Narrative Discourse Analysis and Bible Translation
Training materials based on Acts 16:16–40

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Abstract

To make a translation that is natural, clear, and accurate, translators need to understand the discourse features of the language they are translating from and the language they are translating into, even if this is their mother tongue. These training materials describe important discourse features in narratives, such as natural ways of starting a new section, joining clauses and sentences, describing the characters in a story, representing speech and thoughts, highlighting important information, and distinguishing the main events from background information. Each chapter introduces a particular discourse feature and provides discovery procedures to help readers identify and describe this feature in their own languages. These procedures are then applied to the Greek text of Acts 16:16–40, and readers are guided through how to translate part of this passage. No previous knowledge of Greek is assumed. These materials can be used for private study, or as the basis for a workshop involving one or more translation teams.
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Preface

Bible translation is sometimes described as being like a stool with three legs: if even one of the legs is weak or broken, the stool cannot be used. In the same way, a Bible translation must be accurate, clear and natural. Doing discourse analysis is the way in which a translator comes to appreciate what makes a text sound natural in his or her own language, and it is also helps to make a translation accurate and clear.

During many years involvement in Bible translation, I have often heard translators and consultants complain that they do not feel they have the skills needed to do good discourse analysis, that they do not know how to apply discourse findings to translation, and that most of the published discourse manuals are difficult to understand. These training materials are designed to respond to these needs, at least for narrative discourse (that is, the structure of stories and factual accounts, such as most of Genesis and the gospels, and Acts). Other discourse genres1 will require different training materials.

Having led discourse analysis workshops for translators and translation consultants representing around sixty different languages (including some sign languages), I have found that the most successful workshops have been those where discourse analysis has been combined with translation practice. When translators study discourse features in their own languages and in biblical texts, and then apply what they have just learned directly to translation, they are able to see (and hear) their translations improve. This convinces translators of the value of discourse analysis and motivates them to learn more. After one discourse workshop, a translator wrote: “The times that discourse features have been able to assist us in making a text more clear and natural are extremely many. My estimation is that maybe three-fifths of all the problems or ambiguities we run into have been solved by applying discourse features.”

This format of applying discourse analysis directly to translation works best when translators translate or revise an extended segment, such as a short book or a relatively self-contained story, rather than translating isolated verses. In these training materials, each topic is applied to the translation of Acts 16:16–40. I recommend that you read this passage (preferably in more than one language, or at least in more than one version) before using these training materials, so that you will be familiar with its content.

How to use these materials

These materials can be used for private study, for group study by a translation team, or as the basis of a workshop for a number of translation teams. Each chapter starts with an overview of a particular discourse feature followed by “discovery procedures.” I recommend that you use the discovery procedures to investigate your own language before you look at how the particular discourse feature works in the Greek text of Acts 16:16–40. Once you have studied both your own language and Acts 16:16–40, use the “Application to translation” section to guide you as you translate the passage into your language. If you have already translated this passage, you can either use what you have learnt to revise your original version, or you can do a fresh translation, compare this with your original version, and decide on the best way to translate the passage.

As you study each new chapter, you will translate a little more of the passage and revise what you have already translated. This means that you will check and improve your translation a number of times, which is normal practice in Bible translation. I hope that the final version will be one that you are very pleased with.

Chapters 1–7 contain what I consider to be the basic elements of narrative discourse analysis that are relevant to translation into any language. I recommend that you study each of these chapters, preferably in the order in which they are presented. Chapters 8 and 9 contain more advanced material, some of which may be less directly relevant to translation into certain languages.

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1 The term “genre” refers to socially expected ways of speaking or writing which develop when certain kinds of speech or writing are used repeatedly in similar situations with more or less the same function. SMALL CAPS are used to draw attention to an important term at its first use or when it is defined.
Chapter 8 is particularly tailored to specific issues in eastern Bantu languages. If you are looking for more of a challenge, I hope that you will find these last two chapters helpful.

Each chapter ends with some recommended readings. As far as possible, I have suggested books and articles that are freely available through the internet. As I have prepared these materials, I have benefited greatly from Dooley and Levinsohn (2001) and Levinsohn (2015), and well as other publications by these authors. I have not mentioned every time I have been inspired by these publications because they are so frequent.

You are also welcome to adapt these materials (i.e. remix, transform, and build upon the material) provided that you give appropriate credit to the originator of the materials and indicate whether changes were made, and provided that you do not use these materials or your adaptation of these materials for commercial purposes (i.e. to make money). For example, I often use examples from Bantu languages spoken in east Africa because these are the languages that I know best, but you are free to provide your own examples from other languages.
1 Preparing to study narrative texts

1.1 What is a narrative text?

A narrative text is a true or fictional telling of a story. True narratives include stories in which the narrator is the main character (first person narratives) and stories in which the narrator talks about other people (third person narratives). Fictional narratives can take many forms. In Africa, they are often magical tales about mischievous spirits, animals which speak and outwit humans, and people with supernatural abilities. Other narratives, however, provide explanations of how the world was created, why different animals behave the way they do, and how different tribes and peoples came into being.

Narratives are accounts of events. According to Longacre (1996) and Dooley and Levinsohn (2001:4–5), the events in a narrative have two identifying features.

1. The events are usually described as following one after the other, there is often a cause-consequence relation between successive events. Dooley and Levinsohn (2001:8) call this “contingent temporal succession,” but we will shorten this to TIME ORIENTATION.

2. The events are (partly) controlled by the main characters in the story (called MAJOR PARTICIPANTS), and at least one of the major participants is involved in a number of successive events. In technical terms, the participants are agents and a narrative has AGENT ORIENTATION. Major participants are also agents in the sense that a narrative describes their emotions and motivations (either directly, by describing their thoughts, or indirectly, through their actions).

Because of these features, discourse analysis of narrative texts is largely concerned with how the main events are connected (see chapter 3) and with how the major participants are described (see chapter 4).

1.2 Collecting your texts

To do narrative discourse analysis well you will need good narrative texts. It is possible to analyze just one text, but if you want to be sure that you understand how narrative discourse functions in your language, I recommend that you analyze at least six texts from at least three different narrators. Do not rely only on folk tales involving animal characters; instead, look at a mix of true and fictional stories, and be sure to include a few narratives which each have two or three main characters who interact during the story. Never use translated texts for discourse analysis.

A good text for discourse analysis should take about three to five minutes to read out loud. This is usually around one hundred clauses in length (texts between 80 and 150 clauses are acceptable). Before asking someone to tell you a story, it is a good idea to have them do a few practice runs; this can help to reduce “performance errors” (false starts, hesitations, etc.) and to make sure that the complete story can be told within three to five minutes. If your chosen text is written, count the number of verbs (trying to avoid verbs in relative clauses) to get a rough idea of the number of clauses.

There are various ways of collecting texts, so choose what works best for your situation. One way is to record someone telling a story and then write it down. (The technical term is TRANSCRIBE). If you do this, find out who people consider to be the best storytellers in the community, and ask these people if you can record them. If you are not a mother-tongue speaker of the language, I recommend that you ask someone who is to do the actual recording. When collecting stories in Digo (a Bantu language spoken in Kenya, which is not my mother tongue) I found that when I was present, narrators would often interrupt their stories to check that I was following or to explain things to me. The stories that were recorded by a mother-tongue speaker of Digo when I was not there were far more natural. When you transcribe the recording you will need to do some editing. Remove false starts, obvious mistakes that are corrected, and fillers (like “Umm”), but keep repetition, as this is often a feature of narratives, especially oral narratives. If you are not a mother-tongue speaker of the language, ask a mother-tongue speaker to help you to transcribe the story.

Another way to collect texts is to ask people to write stories. In many language communities, there is no tradition of writing and there may not be many people who can write, but even in such
languages it is possible to collect written texts. Some of the best Digo texts came out of writers’
workshops. In these workshops, people worked in groups of two or three. One person would tell a
story and then the group would retell the story to each other until everyone felt that they had the
best version possible. The original storyteller would then write the story (or dictate it to another
person if he or she could not write). Another person would then read the story out loud and the
group would edit the text together. Many of these texts were published in story books.

You should make sure that you get the narrator’s consent (agreement) to use their story for
discourse analysis. One way is to record the narrator making a statement like “My name is [name]
and I give permission for [your name] to use this story to study the X language.” If the narrator is
literate, and if it is appropriate in the local culture, you can ask the narrator to sign a written
statement. This should include the narrator’s name, your name, and the date, and can also state that
you will not use the narrator’s story make money. If you intend to publish the story (for example in a
story book or as an appendix of a published book or journal article) make sure that you get the
narrator’s permission for this as well.

1.3 Displaying your texts

Once you have transcribed and edited a text, read it through and make sure that you understand the
basic facts: who did what to whom, and what relation one event has to the other events in its
immediate context. If you are not a mother-tongue speaker of the language, check your
understanding of the text with someone who is.

I recommend that you use SIL’s FieldWorks Language Explorer (FLEx)—or whatever eventually
supersedes it!—to help you analyze your texts, including charting the texts. Detailed instructions are
provided in Appendix A. If you do not use FLEx, at least do the following:

1. Type each text out putting each sentence on a separate line. Number each line (so that you can
   refer to sentences easily when you write up your analysis).
2. Divide each sentence into clauses (you can use a slash (/) to do this). A clause is basically a verb
   plus any subject, object, adverbial phrase etc. that is associated with the verb. In some
   languages, clauses expressing existence, location, identity or possession may not have an
   equivalent to the English verbs ‘be’ or ‘have’. Relative clauses (clauses that modify nouns: The
   boy who climbed the tree, The tree that the boy climbed) should not be treated as new clauses.
   (In other words, keep relative clauses with the larger clause that they are part of.)

If the text will be read by people who do not speak your language, include a word-for-word
gloss in the appropriate national language. You may need to add some information to the gloss. For
example, the English word that can function as a RELATIVE PRONOUN (The tree that the boy climbed), a
COMPLEMENTIZER (introducing DEPENDENT clauses: She said that she was happy, she knew that he was sad)
and a DEMONSTRATIVE (modifying or replacing a noun: He climbed that tree, he knew that was possible)
so the abbreviations REL, COMP and DEM are more informative than ‘that’ as glosses. Similarly, English
has a two-way distinction between demonstratives (this vs. that, or these vs. those in the plural) but
some languages have three or four demonstrative forms; English has one past tense but some
languages have more than one; you in English can be singular or plural but most languages have
different pronouns or agreement markers for singular and plural; and so forth. You may also provide
a free translation of the text if this will be of use.

Recommended readings


Hollenbach, Bruce, and Jim Watters. 1998. Study guide on pragmatics and discourse. Notes on

International.
2 Episodes and paragraphs

A narrative text has an overall structure (sometimes called a MACRO-STRUCTURE). Certain sentences can be grouped together to form units, which we will call EPISODES and PARAGRAPHS. In this manual we will deal with episodes and paragraphs separately, since they are different kinds of units.

Taken together, the episodes provide the structure of the story. The same story can be told using slightly different words, with more or less detail, but so long as the content of the story is the same, each version will contain the same episodes. Different episodes are labelled according to their function: the ORIENTATION serves the function within the story of introducing the major characters and setting the scene, the INCITING EPISODE serves the function of initiating the problem or situation from which the story develops, and so forth.

Paragraphs differ from episodes in that their purpose is to help the audience (that is, the hearer or reader) to process and understand the text. This is achieved by grouping together closely related material into a manageable chunk of information, so that each paragraph in a narrative describes a different scene (for example a sequence of closely related events, or a conversation). Episode boundaries and paragraph boundaries may coincide, but often they do not. In very short texts a single paragraph may contain more than one episode, but in longer texts one episode may consist of a number of paragraphs.

To appreciate the difference between episodes and paragraphs, think of a large meal at a restaurant. A meal like this consists of a number of different dishes; for example, the meal may begin with a starter (soup or salad), followed by a main dish (usually a staple like rice, some vegetables, and meat or fish), then dessert (something sweet) and finally a cup of coffee. Each dish is like an episode in that it has its function within the meal as a whole, and the dishes follow one after the other. When a person eats the meal, he or she eats one bite at a time. When eating rice, I do not try to fit all the rice into my mouth at once (I would choke) but neither do I eat each grain of rice individually (that would take a long time and be very tedious). Instead, I take a certain amount of rice in my hand (or spoon, fork, chopsticks...) and eat this together. A handful of rice is like a paragraph: each handful of rice is the right amount to be chewed and swallowed easily, and each paragraph is the right size so that a person can understand and remember it.

2.1 Episodes

Many narratives have a structure consisting of all or most of the following episodes (based on Longacre 1996:33–38, who in turn refers to Thrall, Hibbard and Holman 1961).

2.1.1 Structure

2.1.1.1 Orientation

This is also called an “Introduction.”

- Introduces at least one major participant (see chapter 4), often using a formula such as There was a certain man.
- Provides a time and place setting for the story, often using general time and place markers and typical tense or aspect associated with descriptions and explanations (e.g. remote past tense, imperfective aspect).
- May indicate the purpose or theme of the story, sometimes in a relative clause: There was a certain man who wanted to find a wife tells us that the story will be about the man’s search for a wife.
- May indicate the genre of the story: This is a true story that happened to me. Once upon a time (folk tale). Long ago in the days of the ancestors (traditional origin story).
2.1.1.2 Inciting episode

Labov and Waletzky (1967) also referred to this as the “complicating action.”

• Presents the problem, conflict, or other situation from which the story develops.
• Usually the point at which the storyline starts; that is, the inciting episode includes the first specific event in the story.
• This is often indicated through a point of departure such as One day, a verb of movement with a major participant as the subject: This man went..., and a change from non-storyline tense/aspect to the default storyline tense/aspect. (See also section 2.2.1, “Points of departure.”)

2.1.1.3 Developmental episodes

• There may be a number of developmental episodes. Together, they develop the situation introduced in the inciting episode and move the story towards a resolution.
• The default storyline tense/aspect is used with occasional supportive clauses.
• If the language uses thematic development markers (see chapter 9, “Storyline Concerns”) this is where all or most of them will appear.
• The last developmental episode before the peak may have special linguistic features such as the use of a non-storyline tense/aspect that prepare the audience for the peak, and is sometimes called the pre-peak episode.

2.1.1.4 Peak

This is also called the “peak episode” or “climax.”

• The situation introduced in the inciting episode and developed in the developmental episodes reaches a climax. The peak may describe the resolution of the problem or tension that has developed, but it may equally be the point at which the problem or tension reaches a state in which no resolution is possible.
• The peak is “a zone of turbulence in the flow of the discourse” (Longacre 1985; Longacre & Hwang 2012:53), meaning that it has unusual linguistic features (see chapter 7 “Highlighting” for further details). What these are cannot always be predicted, except to say that something changes. Typical features of the peak include:
  • heightened vividness and detail, often involving a rapid series of verbs with fewer connectives than usual;
  • the use of expressive devices such as ideophones;
  • unusual tense/aspect such as anterior (perfect) aspect or present tense;
  • change from direct to indirect speech, or from indirect to direct speech.

2.1.1.5 Denouement

Longacre (Longacre 1996:36) also called this a “resolution,” or “postpeak.”

• Contains fairly predictable material either describing events which happen after the peak or summarizing the main events of the story
2.1.1.6 Conclusion

This is also called a “coda.”

- The conclusion brings the story to a close, for example by presenting the narrator’s perspective on the story or summarizing the outcome of the story; a formulaic ending may also be used.
- Longacre (1996:38) divides the conclusion into “closure” which consists of the conclusion proper, and “finis” which is a formulaic ending outside of the structure of the narrative.

Structurally, narratives can be divided into two (very broad) types: climactic and episodic. The structure that has just been described applies to a typical climactic narrative. Episodic narratives often include an orientation, inciting episode, denouement, and conclusion, but rather than a series of different developmental episodes moving towards a peak, episodic narratives consist of a series of similar episodes. These episodes often have parallel structures and subject matter and it is their cumulative effect which is important. Each event may contain tension or a climax, but it need not, and some episodes—in particular towards the end of the narrative—may be more important than others. Many children’s stories have an episodic structure.

2.1.2 Discovery procedures

Look at your texts and try to decide where the different episodes occur. This is not an exact science, and different people may have different views on where exactly to divide episodes. Do not worry about this, as it is quite normal. Think of the structure that I have just given you as a lens through which to look at each text, rather than as a set of boxes which you are required to fill with different parts of the text. You may find that in some texts the orientation and the inciting episode overlap, particularly when the story is about well-known characters who do not need to be introduced to the audience. In some texts the denouement and conclusion may be combined.

2.1.3 Episodes in Acts 16:16–40

Because this story is part of a longer narrative, the major participants, Paul and Silas, are already known to the reader and do not need to be introduced. (The slave girl who appears at the start of the narrative is not a major participant in the technical sense of this term.) Also, the time and place have already been introduced in the preceding verses (11–15). Because of this, there is no orientation.

Verse 16 has many of the typical features of an inciting episode: the phrase ‘as we were going to the place of prayer’ is a point of departure (see 2.2.1) describing a specific time and place; it involves a movement verb with the major participants (Paul and Silas are included in ‘we’) as the subject. This inciting episode extends at least through verse 18, but possibly through verse 24. I prefer to treat verses 19–24 as a developmental episode.

This passage tells an exciting story but it also contains a theological lesson. For this reason, we can think of it as having two peak episodes (or a peak episode with two parts), which I will call the dramatic peak and the theological peak. The dramatic peak comes in verses 25–28 when there is an earthquake, the prisoners are freed, and Paul stops the jailer from killing himself. There are certain linguistic features that suggest that this is a peak episode. First, verse 25 slows down the action in preparation for the dramatic events of verse 26 (see chapter 7 “Highlighting”). Second, verse 26 contains two expressions ἀφνω ‘suddenly’ and παραχρῆμα ‘immediately’ which add vividness to the description. Finally, the use of connectives in the dramatic peak is different from the rest of the passage: the default connective καί does not occur where it is expected, and the connective de, that often marks a change or important development (see chapter 3), occurs four times.

The theological peak starts at verse 29 where the jailer approaches Paul and Silas and extends to verse 34 which states that the jailer and his household believed in God. In verse 31 there is a clear summary of the gospel message when Paul and Silas tell the jailer “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” Given the importance of baptism as a sign of salvation and membership of the church in the New Testament, it is not surprising that the theological peak also includes the baptism of the jailer and all the members of his household. Linguistically, there are similarities with the dramatic peak: the phrase ‘in that hour of the night’ in verse 33 ties this verse
back to verse 25 which begins ‘About midnight’, and verse 33 also includes the same vivid expression παραχρῆμα ‘immediately’ which occurred in verse 26.²

The denouement consists of the events of the following day (vv. 35–40). Because the narrative continues into chapter 17, there is not really a distinct conclusion.

The episodes are summarized below:

Inciting episode 16–18
Developmental episode 19–24
Dramatic peak 25–28
Theological peak 29–34
Denouement 35–40

2.2 Paragraphs

We think of paragraphs as a feature of written documents, but what we call “paragraphs” in discourse analysis refers to parts of a text that can be easily processed as units. As such, paragraphs in the discourse analysis sense are also found in speech. In spoken narratives, paragraphs may be indicated through pauses and through a change of pitch (for example, one paragraph might end on a low pitch and the next paragraph will start on a higher pitch). However, deciding where paragraph breaks occur is not always easy, and when transcribing a spoken narrative, not everyone will agree on where the paragraph breaks should go. In this section, we will try to find some more objective criteria for determining where to start new paragraphs.

In chapter 1 we asked the question “What is a narrative text?” In response, I said that narratives describe events, and that these events have two important features: 1) they occur in an orderly sequence, often in a cause-consequence relation, and 2) they are controlled by or at least influenced by the major participants in the narrative. We called these defining features “time orientation” and “agent orientation.” Skillful narrators use paragraphs to describe closely related events that involve the same major participants. In other words, in a paragraph there is continuity of both time orientation and agent orientation. A new paragraph is expected when there is a discontinuity of some kind. The most common discontinuities relate directly to time orientation and agent orientation.

