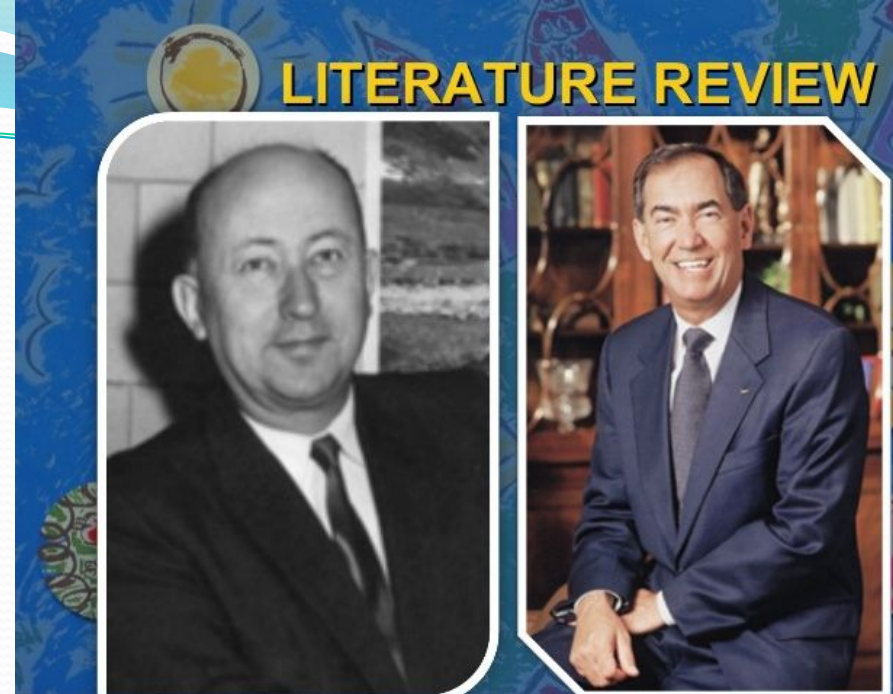


# TRANSLATIONAL TECHNIQUES

## Lecture # 8

## Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet about translation techniques



Vinay and Darbelnet view equivalence-oriented translation as a procedure which 'replicates the same situation as in the original, whilst using completely different wording' (1995, p. 342). They also suggest that, if this procedure is applied during the translation process, it can maintain the stylistic impact of the SL text in the TL text.

# THE PROCESS OF TRANSLATION

The categories used to analyze translations allow us to study the way translation works. These categories are related to text, context and process.

Textual categories describe mechanisms of coherence, cohesion and thematic progression.

Contextual categories introduce all the extra-textual elements related to the context of source text and translation production.

Process categories are designed to answer two basic questions:

1. Which option has the translator chosen to carry out the translation project, i.e., which *method* has been chosen?
2. How has the translator solved the problems that have emerged during the translation process, i.e., which *strategies* have been chosen?

# TRANSLATIONAL TECHNIQUES



```
graph TD; A[TRANSLATIONAL TECHNIQUES] --> B[Direct techniques:]; A --> C[Oblique techniques:];
```

## **Direct techniques:**

- Borrowing
- Calque
- Literal Translation

## **Oblique techniques:**

- Transposition
- Modulation
- Reformulation or Equivalence
- Adaptation
- Compensation

# BORROWING

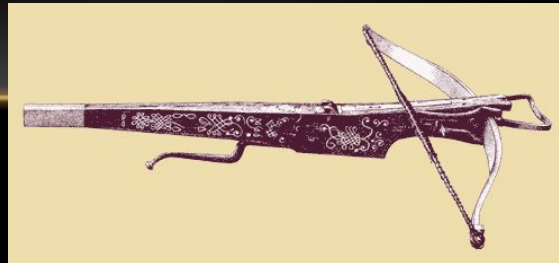
Borrowing is the taking of words directly from one language into another without translation. Many English words are "borrowed" into other languages, and vice versa – many words from other languages became a part of English lexicon.

Why have many foreign words been borrowed in English and Ukrainian from other languages? This phenomenon may be explained with the history, first of all.

