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Différance in the French Versions of the Synoptic: A Case for Intralingua Translation

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Abstract:

This study centers on the intralingua overview of différance in the three French versions of selected verses from the gospels of Jesus Christ as recorded by Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. The objectives of this study are to: describe what différance is in translation studies; examine the meaningfulness of the meaning accorded the selected verses across the three versions of the French Bible to the designated audience; explain variations in the intralingua rendering of the synoptic; analyze the spiritual impression the different meanings generated by the chosen Bible versions could possibly have on the readers; and expound the language movement of French and its strength in communicating the intent of the gospel to the target audience. Skopos theory by Reiss and Vermeer (1984) is adopted to x-ray the purpose of the translation strategy used by each of the three versions of the Bible in French. Seven statements of Jesus Christ across the four gospels were quoted. The verses were compared and the différance examined. Implication of the meaning transfer by each of the versions is viewed in the spirit of intralingua translation and its attending spiritual intelligibility to the target readers. The study finds out that: every version of the French Bible considered makes effort to convey Jesus' messages in a way it feels the reader should understand; while some versions pay premium to conventional language structure to translate, other shows concern for content and "sacred" transfer of the divine words; symbols used by Jesus Christ are preserved in the three versions but the spiritual impression wanes in favor of language structure in some versions. The study concludes that intralingua approach to translating the Scriptures is to satisfy different categories of readers and différance underlines the essence of variations in communicating the gospel to the readers of the Bible in French.

Keywords:
différance; synoptic; Bible translation; intralingua translation; meaning; meaningfulness

I. Introduction

The nucleus of every translation of whatever genre is meaning transfer. It is what the translator reproduces or adapts. It remains the object of debate among scholars and theorists in the field of translation studies. As meaning makes interlingua communication possible, it is what intralingua translation rewords. How a web of words is deciphered and communicated to the target audience is hinged on the understanding of the translator and the meaningfulness of his task to his target audience. In other words, what the translator recoups as meaning from the source text must be meaningful inference that the target reader should be able to understand in the spirit of the original.

The Holy Bible is a sacred book in the Christian faith. Since its purpose is to direct man to his Maker, there is always a great care exercised in its translation from one language into another. The essence of the spiritual impression that the translation creates in the heart of the average reader becomes more critical when different versions with different terms present

the same message. Catford (1965, 5) states that "a translation is said to have the same meaning as the original". While this is the ideal, the level of comprehension of the meaning and the affective implication it has on the reader of the Scriptures is essential to the goal of the Gospel. From Etienne Dolet to Jerome, the debate on word for word as against sense for sense has constituted a serious issue in the translation of the Bible. Eugene Nida, Bible translator and linguist, moves away from the old idea that a word has a fixed meaning and gives a functional definition in which "a word acquires meaning through its context and can produce varying responses according to culture" (Catford, 1965,5). Consequently culture plays an important role not only in the responses of the target readers as conceived by Nida but also as a determining factor in the choice of items to translate culture-specific items from one language into another.

In intralingua translation, one thing that stands out is how the meaning crucially differs within the same language even where classes of words are the same and the correspondence of the message is seemly similar. Different versions of the Bible written in the same language are faced with attempts to satisfy specific audience by either making what is abstract concrete or what is spiritually implicit structurally explicit. Meaning is central to bible interpretation and its mode of presentation has powerful influence on the belief, life and character of the reader.

Bible translation is the greatest Interlingua communication endeavor in the history of mankind. From 200 BC till date virtually all languages of the world and cultures have direct or indirect access to the Holy Bible. The first translation was the Greek Septuagint version of the Hebrew Bible in the second century. Some of the first translations of the New Testament books also appeared in Latin. Dissatisfied with the Old versions of the New Testament in Latin, St. Jerome did its revision towards the end of the fourth century. His effort produced what is popularly referred to as the Vulgate. St. Jerome completed the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Latin by 406 AD. His insistence on the translation of sense other than the form even of the Bible, laid the foundation for the theory of translation. Martin Luther's translation of the Bible into German accompanied with a small book to defend the approaches he adopted to translate introduced what is known as translational equivalence in the Scriptures (Baker, 1998). William Tyndale made major contribution to the translation of the Bible into English. His translation of the New Testament formed the basis for the development of the King James Version known and considered as the Authorized Version in many churches and Christian assemblies today. It appears King James Version has the same structural status as Louis Segond of the French Bible.