Table 1. Affect of continuity and discontinuity of time and agent orientation on paragraphs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Continuity within paragraphs</th>
<th>Discontinuity between paragraphs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time orientation</td>
<td>Successive events separated by small advances in time</td>
<td>Abrupt change of time or events presented out of sequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent orientation</td>
<td>Same major participant or same group of major participants</td>
<td>Different major participant or different group of major participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A change in the location of the events can also be a reason for a new paragraph. If the change of location is gradual, for example if the participants are on a journey, this typically does not require a new paragraph. A change of location is usually accompanied either by a change of time (assuming that it takes time to move from one place to another) or by a change of participants (as events have participants, and the same participants cannot be in two different places at the same time).

Paragraph breaks can also be found when there is a change in the type of event or situation being described, including:

- When the storyline is interrupted to present an extended amount of supportive material (typically more than two or three sentences). The conclusion contains non-storyline material, and is usually contained in a separate paragraph.

² Thanks to Jim Vinton for pointing out these last two features of the theological peak.
• Extended periods of direct speech, including long monologues (one participant speaking or thinking for a number of sentences) and long conversations (where each participant speaks more than once).

Note that in many written texts, direct speech is written on a new line so that it looks like a separate paragraph. In discourse analysis, direct speech does not necessarily require a new paragraph. Conversations where two or more participants talk with little intervening narration (e.g. just brief mentions of the speaker: He said... She replied...) are treated as single events, and constitute paragraphs in their own right.

Length is also a feature of paragraphs. Dancygier (2012:15) writes: “There seem to be two major possible strategies for reading narratives: either text processing is primarily memory-based, or it relies on a search for coherence which prompts the construction of causative chains.” Coherence and the construction of causative chains relate to the various kinds of continuity that we have just discussed; memory relates to how much information a person can store in short-term memory. This is a technical concept that we can’t go into in detail here, but roughly speaking, we can think of a paragraph (in the discourse sense) as a section of text containing as much information as the narrator believes a hearer or reader can remember in detail. How much information a person will remember depends on who the person is and how much effort they are willing to put into understanding a text, and this is reflected in the length of written paragraphs in different kinds of texts. Usually, paragraphs are shorter in children’s story books than in novels written for adults; also paragraphs are usually shorter in newspaper articles and web pages than in academic articles and text books. We will also see later on that written paragraph lengths differ in different translated versions of the Bible. Various linguistic expressions are used to indicate the start (or occasionally the end) of new paragraphs (in the discourse analysis sense), and these can be found in both written and spoken narratives. Some of the most common are:

• A change in the ordering of grammatical constituents (for example, using subject-verb word order when verb-subject is normal within paragraphs).

• Special verb forms or a change of tense/aspect (for example, in Swahili, new paragraphs often start with a verb in the past tense marked by the prefix li- while subsequent verbs describing the events that follow within the same paragraph are marked by the consecutive tense prefix ka-).

• Particular connectives (see chapter 3).

• Special ways of referring to participants, such as using a noun phrase to refer to the subject rather than a pronoun or verb agreement even when the subject is the same as in the previous clause (see chapter 4).

• Points of departure (see next section).

2.2.1 Points of departure

Points of departure are words or phrases that occur at the start of a sentence, or immediately after a sentence-initial connective (connectives are not considered to be points of departure). The first point of departure in many narratives occurs at the start of the inciting episode. The function of a point of departure is to create a link between what has just been said or written and what is about to follow, so that the discontinuity in the text can be recognized by the audience. Points of departure may be temporal, spatial or referential, corresponding to discontinuities in time, location and participants respectively.

The most common points of departure in most narratives are temporal, such as these examples from Digo.³

³ A list of languages cited in this manual is provided before the References.
(1)  a. *Huyu mchetu ariphogbwira mimba* ‘That woman when she became pregnant’
    b. *Juma na chisiku* ‘After a week and a bit’
    c. *Ligundzu ra phiri* ‘On the second morning’.

Points of departure may also occur when the storyline is resumed after a paragraph containing supportive material. In this case, there is no change of time, location or participants, but the narrator may use a point of departure to remind the audience of the time or place where the storyline was left. In Kabwa, this can be done by starting a new paragraph with the reduplicated demonstrative *Ruyoruyo* which means ‘That same one’ (this is a short form of *Orusiku ruyoruyo* ‘That same day’).

Spatial points of departure are very often also temporal; for example, ‘When they arrived there’ indicates a change of time as well as a change of location. If a narrative describes two sets of major participants involved in events in different locations, purely spatial points of departure may occur.

In languages with SVO or SOV word order, referential points of departure are not always easy to identify, since many sentences begin with noun phrases referring to participants even within paragraphs. In some languages, referential points of departure are distinguished from regular subjects by putting a pause or an element such as an adverbial or exclamation between the subject and the verb. In Makonde, referential points of departure are followed by a demonstrative referring to the same participant (Leach 2015:22). In the following example, a new paragraph starts with the noun phrase ‘the elder himself who had called a feast’. We know that this is a point of departure because it is followed by the demonstrative *aju* ‘this’ referring to the elder. The sentence would be grammatical without the demonstrative, but it has the function of setting the noun phrase apart from the rest of the sentence, which makes it clear that it is a point of departure and a new paragraph starts here.

(2) *Napane nang’olo mwene ave ashamile shikukulu,*
    
    *aju kumwona shingula aijd dimembe dindigwanga.*
    
    now elder himself being who.had.called feast
    this saw.him hare that horns they.have.fallen
    ‘Now the elder himself who had called the party, this one saw that the hare’s horns had fallen off.’ (Free translation SN)

2.2.2 *Marking the ends of paragraphs*

Linguistic markers of paragraph breaks usually occur at the start of a new paragraph, but in some languages the end of a paragraph can also be marked linguistically.

In the Cameroonian language Bafanji, an object pronoun referring to the same participant as the subject occurs at the end of some paragraphs:

(3) *A gie’, iiŋ a twotwo, ngiu ngonŋ ze mitaiŋ.*
    
    he COMP yes he come.CONT go remain him in.market*
    ‘He said yes, he was coming, but he went and remained (him) in the market.’ (End of paragraph)

* comp = complementizer; cont = continuous aspect

In the Canadian language Kwak’wala, the absence of the usual connective *La’m’is* ‘Then’ (indicated by Ø) marks end of most paragraphs:

(4) *La’m’is* (Then) Raven saw the sun, moon, stars and water hanging in Grey Eagle’s house.
    
    *La’m’is* (Then) he knew what he would do. *La’a’m* (So) he watched for his chance to take what was hanging. *La’m’is* (Then) he waited for Grey Eagle to go hunting, (Ø) he stole everything, the fire as well.

    *La’m’is* (Then) he flew out of the smoke hole of Grey Eagle’s house, he went outside.
    
    *La’m’is* (Then) he put the sun in the sky. (Ø) The light was very good.

    *La’m’is* (Then) he was able to fly out to an island in the middle of the ocean. When the sun set, he hung the moon in the sky, and the stars in different places. (Ø) By this new light he kept flying all over the place, holding the water and the fire, that he had stolen.
(Then) he flew back over the land, until he came to where he wanted. (Then) he dropped the water he had stolen, and it fell to the ground. (Ø) That’s the reason we have so many streams and lakes over the entire earth. (Then) again Raven flew on holding the fire in his beak. (Then) the smoke coming from the fire went over his white feathers. (Ø) His really beautiful feathers became blackened.

2.2.3 Discovery procedures

Look at each of your texts and note the places where you are sure that a paragraph break should occur. (Paragraph breaks can be indicated in your chart if you are using FLEx.) Look for any specific linguistic markers that help to indicate these paragraph breaks.

Now look at the places where you are uncertain whether or not to put a paragraph break. If any of these same linguistic markers occur at these places (but not elsewhere) this could be evidence that the narrator intended to make a paragraph break.

As we study other discourse features—especially connectives and participant reference (see chapters 3 and 4)—you may discover other linguistic markers of new paragraphs (or you may realize that certain linguistic features occur for other reasons). If this happens, go back and revise your decisions about where paragraph breaks should be put in your texts.

2.2.4 Paragraphs in Acts 16:16–40

The original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible were not divided into (written) paragraphs (or verses); as a result you will see that different modern translations of the Bible often put paragraph breaks in different places. Read Acts 16:16–40 in three or four different versions, and note where paragraph breaks occur.

You will probably find that some versions prefer longer paragraphs and other versions prefer shorter paragraphs. In general, more literal translations (like the ESV and the NRSV) prefer longer paragraphs, and the more idiomatic translations (like the NLT and the TEV) prefer shorter paragraphs. Some translations also put a new paragraph after every direct speech. As you compare the different paragraph breaks in Acts 16:16–40, try to think of possible reasons for each paragraph break and possible reasons why other versions do not have a paragraph break. Remember that you are looking for discontinuities involving time, place and participants, and also extended sections of supportive material and direct speech. If you can read the Greek text, look for linguistic clues that may support the paragraph breaks in different translations. Finally, decide where you think paragraph breaks should be made. When you have made your own decisions, compare them with the suggestions below.

Before we look at paragraph breaks, let’s just remind ourselves of the episodes. (Because it is part of a longer narrative, this passage has no orientation and no conclusion.) I suggested that the episodes correspond to the following verses:

16–18 Inciting episode
19–24 Developmental episode
25–28 Dramatic peak
29–34 Theological peak
35–40 Denouement

I propose the following paragraphs. You can see that the proposed paragraphs are almost identical to the episodes. This is not the case in all narratives. Note that these are only suggestions, and you do not have to accept them when you do your translation.

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4 Details of the different Bible translations mentioned here can be found before “References.”
At verse 16 there is a change of time and place; a change of participants (Lydia is not mentioned); and the Greek expression *Egeneto* (‘It came about’, sometimes translated as ‘Once’), which is a common indicator of a new paragraph.

There is a change of participants (the slave girl is not mentioned but her owners are) and a change of location (from the place of prayer to the market place). Some translations put a new paragraph at verse 22 at the end of the slave owners’ speech or at verse 23 where the jailer is introduced and Paul and Silas are put into prison.

There is a clear temporal point of departure at the start of verse 25: ‘About midnight’. The jailer is mentioned in verse 27 but he is an additional participant and the other participants are still there, so there is still some continuity of participants.

There is no obvious discontinuity in terms of participants, time or location here. However, I have chosen to start a new paragraph at verse 29 for the following reasons. First, there is a common linguistic indicator of a new paragraph at verse 29 (this is the Verb + de construction discussed in chapter 3). Second, there is a transition from the events caused by the earthquake to the events caused by Paul and Silas proclaiming the gospel. Third, based on my own short-term memory capabilities, I prefer to make two shorter paragraphs rather than one longer paragraph.

There is a clear temporal point of departure at the start of verse 35: ‘When it was day’. There could be a new paragraph at verse 36 because the participants change (from the magistrates and the police to the jailer and Paul) and there is that linguistic construction again: Verb + de. However, this would create a very short paragraph (just v. 35).

At verse 38 there is a change of location without a description of the police having returned to the magistrates (and so a certain amount of time must have passed). Also, there is the Verb + de construction. This also occurs at the start of verse 40, where there is a change of participants and location as well, so at the discourse level, I think that there is a new paragraph at verse 40. However, I have not seen any translated Bible version that makes verse 40 into a separate typographical paragraph (probably because it would be a very short paragraph) and so I suggest keeping verses 38–40 together.

### 2.3 Application to translation

We are not going to start translating (or revising) Acts 16:16–40 just yet. Instead, we will do some preparatory work: deciding on what section headings to add, deciding where to make paragraph breaks, visualizing the passage, and deciding on how to translate certain key terms.

#### 2.3.1 Section heading

Most English translations have a single section heading for Acts 16:16–40. A common heading is “Paul and Silas in prison” but you could give a heading that refers to what happens at the peak of the story, such as “A Roman jailer and his household believe in Jesus.” Some translations put a new section heading at verse 25, however I do not recommend that you do this because verses 16–24 are a prelude to the events in the prison rather than a separate story.

#### 2.3.2 Paragraphs

In your translation of the Bible, you will need to decide (in discussion with the translation team and the translation project committee) whether you want to make generally longer or shorter paragraphs. You then need to be consistent, so that you do not have long paragraphs in one book and much shorter paragraphs in another book. Some translation teams choose a particular Bible version and use this as their model, as this makes it easy to be consistent. However, even if you base your paragraph breaks on a particular version, there may be times when you decide to make different paragraph breaks. Use what you have learnt in this chapter to help you make these decisions. If you prefer longer paragraphs, you could keep verses 25–34 and verses 35–40 as paragraphs. If very short paragraphs are acceptable in your translation, verses 23–24 and verse 40 could be made into separate paragraphs. When you start to translate (or revise) this passage, make sure that you use
appropriate linguistic markers of paragraph breaks at the places where you have decided there should be new paragraphs.

2.3.3 Visualizing the passage

Before starting to translate, some translators find it helpful to present the content of each episode or paragraph without using words. Some ways to do this include acting out the events, using dolls or puppets to represent the participants, and drawing simple pictures of the events. When the pictures are put in order, this is called a storyboard.

2.3.4 Key terms

Decide what expressions you will use to translate certain key terms, including:

- slave-girl
- spirit of divination (literally: python-spirit)
- telling fortunes
- Most High God
- way of salvation (how you can be saved)
- authorities (v.19)
- magistrates
- prison
- jailer
- in the stocks (between blocks of wood)
- earthquake
- foundations
- chains
- sword
- house/household
- baptize
- police
- Roman citizens

Recommended readings

3 Connecting clauses, sentences and paragraphs

After you have identified the paragraphs in a text you can see how the narrator has joined the clauses and sentences within each paragraph and between paragraphs. This is often done by using, or not using, CONNECTIVES: words like and, but and then (also called “conjunctions”). Connectives (or lack of connectives) can be used within a paragraph or episode to indicate either continuity or discontinuity, such as an interruption in the storyline and the resumption of the storyline after an interruption. Another way of joining clauses is to repeat the information or even the actual words of one clause or sentence in another clause or sentence. This is called TAIL-HEAD LINKAGE, and has different functions in different languages.

3.1 Connectives

3.1.1 Connectives indicating continuity

The events within a narrative paragraph usually exhibit continuity: the same participants are involved, often in the same place, and the events occur one after the other. Narrators usually indicate continuity between events by joining the clauses and sentences in a paragraph in a particular way. The default (usual) way of joining clauses and sentences in narrative varies with the language. Two norms have been noted:

- In many languages, the default way of conjoining is by JUXTAPOSITION. In other words, the norm is not to use any connective to link clauses and sentences. In some languages where juxtaposition of clauses is the default, continuity is indicated by the way in which participants are referred to, such as the use of pronouns, or by the use of special tense markers. For example, the following paragraph from a narrative in Digo does not contain any connectives joining clauses or sentences, except for mana ‘because’ in the second line. Continuity is indicated by the use of first person singular subject markers (the n at the start of verbs) and the mix of the past tense marker (á in Nålamuvala ‘I woke up’ and other verbs) and the CONSECUTIVE TENSE marker (chi in Nchivwala ‘I got dressed’ and other verbs).

(5) Nålamuvala chiti ligundzu sana kaya Vyongwani, kudzitayarisha nkafundishe hiko Golini shule ya msingi.
I woke up very early in the morning at home in Vyongwani, to get ready to go teach in Golini primary school.

Mwenye ndamba, ‘Narauka nkadzitayarishe mana kala sidzangbwe kutayarisha masomo ga siku hira.’
I said to myself, ‘I am getting up early to go prepare myself because I have not yet prepared the lessons for today.’

Ndrauka, ichikala saa kumi na mwenga hivi, nápiga mswaki, nchidzitayarisha mara mwenga phara.
I got up early, it was about 5 a.m., I brushed my teeth, I got myself ready at once there.

Nchivwala nguwo zangu, nchimlamusa baba na mayo.
I got dressed, I greeted my father and mother.

5 The consecutive tense marker indicates that the verb it modifies is the next in a series of events. In Digo, verbs in the consecutive tense always follow either another consecutive tense verb or a verb in the past tense. If a verb indicating the next event in a series follows verbs in any other tense or aspect, a different tense marker—the SEQUENTIAL—is used. Some languages use a NARRATIVE TENSE to describe events in a series; unlike the consecutive or sequential tense, the narrative tense does not require some other tense or aspect to indicate the start of a series of events. Consecutive and narrative tenses are discussed in chapter 9, “Storyline concerns.”
In other languages (including Ancient Hebrew and Koiné Greek), the default way of joining clauses and sentences is with connectives. The following passage in Koiné Greek (Luke 22:3–6) starts with a verb followed by δε (glossed CON for 'connective'), but after this, all the clauses that describe separate events are joined using και ‘and’ because they exhibit continuity and occur within a single paragraph.

3 Εἰσῆλθεν δε Σατανᾶς εἰς Ἰούδαν τὸν καλούμενον Ἰσκαριώτην, οντα εκ τοῦ entered CON Satan into Judas the one being called Iscariot, being of the

άριθμοι τὸν δώδεκα•

number of the twelve

τὸν δώδεκα•

νῦν ἔσται τὸν δώδεκα•

‘Now Satan entered Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the Twelve,

4 καὶ ἀπελθὼν συνελάλησεν τοῖς ἀρχιερεύσιν καὶ στρατηγοῖς τὸ πῶς and having left he discussed with the chief priests and temple guards the manner

αὐτοῖς παραδῷ αὐτόν.

to them he might deliver him

and he went to discuss with the chief priests and the temple guards how he could deliver him to them.

5 καὶ ἐχάρησαν καὶ συνέθεντο αὐτῷ ἀργύριον δοῦναι.

and they rejoiced and they agreed with him silver to pay

And they rejoiced and agreed to pay him silver.

6 καὶ ἐξωμολόγησεν, καὶ ἐζήτει εὐκαιρία τοῦ παραδοῦναι αὐτὸν ἄτερ ὀχλοῦ αὐτοῖς.

and he consented and he sought opportunity of the to betray him without crowd with them

And he consented and began to look for an opportunity to deliver him to them away from the crowd.’

Note that often the default way of joining clauses will only be used to join clauses that describe a series of events that moves the main point of the narrative on. These events are called the “storyline.” If a paragraph contains background material or events presented out of sequence (what is called “supportive” material), another way of joining clauses will be used. For example, the default way of joining clauses in eastern Bantu languages is by juxtaposition; when the connective na (or similar) ‘and’ is used it may indicate a) events described out of sequence, b) the most important event in a sequence, or c) contrast between the subjects of each clause.

In summary:

• If a language seldom uses a connective in narrative (i.e. if the default means of joining clauses and sentences is by juxtaposition) then the presence of a connective is significant, and may reflect a discontinuity.

• If a language usually employs a default connective to join clauses and sentences in narrative, its absence is significant, and may reflect a discontinuity.

3.1.2 Special connectives within paragraphs

Often, each new clause in a paragraph simply adds more information so that the hearer or reader can construct a complete mental picture of the sequence of events. In this case, the clauses in the paragraph are equally important, and together they function to create a complete description of a

6 The Greek connectives δε and τε (discussed in 3.1.2) always occur in the second position in a clause.
situation. However, sometimes one clause or sentence is more important than the rest, and in some languages this can be indicated through a special connective.

The Greek connective τε is described in Louw and Nida’s lexicon as “a marker of a close relationship between coordinate, nonsequential items.” However, it also has a discourse function: in John 6:18, the effect of using τε instead of the default connective και is to show that the new clause contains important information. Specifically, τε indicates that the information in this clause will become especially significant later on in the story. Read the verses that precede John 6:18 along with verse 18 to understand why this information is important:

16. When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea
17a. και having got into a boat, started across the sea to Capernaum
17b. και it had become dark
17c. και Jesus had not yet come to them
18. the τε sea was becoming roused because a strong wind was blowing.

At other times, there is a contrast between new information and what has already been presented; this is called CONCESSION (understood as “What I just said is true, but this other information is also [or more] relevant”). Examples of concessive connectives in English include but, however, nonetheless and although. In many languages, concession is not expressed by a particular connective, but has to be understood from the context (and perhaps intonation) alone; that is, concession is inferred. This is often the case in small, tight-knit communities, where speakers and hearers share many background assumptions and where there is no established written tradition. In some such languages, concessive connectives are borrowed from languages of wider communication.