1. Some items (belonging to weapon, agriculture or technique) appeared originally among certain nations and were called by them originally.
  2. In the Middle Ages was a tradition to call new inventions by Latin words.
-

For example,

- Most of medical terms have Greek or Latin origin: *asthenia* (ασθενεια), *pneumonia* (πνευμονία), *therapy* (θεραπεία), *oculist* (oculus), *scalpel* (scalpellum).
- Some kinds of weapon which were invented by other nations: *yataghan* (Turk. *yatagan*), *saber* (Tat. *chabala*), *arbalest* (Old French *arbaleste*, from Late Latin *arcuballista*).
- *Musk* and *sugar* from Sanskrit (*mushkā* and *śarkarā*).
- 



English also borrowed numerous words from other languages; abbot from Aramaic (abbā); café, passé and résumé from French; hamburger and kindergarten from German, etc.





# WHEN BORROWINGS ARE GOOD IN TRANSLATION:

- If they stand for items which were called originally by these (foreign) words, and we do not have equivalents for them in TL.
- If we want to give a historical or ethnic flavour to the translation (in the literary texts mainly).

However, in some cases ‘historical’ and ‘foreign’ words may be substituted with their equivalents in the target language.

For example, in spite of the fact, that a computer was originally named with English word, in modern Hebrew it is called by the calque *maḥšēb*; similarly, the word ‘tram’ (this kind of transport appeared in Europe, so it’s name originates from Low German *traam* – beam) is replaced with *ḥašmāl* ([electric] shining). But in Ukrainian we use the borrowed words!



# TWO APPROACHES TO THE USE OF BORROWINGS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE

Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it *of*. The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it (Gen 6:14-16 KJV).

So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.

This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high.

Make a roof for it and finish the ark to within 18 inches of the top. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks (Gen 6:14-16 NIV).



# WHICH OF THESE TWO TEXTS SOUNDS MORE COLORFUL?

The use of borrowings enables 'immersion' in other culture and epoch, and makes the literary text vivid.

On the other hand, overuse of the foreign words makes the text difficult for both reading and understanding. It is necessary to keep a balance!



# WHEN BORROWINGS ARE NOT DESIRABLE FOR TRANSLATION?

- If the loanwords are not historicisms
- If we have widely accepted lexical equivalents in TL
- If the borrowings do not play any emotional or aesthetic part.

Example: English words *юзер* (user), *акаунт* (account), *стікер* (sticker), *лузер* (loser) and others in Ukrainian; all of them have equivalents in Ukrainian – користувач, рахунок / облік, наклейка, невдаха.

# CALQUE

A calque or loan translation is a word or phrase borrowed from another language and translated literally, i. e. from the corresponding root and following the same derivative patterns (if possible, of course), or word-for-word models (phrases and compound words).

A calque is an alternative to borrowing: instead of the use of a foreign word / phrase, a new word is created by using the means of TL.

We can discern two kinds of calques:

1. Lexical calque.
2. Phrase calque.



# LEXICAL CALQUES

At a certain period of the history of languages these words were considered as *neologisms*, but with the laps of time they became widely accepted in the target language:

standpoint – English (< Germ. Standpunkt)

beer garden – English (< Germ. Biergarten)

breakfast – English (< French déjeuner)

півострів – Ukrainian (< Germ. Halbinsel)

примірник – Ukrainian (< Latin exemplarium)

багатозначність – Ukrainian (< Greek πολυσημία)

путеводитель – Russian (< Germ. Reisehandbuch)

samochód – Polish (< Greek αὐτός and Latin mobilis)

מזגן [mazgán] – Hebrew (< English conditioner)

## MANY LEXICAL CALQUES ARE USED IN SEPTUAGINT

מִקְדָּשׁ [miqqəḏāš] ‘sanctuary’ from the verbal root [qiddēš] ‘to sanctify’ in Septuagint is ἁγίασμα from the root ἁγίζω ‘to sanctify’.

מִזְבֵּחַ [mizbē<sup>a</sup>ḥ] ‘an altar’ from the root [zāḇāḥ] ‘to sacrifice’ is translated with the word θυσιαστήριον from θυσιάζω ‘to sacrifice’.

מִנְחָה [minḥā] ‘a gift’ (a kind of sacrifices) is rendered as δῶρον ‘a gift’.