As the King James Version in English is said to have been translated according to the original Hebrews and Greek, Louis Segond claimed same boldly written as a rider to LA SAINTE BIBLE as Traduite d'après les textes originaux hébreux et grec (translated according to the original Hebrew and Greek scriptures). One is made to believe that most of the versions in English and French have eyes on the King James Version and Louis Segond translations respectively. Other versions seem to be perceived corrections, adaptations and revisions of the two versions in English and French. This may be because of the linguistic and cultural reasons for the understanding of the people anticipated to be converts at the evangelism field. La Bible, Louis Segond appeared in 1910. Many French versions of the Bible have surfaced since then though La Bible Louis Segond continues to enjoy reprints in view of its importance and acceptability in the doctrinal training.

This study centers on différance as we analyze sundry verses taken from the synoptic. We hereby state that la version Louis Segond of the French Bible, is the point of departure for every other version of the Bible in French. In other words French language has been used to translate the Bible already written in French. This intralingua approach becomes a cornerstone to explicate the meaning as conceived by these versions within the same language.

II. Review of Literature

Différance is the referral constitution of the linguistic elements from which meaning of a message is drawn. Whether conceptual, associative or theoretical, the movement (direct or indirect) of the structure of any language is the basis for the generation of meaning in that language.

The question of meaning in translation takes different dimensions and terms as it is investigated based on text typology and issues in translation studies. Jenny Williams (2013, 108) defines différance as 'a term which encompasses the double meaning of difference and deferral as well as the ambiguity of the active and passive voices'. As no two words could really be similar, the different versions of the synoptic which attempt to mean the same thing to the understanding of the readers may create lacuna at the structural level and create different perspective to the interpretation of the message by the readers of the different versions. This may result in double meaning as the difference is created. Whether seen as an improvement over the original or that of clarity, the difference and deferral establish different reactions or different spiritual impression to the original messages of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Derrida (1982, 13) in The Palgrave Macmillian Theories of Translation describes différance as 'the movement according to which language or any code, any system of referral is constituted'. As a weave of difference, it is a movement that is the prerequisite for meaning generation. Needful to say however that the stability of meaning perception as underlined by the traditional linguistics may not be applicable to variation of diction in the Scriptures and specifically in the intralingua translation of the synoptic. Malmkjaer (2018, 297) declares that 'traditional linguistics predominantly perceived meaning as stable within language systems'. The meaning as interpreted by different groups within the same language systems of the Bible may be at variance with the original as the interpretation is divine and the word sacred. The fear of this variance in meaning of the scriptures must have accounted for the excessive action of the Roman Empire against translating the sense instead of the form. The action resorted to production of texts ugly to the intended meaning that the original message conveyed. The indispensability of making the Scriptures available to people of another language has shifted the attention of the translators from the ancient order of the Church to the spiritual understanding of the Bible based on the target culture and language structure of the evangelized. Language becomes a vehicle through which gospel messages are conveyed to potential converts.

Différance explicates the history behind the application and interpretation of specific terms and imagery employed in a given language. When different linguistic units and lexicons are used in different versions to present the same theme of the synoptic within the same language, the measure of the intelligibility of the rewording is imperative not only for language implication but also for spiritual underscore.

Within a given language, the choice of a particular register is contingent upon the sociolinguistic level of the audience. In other words, the kind of social encounter in which a

speaker is engaged determines his choice of words. Bible translators are likely to raise the level of a language when they feel a high literary register would fit a sublime character of the divine revelation. This accounts for differences in versions of the Bible even within the same language. The simple language of the gospel according to Luke (Luke 9:57) in Louis Segond is raised to a high level in Version Darby and, introduced by general historical diction, to an oratory level in La Bible de Jerusalem. (The three versions of the Bible we would like to work on in this study). The level of language is very important to the understanding of the scriptures by the audience. If the level is too low, the meaning may be played down. If it is too high the audience may lose grip of the meaning. Both circumstances are capable of not creating the desired spiritual impression on the readers.