- Swahili has borrowed lakini from Arabic lakin ‘but’, and many eastern Bantu languages have borrowed lakini from Swahili.
- In Berta, concessive relations are inferred and a general additive connector u is used: Bakqá katarinó nindigi u ñgó sallá sha nindigi míliañ ñgó aðqafařiñ ñgó algiráya alú. ‘Do not sleep too much and/but pray, because a lot of sleep makes you late.’ Strong contrast can be expressed using lakín ‘but’ which is borrowed from Arabic.
- In Ik, contrast or concession is conveyed by kótó but only in the vaguest way, and sometimes kótó expresses the next event in a sequence rather than contrast, as in kutó kótó ‘then he said’. Ik speakers who are bilingual tend to borrow contrastive connectives from other languages such as nai from Karimojong and lakini from Arabic via Swahili.
- In Mundari, ama ‘but, instead’ (borrowed from Arabic) can join a main clause with unexpected information: Ilo nuri mar merenyeni kulik po kata mede yu. Ama nye a walaju a worani a nuri esa lo ñti a boroj! ‘That person is from the chief’s grandfather’s family. But he changed and instead of a person he became an animal!’
- The connective che in the Gur language Safaliba (and similar connectives in other Gur languages) can be translated as ‘but’ or ‘and’ depending on the context (Schaefer 2009:138); to express a strong contrast (‘adversative’ meaning), the connective ama (borrowed from Arabic) can be used, although this is infrequent.

In some languages, concessives are only used if the clause following the concessive describes an event which follows on the time line, and if this event is more important than the preceding event. In other languages, concessives may be used even when the clauses are out of sequence and the event following the concessive is of equal or less importance than the first event mentioned.

Koiné Greek has a number of connectives that are used to indicate concessive relations between clauses. The following factors enable the most common ones (δε, και and αλλα) to be distinguished.

- When the second clause in a countering relationship is more important than the first, δε is used, as in 1 Tim. 4:8: ‘For physical training is of some value, the δε godliness has value for all things.’

7 Details of these languages and the sources of information are found before Appendix A.
• When the clauses are more or less of equal importance καὶ is used, as in Luke 1:52: ‘He has brought down rulers from their thrones καὶ has lifted up the humble.’ This includes occasions when the first clause is positive and the second is negative, as in Luke 18:16 where the two clauses are saying basically the same thing: ‘Allow the children to come to me καὶ do not prevent them.’

• If the first clause is negative and both clauses are more or less of equal importance, then ἀλλὰ is used, as in 1 Tim. 4:12: ‘Let no-one despise your youth, ἀλλὰ set the believers an example in speech and conduct.’ (This is the usual use of all, see Mat 4:4; 7:21; 22:30; 26:39; Jhn 3:16–17; Rom 2:13; 7:15; Eph 6:6; Php 4:6.)

3.1.3 Connectives indicating discontinuity

Connectives, or the absence of a connective, can be used to indicate discontinuities such as the transition from one paragraph to the next, a change of speaker in a reported conversation, and the transition from the storyline to supportive material (and back again). If a language uses a default connective to mark continuity within paragraphs, a different connective, or the absence of any connective, will usually be used to indicate discontinuities. This can be seen in Koiné Greek. Look at the fairly literal English translation of Luke 22:1–13 below (no paragraph breaks have been marked and most of Jesus’ speech in verses 10–12 has been omitted):

1 Now the festival of unleavened bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. 2 And the chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to destroy him [Jesus] for they were afraid of the people. 3 Now Satan entered Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, 4 and he went to discuss with the chief priests and the temple guards how he could deliver him to them. 5 And they rejoiced and agreed to pay him silver. 6 And he consented and began to look for an opportunity to deliver him to them away from the crowd. 7 Now the day of unleavened bread arrived on which the Passover [lambs] had to be sacrificed, 8 and he [Jesus] sent Peter and John saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it.” 9 And they said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare it?” 10–12 And he said to them, “When you enter the city….” 13 And they left and found everything just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Where are the discontinuities in this passage? Clearly verse 1 is the start of a new paragraph as it introduces a new time reference (and is the start of a new chapter, although this does not always coincide with a new paragraph). At verse 3 there is a shift of attention from the chief priests and scribes to Judas; we saw earlier in this section that verses 3–6 constitute a single paragraph and the clauses are joined by the default connective καὶ. A new time reference is introduced at verse 7. In verse 9 the speaker changes from Jesus to Peter and John, and in verse 10, Jesus replies. In verse 13 the conversation ends and there is a change of location, which could justify starting a new paragraph here; however, the subject is referred to using just subject agreement marking on the verb, which could indicate that this is not a new paragraph even though there is a discontinuity.

Each of these discontinuities coincides with the connective δε, highlighted in the text below. (This is sometimes translated ‘Now’ in the English translation above but is glossed CON for “connective” in the box below. The occurrences of καὶ have also been highlighted.) Notice that when δε occurs at the start of a new paragraph (verses 1, 3 and 7) and also at verse 13 it is preceded by a verb, but when it merely marks a change of speaker (verses 9 and 10) it is preceded by a pronoun. Often (but not always) in Luke’s writing, the construction Verb + δε indicates the start of a new paragraph; δε in general indicates some kind of discontinuity.

1 Ἡ γάγιζεν δὲ ἡ ἑορτή τῶν ἀζύμων ἡ λεγομένη πάσχα.
The festival of the unleavened bread was approaching
calling Passover

2 καὶ ἔζητον οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς τὸ πῶς ἄνελωσιν αὐτὸν, and were seeking the chief priests and the scribes the manner they destroy him

ἔφοβοντο γὰρ τὸν λαόν,
they were fearing for the people
3 ἔσηκεν δὲ Σατανᾶς εἰς Ἰούδαν τὸν καλοῦμενον Ἰσκαριώτην, entered CON Satan into Judas the one being called Iscariot,

ἐντα ἐκ τοῦ ἁρίθμου τῶν δώδεκα• being of the number of the twelve

4 καὶ ἀπελθὼν συνελάλησεν τοῖς ἀρχιερεύσιν καὶ στρατηγοῖς τὸ πῶς and having left he discussed with the chief priests and temple guards the manner

αὐτῶς παραιτήσας αὐτῷ, to them he might deliver him

5 καὶ ἐγάρισαν καὶ συνεθέντο αὐτῷ ἁργύριον δοῦναι, and they rejoiced and they agreed with him silver to pay

6 καὶ ἐξωμολόγησαν καὶ ἔστηε εὐκαρίαν τοῦ παραθούναι αὐτὸν ἄτερ ὀχλον αὐτῶς. and he consented and he sought opportunity of betraying him without crowd with them

7 ἠλθεν δὲ ἡ ἡμέρα τῶν ἄζυμων, [ἐν] ἣ ἔδει θυεῖ θύει αὐτὸν τὸ πάσχα• came CON the day of the unleavened bread in which it was necessary to sacrifice the Passover

8 καὶ ἀπέστειλεν Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην εἰπὼν, and he sent Peter and John having said

Πορευθέντες ἐτοιμάσατε ἡμῖν τὸ πάσχα ἵνα φάγωμεν. having gone prepare for us the Passover so that we may eat

9 καὶ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ποῦ θέλεις ἐτοιμάσωμεν; they CON said to him where you wish that we prepare

10 ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῶι, ἵδον εἰσελθόντων ὑμῶν εἰς τὴν πόλιν [...] he CON said to them look having entered you into the city...

13 ἀπελθὼντες δὲ εἶρον καθὼς εἰρήκει αὐτῶι καὶ ἠτοίμασαν τὸ πάσχα, having left CON they found just as he had said to them and they prepared the Passover

The use of δὲ in the New Testament is not uniform: Matthew and Luke use it far more often than Mark and John. In Luke's gospel and Acts, δὲ often (but not always) indicates new paragraphs while καί maintains continuity within paragraphs, but in some passages, and often in Matthew, δὲ seems to function more like a thematic development marker (see chapter 9 "Storyline Concerns") rather than as an indicator of a discontinuity in the text.

It is quite common for connectives to have two functions: a “logical” function, such as indicating a conclusion or a time relation, and a discourse function, such as marking the beginning of paragraphs or transitions between the storyline and supportive material. For example, when the Digo connectives phahi and ndipho occur between clauses, phahi can usually be translated as ‘so’ (indicating a conclusion) and ndipho can usually be translated as ‘then’ (indicating a time relation). But in narratives phahi and ndipho often mark new paragraphs without expressing any conclusion or time relation (Nicolle 2015a).

Not all languages use connectives to indicate the start of a new paragraph. Some languages use an unusual CONSTITUENT ORDER (for example, subject-verb where the usual order is verb-subject); other languages use an unusual form of PARTICIPANT REFERENCE (for example, using a particular demonstrative, or using a descriptive noun phrase rather than a pronoun even when there is no change of subject). Some languages use a combination of features to mark new paragraphs. A few languages mark the end rather than the start of paragraphs, such as Kwak’wala (mentioned in the previous chapter).
3.2 Tail-head linkage

3.2.1 Forms of tail-head linkage

Tail-head linkage occurs when information from one clause (the “tail”) is repeated at the start of the following clause (the “head”), and the main verb is repeated, either verbatim or as a paraphrase. The following examples from Siroi illustrate various kinds of tail-head linkage.

Exact replication of the verb phrase:

(6) *Nun* tumbrang kina. Tumbrang kina sulumba…

he village went village went and

‘He went to the village. He went to the village and...’ (van Kleef 1988:149)

Same verb, different tense/aspect:

(7) *Age* ande ta tumba kina. Age ta tumba kumba ka…

dog a that taking went dog that taking going go

‘(she) took the other dog and went. Taking that dog, she went...’ (van Kleef 1988:152)

Verb followed by a generic pro-verb:

(8) *Piro* mbolinge ngukina. Tangamba nu kinya.

garden in planted doing.thus she slept

‘She planted it in the garden. After having done this, she slept.’ (van Kleef 1988:152)

3.2.2 Functions of tail-head linkage

In Siroi, tail-head linkage occurs within paragraphs, rather than across paragraph boundaries (van Kleef 1988:151). Its main function is to highlight the main events throughout a narrative, except at the peak where there is usually a lot of direct speech and the information rate is higher than elsewhere (1988:152).

In the eastern Bantu languages, tail-head linkage is used far less than in Siroi. Eastern Bantu languages differ over whether tail-head linkage is used within paragraphs or across paragraph boundaries.

In Makonde, tail-head linkage is often used at the start of a new episode to slow the action down before a significant development in the story. In the following example, the verb *kuudukila* ‘to sweat’ is repeated at the start of the episode in which Hare’s sweat causes his horns to fall off, which is a crucial event as it causes him to be recognized and killed:

(9) Nae kwinjilinneu kuvina, kuvina shingula mpaka *kuudukila*.

Paanjenge *kuudukila* dimembe adild kwanjanga kunyang’anyuka mwaawakuvina namene na liduva alilá, dimembe adild kutwala kugwanga kujaikanga.

‘So Hare joined straight in with the dancing; he danced until he sweated (lit: to sweat).

But when he began to sweat, those horns started to melt because of dancing so much and the hot sun, those horns fell off and were ruined.’ (Leach 2015:28)

In contrast, tail-head linkage in Jita occurs within paragraphs. In the example below, *naabhakeesya* ‘he greeted them’ uses the narrative tense, but the dependent clause *Ejire aamara okubhakeesya* ‘When he finished greeting them’ uses the perfective aspect.


‘So one day chicken went to Hare’s house. When he arrived at Hare’s house, he greeted them. When he had finished greeting them properly, he said...’ (Pyle and Robinson 2015:12)
Digo uses tail-head linkage within sentences, so it obviously does not indicate a paragraph break. Its purpose seems to be primarily to “background” the movement of participants, that is, to indicate a change of location without starting a new paragraph. To achieve this, the repeated verb uses the anterior aspect (translated as ‘having arrived,’ ‘having left,’ etc.).

(11) Phahi tsungula wakpwedza akafika hiphwaamba...
    so hare he.come:PAST he.arrive:ANT there he.say:PAST
    ‘So the hare came (and) having arrived there he said...’ (Nicolle 2015a:21)

3.3 Discovery procedures for connectives and tail-head linkage

Connectives and tail-head linkage function in different ways in different kinds of text (that is, in different genres). Also, connectives in narrative texts may function in different ways depending on whether the clauses they join contain storyline (i.e. foreground) material or supportive (i.e. background) material. Therefore you should study a variety of narrative texts in your language.

1. First, identify the episodes and paragraphs within each text.
2. Highlight all of the connectives that join clauses and sentences. (Ignore connectives that join noun phrases such as ‘Paul and Silas’). Also note the clauses and sentences that are not joined by connectives (i.e. where there is juxtaposition).
3. Identify all the clauses that contain connectives such as ‘that’, ‘because’, ‘so that’ and ‘until’; make a note of these connectives. These are dependent (or subordinate) clauses which should not be included in your analysis of the default way of joining clauses.
4. Next, look at the main clauses and sentences (the clauses that are not covered by point 3 above) and note how they are joined (e.g. using juxtaposition or a certain connective).
5. Try to determine the default way of joining main clauses and sentences within paragraphs (e.g. by juxtaposition, or with a certain connective, or with a variety of connectives, or by juxtaposition between sentences and with a certain connective between clauses, etc.).
6. Look at the use of connectives and juxtaposition between paragraphs. Do certain connectives occur at the start of new paragraphs? Do certain connectives occur at the end of paragraphs? Are there usually no connectives linking paragraphs?
7. Check to see whether certain episodes have a different distribution of connectives. For example, the orientation section and conclusion usually do not contain sequences of events and so may differ from the developmental episodes; the peak episode may use more or fewer connectives than the developmental episodes; the inciting episode may contain a special connective not found elsewhere.
8. Read through your text and decide whether any of the conjoined clauses/sentences express a relation of contrast or concession. Is a special connective used in such cases, or not?
9. Look at other connectives (not the default connectives or concessive connectives) and decide what kind of relationship between the clauses or sentences each connective indicates.
10. Go through your texts looking for cases of tail-head linkage. See whether these occur within paragraphs or between paragraphs. Try to determine the function of tail-head linkage (if it occurs). Check to see whether certain episodes have a different distribution of tail-head linkage.

These discovery procedures can be made easier by charting your texts (see Appendix A: Text Charting for detailed instructions). In your chart, all of the connectives should be placed in a single column (usually one of the pre-nuclear columns). Your chart should also indicate dependent clauses and paragraph breaks.

3.3.1 Application to Greek in Acts 16:16–24

We will just look at verses 16–24. All of the connectives and also an example of tail-head linkage are highlighted, and after each verse there is a short commentary on the functions of these connecting devices.
It came about as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave girl who had a spirit of divination came out to meet us, who was bringing her owners much profit by fortune-telling."

'And this she kept doing for many days. But Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit [lit. and having turned to the spirit he said], "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.'

'vearly with ‘Having.seen’ + δὲ. This Verb + δὲ construction indicates the start of a new paragraph: new participants are introduced and presumably a certain amount of time had also passed between Paul casting out the spirit and the slave owners hearing about this event. In verse 20, καὶ is used to show that a series of events occurs in sequence; this constitutes the storyline.'

'and they are proclaiming customs that are not lawful for us to accept nor to do being Romans.'

'The slave owners’ speech uses καὶ to join ‘disturbing our city’ in verse 20 and ‘proclaiming customs’ in verse 21. These are not sequential events; instead, ‘proclaiming customs’ describes what Paul and Silas are doing (according to the slave owners) that is ‘disturbing our city’. There is one other connective, οὐδὲ that means ‘and not’ and here indicates that Romans cannot accept these customs and cannot practise them either; this connective joins two verbs and does not have a specific discourse level function here. (Note also the contrast between ‘being Jews’ at the end of verse 20 and ‘being Romans’ in verse 21; different verbs are used for ‘be’ but the contrast is clear.)'
23 πολλάς τε ἐπιθέντες αὐτοῖς πληγάς ἔβαλον εἰς φυλακὴν παραγγέλαντες τῷ δεσμοφύλακι ἀσφαλῶς τηρεῖν αὐτοὺς.

‘And having inflicted many blows upon them, they threw [them] into prison, having ordered the jailer to keep them safely.’

The main clause in verse 23 is ‘threw into prison’. This is a pivotal event for the rest of the story, as it is while Paul and Silas are in prison that the earthquake occurs and the jailer and his household believe and are baptized. Everything in verses 16–22 leads up to Paul and Silas being thrown into prison, and Luke emphasizes this in his narrative by using the special connective τε.8 There is also a possible tail-head linkage here as the action of beating is mentioned at the end of verse 22 and repeated (in different words) at the start of verse 23. This may also be a way of showing the importance of this verse.

24 ὃς παραγγελίαν τοιαύτην λαβὼν ἔβαλεν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν ἐσωτέραν φυλακὴν καὶ τοὺς πόδας ἠσφαλίσατο αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ ξύλον.

‘Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.’

Verse 24 begins literally ‘Who order such having received’ which repeats information from verse 23. This is a case of tail-head linkage and its function is to reinforce the importance of the jailer and what he was ordered to do. The rest of the verse explains what the jailer did, and the two sequential events are joined using καί in the normal way.

Note that the Verb+ δε construction is not always a reliable indication of a new paragraph. This is particularly true in Acts 16:25–28 where this construction occurs four times. However, remember that this is the peak episode, and it is common for the way clauses are connected to change during the peak. In verse 27 there are a series of events in which the jailer saw that the prison doors were open, drew his sword, and was about to kill himself. We would expect a sequence of events like this to be joined using καί, but instead the clauses are juxtaposed with no connectives; this may also be because these events are part of the peak.

3.3.2 Application to translation

A common error in translating from Greek and Hebrew into languages that do not use a default connective to join clauses is to use too many connectives. Table 2 shows how Luke 4:38–39 was translated in the King James (Authorized) Version.

Table 2. Comparison of δε in Greek and its translation in the King James Version of Luke 4:38–39

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word-for-word translation from Greek:</th>
<th>King James Version:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having-arisen δε from the synagogue he-entered into the house of-Simon. Mother-in-law δε of Simon was suffering-with fever a-high καί they asked him about her. καί having-stood over her he-rebuked the fever καί it-left her. At-once δε having-arisen she-was-serving.</td>
<td>And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon’s house. And Simon’s wife’s mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her; and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the King James Version, each of the bolded occurrences of and corresponds to a Greek connective (δε or καί). In addition, the King James Version has three additional occurrences of and joining clauses within a sentence (where English usually requires a connective). Compare this with the New International Version:

8 The connective τε also occurs in Acts 16:34 where the jailer brings Paul and Silas into his house and feeds them. This is significant as Jews were not allowed to eat with non-Jews, and so this is a powerful symbol of the way in which being united as followers of Jesus is more important than ethnicity.
Jesus left the synagogue and went to the home of Simon. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Jesus to help her. So he bent over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up at once and began to wait on them. (NIV)

The NIV has kept and joining clauses within a sentence, but has either changed the other connectives (to Now to introduce a new participant, and So to indicate that Jesus’ action was a result of being asked to help) or omitted them. The result is a much more natural translation that still expresses the same meaning as the original Greek text.

Look at different translations of Acts 16:16–24 in a language that you know. How well have the clauses and sentences been connected? Which version do you prefer? Can you think of ways in which this translation can be improved?

Now translate Acts 16:16–24 into your own language, or revise an existing translation of this passage. Pay special attention to the following translation issues:

- Start new paragraphs at verses 16 and 19 in a way that is natural in your language. (Some translations also start a new paragraph at verse 22 after the slave owners’ speech.) If your language indicates paragraph breaks at the end of the “old” paragraph rather than at the start of the “new” paragraph, pay attention to verses 15, 18 and 24.
- Translate verse 17 so that the slave girl’s actions can be understood as being repeated over a period of time.
- Indicate the shift from supportive material to the storyline in verse 18 in the most natural way.
- Join clauses and sentences that describe sequential events in the way that is natural in your language.
- Remember that the και at the start of verse 21 does not indicate a sequence of events; find a natural way to translate ‘nor’ and to express the contrast between ‘Jews’ and ‘Romans’ in the slave owners’ speech.
- If possible, indicate the importance of Paul and Silas being thrown into jail in verse 23.
- Remember that the function of the tail-head linkage in verse 24 is to reinforce the importance of the jailer and what he was ordered to do (because this information is crucial for the rest of the story). Do not use tail-head linkage here if tail-head linkage in your language is used to start a new paragraph or to background events (that is, to make them less important than other events); instead, find some other way of joining these clauses.