# PHRASE CALQUE

- **From French**
- *Adam's apple* < *pomme d'Adam*
- *Bushmeat* < *viande de brousse*
- *Deaf-mute* < *sourd-muet*
- *By heart* < *par cœur*
- *Free verse* < *verse libre*
- *Old guard* < *Vieille Garde* (the most senior regiments of the Imperial Guard of Napoleon I)

# CALQUE IN TRANSLATION: WILLIAM TYNDALE

## Lexical calque:

- Passover < *to pass over* = Hebrew פסח [pāsáḥ]
- Scapegoat < *to escape* and *goat* = Hebrew עֲזָזִיז [‘ăz’āzēl]

## Phrasal calque:

- *knock and it shall be opened unto you*
- *twinkling of an eye a moment in time*
- *seek and you shall find*
- *eat, drink and be merry*
- *ask and it shall be given you*
- *judge not that you not be judged*

# BORROWINGS VS CALQUES: WHAT TO CHOOSE FOR TRANSLATION?

It depends on the target of translation: if you need

- to render a historical or ethnic flavour in the literary text
- to use an 'universal' / 'international' words for specific items in the technical text or concepts in the humanitarian text
- to name a new item or concept but TL doesn't have an equivalent word,  
you CAN use BORROWINGS!

If you need

- to avoid the overuse of borrowings in the target language
- to render author's neologisms in the literary text
- to give emotional expressivity to the translated literary text,  
you SHOULD use CALQUES

For example, in Ukrainian we use the French word *Planchette* for the electronic gadget; the literal meaning of this word is 'a little board'; if to calque this word, its Ukrainian equivalent will be «дощечка». The French borrowing is preferable in this case.

How to translate from Ukrainian into English the author's neologism «розхмарене чоло» (M. Ryl's'ky)? To use here paraphrases "the bright face" or "the shining forehead / brow"? In this case the emotional connotations are lost.

It would be better to use calque here: "the brow-without-clouds". If it sounds like a whole word, it sounds more impressive and emotional.

# PROBLEMS OF THE CALQUE

In the Latin translation of the Bible of st. Jerome (Vulgata) in the prayer “Our Father in Heaven” (“Pater noster”) the Greek word ἐπιούσιος (ἐπι- ‘over’ and οὐσία – ‘essence’, ‘substance’), which means ‘everyday’ (adj.), was translated as ‘supersubstantialem’, i.e. ‘supernatural’

Panem nostrum supersubstantialem da nobis hodie (Mat 6:11 NOV)

In the Old Latin Translation: Panem nostrum **cotidianum** (‘everyday’).

# LITERAL TRANSLATION

Literal translation occurs when there is an exact structural, lexical, even morphological equivalence between two languages. This is only possible when the two languages are very close to each other:

English: *The ink is on the table*

French: *L'encre est sur la table.*

Ukrainian: Чорнильниця на столі.

Sometimes it works and sometimes it does not: if one sentence can be translated literally across languages, it does not mean that all sentences can be translated literally.

# OBLIQUE TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

Oblique Translation Techniques are used when the structural or conceptual elements of the source language cannot be directly translated without altering meaning or upsetting the grammatical and stylistics elements of the target language.



# TRANSPOSITION

This is the process where parts of speech change their sequence when they are translated:

English *blue ball* becomes *boule bleue* in French.

Grammatical structures are often different in different languages:

*He likes swimming* translates as *Er schwimmt gern* in German.

Transposition is often used between English and Ukrainian because of the object's position in the sentence: English often has the object after the verb; Ukrainian can have it in the beginning (if this position is emphatic).

My friends said me happy birthday.

Мене привітали друзі з Днем Народження.

# MODULATION

Modulation consists of using a phrase that is different in the source and target languages to convey the same idea:

*Hold your peace!* – the literal translation of this phrase is «Тримай свій мир!», but translates better as «Тримай язик за зубами». Through modulation, the translator generates a change in the point of view of the message without altering meaning and without generating a sense of awkwardness in the reader of the target text. It is often used within the same language: you can say “Be silent!” in English or «Мовчи!» in Ukrainian.

Have you a nice day! – is translated as «Гарного дня!» (literal translation: «Май гарний день!»)