Russian born linguist, Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) formulated the definition of translation envisaging a three-part model in 1959. He divided translation into three parts as follows: Intralingua translation, Interlingua translation and Intersemiotic translation (Baker, 1998).

Intersemiotic translation is otherwise referred to as transmutation. It is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal systems. Interlingua translation is defined as the translation proper. "Inter" means "between". It is a reproduction of a language by means of another language. It is the interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.

Intralingua translation is also known as rewording. It is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. People say the same thing in different ways within the same language. What is said poetically may be rendered in standard level according to the status of who listens or reads the speech. Polysemy is one of the language resources that come to play in intralingua translation. The words: "arrive", "return" and "come back" could be taken as meaning the same thing. But in real sense of it, no two words could be said to mean the same thing.

III. Research Methods

This study adopts inter-textual study in the analysis of cases of intralingua translation drawn from Louis Segond, La Bible de Jerusalem and La version Darby of the French versions of the Bible. The three versions are compared and how différance is played out in each example of the synoptic is analyzed. Skopos theory by Reiss and Vermeer (1984) is adopted to x-ray the purpose of the translation strategy used by each of the three versions of the Bible in French. Seven statements of Jesus Christ across the four gospels were quoted. The verses were compared and the différance examined. Implication of the meaning transfer by each of the versions is viewed in the spirit of intralingua translation and its attending spiritual intelligibility to the target readers.

From the foregoing therefore, this study would consider la version Louis Segond of La Sainte Bible as the original and other versions as the translations within the same language. While Louis Segond is mainly a direct translation from the original Hebrew and Greek, others review it by reading through the scriptures in Hebrew and Greek where possible.

IV. Results and Discussion

The synoptic was translated with focus on Jesus Christ as the essence of the whole Bible. Every language into which it was translated is very conscious of this fact. Since it is widely believed that Jesus Christ is the author of good news to mankind, the synoptic is presented as such. It is the opinion of Bible translators that no matter the spiritual dimensions a gospel presents which may seem difficult to adapt to another language culture, different types of expressions can be used. In other words the messages would be presented in the expressions close to the original and the one the readers are familiar with.

Looking at the variations that occur in the French versions of the Bible (*Dieu Fait Le Monde*, 1998, *Bible Stories for Children in French*, 2022) etc. meant for children and adults, Anna Young (2019, 9) states that 'different versions of the Bible, of the same basic message, are created in order to cater for having knowledge of God and developing children's vocabulary in French'. Definitely the language of the Bible or Bible stories for children has to be simplified to incite their interest in the word of God. In the case of this study, the three versions of the French Bible we are examining are Adult-target oriented. While they all claim to source their translations of the synoptic from Greek, it is discovered *La version Louis Segond* served as a reference material to the other two.