Recommended readings


4 Participants

As we have seen, a defining feature of narrative texts is agent orientation, that is, the events in narratives involve characters which play some kind of active role in the story. We refer to these characters as “participants.” Typically participants are individuals, although the term can also refer to groups acting together. Participants need to be introduced into the narrative, and then referred to subsequently (or tracked) as the narrative develops. Each language has a system for introducing participants, maintaining reference to participants, and reintroducing participants after an absence.

In this section, we will only be concerned with how participants are tracked. Since the passage we are translating (Acts 16:16–40) occurs part way through a longer narrative (the book of Acts), there is no formal introduction of the major participants (Paul and Silas). A discussion of how participants are introduced, together with some translation exercises, is provided in Appendix B.

4.1 Different kinds of participants

A basic distinction is made between MAJOR and MINOR PARTICIPANTS:

- Major participants are those which are active for a large part of the narrative and play leading roles; minor participants are activated briefly and lapse into deactivation. Major participants typically have a different overall pattern of reference and a different way of being introduced.

(Dooley & Levinsohn 2001:119)

Sometimes it is easy to decide which participants are major participants and which are minor participants. For example, in Acts 16:16–40 Paul and Silas are clearly major participants and the magistrates and police are clearly minor participants. However, some participants are harder to classify, such as the slave girl, the slave owners, and the jailer.

4.1.1 Characteristics of major participants

Major participants usually have all or most of the following characteristics:

- They are mentioned in most of the episodes in a narrative.
- They are active throughout entire episodes and often initiate events.
- Their words and thoughts are expressed using direct speech.
- They are named or described at least once in the narrative.

Not all major participants are the same. Here are some useful categories of major participants. It is important to note that not every narrative will have all of these types of major participants. Also, some languages may distinguish linguistically between certain types of major participants where other languages do not.

4.1.1.1 VIP (Very Important Participant)

In some narratives, one major participant is more important than the others and is the centre of attention throughout (most of) the narrative. In some languages, the VIP may be referred to using different kinds of expressions than other major participants. A distinction can be made between the GLOBAL VIP, who is the centre of attention throughout the narrative as a whole (for example, Jesus in the Gospels) and a LOCAL VIP who is active throughout most of the narrative but is the centre of attention for a few episodes only. The VIP is also referred to as the “central character” (Levinsohn 1992:100) and the “primary participant” (Taylor 1994).

4.1.1.2 Episodic major participant

Sometimes a minor participant is promoted to major participant status for a short while. At other times, a participant is introduced part way through a narrative and only remains active for one or two episodes. If the participant functions as a major participant during these episodes (being active
throughout these episodes, speaking, and initiating events), he or she is called an **EPISODIC MAJOR PARTICIPANT**.

### 4.1.1.3 Protagonist and antagonist

In some (but not all) narratives, the story revolves around the interaction of two major participants. Often, one is more proactive and initiates most of the action; this is the **PROTAGONIST**. The other participant is impacted by and reacts to the events initiated by the protagonist; this is the **ANTAGONIST**.  

### 4.1.2 Characteristics of minor participants

In contrast, minor participants occur in only a few episodes, are active for only a short time and usually do not initiate events, their words are more likely to be expressed indirectly, and they are less likely to be named. They are often referred to for the first time without any specific introduction, for example as objects of a verb. However, they are still active participants in the story.

### 4.1.3 Props

People or things which do not play an active role in the story are called **PROPS**. For example, in Acts 16:25 the other prisoners are props. Props never do anything significant, have only short-term significance, and tend to be referred to using full noun phrases.

### 4.2 Referring expressions and amount of coding material

A participant can be referred to in many different ways, for example: *Paul, the apostle, that man, or he*. In many languages verbs have agreement marking to indicate the gender and number, or the noun class of the subject. Some languages allow **ZERO REFERENCE** (sometimes indicated by the symbol Ø); in English this is common when two verb phrases are joined by a connective (*and, but, or*) and the subject does not change, as in “Paul turned and Ø said”. All of these are different **REFERRING EXPRESSIONS**.

It is important to remember that different languages use different kinds of referring expressions. For example, English pronouns are usually unstressed but pronouns can be stressed in speech and this can change the meaning of a sentence. Compare the following two sentences. Who hugged Charles in each sentence?

(12) a. Andrew hugged Ben, then he hugged Charles. (Unstressed pronoun)

b. Andrew hugged Ben, then **he** hugged Charles. (Stressed pronoun)

In (12a) Andrew hugged Charles, but in (12b) it is Ben who hugged Charles.

Many languages do not distinguish between unstressed and stressed pronouns. In the Bantu languages of eastern and southern Africa, most verbs contain an obligatory **SUBJECT MARKER**, which is a prefix on the verb that indicates the person (*I*, ‘you singular’, ‘you plural’ etc.) or the noun class of the subject. Because of this, independent pronouns (separate words like English *he*) are not often used. However, independent pronouns do exist, and when they are used they have specific functions, such as indicating contrast (similar to a stressed pronoun in English). The examples in (13) are the Swahili equivalents of (12); (13a) uses a subject marker *a-* only to indicate the subject of the second clause but (13b) also uses the independent pronoun *yeye*:

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9 The Oxford English Dictionary defines “antagonist” as “a person who actively opposes or is hostile to someone or something;” this is not how the term is used in discourse analysis.
Some referring expressions can be used to identify a participant at any time. For example, if I am talking about the story in Acts 16, the proper name Paul and the definite noun phrase the jailer will always identify specific individuals. Other referring expressions identify different participants at different times, depending on the context. The pronoun he could refer to Paul, Silas or the jailer, so long as the participant has been recently mentioned. We say that proper names and noun phrases have more CODING MATERIAL than pronouns and agreement markers. When there is continuity in a text, specifically when the same participant continues in the same grammatical role (e.g. subject or object) from clause to clause and there is no paragraph break, participants can be referred to using a minimal amount of coding material. When there is some discontinuity in a text, or when there is potential ambiguity regarding the intended referent, more coding material is required. For example, in many Bantu languages, when there is a change of subject, or when a subject is repeated at the start of a new paragraph, the subject takes the form of a proper name or a noun phrase. Givón summarizes this nicely: “The more disruptive, surprising, discontinuous or hard to process a topic [or participant] is, the more coding material must be assigned to it” (Givón 1983:18).

4.2.1 Default encodings for referring expressions

The most basic function of any referring expression is to enable the audience to identify which participant is being referred to so that it is clear who did what to whom. However, in natural speech and writing the following rule seems to apply: “Use the least amount of coding material necessary to refer to a participant, unless some special effect is intended.” The special effects mentioned at the end of the rule will be discussed in the next section, on “Discourse-Pragmatic Functions of Referring Expressions.”

When narrators follow the “least-amount-of-coding-material” rule, they tend to use the same kinds of referring expressions in the same kinds of context. This enables us to state the DEFAULT ENCODINGS (that is, the usual referring expressions) for subjects and objects when there is continuity (for example, within a paragraph). One helpful way of describing default encodings is to look at the contexts in which subjects and objects occur. (Since most referring expressions occur in subject position, we will only look at subjects here, but the same principles can be applied to objects.) Dooley and Levinsohn (2001:65) suggest four contexts for subjects (see table 3), which they label S1, S2, S3 and S4. In these contexts, “clause” means “clause” or “sentence,” excluding relative clauses. These contexts will be explained in more detail in section 4.3, “Discovery procedures.”

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Table 3. Four contexts for subjects (Dooley and Levinsohn 2001:65)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>The subject is the same as in the previous clause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>The subject was the addressee of a speech reported in the previous sentence as part of a CLOSED CONVERSATION (that is, where two participants have a conversation which is not interrupted by the narrator giving additional information).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>The subject was involved in the previous clause in a non-subject role (but not as the addressee in a conversation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>The subject was not mentioned in the previous clause.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is easier for the audience to process a text when there is continuity than when there is discontinuity. For this reason, a good narrator will find ways to help the audience at places where there is discontinuity, such as at a paragraph break (in the discourse sense of “paragraph”). One way to do this is to provide more coding material at the start of a paragraph, even if the same participant is being referred to as in the previous paragraph. In practice, this means that some participants are referred to using a name or description when the default encoding would predict that a pronoun or agreement marker should be sufficient to identify the participant.

4.2.2 Discourse-pragmatic functions of referring expressions

Once the default encodings of referring expressions have been taken into account, narrators still have some freedom to choose which referring expression to use. A skillful narrator will use referring expressions to achieve certain effects that make the story more interesting and convey additional information. For example, the VIP (Very Important Participant) may be referred to in a special way, or important developments in the story may be indicated through a particular choice of referring expression. We will refer to these as DISCOURSE-PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS (“discourse” because they affect the text as a whole, and “pragmatic” because they concern the specific meanings intended by the narrator, rather than the basic meanings encoded by referring expressions).

In this section we will look at some discourse-pragmatic functions of pronouns and demonstratives in Bantu languages. Details can be found in Nicolle (2014) and Nicolle (2015b). This is just to provide some examples of possible discourse-pragmatic functions of referring expressions; other languages will have different functions.

In the eastern Bantu languages, a subject agreement marker on the verb is the default encoding within paragraphs where the subject is the same as in the previous clause. When the subject changes, at the start of a new paragraph, or for particular discourse-pragmatic reasons, narrators use names, noun phrases, noun phrases containing a demonstrative (e.g. ‘that person’), and different kinds of independent pronouns.

Demonstratives are more common than independent pronouns. For example, in one language, Digo, out of 864 clauses in narrative texts, there were 147 third person demonstratives (roughly 1 for every 6 clauses) compared to just twenty-nine third person independent pronouns (roughly 1 for every 30 clauses). Most eastern Bantu languages have at least three kinds of demonstratives: proximal, referential and distal. When talking about things that are physically present, PROXIMAL DEMONSTRATIVES mean ‘this here’ or ‘these here’, REFERENTIAL DEMONSTRATIVES mean ‘that (or those) near to you (but not near to me)’, and DISTAL DEMONSTRATIVES mean ‘that (or those) far from you and me’. In narratives, they can be used to express very different kinds of meaning, as we will see.

11 These languages do not have definite and indefinite articles (like the and a/an in English) so whether a noun phrase is definite or indefinite depends on the context (except noun phrases containing demonstratives, which are definite).
4.2.2.1 Contrast

In most of the eastern Bantu languages, narrators use the basic form of independent pronouns to indicate a certain participant in contrast to any other (either mentioned in the narrative or understood). In the following Digo example, a crime has been discovered and the woman who committed the crime is seized by panic and falls to the ground; the independent pronoun iye indicates that this woman rather than some other person committed the crime:

\[(14) \text{Ndipho atu achimanya kukala iye ndiye ariyehenda mambo higo.} \]

\[\text{then people knew that 3SG it was who did things these} \]

\[\text{‘Then people knew that it was her who did those things.’} \]

4.2.2.2 Activation status

In the languages Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa, Malila and Suba-Simbiti (all spoken in Tanzania), referential and distal demonstratives are used to indicate the **activation status** of participants. Activation is defined as follows:

Participants are considered to be activated in the mind of the listener if they have been explicitly mentioned in the previous event (which is not necessarily comprised of the previous clause or sentence alone), or if they are not mentioned but assumed to be an active participant in the action (Masatu 2015:20)

When participants which have been previously mentioned but are not activated (were not active in the previous event) are mentioned again, they are **reactivated**.

In four of the languages (Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa and Malila) reactivated participants are always referred to using a noun phrase containing a distal demonstrative.\(^\text{12}\) In the following Malila example (Eaton 2015a:18), the participants are reactivated after a digression about wild animals that lived in the area where the events took place:

\[(15) \text{Basi abhantu bhaala ikhabiidi \(bha-piny\)-e umuntu ula mwi pagali.} \]

\[\text{well people those it was necessary they tie person that on stretcher} \]

\[\text{‘Well, those [DISTAL] people, it was necessary that they should tie that [DISTAL] person to the stretcher.’} \]

In Jita and Kwaya, when a major participant is activated and is referred to using a noun phrase rather than just a subject prefix, the noun phrase almost always contains a referential demonstrative. This does not apply to Kabwa and Malila, where a subject noun phrase referring to an activated major participant is equally likely to contain a referential or a distal demonstrative.

The same functions of distal and referential demonstratives occur in Suba-Simbiti, but only as tendencies. Three quarters of reactivated participants were referred to with a noun phrase containing a distal demonstrative and one quarter with a noun phrase containing a referential demonstrative in Suba-Simbiti; conversely just over three quarters of activated participants were referred to with a referential demonstrative and one quarter with a distal demonstrative.

4.2.2.3 Agency

In Bena, distal demonstratives are almost always used to refer to both major and minor participants who function as agents (i.e. they intentionally initiate or control an action); conversely, referential demonstratives are used to refer to participants which do not initiate or control an action which affects them (Broomhall 2011). This is true regardless of whether the participants are activated or reactivated. In six narrative texts (totalling 674 clauses) distal demonstratives were used seventeen

\[^{12}\text{This also happens in Ngoreme [ngq] and Ikizu [ikz] (Rundell 2012: 81–88). Also, in Malila when an object is referred to using a noun phrase containing a demonstrative, a distal demonstrative is almost always used.} \]
demonstratives were used to refer to subjects of non-active verbs ‘not be able’ and ‘remember’, so this
is not absolute. Referential demonstratives were used nine times to refer to subjects of non-active
verbs ‘see’, ‘get fat’, ‘agree’ and ‘refuse’.\textsuperscript{13}

4.2.2.4 Text structuring

TEXT STRUCTURING is a label used to describe how different referring expressions are used in different
kinds of episode and with different kinds of participant. In Digo, noun phrases containing
demonstratives are often used to refer to major participants when there is a change of subject, and
different demonstratives are used in different episodes:

• Orientation: referential demonstratives are used.
• Inciting episode: either proximal demonstratives or distal demonstratives are used.
• Developmental episodes and peak: distal demonstratives are used to refer to major participants
  64 times, referential demonstratives are used 5 times, and proximal demonstratives are used 3
times.
• Denouement: either distal or referential demonstratives are used.
• Conclusion: typically no demonstratives are used.

In the developmental episodes and peaks of some Digo narrative texts, the protagonist or VIP is
typically referred to using a noun phrase containing a distal demonstrative, but the antagonist and
other participants (major or minor) are more often referred to using a noun phrase without any
demonstrative.

4.2.2.5 Important developments

In Fuliiru, the presence of referential and distal demonstratives referring to any kind of participant is
one of the ways in which a narrator can indicate the important developments in a story. In stories
where both kinds of demonstratives are used, distal demonstratives indicate the most important
events. Similarly, in Makonde distal demonstratives referring to major participants indicate
important developments (including, but not restricted to, the peak episode). That is, demonstratives
in Fuliiru and Makonde function as THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT MARKERS (see chapter 9, “Storyline
Concerns”).

4.3 Discovery procedures

These discovery procedures are similar (but not identical) to those in Dooley and Levinsohn
(2001:64–68). We will use Luke 22:1–13 to illustrate each step in the procedure. We will ignore the
contents of direct speech, and you should also ignore the contents of direct speech in your texts.

\textbf{Step 1:} \textit{Make sure that paragraph breaks are marked in your text and make a note of where
the different episodes occur.}

We looked at the connectives in this passage in chapter 3, and decided that new paragraphs
start at verses 1, 3, 7 and 13 (although verse 13 stands alone and might be considered part of a
paragraph starting at verse 7 to avoid having a very short paragraph).

\textsuperscript{13} Eaton (In press, see chapter on Vwanji) reports that Vwanji [wbi] also has this function.
Step 2. Make a list of different kinds of referring expressions that occur in your texts.

In this passage the following kinds of referring expressions occur (listed in order from most coding material to least coding material):

- Names: Σατανᾶς ‘Satan’, Ἰούδαν ‘Judas’, Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην ‘Peter and John’
- Definite noun phrase: οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς ‘the chief priests and the scribes’
- Independent pronouns (non-subject position): αὐτὸν ‘him’, αὐτοῖς ‘to/with them’, αὐτῷ ‘to/with him’
- Definite articles functioning as independent subject pronouns: οἱ (masculine plural), ὁ (masculine singular)
- Subject agreement marking on verbs: εζήτουν, ανέλωσιν, εφοβουντο (3rd person plural); συνελάλησεν, παραδῷ (3rd person singular); ἀπελθὼν (masculine singular), etc.

Step 3. Identify the major participants in each text.

Decide which participants—if any—are VIPs, episodic major participants, or protagonists and antagonists. Optionally at this point you can distinguish the participants by highlighting each referring expression (including zero reference) with a different colour or number for each major participant. (In FieldWorks Language Explorer, you can use the Tag function.)

The chief priests (plus scribes and temple guards) and Judas are the major participants in verses 1–6. (Looking at the rest of Luke’s Gospel we can say that these are episodic major participants). Satan is only mentioned once, and so I will treat him as a minor participant. Verses 7–13 concern Jesus, who is the global VIP, and Peter and John (functioning as a group). I will highlight them using colour.
ἀπελθόντες δὲ εὗρον καθὼς εἰρήκει αὐτοῖς καὶ ἡτοίμασαν τὸ πάσχα.

Having left, they found just as he had said to them and they prepared the Passover.

**Step 4. Identify the context in which each referring expression (including zero reference) occurs.**

The contexts for subject referring expressions were given in table 3 and are repeated here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Referring expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>The subject is the same as in the previous clause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>The subject was the addressee of a speech reported in the previous sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>The subject was involved in the previous clause in a non-subject role (but not as the addressee in a conversation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>The subject was not mentioned in the previous clause.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We will look at each participant in turn. The first participants mentioned are the chief priests and the scribes in verse 2; the previous clause does not mention them, and so the context is S4. The chief priests and temple guards are the subject of ‘they rejoiced’ in verse 5; they were mentioned in the previous clause (v.4) but not as the subject so the context in ‘they rejoiced’ is S3. They are also the subject of the next clause in verse 5, ‘they agreed…’; since they were the subject of the previous clause, the context is S1.

Judas is the subject of ‘having left he discussed’ in verse 4; we will treat this as one clause. Since Judas is mentioned in the previous clause (in v.3) but not as the subject, the context is S3. Judas is also the subject of the dependent clause ‘he might deliver him’; since Judas was the subject of the previous (main) clause, the context is S1. In verse 6 Judas is the subject of ‘he consented’; because Judas was mentioned in the previous clause (‘they agreed with him’), this is S3. Judas is also the subject of the next verb ‘he sought’, which is S1.

Jesus is the subject of ‘he sent’ in verse 8 (although he is not named); since Jesus was not mentioned in verse 7 this is S4. Jesus is also the subject of the next verb ‘having said’ so this is S1. In verse 9, Peter and John address Jesus and in verse 10, Jesus replies; Jesus is the subject of ‘he said’ in verse 10, and because he was the addressee in the previous clause, the context is S2.

Peter and John are spoken to in verse 8 and reply in verse 9 so the context of ‘they said’ is S2. They are also the subject of ‘having left they found’ in verse 13, which we will treat as one clause. Although they were the addressees in the previous clause, the conversation has ended, and so the context is not S2; because Peter and John were mentioned in the previous sentence (‘he said to them’), the context is S3.

We can record the results in a table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Referring expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief priests and scribes/ temple guards</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>noun phrase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judas</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>definite article functioning as subject pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter and John</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>definite article functioning as subject pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>subject agreement on verb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 5. **Determine the default encodings for major participants in subject position.**

You will need to discover what the default encodings are in your narrative texts. Be sure to look at a variety of texts, including ones with human participants, not just well-known folktales (involving animals), and be aware that there may be a difference between how certain types of participants are referred to.