# REFORMULATION OR EQUIVALENCE

Here you have to express something in a completely different way, for example when translating idioms or advertising slogans. The process is creative, but not always easy. Would you translate the movie name

“Equalizer” as «Вирівнювач»? (reformulated translation is «Праведник»)

“The Middle” as «Середина»? (reformulated translation is «Буває й гірше»)

“Die Hard” as «Вмирай тяжко»? (reformulated translation is «Міцний горішок»)

# ADAPTATION

Adaptation occurs when something specific to one language culture is expressed in a totally different way that is familiar or appropriate to another language culture. It is a shift in cultural environment, i.e., to express the message using a different situation, e.g. *cycling* for the French, *cricket* for the English and *baseball* for the Americans.

Should *pincho* (a Spanish restaurant menu dish) be translated as *kebab* in English? It involves changing the cultural reference when a situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture.



# COMPENSATION

In general terms compensation can be used when something cannot be translated, and the meaning that is lost is expressed somewhere else in the translated text. Peter Fawcett defines it as: "...making good in one part of the text something that could not be translated in another". One example given by Fawcett is the problem of translating nuances of formality from languages that use forms such as French tu and vous, and German du and sie into English which only has 'you', and expresses degrees of formality in different ways.

As Louise M. Haywood from the University of Cambridge puts it, "we have to remember that translation is not just a movement between two languages but also between two cultures. Cultural transposition is present in all translation as degrees of free textual adaptation departing from maximally literal translation, and involves replacing items whose roots are in the source language culture with elements that are indigenous to the target language. The translator exercises a degree of choice in his or her use of indigenous features, and, as a consequence, successful translation may depend on the translator's command of cultural assumptions in each language in which he or she works".

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# VINAY AND DARBELNET'S TRANSLATION PROCEDURES

<b>Borrowing</b>	<b>Bulldozer (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Bulldozer (F)</b>
<b>Calque</b>	<b>Fin de semaine (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Week-end (E)</b>
<b>Literal translation</b>	<b>L'encre est sur la table (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> The ink is on the table (E)</b>
<b>Transposition</b>	<b>Défense de fumer (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> No smoking (E)</b>
<b>Crossed transposition</b>	<b>He limped across the street (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Il a traversé la rue en boitant (F)</b>
<b>Modulation</b>	<b>Encre de Chien (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Indian Ink (E)</b>
<b>Equivalence</b>	<b>Comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Like a bull in a china shop (E)</b>
<b>Adaptation</b>	<b>Cyclisme (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Cricket (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Baseball (U.S)</b>

<b>Compensation</b>	<b>I was seeking thee, Flathead (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> En vérité, c'est bien toi que je cherche, O Tête-Plate (F)</b>
<b>Dissolution</b>	<b>Tir à l'arc (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Archery (E)</b>
<b>Amplification</b>	<b>He talked himself out of a job (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Il a perdu sa chance pour avoir trop parlé (F)</b>
<b>Economy</b>	<b>Nous ne pourrons plus vendre si nous sommes trop exigeants (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> We'll price ourselves out of the market (E)</b>
<b>Reinforcement</b>	<b>Shall I phone for a cab? (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Voulez-vous que je téléphone pour faire venir une voiture? (F)</b>
<b>Condensation</b>	<b>Entrée de la garde (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> To the station (E)</b>
<b>Explicitation</b>	<b>His patient (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Son patient / Son patiente (F)</b>
<b>Implicitation</b>	<b>Go out/ Come out (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Sortez (F)</b>
<b>Generalization</b>	<b>Guichet, fenêtre, devanture (F) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Window (E)</b>
<b>Particularization</b>	<b>Window (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Guichet, fenêtre, devanture (F)</b>

# THE BIBLE TRANSLATORS

From their study of biblical translation, Nida, Taber and Margot concentrate on questions related to cultural transfer. They propose several categories to be used when no equivalence exists in the target language:

- *adjustment techniques*
- *essential distinction*
- *explicative paraphrasing*
- *redundancy*
- *naturalization*

# TECHNIQUES OF ADJUSTMENT

Nida (1964) proposes three types: *additions, subtractions and alterations*. They are used: 1) to adjust the form of the message to the characteristics of the structure of the target language; 2) to produce semantically equivalent structures; 3) to generate appropriate stylistic equivalences; 4) to produce an equivalent communicative effect.