The first language system from which ***Différance*** is a pointer of impression on the reader is the linguistic organization of verses. The following examples show variations in the presentation of **Mathew 6:33**. *Louis Segond* ascribes the 'kingdom' and 'righteousness' to God in that *le royaume* is co-joined with *la justice* with the use of the coordinating conjunction *et* as follows: *Cherchez premièrement le royaume et la justice de Dieu; et toutes les choses vous seront données par-dessus.* La version Darby does not only see the verse as a continuation of verse 32 but also that *le royaume* belongs to God. Separating *la justice* from *le royaume* is capable of creating double meaning as a result of the ambiguity it may pose. What is the referral of s*a justice*? *Dieu* or *le royaume de Dieu*? A close look at the verse in this version (*La version Darby*) presents this argument: *mais cherchez premièrement le royaume de Dieu et sa justice, et toutes ces choses seront vous données par-dessus.* Whereas *Louis Segond* makes it clear that *le royaume et la justice* are possessives of *Dieu,* La version Darby is short of this clarity. *La Bible de Jerusalem* distances itself through omission of a very important element which is the possessor of both *le royaume* and *la justice.* The omission of the noun *Dieu* and its replacement with the possessive marker: *sa* seems to make the reader not have the same spiritual impression as presented by *Louis Segond* and *La version Darby* because of the linguistic ambiguity the structure presents. The simplification approach of *La Bible de Jerusalem* to the expression and key words of the verse may deny the reader the strong spiritual impression the readers of the other two versions enjoy. Let us look at the full text of the verse by this version: *Cherchez d'abord son Royaume et sa Justice, et tout cela vous sera donné par surcroît.* The possessive adjectives: *son* and *sa* written in lower case and the initial letters of *royaume* and *justice* put in upper case are capable of creating confusion for a reader of the same verse in many versions of the Bible within the same language. Do the possessive adjectives in question refer to a lesser being while the words: *royaume* and *justice* refer to Supreme Being? The word *surcroît* (*extra*, *additional*) does not bear the same meaning as *toutes ces choses* (all other things) as presented by the two other versions. While one could conclude that the three versions agree that what to seek first is the kingdom of God and His righteousness, the language materials of *La Bible de Jerusalem* appears less sacred than the other two.

The use of imperative in translating the comforting message of Jesus Christ is a stylistic device which is that of obligation other than of option. This could be examined in the next verse to verse 33. **Mathew 6:34** 'Ne vous inquiétez donc pas du lendemain; car le lendemain aura soin de lui-même. A chaque jour suffit sa peine' (*Louis Segond*) ; 'Ne soyez donc pas en souci pour le lendemain, car le lendemain sera en souci de lui-même.' (*La version Darby*) ; 'Ne vous inquiétez donc pas du lendemain : demain s'inquiétera de lui-même. A chaque jour suffit sa peine.' (*La Bible de Jérusalem*).

Christ admonition here is pungent on what should be the disposition of His disciples towards the issue of *worry*. The diction of each version presents this in different linguistic phenomenon. Worry is a universal malaise. The three versions implicitly and explicitly express this notion in the texts. While *Louis Segond* and *La Bible de Jérusalem* use the reflexive verb "s'inquiéter" to express "worry", *La version Darby* employs the noun "souci." The verbs in imperative mood in negative form to warn against *worry* have an affective force to make the readers diffuse the tension brought about by worry. *La Bible de Jérusalem* on this verse is a direct import from *La version Louis Segond*. However its use of *demain* in place of *le lendemain* in the latter part of the verse seems to be an oversight. Thought both *demain* and *le lendemain* point at the future, *le lendemain* is not as close in futuristic sense as *demain*. *La version Darby* omits the last phrase: « A chaque jour suffit sa peine ». The *différance* in these versions is more of stylistics and its meaning generation for the readers is more of how freely they read and understand the message in French language. *La version Darby* may want to ask of what sense value is the last phrase since the main message of the savior has been relayed in the preceding sentences. However, since one must not *add to* or *subtract from* the word of God (to borrow from the attackers of Jerome on Bible translation in *sense for sense* instead of *word for word* in 17th century), the last phrase remains the statement that came from Jesus Christ. The statement in itself is not self-explanatory. The theologian may want to interpret it as "chaque jour l'on fait face des défis". In other words 'there are hurdles of life to cross daily.' And so man that believes in God needs not worry. The words: 'Souci', 'peine', 'inquiéter' all point at emotional unrest man suffers as a result of earthly desires. Each version of the verse presents this with differed styles which demonstrate the generation of double meaning.