We will decide on default readings within paragraphs (that is, we will ignore the first clause in each paragraph for now). The contexts in which each referring expression occurs along with the frequency of their occurrences is as follows:

- **S1** subject agreement on verb (x 4)
- **S2** definite article functioning as subject pronoun (x 2)
- **S3** subject agreement on verb (x 4)
- **S4** noun phrase (x 1) or subject agreement on verb (x 1)

In all of the S3 contexts, a single participant is interacting with a group (Judas with the chief priests, Jesus with Peter and John) and so singular or plural verb agreement is sufficient to distinguish the subject. Levinsohn notes that when two individual major participants are interacting, a noun phrase must be used in S3 contexts to indicate a change of subject. We can see this in Acts 16:18 where there is a change of subject from the slave girl to Paul, and in Acts 16:27–28 where there is a change of subject from the jailer to Paul, and Paul is named in both cases.

The default encodings in this passage are clear for S1, S2 and S3 but not for S4. Based on the evidence in this passage, Koiné Greek merges S1 and S3 (both are marked by subject agreement on the verb) but treats S2 differently (using a definite article functioning as a subject pronoun). Different languages have different patterns of default encodings. There appears to be a tendency for African languages to follow one of two patterns of default encoding:

- **S1** contexts (same subject) use minimal coding material, whereas **S2**, **S3** and **S4** contexts (all changes of subject) use a noun phrase (e.g. Chadic languages).
- **S1**, **S2** and **S3** contexts (all recently mentioned participants) use minimal coding material, whereas **S4** contexts (not recently mentioned participants) use a noun phrase (e.g. a number of West African languages, including Bantu zone A languages).

The eastern Bantu languages have a variety of the first pattern, where **S1** contexts are marked by subject agreement on the verb and **S3** and **S4** contexts are marked by noun phrases, often including a demonstrative (as discussed above). In closed conversations (S2) there is variation, with a change of speaker indicated sometimes by a noun phrase, sometimes by subject agreement alone, sometimes simply by a QUOTATIVE (see chapter 5), and sometimes by nothing (the conversation proceeds with no indication of a change of speaker).

**Step 6. Look at how participants are referred to in the first clause of each paragraph.**

Does the narrator sometimes use more coding material than the default encoding? If so, how often does this occur, and what kinds of referring expressions are used to start new paragraphs?

In this passage no participants are referred to at the start of a new paragraph. Let us look at Acts 16:25 instead. The context here is S3 because the subject (Paul and Silas) was mentioned in the previous clause in a non-subject role (in v.24 the jailer puts them in prison and fastens their feet in the stocks). Greek distinguishes singular and plural subject agreement on verbs, and so there is no danger of mistaking who is being referred to. We would therefore expect an S3 context like this to be marked by subject agreement on the verb. However, what we find is the use of the names ‘Paul and Silas’.
Step 7. Try to find reasons why different referring expressions are used instead of the default encodings.

Identify other places where

- more coding material is used than expected (e.g. when a pronoun is expected but a name is used);
- less coding material is used than expected (e.g. when a noun phrase is expected but verb agreement is used); or
- it is not possible to establish a default encoding for a particular context because a variety of referring expressions are used.

The reasons for using different referring expressions instead of the default encoding will probably concern the discourse-pragmatic functions of referring expressions. Sometimes the default encodings do not apply at the peak (but in this passage there is no obvious peak).

In the passage there are two S4 contexts: one uses a noun phrase (‘the chief priests and the scribes’ in v.2) and the other uses subject agreement on the verb (referring to Jesus in v.8). Although Jesus is referred to a number of times in this passage, he is never named. In verses 2, 4 and 6 Jesus is referred to in non-subject roles using independent pronouns, but when Judas is referred to in a non-subject role in verse 3, he is named. The most likely explanation for this is that because Jesus is the global VIP (because the whole Gospel is about him) he is treated as if he were present in the story, even when he has not been recently mentioned. This means that references to Jesus can be treated as if they were S1 or S3 when they are, in fact, S4. Note that this is a feature of Koiné Greek and might not be a feature of your language.

4.4 Participants in Acts 16:16–40

We will not go through the steps of deciding default encodings in this passage, as this is something that we only need to do once for each language. The important thing is for you to know the default encodings and discourse-pragmatic functions of referring expressions in your language.

The following are the major participants in Acts 16:16–40:

- Paul (and Silas)—sometimes they act together, but at other times Paul acts alone. Note that Paul is the global VIP in the second half of Acts (Peter is the global VIP for most of the first half of Acts).
- The jailer—although the jailer is only introduced at the end of the developmental episode, he plays a very active role in the rest of the story, including at the peak.

These are the minor participants in Acts 16:16–40:

- The slave girl—she is only present during the inciting episode but she is active and speaks.
- The slave owners—although they are active and speak, they are only present during the developmental episode.
- The magistrates, the crowd and the police.

4.5 Application to translation

Because of the differences between languages, it is important for translators to know what choice of referring expressions is available in the source language and in the target language, and what the function of each referring expression is. A translator must use a referring expression in the target language that has a similar function to the referring expression in the source language, even if the form is different. For example, an independent pronoun in English (he or she) should not always be translated with an independent pronoun in an eastern Bantu language because independent pronouns have different functions (such as contrast or emphasis) in eastern Bantu languages.

After you have studied participant reference in your language, revise your translation of Acts 16:16–24 and make a first draft of Acts 16:25–34. Pay special attention to the use of connectives (see chapter 3) and referring expressions. The notes below are provided to help you.
4.5.1 Plural referents: verses 16–18 and 19–23

Verses 16 and 17 continue the use of the first person plural references (ἡμῶν ‘we’ and ἡμῖν ‘us’) started in 16:10. You may have put a note at Acts 16:10 to indicate that ‘we’ indicates Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke (the author), but even so it could be worth repeating this information here as this is a new section. From verse 18 onward (until Acts 20:5) all the references are third person (‘they’, ‘he’). It seems that Timothy and Luke left Paul and Silas at or before the time when they were arrested and put into prison, and you may want to mention this in a note.

There are also potential difficulties in translating the plural referring expressions in the developmental episode. Below is the text of Acts 16:19–23 in the English Standard Version; the third person plural pronouns have been highlighted:

19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. 20 And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” 22 The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely.

There are four groups referred to in these verses: the slave owners, Paul and Silas, the magistrates (also referred to as ‘Roman officials’, ‘city officials’ and ‘rulers’ in certain translations), and the crowd. Not mentioned directly are the people who beat Paul and Silas and threw them into prison on the magistrates’ orders—probably the police (see vv.35–38) rather than the magistrates themselves (although the magistrates themselves probably did order the jailer to keep Paul and Silas safe). Let’s colour the referring expressions to distinguish the participants:

19 But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. 20 And when they had brought Paul and Silas to the Roman magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice.” 22 The crowd joined in attacking Paul and Silas, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 Having been thoroughly whipped Paul and Silas, were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded and told, “Keep them safely.”

Let’s look at an example of how more coding material can be used to help hearers and readers correctly identify the participants. When these verses were translated into Orma (D’iba 2011) some of these plural pronouns were replaced with noun phrases and passive constructions (in bold below) to make the references clearer:

19 But when the slave girl’s owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the authorities. 20 And when they had brought Paul and Silas to the Roman magistrates, they said, ‘These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city.’ 21 They advocate customs that are not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice.” 22 The crowd joined in attacking Paul and Silas, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. 23 Having been thoroughly whipped Paul and Silas, were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded and told, “Keep them safely.”

The main things to note here are the use of the names ‘Paul and Silas’ instead of ‘them’ except in the direct speech, and the use of the passive constructions (‘Having been thoroughly whipped’, ‘were thrown’, ‘was commanded’). Using passive constructions means that the agents of the whipping and throwing do not have to be named. An alternative way to translate the last verse is to make the agents explicit: ‘When the police had inflicted many blows on Paul and Silas they threw them into prison, and the magistrates ordered the jailer to keep them safely.’
4.5.2  **Paragraph break: verses 24–25**

Paul and Silas are mentioned in verse 24 in non-subject roles:

24 Having received this order, he [the jailer] put them [Paul and Silas] into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. (ESV)

A new paragraph starts at verse 25, and even though Paul and Silas have just been mentioned, they are referred to using their names in the Greek text:

23 About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, (ESV)

Your translation should also use names to refer to Paul and Silas in verse 25.

4.5.3  **Discourse-pragmatic functions: verses 27–29**

The discourse-pragmatic functions of referring expressions differ from language to language. In these notes, I will discuss how reference to the jailer in verses 27–29 would vary in the different eastern Bantu languages discussed in section 4.5.

4.5.3.1  **Verse 27**

In verse 27, all of these languages except Bena would probably use a distal demonstrative (‘that jailer’), but for different reasons:

27 When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. (ESV)

**Activation status**

The jailer was last mentioned in verse 24, and although he was probably present in the jail while Paul and Silas were singing and during the earthquake he was not active (in fact he was asleep). In Jita, Kwaya, Kabwa, Malila and Suba-Simbiti, reactivated participants (participants that were not active during the previous event) are almost always referred to using a noun phrase containing a distal demonstrative.

**Agency**

In Bena, distal demonstratives are used to refer to major participants functioning as agents, and referential demonstratives are used to refer to major participants functioning as non-agents. The first events that the jailer is involved in are waking and seeing that the prison doors were open. These are not events that the jailer can initiate and control, and so the jailer is an EXPERIENCER (a non-agent) and a referential demonstrative is appropriate.

**Text structuring**

In Digo, the default way of referring to major participants in developmental episodes and at the peak is to use a distal demonstrative. The jailer is an episodic major participant, and in the Digo New Testament he is referred to in this verse as *yuya asikari jela* (‘that guard [of] jail’) using a distal demonstrative *yuya*.

**Important developments**

In Fuliru and Makonde distal demonstratives are used to indicate important developments in a story. Since this is the start of the peak (which always marks an important development) and the jailer is an episodic major participant, a distal demonstrative would be appropriate here.
When we come to the way the jailer is referred to in verse 29 there are some differences:

28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” 29 And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas. (ESV)

**Activation status**

In Jita, Kwaya and Suba-Simbiti, activated participants are usually referred to using a referential demonstrative when there is a change of subject. The jailer is activated but Paul was the subject in verse 28, and so a referential demonstrative would be appropriate. Kabwa and Malila use referential and distal demonstratives in almost equal numbers for activated participants, so either should be acceptable.

**Agency**

In Bena, we would expect a distal demonstrative because the jailer is an agent in this sentence.

**Text structuring**

Distal demonstratives in Digo are used more frequently for protagonists and VIPs than for antagonists and other participants (who are usually referred to using a noun phrase without any demonstrative). When a story has a protagonist and an antagonist, a demonstrative may be used early on to refer to the antagonist but once the story is under way (that is, in the developmental episodes and peak) demonstratives are usually used to refer to the protagonist only. In verse 28 Paul (who is a VIP) takes the initiative and functions as a protagonist, and the jailer reacts and functions as an antagonist. For this reason, no demonstrative was used in verse 29 to refer to the jailer in the Digo New Testament.

**Important developments.**

The earthquake, the jailer being about to kill himself, and Paul telling him to stop are all important and unexpected developments in the story. In contrast, the jailer calling for lights and entering the prison is less important and more predictable. In Fuliru and Makonde major participants are only referred to using demonstratives when there are important developments, and so we would expect no demonstrative in these languages either.

**Recommended readings**


5 Represented speech

The participants in narratives not only do things, they also say and think things. Narrators can tell the audience what the participants say and think using REPRESENTED SPEECH (also called “reported speech” or “quotation”). In this chapter, we will look first of all at the forms of represented speech, distinguishing two main kinds: DIRECT SPEECH and INDIRECT SPEECH (additional kinds of represented speech are described in Appendix C) and analyzing SPEECH ORIENTERS (clauses that identify the speaker and/or addressee, and optionally describe the manner of speech). We will then look at the functions of represented speech, noting different ways in which represented speech is used in various languages, including the representation of conversations. Finally, we will see how you can study represented speech in your language and apply what you learn to translation.

5.1 Different kinds of represented speech

5.1.1 Direct and indirect speech

Most languages of the world have two main kinds of represented speech: direct and indirect speech (Aikhenvald 2008:411). Let’s look again at Luke 22:1–13:

1 Now the festival of unleavened bread, which is called the Passover, was approaching. 2 And the chief priests and the scribes were looking for a way to destroy him [Jesus] for they were afraid of the people.
3 Now Satan entered Judas called Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, 4 and he went to discuss with the chief priests and the temple guards how he could deliver him to them. 5 And they rejoiced and agreed to pay him silver. 6 He consented and began to look for an opportunity to deliver him to them away from the crowd.
7 Now the day of unleavened bread arrived on which the Passover [lambs] had to be sacrificed, 8 and he [Jesus] sent Peter and John saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, so that we may eat it.” 9 And they said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare it?” 10 And he said to them, “When you enter the city you will meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him into the house which he will enter, 11 and you will say to the owner of the house, ‘The master says to you, “Where is the room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?” ’ 12 And that man will show you a large furnished room upstairs; that is where you will make the preparations.” 13 And they left and found everything just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Verses 4–6 describe a meeting between Judas and the chief priests and temple guards. We know that Judas and at least some of the chief priests and temple guards talked because Luke uses the word “discuss.” When the chief priests and temple guards rejoiced they probably spoke to each other, and when they agreed to pay Judas silver they certainly spoke to him, probably saying something like “We will pay you silver.” In the same way, Judas probably said “I agree” or similar words when he consented. Although verses 4–6 describe the results of a conversation, Luke does not tell us any of the actual words that were spoken. This is indirect speech.

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14 The term “reported speech” is most commonly used, but I follow Egner (2015:65) in using “represented speech.” Egner prefers this term for the following reasons: (i) people “report” what has already been said, but represented speech includes what will or may be said in the future; (ii) representing involves a certain amount of interpretation or selection, but reporting should be more objective; (iii) people can represent speech more or less accurately, but a report suggests only an accurate reproduction; (iv) thoughts can also be represented as speech; (v) represented speech includes clauses which express the purpose of a speech event (using verbs such as ‘accuse’ or ‘refuse’) without using any of the actual words spoken.
Verses 8–12 describe a conversation between Jesus and two of the disciples, but this time Luke tells us in detail the words that were spoken. This is direct speech. This passage includes some embedded direct speech, or “speech within speech,” when Jesus tells Peter and John to tell the owner of the house what he (Jesus) says. There are three levels of direct speech:

(1) Jesus said to them..., (2) you will say to the owner of the house, (3) The master says to you...

Direct and indirect speech can be distinguished through the kinds of referring expressions and different tenses that are used. In direct speech, first person pronouns (‘I’, ‘we’ etc.) are used to refer to the speaker or speakers, and second person pronouns (‘you’, ‘your’ etc.) to refer to the addressee(s). In indirect speech, the narrator refers to both the speaker and the addressee using third person pronouns (‘he’, ‘she’, ‘they’). Direct speech uses a variety of tenses, including present and future, but indirect speech usually uses past tense (at least in English). Compare the direct and indirect forms in table 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct speech</th>
<th>Indirect speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>They said</strong>₁, “We₁ agree₂ to pay you₄ silver.” <strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>They₂ agreed₂ to pay him₂ silver.</strong> <strong>1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Speech verb ‘said’</td>
<td>1 No speech verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1st person pronoun ‘We’ for speakers</td>
<td>2 3rd person pronouns ‘They’ and ‘him’ for speakers and addressee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Present tense ‘agree’</td>
<td>3 Past tense ‘agreed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 2nd person pronoun ‘you’ for addressee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>He said</strong>, “Go₁ and prepare the Passover for us₃.” <strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>He told</strong>, them to go₂ and prepare the Passover for them₃. <strong>₁</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 General speech verb ‘said’</td>
<td>1 Specific command verb ‘told’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Imperative (command) ‘Go...’</td>
<td>2 Subordinate (infinitive) clause for command ‘to go...’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 1st person pronoun ‘us’ for speaker and addressee</td>
<td>3 3rd person pronoun ‘them’ for speaker and addressee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>They said</strong>₁, to him, “Where do you₄ want₃ us₄ to prepare it?” <strong>₁</strong></td>
<td><strong>They asked</strong>, him where he₂ wanted₁, them₄ to prepare it. <strong>₁</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 General speech verb ‘said’</td>
<td>1 Specific question verb ‘asked’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 2nd person pronoun ‘you’ for addressee</td>
<td>2 3rd person pronoun ‘he’ for addressee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Direct question in present tense ‘Where do you want...?’</td>
<td>3 Indirect question in past tense ‘where he wanted...’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 1st person pronoun ‘us’ for speakers</td>
<td>4 3rd person pronoun ‘them’ for speakers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some languages, certain kinds of speech—notably questions and commands—must be expressed using direct speech. In such languages there is no equivalent of ‘he asked whether it was true’ and ‘she told/ordered him to leave’. Instead, narrators say ‘he said/asked, “Is it true?” ’ and ‘she said, “Leave!” ’

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15 The New Testament authors do not always give the exact words that were spoken, as the differences between the gospels indicate. Instead, they are concerned to give the meaning of what was said. Peter or John—or both—may have told Luke about this conversation.

16 Aikhenvald (2008:410–417) provides a detailed account of how to distinguish direct and indirect speech in different languages. Suggestions for analyzing direct and indirect speech together with notes on the relevance of this for translation can be found in van den Berg (2008:1–3).
5.1.2 Other kinds of represented speech

Some languages have additional forms of represented speech that combine features of direct and indirect speech. Two additional types of represented speech—semi-direct speech and free indirect style—are described in Appendix C. If you are aware that your language has more ways of reporting speech and thought than just direct and indirect speech, or if you suspect that this may be the case, please read Appendix C before continuing with this chapter.

5.2 Unique features of represented speech

5.2.1 Vocatives

Direct speech—but not indirect speech—may contain vocatives. Vocatives are expressions that are used when one person calls another; they are used to get someone’s attention or to address someone directly. An important function of vocatives is to establish the relative status of the speaker and the addressee; compare, for example “My Lord” and “You there.” Different vocative forms are found in different languages:

- Vocative pronouns; for example, the usual 2nd person singular pronoun ‘you’ in Digo is uwe but the vocative form is wee.
- Particles or exclamations, such as English Hey!
- Forms of address, often restricted to family members or friends (the New Testament often has ἀδελφοί ‘brothers’, sometimes translated as ‘brethren’, ‘brothers and sisters’ or ‘friends’). In some (but not all) languages, these may be modified by adjectives, relative clauses and possessive pronouns; Koiné Greek can do this, as in ἀδελφοί μου ‘my brothers’.
- Special forms of names such as Koiné Greek ὦ Τιμόθεε ‘O Timothy’.

In some languages, vocatives must occur at the start of a sentence, but in other languages vocatives may occur at the end or in the middle of a sentence, as in James 1:2:

Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιπέσητε ποικίλοις
‘Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you face various trials.’

5.2.2 Speech orienters

Speech orienter is a term used to describe any words or phrases that accompany represented speech (direct, indirect, or any other kind). Minimally a speech orienter indicates that there is speech, but a speech orienter can also contain information about who is speaking, who is being spoken to, and the manner of speaking. Depending on the language, speech orienters can occur before, after or within the represented speech, or at more than one location. Sometimes speech orienters may be omitted completely. Factors such as whether a text is formal or informal, whether the speech forms part of a conversation or a monologue, whether the speaker is a major or minor participant, and so on, can affect the content of speech orienters, and even whether a speech orienter occurs or not.

The following examples from an English folk tale illustrate different speech orienters. The speakers are two major participants, a boy called “Jack” and his mother.

---

17 Other terms include “speech margin,” “quote margin,” “quotation formula” and “quote tag.”
(16) a. “You stupid boy,” said his mother, “you should have put it in your pocket.”
   b. “I’ll do so another time,” Jack replied.

(17) a. “Dear me!” said the old woman. “You should have carried it on your head.”
   b. “I’ll do so another time,” said Jack.

(18) When he got home his mother said to him, “You silly fellow…”

These examples show us some of the variety in speech orienters in English:

- Position: Speech orienters occur in the middle of represented speech in (16a) and (17a), after represented speech in (16b) and (17b), and before represented speech in (18).
- Speech verbs: The basic speech verb said is used most often, but (16b) uses replied which indicates that Jack’s speech was a response to what his mother had said.
- Constituent order: The usual order of subject (S) and verb (V) in English is SV as in Jack replied (16b) and his mother said (18), but with speech verbs the order can be reversed (VS) as in said his mother (16a) and said Jack (17b).
- Participants: English clauses require a subject and so the speaker is always identified. In (18) the addressee is also identified: his mother said to him.