ADDITIONS. Nida lists different circumstances that might oblige a translator to make an addition:

- to clarify an elliptic expression,
- to avoid ambiguity in the target language,
- to change a grammatical category,
- to amplify implicit elements,
- to add connectors.

When translating from St Paul's Epistles, it is appropriate to add the verb *write* in several places, even though it is not in the source text; a literal translation of *they tell him of her* (Mark 1:30), it would have to be amplified to *the people there told Jesus about the woman*, otherwise, as this language makes no distinctions of number and gender of pronominal affixes it could have thirty-six different interpretations.

Example: an antecedent is clear in SL but may be lost in TL.

הָלֹא-  
הָעָשִׂיתִי מִיָּמֵי קֶדֶם וַיֵּצְרֶתִּי עֲתָה הִבֵּאתִי וְתָהִי לְהִשָּׂאוֹת גְּלִים נָצִים עָרִים בְּצָרוֹת: ש

"Have you not heard? Long ago I ordained **it**. In days of old I planned **it**; now I have brought **it** to pass, that you have turned fortified cities into piles of stone (Isa 37:26 NIV)

Хіба ти не чув, що віддавна зробив Я **оце**, що за днів стародавніх Я **це** був створив? Тепер же спровадив Я **це**, що ти нищиш міста поукріплювані, на купу румовищ обертаєш їх (Isa 37:26 UKR).

What is an antecedent of the pronominal objective suffix –ah ('her')?

In the context (see v. 22) 'she' is 'the virgin daughter of Zion', i.e. Jerusalem (in Hebrew – feminine):

בְּתוּלַת בֵּית-צִיּוֹן אֶת־רִיֹּדָהּ רָאשׁ הִנִּיעָה בֶּת יְרוּשָׁלַם

The daughter of Jerusalem shakes her head in derision as you flee  
(Isa 37:22 NLT)

:So, the correct translation of Isa 37:26 should be (with additions)

Have you not heard? Long ago I ordained **Jerusalem**; in days of old I"  
planned **it**; now I have brought **it** to pass; and you will turn fortified cities into  
.piles of stone



SUBTRACTIONS. Nida lists four situations where the translator should use this procedure, in addition to when it is required by the TL: unnecessary repetition, specified references, conjunctions and adverbs. For example, the name of God appears thirty-two times in the thirty-one verses of Genesis. Nida suggests using pronouns or omitting *God*.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ הָיְתָה  
תֵּהוֹ וְבָהוּ וְחָשָׁךְ עַל-פְּנֵי תְהוֹם וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל-פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now (*instead of and*) the earth was formless and empty, (*and* is omitted) darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters (Gen 1:1-2 NIV)

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (Gen 1:1-2 KJV)



וְעַתָּה שְׂאֵבָא כִלְיָךְ תְּלִיךָ וְקִשְׁטְךָ וֵיצֵא הַשָּׂדֶה וְצוּדָה לִי צִידָה:

Now then, get your weapons – your quiver and bow – and go (**and** is omitted) out to the open country to hunt (*instead of and hunt*) some wild game for me.  
(Gen 27:3 NIV)

וַיָּבֹא אֶל־אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִי מִי אַתָּה בְנִי:

And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I; who *art* thou, my son? (Gen 27:18 KJV)

He went to his father and said, "My father." "Yes, my son," he answered. "Who is it?" (Gen 27:18 NIV)

І прибув він до батька свого та й сказав: Батьку мій! А той відказав: Ось я. Хто ти, мій сину? (Gen 27:18 UKR)

ALTERATIONS. These changes have to be made because of incompatibilities between the two languages. There are three main types.

1) Changes due to problems caused by transliteration when a new word is introduced from the source language, e.g., the transliteration of *Messiah* in the Loma language, means *death's hand*, so it was altered to *Mezaya*; or the Spanish verb *alabar* 'to glorify' the local Indians heard as *a labar* 'to wash'; similarly *Tiro y Sidon* they understood as *tiro y azadon* 'shot and hack', etc.

2) Changes due to structural differences between the two languages, e.g., changes in word order, grammatical categories, etc.