Another element of *différance* in the three versions of the French Bible under study is the syntactical variation. This variation can make the language modern and clearer to understand. This is the case of **Mathew 7: 1-3** of *La version Darby*: « *Ne jugez pas, afin que vous ne soyez pas jugés ; car du jugement dont vous jugerez, vous serez jugés ; et de la mesure dont vous mesurez, il vous sera mesuré. Et pourquoi regardes-tu le fétu qui est dans l'œil de ton frère et tu ne t'aperçois pas de la poutre qui est dans ton œil ?* ». This gospel message is structured in a way that a young believer may not need the spiritual assistance of a senior one to understand. It seems to be a reorganization of *La version Louis Segond* to fit the modern syntactical structure of French. "*Ne jugez point, afin que vous ne soyez point jugés. Car on vous jugera du jugement dont vous jugez, et l'on vous mesurera avec la mesure dont vous mesurez. Pourquoi vois-tu la paille qui est dans l'œil de ton frère, et n'aperçois-tu pas la poutre qui est dans ton œil ? ». Ne… pas* is often used instead of *Ne… point* in contemporary French. *Voir* and *regarder* do not connote the same thing. While *voir* (to see) talks about the physical perception of something, *regarder* (to look at) envisages a thing. Since Christ's message here is analogical, *La version Darby* seems to rewrite *Louis Segond version. La Bible de Jerusalem* equally draws its syntactical restructure from *Louis Segond* in that it opts for the use of infinitive form instead of subjunctive mood of the latter. To translate these verses, *La Bible de Jerusalem* puts them this way: "*Ne jugez pas, afin de n'être pas jugés, Car du jugement dont vous jugez on vous jugera, et de la mesure dont vous mesurez on mesurera pour vous. Qu'as-tu à regarder la paille qui est dans l'œil de ton frère? Et la poutre qui est dans ton œil à toi, tu ne la remarques pas. »* Here we see the movement

according to which French language system of referral is constituted. It is a movement from almost direct translation from Greek in *Louis Segond* to a syntactical reformulation in *Darby* and *La Bible de Jerusalem*. The clause: …*et l'on vous mesurera avec la mesure dont vous mesurez* may create an ambiguity for a non-regular reader of the gospel of Christ as what comes to mind with the verb: *mesurer* is the measurement of the size of someone or something. For example, it is often used in the contemporary language to refer to the size of a dress, a pair of shoes or a piece of land in the way *Louis Segond* puts it. *La Bible de Jerusalem* clarifies this by showing that it is the measurement of the quantity of certain materials by rewording this clause as: …*et de la mesure dont vous mesurez on mesurera pour vous*. This rendering moves from taking the measurement of someone in a way to taking the measurement of something for someone which is the intended meaning of the message of Jesus Christ. It needs to be stated here that the target readers of the two versions of the Synoptic other than *Louis Segond* are possibly those that find the language style of *Louis Segond* difficult to understand. Another syntactical change that is carried out on this verse is the last part of verse 3 of *La Bible de Jerusalem*: « *Et la poutre qui est dans ton œil à toi, tu ne la remarques pas.»* The use of the possessive adjective followed by pronoun in emphatic form as we have in the sentence: *ton œil à toi* is laying emphasis on the referent. In other words, It is the beam in *his eyes* and not in someone else's eyes.

A common feature of intralingua translation is saying the same thing in different ways with the use of synonyms. This is noted in the translation of **Mark 12:28-31** by the versions of the Bible under examination. *Louis Segond*: *Un des scribes qui les avait entendus discuter, sachant que Jésus avait bien répondu aux Saducéens, s'approcha, et lui demanda: Quel est le premier de tous les commandements? Jésus répondit : voici le premier : Ecoute Israël, le Seigneur, notre Dieu, est l'unique Seigneur. Et Tu aimeras le Seigneur, ton Dieu, de tout ton cœur, de toute ton âme, de toute ta pensée, et de toute ta force. Voici le second : Tu aimeras ton prochain comme toi-même. Il n'ya pas d'autre commandement plus grand que ceux-là.*

La version Darby: *Et l'un des scribes, qui les avait ouï discuter, voyant qui leur avait bien répondu, s'approcha et demanda : Quel est le premier de tous les commandements ? Et Jésus lui répondit : Le premier de tous les commandements est : « Ecoute Israël, le Seigneur notre Dieu est un seul Seigneur ; et tu aimeras le Seigneur ton Dieu de tout ton cœur, et de toute ton âme, et de toute ta pensée, et de toute ta force ». C'est le premier commandement. «Et le second lui est semblable : Tu aimes ton prochain comme toi-même ». Il n'y a point d'autre commandement plus grand que ceux-ci.*

