

Interlinears: The Lack of Equivalence

By Anicia del Corro

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What is an interlinear?

A tool used by people studying the biblical text, whether Old Testament or New Testament, through a word-for-word translation of the Greek or Hebrew text.

Mark 1.1

Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ

[THE] BEGINNING OF THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS

Χριστοῦ [υἱοῦ θεοῦ].

CHRIST [THE] SON OF GOD

Mark 1.2

Καθὼς γέγραπται ἐν τῷ

JUST AS IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN -

Ἡσαΐα τῷ προφήτῃ,

ISAIAH THE PROPHET

Ἴδού ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν
BEHOLD I SEND THE MESSENGER

μου πρὸ προσώπου σου,
OF ME BEFORE THE FACE OF YOU

ὅς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν
WHO WILL PREPARE THE WAY

σου·
OF YOU

Mark 1.1-2

RSV

The beginning of the
gospel of Jesus Christ,
the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah
the prophet,

“Behold, I send my
messenger before thy
face,

who shall prepare thy
way;

GNT

This is the Good News
about Jesus Christ, the
Son of God. It began
as the prophet Isaiah
had written:

“God said, ‘I will send my
messenger ahead of
you

to open the way for you.’

the snobbish scholar

In seminary, professors prohibit the use of interlinears.

UBS scholarly editions do not include interlinears.

“not in my book shelf”

Alternative?

“Master your Greek in your Greek class,
Hebrew in your Hebrew class.”

Know the language in a systematic way.

**But, how long will
will that take?**

Why is the interlinear considered unscholarly?

It is too one-sided.

It shows the ultimate bias favoring the source text, to the utter neglect of the target text.

Interlinears represent an era in translation studies when the source text was paramount and the target text was incidental.

Interlinear projects are increasing in number.

Greek-Tagalog NT Interlinear project
Greek-Urdu

Reasons

Bible users want more than a translation. They want access to the source text.

It is a response to the accusation regarding the changing character of the Bible.

Objective:

To present the theoretical considerations in the making of an interlinear thereby elevating this practice from a one-sided study of the Greek language, to one that gives equal importance to the gloss language. As a result, the linguistic patterns of the two are viewed from the perspective of structure leading to a more objective, holistic and consistent description of the languages.

Methodology: Skopos theory

- “Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The Skopos rule thus reads as follows:
translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function. (Vermeer, cited by Wilt 2003, p13).
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Differences between Greek and Tagalog

Genetic classification: Greek is Indo-European, Tagalog Austronesian

Typological classification: Greek is inflectional, Tagalog agglutinating

Contrastive analysis

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Differences:

Concord – grammaticalized through affixes affecting articles, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs in Greek vs Tagalog none

Verbals – grammaticalized in Greek participles and infinitives vs Tagalog expressed as verbs, or lexicalized

Reflexive – grammaticalized in Greek, lexicalized in Tagalog

Differences

Subjunctive: Greek grammaticalized,
Tagalog lexicalized.

Nouns: Greek elaborate declension,
Tagalog none

Prepositions: Greek high differentiation,
Tagalog low differentiation

Primacy of the patient

Ergative-like behavior of the verb

It may happen that an active verb in Greek cannot be expressed as active in Tagalog. Example Matthew 1.2

Ἀβραὰμ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰσαάκ,

Abraham begat Isaac (KJV)

*Si Abraham ang ama ni Isaac * umanak*

No copula verb in Tagalog to correspond
to the verb 'to be' ειμι

Accompanying formal translation

Most difficult to gloss: participles, subjunctive

As the two languages retain their uniqueness, the goal is still to find a correspondence between them. The picture is that of two linguistic systems being rearranged and readjusted to find a systematic correspondence between them. Because of the reality of the two unique systems, two principles are necessary.

A correspondence, but no equivalence

Because of the lack of equivalence, the gloss will not be read as a translation

- No accommodation of word order
 - No ligatures to make the reading smooth
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Areas for further research:

Application of the interlinear model for documents that need a thorough analysis (exegesis) such as sacred text, or laws.

Do research on effect on users

Guide to the user still evolving.

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