3) Changes due to semantic misfits, especially with idiomatic expressions.

One of the suggestions to solve this kind of problem is the use of a *descriptive equivalent* i.e., a satisfactory equivalent for objects, events or attributes that do not have a standard term in the TL. It is used for objects that are unknown in the target culture (e.g., in Maya *the house where the law was read for Synagogue*) and for actions that do not have a lexical equivalent (e.g., in Maya *desire what another man has for covetousness*, etc.)

‘We have this hope as an anchor (ἄγκυρα) for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain’ (Heb 6:19 NIV). In many Polynesian tribes anchors are not used at all: they draw out their boats on the bank / shore. How to translate this passage correctly?



"Tell the people of Israel, 'Look, your King is coming to you. He is humble, riding on a donkey – riding on a donkey's colt.' " (Mat 21:5 NLT). What if some tribes have never seen any donkey?

“A pack animal with big ears”? However, the use of donkey was connected with some ritual actions: “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here (Luk 19:30; see Ex. 13:13 NIV).



Nida includes footnotes as another adjustment technique and points out that they have two main functions:

- 1) To correct linguistic and cultural differences, e.g., to explain contradictory customs, to identify unknown geographical or physical items, to give equivalents for weights and measures, to explain word play, to add information about proper names, etc.;
- 2) To add additional information about the historical and cultural context of the text in question.



# ESSENTIAL DISTINCTION

Margot (1979) presents three criteria used to justify cultural adaptation. He refers to them as the essential differences.

- 1) Items that are unknown by the target culture. He suggests adding a classifier next to the word, e.g., *the city of Jerusalem* or, by using a cultural equivalent, e.g., in Jesus' parable (Matthew 7:16) to change *grapes / thorn bushes* and *figs / thistles* for other plants that are more common in the target culture. However, he warns the reader that this procedure is not always possible.

Taber y Nida (1974) list five factors that have to be taken into account when it is used: a) the symbolic and theological importance of the item in question, b) its frequency of use in the Bible, c) its semantic relationship with other words, d) similarities of function and form between the two items, e) the reader's emotional response.

2) The historical framework. Here Margot proposes a linguistic rather than a cultural translation, on the grounds that historical events cannot be modified.

3) Adaptation to the specific situation of the target audience. Margot maintains that the translator's task is to translate and that it is up to preachers, commentarists and Bible study groups to adapt the biblical text to the specific situation of the target audience. He includes footnotes as an aid to cultural adaptation.

# EXPLICATIVE PARAPHRASING

Nida, Taber and Margot coincide in distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate paraphrasing. The legitimate paraphrase is a lexical change that makes the TT longer than the ST but does not change the meaning. The illegitimate paraphrase makes ST items explicit in the TT. Nida, Taber and Margot agree this is not the translator's job as it may introduce subjectivity.

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# THE CONCEPT OF REDUNDANCY

According to Margot (1979), redundancy tries to achieve symmetry between ST readers and TT readers. This is done either by adding information (grammatical, syntactic and stylistic elements, etc.) when differences between the two languages and cultures make a similar reception impossible for the TT readers, or by suppressing information when ST elements are redundant for the TT readers, e.g., the Hebrew expression, *answering, said* that is redundant in some other languages. This procedure is very close to SCFA's implicitation / explicitation.

# THE CONCEPT OF NATURALIZATION

This concept was introduced by Nida (1964) after using the term *natural* to define dynamic equivalence (*the closest natural equivalent to the source language message*). Nida claims that naturalization can be achieved by taking into account:

- 1) the source language and culture understood as a whole;
- 2) the cultural context of the message;
- 3) the target audience. This procedure is very close to SCFA's adaptation.

# THE BIBLE TRANSLATORS' PROPOSALS

<b>Classifier</b>	<b>The city of Jerusalem</b>
<b>Alteration</b>	<b>Messiah (E) <math>\Rightarrow</math> Mezaya (Loma)</b>
<b>Cultural equivalent</b>	<b>grapes / thorn bushes and figs / thistles <math>\Rightarrow</math> other plants that are more common in the target culture</b>
<b>Equivalent description</b>	<b>Synagogue <math>\Rightarrow</math> The house where the law was read (Maya)</b>
<b>Footnotes</b>	