We can present this information in the form of a table (the position of the represented speech—before and/or after the speech orienter—is indicated by xxx):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Speech</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Addressee</th>
<th>Speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>said</td>
<td>his mother</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>replied</td>
<td>his mother</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>said</td>
<td>the old woman</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td>said</td>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>his mother</td>
<td>said</td>
<td>to him</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table will not necessarily work for other languages. Look at the following examples from a narrative in the Bantu language Ekoti.

(19) a. khunvekela Siipannu araka, “Siipannu, kin takha onrala mwanenu.”
    he.asked.him Lion saying Lion I.want to.marry.her your.daughter

  b. Aphano Siipannu ajipwaka khuri, “Mwanaka kininloza otule anwa haaye…”
    then Lion reply ing said my.daughter I.will.marry.her.to that.one who.is.able
    ‘He asked Lion saying, “Mr. Lion, I want to marry your daughter.” Lion replying said, “I will marry her to the one who is able to…” ’

(20) Namarokolo khunvekela Siipunnu yoori, “Nam iyo kin takha wulottani…”
    Hare he.asked.him Lion QUOTATIVE I.also I.want to.accompany.you
    ‘Hare asked Lion, “I want to accompany you…” ’

The word yoori is a QUOTATIVE MARKER, also called a “speech particle.” Quotative markers are words or expressions that are used to introduce represented speech (direct or indirect) and which are not lexical verbs that take all the usual person and tense/aspect marking. (However, quotative markers often develop historically out of verbs, and in fact the forms khuri in (19b) and yoori in (20) probably share the same verb root ri ‘be’.) English does not use quotative markers to introduce direct speech, but complementizers including that and if/whether are used to introduce indirect speech in English, as in His mother said that he should have put it in his pocket, and His mother asked if/whether he had put it in his pocket.
As well as having an optional quotative marker, Ekoti also allows two speech verbs in a single speech orienter: a manner verb such as ‘ask’ or ‘reply’ and a basic speech verb ‘say’. Also, like other eastern Bantu languages, speech orienters in Ekoti always occur before the represented speech. Because of this, the table for Ekoti looks rather different than the table for English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Verb 1</th>
<th>Addressee</th>
<th>Verb 2</th>
<th>Quotative</th>
<th>Speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>khunvekela</td>
<td>he.asked.him</td>
<td>Siipannu</td>
<td>araka</td>
<td>xxx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>Siipannu</td>
<td>Lion</td>
<td>ajipwaka</td>
<td>reply</td>
<td>khuri</td>
<td>said xxx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Namarokolo</td>
<td>Hare</td>
<td>khunvekela</td>
<td>he.asked.him</td>
<td>yoori</td>
<td>QUOTATIVE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Speech orienters in Ekoti

Different languages vary in terms of the kinds of speech verbs that occur in speech orienters and whether or not a quotative marker is used. Specifically, we can determine for each language

- the variety of speech verbs that occur in speech orienters,
- the number of speech verbs that may occur in a single speech orienter,
- whether a speech verb is obligatory or optional in a speech orienter,
- the number of quotative markers in the language,
- whether a quotative marker (if it exists) is obligatory or optional in a speech orienter, and
- whether quotative markers introduce specific kinds of represented speech (e.g. direct or indirect).

5.2.2.1 Speech verbs

We have seen that English usually has just one speech verb in each speech orienter but Ekoti can have two. When a language uses two or more speech verbs, it is common for one to be a basic verb ‘say’ and the other(s) to be more specific (e.g. ‘ask’, ‘reply’, ‘shout’).

Some languages use many different verbs in speech orienters. For example, speech orienters in the Bantu language Fuliiru may contain the verbs *deta* ‘speak’, *bwira* ‘say’, *buusa* ‘ask’, *ganuula* ‘chat’, *komeereza* ‘insist’, *lahira* ‘disagree’, *longoola* ‘discuss’, *naaka* ‘argue’, *shunya* ‘answer’, *tendeera* ‘beg’, *yemeera* ‘agree’, *yidodomba* ‘murmur’, and others. In other languages, even if similar verbs exist, they are either not used in speech orienters or must be accompanied by a basic verb. In another Bantu language, Digo, for example, almost every speech orienter contains the verb *amba* ‘say/tell’. Occasionally another speech verb occurs, but all other verbs (except for *iha* ‘call’ or *usa* ‘ask’) must be followed by the verb *amba*.

In some languages, certain verbs take on special meanings when used in speech orienters. For example, in Tembo, long or important speeches are often introduced using the verb ‘start’, as in ‘He started to say…’. This gives the hearer warning that an important speech is about to begin.

Speech verbs sometimes have unusual properties compared with other verbs. We have already seen that English speech verbs can occur before the subject as well as after the subject; this also happens in French. In some languages, speech verbs take different tense or aspect marking than other storyline verbs. In Digo narratives, about half of all occurrences of the usual speech verb *amba* ‘say’ are in the present tense, and in Kwaya the present tense is often used to introduce speech clauses instead of the usual narrative tense:

\[
\text{Abhaanu bhayo a-bha-aika ati, "Aa anye enigatura era."} \\
\text{people those PRES-they-say QUOTATIVE ah I L.am.able easily} \\
\text{‘Those people say, “Ah I can do it easily.” ’ (Odom 2015: 26)}
\]
5.2.2.2 Quotative markers

In some languages, a speech verb is optional and a quotative marker occurs either instead of or in addition to a speech verb. Quotative markers can be invariable particles, including complementizers like English that, or reduced verbs which are often shorter than the full verbs that they developed out of. For example, in Suba-Simbiti the quotative marker igha developed out of the verb ghamba ‘say’; in some speech orienters the verb ghamba occurs without a quotative marker but sometimes the verb and the quotative marker are used together in a speech orienter, as in Akaghamba igha “...”

5.3 Functions of represented speech in narratives

5.3.1 Default types of represented speech

Biblical narratives tend to use a lot of direct speech; that is, direct speech is the default way of representing speech (and thoughts) in the Old and New Testaments. This is also the case in many of the eastern Bantu languages. If a language uses one type of represented speech as the default, other types of represented speech often have a special function. For example, in Fuliiru, direct speech (the default type of represented speech) occurs on the storyline and indirect speech tends to occur in supportive material.

5.3.2 Reporting thoughts

Direct speech is often used in the text of the Bible to express not only the words that participants say but also their private thoughts. Look at Genesis 21:15–16 below. In this passage, Hagar and her son Ishmael have been sent into the desert and their water has just run out. Direct speech is used to express what Hagar is thinking.

15 When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. 16 Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, “I cannot watch the boy die.” And as she sat there, she began to sob. (NIV)

There is no difference in form between direct speech used to express speech and direct speech used to express thoughts, as Genesis 17:17–18 shows:

17 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?” 18 And Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!” (NIV)

Verse 17 reports what Abraham “said to himself”; he probably did not speak aloud, so the words in the quotation are a way of reporting what Abraham was thinking rather than actual words that he said. Verse 18 reports what Abraham “said to God”; in this case he probably spoke these actual words—or something very similar—aloud.

Examples of represented speech being used for both thoughts and actual words are also found in the New Testament. Look at Luke 15:17–19 below; the whole passage reports the son’s thoughts, but verses 18 and 19 report what the son plans to say to his father—that is, his imagined future conversation with his father.

17 But when he came to himself, he said, “How many of my father’s hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.’ ” (ESV)

One final example of represented speech being used to record a participant’s thoughts is found in Acts 12:11.

11 When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.” (ESV)
5.3.3 Major and minor participants and represented speech

In some languages, when major participants (especially VIPs) speak, this is more likely to be represented using direct speech, and when minor participants speak, this is more likely to be represented using indirect speech. In Koiné Greek, both major and minor participants can have direct speech, but there is a tendency for major participants to have direct speech and for minor participants to have indirect speech. A good example of this is Acts 27. This passage describes how Paul and his companions (Luke uses ‘we’) travel from Caesaria by boat. As well as Paul, the participants in this passage include a Roman centurion called Julius, the soldiers under his command, and the crew of the ship. All of these play an active role in the events, but only Paul’s words are represented using direct speech.

5.4 Conversations

A conversation between two or more participants, even if it involves many “turns” (that is, when the speaker changes), should be treated from a discourse perspective as a single event. At the discourse level, therefore, a conversation is treated as a single paragraph so long as the topic and the speakers do not change. Conversations in which the same two participants talk about a single topic are called CLOSED CONVERSATIONS.

In a closed conversation, once the speakers have been identified, it may not be necessary to name the speaker at each turn in the conversation. In Hebrew, once the participants have been established, a conversation can be recorded as a series of quotations without any noun phrase indicating each change of speaker. Often the turns are indicated in the following way (for example Genesis 18:27–33 and 32:26–30):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>(A speaks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>(B speaks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>(A speaks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>(B speaks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb</td>
<td>(A speaks)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hebrew sometimes uses two verbs in a speech introduction: Verb1 Subject Verb2 (e.g. ‘answered Abraham and said’). The use of ‘answered’ in a series of speech verbs usually means that this is the most important turn in a conversation:

Laban and Bethuel **answered and said**, “This is from the Lord; we can say nothing to you one way or the other. Here is Rebekah; take her and go, and let her become the wife of your master’s son, as the Lord has directed.” (Genesis 24:50–51)

Or, that a new speaker interrupts the conversation:

A young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ aide since youth, **answered and said**, “Moses, my lord, stop them!” (Numbers 11:27–28)

Turns in a conversation may be indicated in different ways in other languages. Occasionally in Digo, a narrator will refer by name or by a demonstrative to one of the speakers, but not to the other:

| Name verb | (A speaks) |
| Verb | (B speaks) |
| Name verb | (A speaks) |
| Verb | (B speaks) |
Another method is to name one of the participants and then alternate between active and passive forms of the speech verb. In the following Digo example, the active verb form *amba* ‘say/tell’ is used in speech orienters for the protagonist [P], while the passive verb form *ambwa* ‘be told’ is used in speech orienters for the antagonist [A], with the protagonist remaining as the subject.

(22) [P] …*anamuamba yuya, “Mwarabu una mwanao mchetu uwe, mino namtaka.”*  
…he told him, “Mr Arab, you have a daughter, and I want [to marry] her.”

[A] *Anaambwa, “Uwe mgbwayi tsona mchiya wa mwisho unataka mwanangu!”*  
He was told, “You are poor and moreover you are a total loser but you want my child!”

[P] *Anaamba, “Hee.”*  
He said, “Yeah.”

[A] *Anaambwa, “Nataka uniphe elufu arubaini.”*  
He was told, “I want you to give me forty thousand (shillings).”

### 5.5 Discovery procedures

Use narrative texts in your language to answer the following questions:

- What types of represented speech are used in your language? Direct, indirect, semi-direct?
- Is one of these types of represented speech the default form?
- Does your language have special vocative forms of address? Are there restrictions on where vocatives occur (e.g. only at the start of a sentence) or whether they can be modified (e.g. ‘my brothers’)?
- Are there any kinds of speech (e.g. questions, commands) which must be expressed using direct speech?
- Describe the speech orienters in your texts. You may find it useful to make speech charts like the charts for English and Ekoti in section 5.2.2 above. Pay particular attention to the position of the speech orienters (before, after, or within represented speech) and differences between speech orienters that introduce direct and indirect speech.
- Look at the verbs that occur in speech orienters. Are there various different verbs or just one or two general verbs (e.g. ‘say’, ‘tell’, ‘ask’, ‘reply’)? Can more than one verb occur in a single speech orienter?
- Is there anything unusual about speech verbs compared to other verbs (for example, different word order or different tense or aspect)?
- Does your language have quotative markers? If so, do all speech orienters contain a quotative marker or only some? Are there types of represented speech where a quotative marker can or can not occur?
- If there is a default type of represented speech, what are the discourse functions of the other types of represented speech? For example, is one type of represented speech used for background information? Or does a certain type of represented speech indicate important developments in the story?
- Look for places in your texts where the narrator describes the thoughts of a participant. How is this done? Is it possible to express thoughts using direct speech?
- Do all participants have direct speech or only major participants?

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18 The passive is indicated by the suffix -*w* after the verb root. The speech verbs in the example below are in the present tense, but have been glossed in English using the past tense.

19 Suggestions of what to look for when investigating represented speech can also be found in Wiesemann (1990), van den Berg (2008), and Aikhenvald (2008:417–418).
• In conversations with many turns, is it necessary to distinguish the speakers using names or noun phrases at every turn, or is the alternation between speakers sufficient to identify who is speaking?
• When speakers are referred to during a closed conversation, does the way in which they are referred to (e.g. by a noun phrase, by verb agreement only, not at all) depend on their position in the conversation (first speaker or second speaker) or on some other factor (e.g. protagonist or antagonist, more or less important participant, socially superior person or socially inferior person, etc.)?
• Does your language have a way to indicate the most important turn in a conversation?
• What, if anything, happens in your language to indicate that an unexpected or new speaker is about to speak?

5.6 Represented speech in Acts 16:16–40

Acts 16:16–40 contains both direct and indirect speech. Indirect speech is expressed using verbs such as ‘ordered’, ‘called’, ‘spoke’, ‘reported’, ‘apologized’, and asked:

verse 22 the magistrates...gave orders to beat them with rods (sticks)
verse 23 having ordered the jailer to guard them carefully
verse 29 the jailer called for lights
verse 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.
verse 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates
verse 39 they apologized to [literally: ‘begged’] them [...] and asked them to leave the city.

Most of the speech is expressed as direct speech. In this passage (unlike Acts 27), minor participants have direct speech: the slave girl in verse 17, the slave owners in verses 20–21, and the magistrates in verse 35. However, most of the direct speech involves Paul and the jailer.

In Greek, speech orienters always occur before direct speech, and usually contain a speech verb ‘say’ (Greek has two verbs, λέγω and φημί which have very similar meanings). Occasionally the verb ‘say’ is not used; in Acts 16:36 the only verb in the speech orienter is ‘reported’ and the direct speech is introduced using a quotative marker ὅτι ‘that’:

36 ἀπήγγειλεν δὲ ὁ δεσμόφυλαξ τοὺς λόγους τούτους πρὸς τὸν Παῦλον ὅτι reported and the jailer the words these to the Paul that οἱ στρατηγοὶ ἴνα ἀπολυθῆτε· νῦν οὖν εἴσελθόντες have.sent the magistrates that you.be.released now therefore having.gone.out πορεύεσθε ἐν εἰρήνῃ, go in peace

‘The jailer reported these words to Paul (saying), “The magistrates have sent (ordered) that you be released. So come out now and go in peace.”’

5.7 Application to translation

After you have studied represented speech in your language, revise your translation of Acts 16:16–34 and make a first draft of Acts 16:35–40. I will highlight a few issues in verses 16–34 before looking in more detail at verses 35–40.

Notes on verses 16–34

As we saw in section 5.6, most speech orienters in Greek use a form of the basic speech verb ‘say’. The ESV translation of verses 30 and 31 reflects this:

30 καὶ προσήχοντον αὐτοῖς ἔξω ἔρη, Κύριο, τι με δὲ ποιεῖν ἵνα σωθῶ; οἱ δὲ τίτλου, 31 Πίστευσον ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ σωθήσῃ σὺ καὶ οἶκός σου. ‘Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”’ And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household.”’ (ESV)
In non-translated English narrative texts it is more natural to use a variety of speech verbs, and so other English translations (including NIV, NLT, and TEV) use *ask* to introduce the questions and *reply* or *answer* to introduce responses:

30 Then he brought them out and **asked**, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 They **replied**, “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, along with everyone in your household.”

(NLT)

The way in which a person speaks can be described using a verb of manner such as ‘shout’, but speech orienters in Greek usually include ‘say’ in addition to the verb of manner. This is not natural in English, and so most English translations omit ‘say’.

17 **αὕτη κατακολουθοῦσα τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ ἡμῖν ἔκραξεν λέγοντας,**

ESV ‘She followed Paul and us, crying out, …’

NRSV ‘While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, …’

28 **ἐφνησεν δὲ μεγάλη φωνῇ ὁ Παῦλος λέγων,**

called but with loud voice the Paul saying

NRSV ‘But Paul shouted in a loud voice, …’

NIV ‘But Paul shouted, …’

Find out whether it is natural to use a basic speech verb like ‘say’ in most speech orienters (like Greek) or whether it is more natural to use a variety of speech verbs, such as ‘ask’ and ‘reply’ (like English). If it is not natural in your language to use ‘say’ in addition to a verb of manner like ‘shout’, just use the verb of manner in your translation. If it is natural in your language to include a quotative marker, do so.

Note that the direct speech in verse 17 is an example of what the slave girl was calling out many times; verse 18 tells us that she was doing this for many days. Is it natural to use direct speech and then say ‘She kept doing this for many days’? Also, the slave girl is a minor participant (see section 4.7). Is it usual for minor participants to have direct speech in narrative texts in your language?

Verse 22 literally states ‘the magistrates tore off their clothes and ordered to beat [them] with rods’. This suggests that the magistrates themselves stripped Paul and Silas and then ordered some other people to beat them with wooden sticks. This is how the King James (Authorized) Version, ESV, and TEV have interpreted the events in verse 22:

ESV  …the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods.

It is perhaps more likely that the magistrates ordered other people to strip Paul and Silas. This is how the NIV, NLT and NRSV have interpreted the events:

NIV the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods.

NRSV the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods.

It may be more natural in your language to say which other people the magistrates ordered to tear off Paul and Silas’ clothes; we are not told who these other people are, but it was probably the police (the same ones who were sent to the prison by the magistrates in v.35). The following is a possible translation: *the magistrates ordered the police to strip them and beat them with rods/sticks.*

If it is only natural in your language to report orders and commands using direct speech, the verse can be reworded as follows: *The magistrates told the police, “Strip these men, and beat them with rods/sticks!”*
Notes on verses 35–39

Verses 35–39 report five separate speeches or conversations, but much of what happened is not recorded and has to be assumed (the ESV translation is provided):

35 But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let those men go.”

The magistrates give instructions to the police who pass the message to the jailer (“Let those men go” means ‘Release those men’.)

36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace.”

The jailer reports what the police said to Paul.

37 But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.”

Paul speaks to the police.

38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens.

The police return to the magistrates (we assume) and tell the magistrates what Paul had said.

39 So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

The magistrates come to the prison and speak to Paul and Silas.

Here are some points to consider as you translate these verses:

35 This represented speech is an instruction from the magistrates (minor participants) to the police (also minor participants) who then tell the jailer. Is it natural to use direct speech, or could you use indirect speech, for example: ‘...the magistrates sent the police (to the prison) (with orders) to release Paul and Silas.’? If you do use direct speech, make it clear that it is the police who tell the jailer “Let those men go” and not the magistrates themselves.

36 The ESV follows the Greek The jailer reported these words to Paul and translates the quotative ὅτι ‘that’ as saying. The NIV, NLT and TEV simplify the speech orienter and have only The jailer told Paul. In the direct speech, ‘sent’ may need to be expanded to ‘sent word’ or ‘sent the police’ or you could translate it as ‘The magistrates have instructed me...’ or something similar. Although the jailer is speaking to Paul, both Paul and Silas are to be released, and ‘you’ here is plural.

37 In the speech orienter, it may be necessary to specify that ‘them’ refers to the police (the TEV and the NET Bible both have But Paul said to the police officers). The NRSV and NLT have But Paul replied which suggests that Paul was speaking to the jailer; this should be avoided. Make sure that Paul’s words are forceful but also have the correct level of respect for a person speaking to police officers; the NLT does a good job in English: “They have publicly beaten us without a trial and put us in prison—and we are Roman citizens. So now they want us to leave secretly? Certainly not! Let them come themselves to release us!”

39 Make sure that it is clear that it is the magistrates who apologized and not the police. In some languages it may be more natural to use direct speech: “We are sorry.” And, “Please leave the city.”