La Bible de Jérusalem : un Scribe qui les avait entendus discuter voyant qu'il leur avait bien répondu, s'avança et lui demanda : « Quel est le premier de tous les commandements ? » Jésus répondit : « Le premier c'est : « Ecoute Israël, le Seigneur notre Dieu est l'unique Seigneur, et tu aimeras ton Dieu de tout ton cœur, de toute ton âme, de tout ton esprit et de toute ta force. Voici le second : « Tu aimeras ton prochain comme toi-même. Il n'ya pas de commandement plus grand que ceux-là ».

The verb *ouï* of *Version Darby* translates *entendus* of *Louis Segond* and *La Bible de Jerusalem*. Avoiding the repetition of the referent (*Saducéens*) already mentioned in the preceding verse by *Louis Segond*, *Version Darby* and *La Bible de Jerusalem* replace this noun with indirect object pronoun (leur). The demonstrative statements: *Voici le premier* in *Louis Segond* and *le premier est* or *le premier c'est* in *Version Darby* and *La Bible de Jerusalem* respectively are similar in meaning. The adjective *unique* in *l'unique Seigneur* in *Louis Segond* and *La Bible de Jerusalem* is simply reworded as *Un seul Seigneur* in *Version Darby*. The expression: *Voici le second* to indicate the commandment closely related to the first in *Louis Segond* and *La Bible de Jerusalem* is otherwise

translated as *Et le second lui est* in *Version Darby*. All these substitutions by synonymy portend that the translation of these verses are done intralingually.

Substituting the specific term of the original with the general term in the intralingua translation of the synoptic is a feature that shifts the attention of the reader from symbolism to generalization. The word: *nids* (nests) are peculiar to birds while the word: *demeures* means a dwelling place, a house or a domicile. The translation of the following verse from the book of **Luke 9:57-58** affirms this remark.

Louis Segond: Pendant qu'ils étaient en chemin, un homme lui dit : *Seigneur*, je te suivrai partout ou tu iras. Jésus lui dit : Les renards ont des tanières, et les oiseaux du ciel ont des nids : mais le Fils de l'homme n'a pas un lieu où il puisse reposer sa tête.

Version Darby : Et il arriva comme ils allaient par le chemin qu'un certain homme lui dit : Seigneur, je te suivrai où que tu ailles. Et Jésus lui dit : Les renards ont des tanières, et les oiseaux du ciel ont des demeures ; mais le Fils de l'homme n'a pas où reposer sa tête.

La Bible de Jérusalem: Et tandis qu'ils faisaient route, quelqu'un lui dit en chemin : « je te suivrai où que tu ailles. » Jésus lui dit : « Les renards ont des tanières et les oiseaux du ciel ont des nids ; le Fils de l'homme, lui, n'a pas où reposer sa tête. »

The word 'demeure' is not restricted to human or non-human. Its adoption for *nests* by *La version Darby* is capable of making a competent reader of the version of the Bible supply the exact meaning by himself while a reader that does not pay serious attention to the connotation of the word may subject it to diverse interpretations. From the same verse, the substitution of the word *route* for *chemin* by *La Bible de Jerusalem* may not create the local or rural impression that the original, as represented by *Louis Segond* and reproduced by *Version Darby* depicts. The scene of operation of Jesus Christ in the text is not a city but a rural community so the use of the word *route* creates an impression of a city road which is capable of changing the spiritual imagination of the scene where Jesus and a *certain* man engage in conversation.

One area of *différance* in the translation of the synoptic is the replacement of active voice expressed in subjunctive form of the original by a passive and impersonal conjunction of the new versions to avoid apportioning dual meaning to a key message of Jesus by an average reader of the message. We take an example from **John 3: 4, 7:**

Louis Segond: *Nicodème lui dit: Comment un homme peut-il naître quand il est vieux ? Peut-il entrer dans le sein de sa mère et naître ? Ne t'étonne pas que je taie dit:* ***il faut que vous naissiez de nouveau***.

