increasingly share the cognitive environment of the original text, however imperfectly that may be true at any given point in the cycle of interpretation and subsequent repeated editing of the translation.

Returning to another author referenced near the beginning of this article, perhaps Cicero's metaphor has much to commend it. He described his aim in translation by saying, "I did not think I ought to count them (i.e.,

the words) out to the reader like coins, but to pay them by weight, as it were."

May our work as translators contribute not just to the completion of New Testaments and Bibles and portions in various languages, as important as that goal is, but also to the living and ongoing process whereby men and women are captured by the "weight" of the Biblical message and find their cognitive environments, indeed their very, entire lives, utterly transformed. **IJFM**

Endnotes

¹ Roberta King in Van Engen, Charles Edward, Whiteman, Darrell L., Woodberry, John Dudley. 2008. *Paradigm Shifts in Christian Witness: Insights from Anthropology, Communication, and Spiritual Power: Essays in Honor of Charles H. Kraft*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, p. 74.

² Cited in Manuel Jinbanchian's article, "Introduction: The Septuagint to the Vernaculars," in Noss, Philip A., Editor, *A History of Bible Translation; Rome, Edzioni Di Storia E Letteratura*, p. 31.

³ Ibid.

⁴ I refer the reader to works such as Beekman & Callow. 1974. *Translating the Word of God*. Dallas: I.A.B.; Nida, E. A. Taber. Charles, R.; 1969. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden, E.J. Brill; and Shaw, R. D. 1988; *Transculturation: the Cultural Factor in Pasadenation and Other Communication Tasks*. Pasadena, Calif., William Carey Library.

⁵ Sperber, Dan, and Deirdre Wilson, 1995. *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*, 2nd Edition. Oxford, Blackwell.

⁶ Chomsky's model has been seriously criticized by Daniel Everett, particularly Chomsky's claim that recursion formed a universal grammar of cognition (in a 200 page chapter found in Desmond C. Derbyshire and Geoffrey K. Pullum, eds., *Handbook of Amazonian Languages*, Volume 1, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, 1986).

⁷ Sperber and Wilson briefly address each of these models and authors in their introduction (1995:3-8). However they carry on an extended dialogue with and critique of Grice through the book.

⁸ Asserted by Phillip Stine in his introduction to Gutt's lectures for a group

of Bible translators and later edited for publication (Gutt 1992: 6). I can find no evidence to the contrary. Gutt's thesis was written under Wilson's mentorship and published later as *Translation and Relevance* (2000). The literature that engages Gutt's work can be conveniently traced in the references found in Stephen Pattemore's article, "Framing Nida: The Relevance of Translation Theory in the United Bible Societies" found in Noss, Philip A. Editor; *A History of Bible Translation*; p. 217 ff.

⁹ Shaw and Van Engen provide a very helpful and non-technical description of this complex communication reality. Shaw, R. Daniel; Van Engen Charles Edward; 2003; *Communicating God's Word in a Complex World: God's Truth or Hocus Pocus?* Lanham, Md.; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

¹⁰ "Manuscript Bible Study" was developed as a methodology by Paul Byer in his work with InterVarsity. Similar to inductive study the main features of MBS include: far fewer questions are pre-formed and directed to the text than in other inductive study methods; all introductory comments such as are frequently added in paragraph headings of English Bibles are removed; there are no paragraph divisions; chapter numbers and verse numbers are also removed. The reason for these changes is to remove as many of the later additions to the text as possible, rendering the form far closer to how it might have come to the original readers, and allowing the flow of the text itself to guide the reader in seeing the breaks in thought and topics, rather than depending on the opinions of later editors and Bible publishers to provide these.

¹¹ Though my notes indicate that we spent almost 20 hours on Luke 1 and 2.

¹² In strict MBS methodology, if the answers to new questions are not in the text under consideration the principle becomes something similar to "this is not a question the author seems interested in" and is dropped. We did use this principle at times, but also allowed free range for discussion of what seemed initially to be completely outside the range of Luke's concerns or intent. I did this because I was personally seeking to understand how the context and cognitive environment of these men shaped the types of questions they saw as important, and they ways they saw the text giving answers.

¹³ I mentioned above that we were using a new version of Luke written for Muslim readers and seeking to employ Quranic style and use explanatory description for concepts that frequently give Muslims concern.

¹⁴ Indeed, one of my questions, which I did not think to ask then, is whether part of the problem was in how I phrased the

question. I used the word "translation" instead of "interpretation." The latter is more in keeping with Islamic thinking. And, I know better! But in the flurry of the moment I used the word "translation." If I had said it was an interpretation problem, I might not have had the tug on my sleeve (other than the security concern).

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