We will look at these verses again, as well as verse 40, in the next chapter.
Recommended readings


6 Movement and location

In most narratives, participants move from one place to another, and events occur in different locations. We saw in chapter 2 “Episodes and paragraphs” that an abrupt change of location is a common reason for starting a new paragraph. Keeping track of where participants are located and maintaining a consistent perspective on the events are important elements in telling a coherent story. Sometimes movement from one place to another is treated as an event in its own right, and is described using a lexical verb in its own clause; at other times, movement is treated as an incidental part of another event, and is expressed in some other way, or left implicit (unstated). In either case, a good narrator will make sure that the audience knows where the participants are located and will express movement in a way which is natural for his or her language.

6.1 Different ways of describing movement

Movement from one location to another can be described in various ways. As well as the participant that moves, a movement event involves a number of elements: a starting point (the SOURCE), a destination or end point (the GOAL), a route between the source and the goal (the PATH), and the kind of movement involved, such as running, flying or sailing (the MANNER). When describing a movement event, speakers must choose which of these elements to describe and how to describe them. To some extent, speakers have a free choice concerning how to describe movement, but the language a person speaks also has a large influence on how movement is described.

For example, the following sentences can all be used to describe the same event:

(23) a. The child ran into the house.
b. The child entered the house (running).
c. The child went (running) into the house.
d. The child came (running) into the house.

In (23a) the verb run describes the manner of movement, and the preposition into describes the path (from an outside place to an inside place). In (23b) the verb enter describes the path (from outside to inside place) and the manner can be described using the participle (-ing verb form) running (the parentheses indicate that this is optional). (23c) and (23d) describe the path using the preposition into and the manner using the optional participle running. The difference between (23c) and (23d) is one of perspective: in (23c) the speaker is asking us to imagine the event as if we are outside the house watching the child go in, but in (23d) the speaker is asking us to imagine the event as if we are inside the house watching the child come in.

In English, (23a) is a natural description of the event if a speaker wants to describe the manner and the path, but in French and Spanish, the equivalent of (23b) is usually the most natural description. English also uses the verbs go and come frequently, especially when the speaker is at the location of the source or goal, and so (23c) and (23d) are also natural in English depending on whether the speaker’s perspective is outside or inside the house. We will look at the issue of the perspective of the speaker in the next section.

Think of different ways that you can express the event described in (23) in your language. Which ways of expressing the event seem most natural to you in different situations?

6.1.1 Movement to or from the deictic centre

As we have seen, a movement event can be described as if the speaker were standing at the source or at the goal, or somewhere else. In English, if a speaker is standing at the source, she can use go to describe movement away from the source (23c), and if a speaker is standing at the goal, she can use come to describe movement towards the goal (23d). If the speaker is not located at the goal or at the source, she can use go to describe movement (e.g. “go from Troas to Philippi”), but in some other languages, it will be more natural to use the verb ‘come’ or another verb such as ‘move’ or ‘travel’.

The location relative to which other places and participants are described is called the DEICTIC CENTRE. Usually this is the location of the speaker, but it can be the location of the hearer or some other place. In all English (and most French) translations of Acts 16:15, Lydia says “come and stay in
my house” or “come and stay at my home.” We do not know where Lydia was when she spoke, but it could have been by the river since Luke tells us that she had just been baptized. In English and French it is possible for Lydia to say “come and stay in my house” even when she is not actually in the house. The house is the place where Lydia lives, and so it can be used as the deictic centre even when she is not there. Interestingly, the Greek verb translated as come in Acts 16:15 is εἰσελθόντες which is literally ‘having entered’. This is not a deictic verb but rather describes the PATH (moving into a space). It is often translated as enter and also as move into, go into and come into, depending on the speaker’s perspective, but here it is simply translated as come.

A similar example is found in Acts 16:9 where Paul has a vision of a Macedonian man saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” Macedonia is the deictic centre because the speaker is a Macedonian referring to his home. The verb come is appropriate because the addressee is in another place (in this case, Paul was in Troas). The preposition over suggests that the path from Troas to Macedonia involves crossing some kind of barrier, such as a river, sea or mountain. Come over is a translation of the Greek verb διαβαίνω which expresses the idea of moving from one side of an area to another across some kind of barrier; it is used to describe crossing a lake in Luke 8:22 and crossing the chasm separating Paradise and Hades in Luke 16:26. Depending on the speaker’s perspective—that is, on whether the deictic centre is at the source, the goal, or somewhere else—the Greek verb διαβαίνω can be translated into English as go over, come over or cross over. The most natural English translation when the speaker is a Macedonian man asking Paul to travel across the sea to his home is come over.

Any verb or other expression which indicates movement away from the deictic centre, like ‘go’, is termed iTIVE (the terms “andative” and “allative” are also used), and any verb or other expression which indicates movement towards the deictic centre, like ‘come’, is termed VENTIVE (the term “venitive” is also used). An expression which indicates that an event takes place at a distance from the deictic centre and which does not also describe movement away from or towards the deictic centre is termed DISTAL. Examples of itive, ventive and distal expressions are provided in the examples below.

6.1.2 Expressing movement as part of another event

In many languages, movement can be included in the description of an event without using a movement verb. In Digo, expressions meaning ‘go’ and ‘come’ can be attached to main verbs in the form of prefixes. In the following examples, the important events are boarding a dhow (a kind of boat) and killing a fierce beast called Mwanyika.

(24) Wa-kpwenda-meny a-jahazi a-chi-vuka.  
3SG.PAST-ITIVE-enter  dhow  3SG-CONS-cross  
‘He went and boarded a dhow and crossed over.’  
3SG = third person singular; CONS = consecutive tense; FUT = future tense

I.say  FUT-who-VENTIVE-kill  NAME  woman  is  his  
‘I say, whoever comes and kills the Beast, the woman will be his.’

The itive marker kpwenda in (24) indicates that the dhow was at a different location from where the man was at the end of the previous sentence; the ventive marker kpwdza in (25) indicates that Mwanyika is at the same location as the speaker, and that anyone who wants to kill Mwanyika will have to come to that location to do so.

Sometimes in Digo, movement can be expressed using a verb in its own clause, but even then it is common to find the next event described using an itive or ventive marker as well. In the following example, the verb phiya, which is the lexical verb meaning ‘go’, occurs in the first clause and the itive marker kpwenda (derived from an old verb meaning ‘go’ which is no longer used in Digo) occurs in the second clause:
Atu osi kala a-ka-phiya mzikani kpwenda-voya mikoma ili ajaliwe.

‘All the people had gone to the shrine to go and pray to the spirits so that they would be blessed.’

6.2 Functions of movement expressions in narrative discourse

The way that movement is expressed in a narrative can help to maintain continuity within paragraphs and to indicate discontinuity between paragraphs. It can also be used to indicate which participant is the VIP (Very Important Participant).

In some narratives, the VIP (e.g. Jesus in the gospels, Peter or Paul in Acts) is treated as the reference point and the deictic centre is wherever the VIP is located. When there is a discontinuity of place and the VIP is the same in both paragraphs, the change of place is often expressed using itive expressions (e.g. Then Jesus went…); where there is a discontinuity of participants and another participant joins the VIP, ventive expressions are used (e.g. A man came to Jesus and asked him…).

In other narratives, a particular location can serve as the deictic centre, and participants (including the VIP) ‘come’ and ‘go’ in relation to that location. In the example below from Digo, the VIP (a poor man) has already gone to his brother’s house (expressed using the verb phiya ‘go’) to beg for food. The prefix cha- in (27a) is a distal marker that indicates that an event happens at a distance from the deictic centre. In (27b), the poor man eats the food at home with his family; this is the deictic centre of the narrative. The itive marker edza ‘come’ indicates that the subject has returned home to eat, but the most important action is the eating, and not the moving which precedes it. So, there is a change of location (from the poor man’s home to his brother’s house and back to his home) but no change in the deictic centre, which is always the poor man’s home.

(27)

a. Sambi yuya mchiya kala a-chi-phiya kpwa nduguye a-cha-voya chakurya;
   now that poor.person PAST 3SG-CONS-go to his.brother 3SG-DISTAL-beg food

   b. a-ka-hewa na a-k-edza-rya na mchewe na anae.
   3SG-SEQ-be.given and 3SG-SEQ-VENTIVE-eat with his.wife and his.children

   ‘Now that poor man had gone to his brother and begged for food (there—at a distant place); he was given some and he came and ate with his wife and children.’

   *3SG = third person singular; cons = consecutive tense; seq = sequential tense

The deictic centre of the narrative may also determine whether ‘here’ or ‘there’ is used. In Luke 15:13b, Jesus tells the story of a son who went to a distant country, and tells us that there he squandered his property in dissolute living. The use of there indicates that the deictic centre of the parable is still the father’s house, not the current location of the younger son. In the represented speech of verse 17, in contrast, the son says, “but here I am dying of hunger. I will get up and go to my father…” The use of here and go indicates that the deictic centre from the speaker’s (the son’s) perspective is his current location. That is, the deictic centres of the narrator (Jesus) and the participant (the son) are different.

6.3 Discovery procedures

• List all the places where your texts use ‘go’, ‘come’, or other movement expressions. Decide whether each movement expression is expressed by a main verb, an auxiliary form, or something else (such as a particle, or a verbal prefix like cha- and edza- in Digo).

• Now check whether there are any places in the story where movement between one place and another is NOT made explicit. (If you do find such places, they will often be at the beginning of a paragraph.)
• Do narrators in your language prefer to mention most movements, or do they only mention movement occasionally?
• Now look at the movement expressions in your texts and decide what elements of a movement event they describe. Some expressions describe movement relative to a deictic centre: ‘go’, ‘come’; some describe the path: ‘enter’, ‘exit’; some describe the manner: ‘run’, ‘sail’. Try to determine whether your language prefers any particular kind of movement expression.

6.4 Movement and location in Acts 16 and application to translation

We will start by looking at the verses immediately before Acts 16:16, as these contain some interesting movement expressions. (Acts 16:15 has already been discussed above.) We will then look at some movement expressions in our main passage, Acts 16:16–40. We will not study every movement event in the passage, as some are quite straightforward; for example, verse 16 has a general verb describing moving from one place to another, which is translated as going.

We will look at Acts 16:11 first.

11a Ἀναχθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ Τρῳάδος εὐθυδρομήσαμεν εἰς Σαμοθρᾴκην, putting_out_to_sea so from Troas we Took_a_straight_course to Samothrace

11b τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ εἰς Νέαν Πόλιν the and next_day to Neapolis

The first verb, ἀναχθέντες, means ‘start a journey by boat’ (other English translations are put out to sea and set sail). The second verb, εὐθυδρομήσαμεν, means ‘follow a straight course’. It describes the path that is taken but says nothing about the manner (it can be used for walking, running, sailing, etc.). In verse 11b there is no verb and we can assume that εὐθυδρομήσαμεν ‘follow a straight course’ or a general movement verb like ‘go’ is understood.

Let’s look at how different English translations have dealt with this verse.

NRSV We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis.

TEV We left by ship from Troas and sailed straight across to Samothrace, and the next day to Neapolis.

NIV From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis.

NLT We boarded a boat at Troas and sailed straight across to the island of Samothrace, and the next day we landed at Neapolis.

Let’s look at how these translations have expressed εὐθυδρομέω ‘to follow a straight course’. NRSV stays very close to the Greek (as does ESV and most French translations) by using an expression, took a straight course, that describes the path that the boat took. The other three translations all use the verb sailed which describes the manner of movement (travelling by boat) and the path is expressed using the adverb straight. The translations that use the verb sail have in fact added this to make the translation more natural in English. Unless it is more natural to use a verb meaning ‘travel by boat’—and especially if your language does not have a verb that describes travelling by boat—it is best to follow the Greek and use an expression that means ‘go directly’.

NRSV and TEV do not use a verb in verse 11b, but TEV uses went and NLT uses landed. Both of these verbs indicate that Neapolis was the goal, but went focuses on the path (the journey) while landed focuses on the fact that Neapolis was the final destination that they reached by boat (which would have been known to Luke’s original readers but will not be obvious to most modern readers).

In Greek, Acts 16:12 begins with κἀκεῖθεν εἰς Φιλίππους ‘and from there to Philippi’. The original readers of Acts would have been familiar with the geography of the area, and so they would have understood that Philippi was an inland (upcountry) city. NLT states we landed at Neapolis in 11b and the verb landed indicates the end of a journey by boat. (The Swahili translation Habari Njema uses an expression meaning ‘to anchor’.) TEV is even clearer and begins verse 12 with From there we
went inland to Philippi. This, or something similar such as From there we went by road to Philippi, is a good model to follow.

Acts 16:13 contains the phrase ἐξῆλθομεν ἔξω τῆς πύλης παρὰ ποταμόν ‘we went outside the gate by a river’. The verb ἐξέρχομαι literally means ‘to exit’, that is, ‘to move from an enclosed space to an outside place’, and the preposition ἔξω means ‘outside’. This makes sense, because in Roman times, Philippi was surrounded by a wall, and so to leave the city a person would literally go outside. The gate that is mentioned is therefore the main gate in the city wall, and some modern English translations say we went outside the city. When you translate this verse, use whichever movement expression is most natural, whether this is a verb like ‘exit’ which some French and Swahili translations use, or a deictic movement verb like ‘go’ in English.

The same verb, ἐξέρχομαι ‘to exit’ also occurs twice in Acts 16:18 where Paul commands the spirit to ‘exit’ the slave girl and it ‘exits’ immediately. English translations express this most naturally using come out and leave, for example Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” At that moment the spirit left her. (NIV)

The use of the Greek verb ἐξέρχομαι reflects the belief that a spirit that controls a person is inside that person. By telling the spirit to ‘come out’ of the slave girl, Paul was in effect telling the spirit to stop controlling her. If there are ceremonies or prayers in your culture for freeing people who are controlled by bad spirits, find out what people command spirits to do or how they describe the moment when a spirit stops controlling a person. It may be more natural in your language to use a different movement expression such as ‘leave’, ‘go away from’ or ‘separate from’, or a completely different verb such as ‘release’.

Acts 16:29 tells us that the jailer called for lights and rushed in. The phrase he rushed in is expressed in Greek using a single verb: εἰσεπήδησεν. This describes both the path (moving into an enclosed space—in this case the prison cell) and the manner of movement (running or rushing). Decide whether it is most natural to translate this using a single verb, as in Greek, with a combination of a verb and a directional expression, e.g. ‘rushed in’, a verb and a manner expression, e.g. ‘entered running’, or in some other way, e.g. ‘came running in’. (Review the discussion of example (23) in section 6.1 if necessary.)

Some English translations (including NIV and NLT) begin Acts 16:34 with He brought them into his house but others (including ESV, NRSV and TEV) have He brought them up into his house. Those translations that include up do so because the Greek verb at the start of this verse, ἀνάγω, means ‘to bring up’ or ‘to lead up’. Decide whether you can naturally include the path ‘up’ in your translation, and if so whether you need to include a note mentioning that it is likely that the jailer’s house was above the prison. Alternatively, you may decide not to include ‘up’ in your translation, as the fact that the jailer’s house was probably above the prison is not crucial to understanding the narrative.

Finally, we will look at Acts 16:35–40 (the ESV translation is provided below). We looked at represented speech in verses 35–39 in the previous chapter, and now we will focus on movement in these verses as well as in verse 40, the final verse of this passage.

35 But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let those men go.”

The police come to the jail; this movement is indicated in the verb ‘sent’. Do you need to make the police’s movement explicit? For example, the magistrates sent the police to the prison, and they came and said, “Let those men go.”

36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace.”

The jailer went to Paul, but this is not stated. Do you need to make the jailer’s movement explicit? If so, is it more natural to say, the jailer went and reported these words to Paul, or the jailer came and reported these words to Paul? The verb translated come out is the same verb ἐξέρχομαι ‘to exit’ that we saw in verses 13 and 18; some English translations express this as you may leave. The verb translated go is the same general verb describing moving from one place to another that occurs in verse 16.

37 But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.”
Paul is taken to the police (or the police are brought to Paul), but we are not told this explicitly. The fact that the jailer reported what the police said to Paul indicates that the police did not meet Paul. Paul now speaks directly to the police, implying that he went to them. Can you leave this implicit, as in Greek, or is it more natural to say But Paul went and said to them…? In Paul’s speech, he uses the verbs βάλλω ‘throw’ and ἐκβάλλω ‘throw out’. Use natural expressions in your language to describe putting someone forcefully into prison and sending someone away. Paul then uses the deictic verb ‘come’ because from his perspective the prison is the deictic centre. He also says that the magistrates should take us out using an expression meaning ‘to lead out’, ‘to bring out’ or ‘to escort out’ that indicates that the magistrates should enter the prison and then accompany Paul and Silas outside.

38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens.

The police return to the magistrates and tell the magistrates what Paul had said. Do you need to indicate that the police moved to where the magistrates were located? If so, you can say, The police went/left and reported these words to the magistrates.

39 So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

The magistrates come to the prison and speak to Paul and Silas, then they escort them out of the prison. This time we are told that the magistrates came to the prison (using the same verb for ‘come’ that Paul used in verse 37) and took Paul and Silas out (using the same verb for ‘take out’ that Paul used in verse 37). As far as possible, try to use the same expressions in verses 37 and 39. (Note that a different Greek verb is used in verse 30.)

40 So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

Paul and Silas visit Lydia and the other believers in Philippi. The Greek verb in they went out of the prison is the same as that used in verses 13, 18 and 36. This does not mean that you have to translate it using the same expression in your language in all four verses! Note that in verse 39 we are told that the magistrates escorted Paul and Silas out of the prison, so a more natural translation of verse 40 may be: After Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met the believers and encouraged them, and then they left the city.

Recommended readings


7 Highlighting

Some information in a narrative is more important or unexpected than other information, and narrators can emphasize or highlight different parts of a narrative. Sentences and clauses are typically highlighted when they relate to an unexpected event. Longacre distinguishes ‘inciting incidents’ and ‘complications’. An inciting incident is “that which is unexpected and routine-breaking” (Longacre 1996:141); it often introduces a problem or creates an imbalance that needs to be resolved. A complication increases the tension in a story and moves it further from a resolution.

Important information often forms part of the storyline, but supportive material can also contain important information, so highlighting is not the same as indicating the storyline (see chapter 9 ‘Storyline concerns’). Sometimes just a particular part of a sentence is highlighted, sometimes a whole sentence, and sometimes an entire episode.

Highlighting can be achieved in many different ways. In speech, narrators can use their voices by speaking louder than usual, slower than usual, or with a higher pitch than usual. In Papuan Malay, single hand claps are sometimes used to highlight important parts of a discourse, including the peak of a narrative (Angela Kluge, SIL Linguistics Discussion List 12 Feb 2015). In written communication, highlighting can be achieved visually. For example, if a whole sentence is printed in blue except for one word that is in a different colour, that is the word that will stand out.

It doesn’t really matter which colours are used—the important thing is that any word which is different from the others will stand out.

The principle at work here is that we pay more attention to anything that is different. A red word only stands out if all the other words in a sentence are another colour. If all the words are red, then no single word will be highlighted. In the same way, if every word is shouted loudly, no single word will be highlighted. But if one word is shouted in the middle of a sentence spoken at a normal volume, then the audience will notice it and it will be highlighted. The same principle applies to linguistic highlighting. Highlighting in language typically involves an unusual linguistic feature (often referred to as a ‘marked’ structure). For example, if the usual way to refer to a participant that is present throughout an episode is with an agreement marker, a particular event might be highlighted by the “unnecessary” use of an independent pronoun, a descriptive noun phrase or a name. Similarly, if the usual tense for reporting events in sequence (i.e. on the storyline) is the past, a perfect aspect might be used instead to highlight certain events.

7.1 Words and expressions

All languages have certain words and expressions that highlight some part of a story. These words and expressions are like flashlights (torches). When someone shines a flashlight onto a certain object, people are meant to look at the object that is illuminated, not at the flashlight. In the same way, there are words and expressions which are not important in themselves, but which draw the audience’s attention to other parts of the text.

These words and expressions are of different kinds, including lexical words and phrases, exclamations and interjections, and ideophones. These range from words and phrases with very specific functions, through to very general expressions of emotion. I will not be concerned with giving precise definitions of these categories but will rather use them to illustrate the kinds of expressions that can be used to highlight certain events or information.