Version Darby : Nicodème lui dit: Comment un homme peut-il naître quand il est vieux? Peut-il entrer une seconde fois dans le sein de sa mère et naître ? Ne t'étonne pas de ce je t'ai dit: ***il vous faut être nés de nouveau***.

La Bible de Jérusalem : « Comment un homme peut-il naître, étant vieux ? Peut-il une seconde fois entrer dans le sein de sa mère et naître ? » Ne t'étonne pas, si je t'ai dit: ***il vous faut naître à nouveau***.

The conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus has been seen as the whole essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ: to change a natural man to a spiritual being through conversion and moral redemption. For the theologians, the last part of verse 7 of the book of John under consideration should not pose any problem as Nicodemus, a man, could not have been taken

as one that bears a child by Jesus. But an ordinary reader of the Bible may not understand the implied meaning of the message structured in subjunctive form. The use of impersonal conjunction followed by the passive form in *Version Darby* (***il vous faut être nés de nouveau*)** and the imitation of the same though with infinitive in *La Bible de Jerusalem* (***il vous faut naître à nouveau)*** makes us to understand that it is a call on Nicodemus and his likes to change from bad innate character to good new behavior.

Translation of metaphor in the synoptic is unidirectional though the linguistic elements that illustrate it may subject the original to revision and explicit structure in the new versions. This is the case of John gospel in **John10: 9-10:**

Louis Segond: Je *suis* la porte. Si quelqu'un entre par moi, il sera sauvé ; il entrera et il sortira, et il trouvera des pâturages ; Le voleur ne vient que pour dérober, égorger et détruire ; moi, je suis venu afin que les brebis aient la vie, et qu'elles soient dans l'abondance.

Version Darby : Moi, je suis la porte : si quelqu'un entre par moi, il sera sauvé ; et il entrera et il sortira, et il trouvera de la pâture. Le voleur ne vient que pour voler, et tuer et détruire : moi, je suis venu afin qu'elles aient la vie, et qu'elles l'aient en abondance.

La Bible de Jérusalem : Moi, je suis la porte. Si quelqu'un entre par moi, il sera sauvé ; il entrera et sortira et trouvera un pâturage. Le voleur ne vient que pour voler, égorger et faire périr. Moi, je suis venu pour qu'on ait la vie et qu'on l'ait surabondante.

All the three versions retain *la porte* as the object of comparison. Jesus described himself as the door through which sinners could gain access to God. The house they would enter remains an imaginative place filled with green pastures where the sheep (people that accept Jesus) could graze. This is alluded to by *Louis Segond* in verse 10: …*afin que les brébis aient la vie*... (…So that the sheep could have life…). *La version Darby* engages in reviewing the use of the word: *sheep* as representing humans by replacing it with the personal pronoun *elles* (they). This change in style category shifts the reader's attention from animal representing humans to pronoun standing possibly for humans. *La Bible de Jerusalem* follows the same trait but with the use of indefinite pronoun "On" which may imply *people*, *they*, *we*, *one*, etc as the context may dictate. While *Louis Segond* seems to import directly from the Greek into French, the other two versions restructure *Louis Segond* to reduce interpretive efforts of the clergy to the Pews and to allow for self-explanation of the text to an average reader of the Synoptic.

The verbs *dérober, égorger, détruire* as used in *Louis Segond* fit into what are done to the sheep by the enemy; the thief. *La version Darby* replaces these with the verbs: *voler, tuer* and *détruire* which describe the general actions of the enemy both to the animals and humans. The terms employed by *La Bible de Jerusalem* are a mixture of the other two versions. However, the use of the phrase; *faire périr* to translate *détruire* is an intralingua effort to look for a synonym to the word in the original in order not to make the version look like a copycat of *Louis Segond*. All the verbs used in *Version Darby* and *La Bible de Jerusalem* belong to the same word family of *Louis Segond*.

Explicitation is one of the motivating factors of intralingua communication. What seems obscure and calls for theological explanation to an average reader of the original of the synoptic is made clear by rewording of the other versions. This is made possible with the use of clear simple sentences. This is the case of the gospel according to Saint John in **John 11:25-26**:

Louis Segond: *Jésus* lui dit: Je suis la résurrection et la vie. Celui qui croit en moi vivra, quand même il serait mort. Et qui quiconque vit et croit en moi ne mourra jamais. Crois-tu cela ?

Version Darby : Jésus lui dit: Moi, je suis la résurrection et la vie : celui qui croit en moi, encore qu'il soit mort, vivra ; et quiconque vit, et croit en moi, ne mourra point à jamais.

La Bible de Jérusalem: *Jésus* lui dit: "Moi, Je suis la résurrection et la vie. Qui croit en moi, même s'il meurt, vivra ; et quiconque vit et croit en moi ne mourra jamais. Le crois-tu ? »

The philosophical precisions of Jesus in *Louis Segond* demand clergy assistance in their interpretation if confusion will not ensue. The other two versions which might have read this version restructure the original in their own way to make known that the conjunction: *quand même* in *quand même il serait mort* in *Louis Segond* does not talk of duration but of adverb clause of condition: *même s'il meurt* in *La Bible de Jerusalem* and that it has a force of impression on the state of mind of the reader with the use of the subjunctive as presented *Version Darby* thus: *encore qu'il soit mort, vivra.*

V. Conclusion

The language structure and diction of the synoptic as presented by Louis Segond (1910) contain expressions that most of the time can hurt the flow of understanding of the gospels by an average reader of the Bible who is not vast in the linguistic performance of modern day French. This, in one hand, may be as a result of direct imitation from the original Hebrew with which the New Testament was written. In the other hand, the divine word demands spiritual interpretation which is best provided by the Holy Spirit but the fact still remains that every communication works through words. Certain coded expressions and terms as used in Louis Segond are simplified in Version Darby and La Bible de Jerusalem using the modern-day French language structure and expressions. This, to a large extent, should be able to communicate the meaningfulness of the original meaning to an average reader.

The strategies deployed in the analysis of the examples drawn from the three versions of the synoptic suggest that the intralingua translation of the gospels of Jesus Christ is motivated by clarity effort amplified by such factors as: additions, omissions, explicitation and restructuring. Meaning is a property of a language (Catford, 1965) but despite this, two words rarely convey the same meaning no matter how close they are in resemblance. The reading of the synoptic aims at impressing the works of Jesus Christ in the minds of the people in such a way that they turn from evil to good. Though the three versions are able to achieve this in their readers, the understanding of the processes as offered by the relevant verses depends on the status of the readers. Well literate readers that are good at classical French should be at home with the style of Louis Segond. Well literate and average speakers of modern-day French should enjoy reading Jerusalem Bible and Darby versions with good understanding.

Meaning is said not to be captured in words because it is the meaning that drives the choice of words. According to Jean Paul-Satre quoted by Lederer (1994, 23) "ainsi dès le départ, le sens n'est plus connu dans les mots puisque c'est lui, au contraire, qui permet de comprendre la signification de chacun d'eux ; et l'objet littéraire quoi qu'il se réalise à travers le langage n'est jamais donné dans le langage. » If meaning is not captured in words, it is expressed by words as their usage drives in the connotation ascribed to their amalgamation. In the synoptic parlance, the use of words and expressions to present a fact of the gospel

message dictates how such fact is understood and acted upon by the reader. The essence of the synoptic is to recognize the essence of Jesus Christ in the world. The effort to achieve this goal in the readers informs the rewording that intralingua translation engages in.

Cultural reconstruction is hardly carried out in this article. This is because the target audience of the three versions is French readers of their unique culture. It is in my opinion that the translation of the synoptic whose target audiences would be Francophone of different cultural extraction will be carried out to be able to spell out the cultural differences in the linguistic presentation. This study can equally be a point of reference to works on intralingua translation of some literatures written in oratory or poetic form.

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