7.1.1 Lexical words and phrases

Various lexical forms, including verbs, connectives, copulas and demonstratives, can be used to highlight adjacent material in fairly specific ways. Koiné Greek ἐγένετο and Ancient Hebrew וַיַּהַי, both traditionally translated as ‘it came to pass’, can function as DISCOURSE MARKERS signalling the transition from less important to more important events. In Acts 9:37, ἐγένετο (plus a temporal point of departure) marks the transition from background information to the first significant event of the story:
Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity.

Egeneto at that time she became ill and died.

Hebrew w’hinneh and Greek idou, traditionally translated ‘behold’, are used to highlight the information that immediately follows. This is illustrated in Matthew 2:9b, where idou highlights the reappearance of the star that announced the birth of Jesus:

9a When they had heard the king, they set out;
9b and idou the star that they had seen at its rising went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

Like most discourse markers, these Hebrew and Greek expressions do not have direct translations in every language; in other languages, however, different linguistic constructions have highlighting functions.

In Malila, most EQUATIVE clauses (clauses that state what something is) are expressed by juxtaposing the phrase describing the thing and the phrase describing what it is—that is, placing the two phrases next to each other. However, an equative clause can be highlighted by using a copula to join the two phrases. In the following example, the copulas khe and lye highlight the identity of a strange kind of food, indengani, and the narrator’s surprise is also expressed through the use of the exclamation fwan.

(28) Pe itwe tukhaswigaga kuti indengani khe khantu khooni.
then we we.were.surprised that ndengani COPULA thing what
Fwani indengani lye ligoodo.
gosh ndengani COPULA porridge
‘Then we were surprised about what that thing “ndengani” was. Gosh, “ndengani” is porridge!’
(Eaton 2015a:36)

Copulas also function as highlighting expressions in Makonde. Occasionally in Makonde narratives the copula ni is used rather than a form of the verb ‘be’ or juxtaposition. According to Leach (2015: 94) “if a ni occurs, it is a strong signal that the structure is identifying information essential to the theme of the narrative.” This information is typically not new, but is highlighted, confirmed or elaborated using a ni clause. The ni copula is common in orientations and conclusions, and also occurs at the peak of some narratives, as in example (31) below.

In Digo, demonstratives ending in -no can be used to express surprise, disapproval or shock—not necessarily about the thing referred to using the demonstrative, but about the whole situation or event that is being described. Important events can also be highlighted using an EMPIRICAL aspect marker henda which is derived from the verb meaning ‘do’. Both of these are illustrated in example (29) below.

7.1.2 Exclamations and interjections

Exclamations are words which express specific emotions, such as surprise, shock, joy or sorrow. Interjections are similar to exclamations, but they are not really lexical expressions and they express emotion in very general terms. In the following Digo example, direct speech is used to represent the thoughts of one of the participants when he sees a group of hyenas being given instructions which they then obey. This direct speech contains an interjection Aa, an exclamation mbavi, and a demonstrative ending in -no, which all combine to express surprise and amazement. The verb contains the emphatic aspect marker henda which emphasizes the fact that the hyenas really were given instructions.

(29) Wamaka, “Aa, mbavi gano mafisi ga-henda-lagiswa...”
he.wondered ah EXCLAMATION those hyenas they-really-were.instructed
‘He wondered, “Ah, really those hyenas were actually instructed...” ’ (Nicolle 2015a: 39)
7.1.3 **Ideophones**

Ideophones are words that describe actions, sounds, smells, colours, emotions, intensity and so forth. Ideophones are not just sounds, but are real words with phonological properties. But they are not typical words, as they usually have no inflection (even if there is a related verb form), they cannot be combined with each other or with other words to form longer phrases, and they sometimes have different phonological rules than regular words in the language. For example, ideophones in Dagaare typically have three syllables, often containing the same vowel, with the same tone: low for things that are heavy, long or fat, and high for things that are light, short or slim (Bodomo 2006). In many languages, ideophones are introduced by quotative markers.

In Digo, ideophones take various forms (Nicolle 2013: 220-4). Many are monosyllabic, such as *dii* ‘all day’, *gbwii* ‘silently’, *bu* ‘completely’, *bii* ‘not at all’, *pi* ‘black’ and *do* ‘red’. Many monosyllabic ideophones can be repeated twice (that is, said three times) to express intensity, for example *ngi-ngi-ngi* ‘very close together’, and *tse-tse-tse* ‘absolutely’. Some ideophones are formed by repeating a verb root (e.g. *rem* ‘refuse’), sometimes with a different final vowel, and can accompany that verb to express an idea of intensity or completeness:

(30) *Mwanache hiyu wa chichetu wamrema remi-remi hiyu mvulana.*

child this of female she.refused.him **ideophone** this youth

‘The girl rejected the youth completely.’ (Nicolle 2013: 220)

Ideophones are common at the peak of narratives in many languages. In the following example from a Makonde narrative, a poor fisherman has received many gifts from a magic bird, but only on the condition that he does not open a particular door. At the peak of the story, he opens the forbidden door and falls through darkness back into his boat. The peak contains two ideophones and the *ni* copula discussed above. The ideophone *pindiku*, which is derived from the verb meaning ‘to turn or spin’ is introduced by the quotative marker *do*, and is repeated twice; the second ideophone *shanjaa* expresses the fisherman’s shock at finding himself back in his boat, still poor.

(31) *Shinantandi kumevo kumwidile kudimba ni palipindikulila do:*

first to.eyes came.to.him darkness **cop** where.somersaults **quotative**

*pindiku pindiku pindiku*

**ideophone** **ideophone** **ideophone**

*nalikodya andiikala mo mwingalava amu kavili*

and.he.found.himself he.is.seated in boat this again

*shanjaa ankutambisha kavili na indawana yake.*

**ideophone** he.is.fishing again with hook his

‘Suddenly he was plunged into darkness and found himself rolling and somersaulting, tossed over and over, until—there he found himself sitting down back in his boat, sitting there again at his fishing line.’ (Leach 2015: 14-15)

7.2 **Repetition**

The repetition of the ideophone *pindiku* in example (31) makes it more prominent and highlights it. Not only ideophones can be repeated. In the example of a peak in a Malila narrative in the next section, we see repetition of adjectives, nouns and verb phrases. In some languages, including many eastern Bantu languages, repetition seems to be more common in spoken narratives than in narratives that were originally written. This is particularly the case where repetition of verbs, verb phrases and whole clauses is concerned.

Repetition in narrative serves two main purposes: it highlights whatever is repeated, and it also slows the narrative down before the peak or other important information. Another way to do this is discussed in the next section.
7.3 Interrupting the storyline before important information

As well as repetition, another way to slow a narrative down before the peak or other important information is to interrupt the storyline with non-event material. The following extract from Acts 19 illustrates the introduction of non-event information immediately before a peak. After the event of verse 13 has been presented, the reader expects to be told whether these Jewish exorcists were successful in using Jesus' name to cast out evil spirits. Instead, a non-event is introduced, thus slowing the story down and creating the expectation that a particularly significant event is about to be described:

13 Storyline material  Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.”

14 Non-event  Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this.

15-16 Peak  But the evil spirit said to them in reply, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them all, and so overpowered them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. (NRSV)

We will see another example of this in the Malila narrative in the next section. A similar effect can be achieved by backgrounding clauses immediately before the peak or other important information, as in Acts 16:25.

7.4 Linguistic features of peak episodes

Within a climactic narrative, the peak has a special status, as it marks a resolution or culmination, and it is often highlighted in its entirety. The peak is “a zone of turbulence in the flow of the discourse” (Longacre 1985; Longacre & Hwang 2012: 53), meaning that it has unusual linguistic features. Whilst these unusual features cannot be predicted for the peak of any given narrative, here are some common features:

• introduction of non-event information immediately before the peak (see Acts 19:14 above)
• backgrounding of event(s) immediately preceding the peak (see Acts 16:25 below)
• high concentration of verbs (sometimes without overt subjects)
• unusual tense or aspect (e.g. use of perfect or present in place of past or consecutive)
• more detail than usual
• ideophones and interjections
• repetition
• change to direct (or indirect) speech
• unusual participant reference (e.g. change from 3rd to 2nd person, from pronoun to noun)
• connectives, in languages that do not use connectives as the default way of joining clauses within a thematic unit

These features may also occur at other points in a narrative, but the peak is often the place where a combination of these features is found throughout the entire episode. The example below (sentences 15–21) is the peak of a Malila narrative (Eaton 2015a:45-6). In the story, a strange bull comes to a village, and when the villagers plan to slaughter and eat it, it leads all the other cattle in the village into a lake.

(32) Peak of Malila narrative

15 Pe yikwa sa in’ombe zyonti zyonti zyonti zyonti zye bhalil nazyo. then it.gathered cows all all all all which they.were with.them
‘Then it gathered all the cattle which they had.’
There, we call it Luanda, we call it Ileya.'

‘Right there is a lake, we call it Luanda.’

‘They call it the people’s lake, they call it the lake of the Mwasiles.’

‘Then right there that bull led right over there, clop, clop, all the cows, and all the calves, and the other bulls.’

‘It led them right there, it led them right there, they all went into the lake.’

‘In that lake, that lake, the blood bubbled up, it (the lake) slaughtered them.’

This episode has a number of highlighting features:

• Repetition: yonti ‘all’ four times in 15 and once in 20, plus yonti ‘all’ and twonti ‘all’ in 19; shizibha ‘lake’ six times; likhalongola kukuula ‘it led (narrative tense) right there’ in 19 and lyalongola kukuula ‘it led (perfective aspect) right there’ twice in 20.

• Non-event material: Sentences 16, 17 and 18 express non-event material which slows the narrative down, creating tension between gathering the cattle and leading them into the lake.

• The idiophone: longoto longoto ‘clop clop’ in 19.

• Detail: specifying the cattle that went into the lake as cows, calves and bulls in 19.

7.5 Discovery procedures

• Look for words and expressions that highlight certain events or information in your texts. Knowing which label (discourse marker, exclamation, interjection, ideophone, etc.) to attach to a particular word or expression is less important than knowing how it functions, so do not worry about trying to categorize highlighting words and expressions.

• List any ideophones which occur in your texts and think of others that you know of. How appropriate are ideophones in a translation of the Bible?

• Look for repetition in your texts. Is repetition used to highlight information in your texts? What kinds of expressions are repeated? Is repetition found in written texts or only in texts that were originally spoken?

• In each text, look at the start of the peak and at the episode immediately before the peak. Do these describe non-events or background events?

• List any linguistic features which are used exclusively or primarily in the peak episodes of your texts.
7.6  Highlighting in Acts 16:16–40

Each language has its own linguistic features that are used for highlighting, and so it is likely that without a good understanding of Greek or Hebrew, Bible translators will miss some of the material that the biblical authors highlighted in the original texts. However, by looking at a number of different translations, and reading commentaries that refer to the original language of the text, translators can become aware of most places where highlighting is required.

7.6.1  Lexical highlighting expressions

I mentioned above that the expression ἐγένετο (egeneto) ‘happened, occurred’ can mark a change from less important to more important information, in which case it is traditionally translated it came to pass. Modern English translations do not always provide a direct translation of this word when it functions as a discourse marker, as this tends not to sound natural in English. However, the word is easy to find by looking at the Greek text. It occurs in Acts 16:16 which is the start of the inciting episode.

ἐγένετο also occurs in Acts 16:26, which is part of the peak, but in this case it functions as part of the clause an earthquake occurred rather than as a discourse marker. However, in this clause, the subject σεισμὸς ‘earthquake’ precedes the verb ἐγένετο ‘occurred’; the usual order is verb-subject, and so this clause has an unusual word order which may help to highlight ‘earthquake’.²⁰ Although ἐγένετο does not function as a discourse marker in this clause, its frequent use as a discourse marker, plus the unusual word order and the unexpected nature of the event all combine to highlight the information in this verse.

Another expression which we discussed in section 3.3.1 is the connective τε (te). This is an unusual connective; it only occurs twice in this passage, in verses 23 and 34. In verse 23 τε occurs before they threw them into prison, which is an important event in the story, as it leads to the jailer and his household believing and being baptized. In verse 34 τε occurs when the jailer brings Paul and Silas into his house and feeds them. As I mentioned before, this is an important demonstration of the fact that the Gospel is for non-Jews as well as for Jews and can unite both communities. It may also be significant that verses 23 and 34 both occur at the end of episodes; everything in verses 16–22 leads up to Paul and Silas being thrown into prison, and the events of verses 25–33 result in the jailer and his household welcoming Paul and Silas and rejoicing because they believed in God.

7.6.2  Backgrounding events to highlight what follows

The peak episode in Acts 16:16–40 occurs in verses 25–34 (in chapter 2, I suggested a dramatic peak in 25–28 and a theological peak in 29–34). Verse 25 describes events that occurred after Paul and Silas were put in prison using participle or imperfect verb forms (‘praying’, ‘singing’, ‘listening’). This backgrounds these events (see section 9.3) and slows down the narrative in preparation for the dramatic events of verse 26. This helps to highlight the earthquake and its effects which are expressed using aorist verb forms (which often indicate storyline events) including ἐγένετο (egeneto):

25  Κατὰ δὲ τὸ μεσονύκτιον Παῦλος καὶ Σιλᾶς προσευχόμενοι ὕμνουν τὸν θεόν, ἐπηκροῶντο δὲ αὐτῶν οἱ δέσμιοι.
       ‘About midnight Paul and Silas were praying [participle] and singing hymns [imperfect] to God, and the prisoners were listening [imperfect] to them.’

26  ἄφνω δὲ σεισμὸς ἐγένετο μέγας ὥστε σαλευθῆναι τὰ θεμέλια τοῦ δεσμωτηρίου· ἠνεῴχθησαν δὲ αἱ θύραι πᾶσαι καὶ πάντων τὰ δεσμὰ ἀνέθη.
       ‘Suddenly an earthquake occurred [aorist], so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken [aorist]; and immediately all the doors were opened [aorist] and everyone’s chains were unfastened [aorist].’

²⁰ I am grateful to Sarah Casson for bringing this to my attention.
The peak continues in Acts 16:27. This verse (which is a single sentence in Greek) contains a lot of detail, which is characteristic of the peak, but the main point of the verse is that the jailer was preparing to kill himself, and would have done so if Paul had not intervened. The Greek text of Acts 16:27 uses PARTICIPLE verb forms (like -ing verbs in English) in all clauses except in he was about to kill himself. This uses an INDICATIVE verb form which makes he was about to kill himself stand out from the rest of the sentence.

27a ἔξυπνος δὲ γενόμενος ὁ δεσμοφύλαξ awkaw and having become the jailer

27b καὶ ἰδὼν ἀνεῳγμένας τὰς θύρας τῆς φυλακῆς, and having seen having been opened the doors of the prison

27c ἐσπασάμενος τὴν μάχαιραν having drawn the sword

27d ἠμέλλεν ἑαυτὸν ἀναρέιν he was about himself to kill

27e νομίζων ἐκπεφευγέναι τοὺς δεσμίους. thinking to have run away the prisoners

The ESV follows the Greek fairly closely using appropriate English constructions, such as a ‘when’ clause to background 27a and 27b (see chapter 9 “Storyline concerns”), and a participle form supposing to indicate the reason in 27e. Verse 27c having drawn the sword is so closely tied to he was about to kill himself that these clauses are put together in almost all English translations, including the ESV:

When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. (ESV)

The reason that the jailer thought that the prisoners had escaped was because he saw that the doors of the prison had been opened. This means that although 27e gives the reason for the jailer being about to kill himself, 27e is also closely connected with 27b. Now, in many languages, the following principles apply:

- As far as possible, report events in the order in which they occurred.
- As far as possible, put the most important or unexpected information at the end of the sentence.

The TEV follows these principles and connects 27a, 27b and 27e in the first part of verse 27, and then places 27c and 27d at the end of this verse. Although the TEV presents 27a in a main clause (as does the NIV), it presents the important information in 27c–d in the prominent final position:

The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he thought that the prisoners had escaped; so he pulled out his sword and was about to kill himself. (TEV)

In the following suggestion, I have tried to combine the best features of the ESV and the TEV translations and express this within a strict topic-comment structure (see chapter 7). The information in 27a and 27b is backgrounded using a ‘when’ clause (see chapter 8), the events are presented in the order in which they occurred, and the important information in 27c–d is presented in the prominent position at the end of the sentence:

The jailer, when he woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he thought that the prisoners had escaped; so he pulled out his sword and was about to kill himself.

I suggest either this translation or the TEV as a model to follow for eastern Bantu languages.
7.7 Application to translation

If you have completed the Application to translation sections in the previous chapters, you will have already translated all of Acts 16:16–40 and revised most of the passage, focusing on episode and paragraph boundaries, the use of connectives, the ways that participants are referred to, represented speech, and the expression of movement. Now, please read through your translation and decide whether the most important information has been highlighted in an appropriate way for your language, as far as possible. Also make sure that you have not inadvertently highlighted information which is not especially important. Pay special attention to the peak.

The way that you highlight information in your translation will not be the same as in Greek or English. For example, you may not have a direct translation of Greek ἐγένετο or τε (English doesn’t!), and you may not be able to use contrasting aspects in verses 25 and 26. There may be some other way that you can highlight these parts of the text, but it is also possible that you will just have to be content with translating these parts clearly and naturally without any special linguistic features.

It is also possible that it is natural to highlight parts of the text in your translation that do not have specific linguistic features in Greek. For example, the Greek text does not use ideophones, but these are an important and acceptable linguistic feature in certain other languages. The Ethiopian language Zayse has an ideophone sitz which expresses giving an alarm or warning; during a discourse and translation workshop in 2012, the Zayse translators translated Acts 16:28 as:

But Paul sitz, “Don’t do it! We are all here,” he said shouting.

Zayse also has an ideophone kirkir which describes a person trembling with fear. The Zayse translators considered using this in verse 29 where the jailer fell down trembling before Paul and Silas, but decided that one ideophone was sufficient in these verses. In the same way, you must decide what to highlight and which linguistic features to use so that the translation sounds natural and appropriate in your language.

Recommended readings


A note on chapters 8 and 9

Chapters 8 and 9 contain material that is more challenging than the material covered so far. Chapter 8 deals with information structure, which is very important for translation into eastern Bantu languages, but which is of less direct relevance for translation into certain other languages. Chapter 9 deals with various issues under the heading “Storyline Concerns.” There is a large amount of variation between languages concerning the characteristic features of the storyline, how clearly distinct the storyline is from non-storyline material, which clauses can be backgrounded, and whether or not important turning points are linguistically marked in a systematic way. For these reasons, some readers may prefer to study these chapters at a later time. Information structure is a complex area of study and even experienced linguists can be confused by the different terms used and the various theories that have been proposed. (Some universities offer entire courses in information structure at the master’s level!) So, we will not try to cover everything about information structure in chapter 8. Instead, I will explain a few key concepts and show how being aware of these can make a real difference to naturalness in translation. To help keep within reasonable limits, I will only deal with concepts that are relevant for the translation of our chosen passage, and I will focus on translation into eastern Bantu languages only (although the general principles will be relevant to translation into other languages as well).
8 Information structure

Whether a narrator is aiming to inform, teach or entertain, he or she does this by communicating information. To communicate clearly, a narrator must present this information bearing in mind what the audience already knows. For example, when Luke tells us that Paul and Silas were thrown into prison, he assumes that we know that the prison had a jailer (a person in charge of keeping the prisoners securely). This is why in Acts 16:23 Luke writes *they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely* even though the jailer has not previously been mentioned. Imagine if Luke had been writing to people who did not know that there was a person called a jailer who was in charge of the prison. How do you think he might have structured the information in verse 23?²¹

The same information can be expressed in many different ways, depending on what a speaker (or writer) assumes a hearer (or reader) already knows. Look at the following sentences, which all describe the same event:

(33) a. Eve ate the fruit.
    b. The fruit, Eve ate it.
    c. She ate the fruit.
    d. It was Eve who ate the fruit.
    e. It was the fruit that Eve ate.

These five sentences are appropriate as answers to different questions. For example, if the question is “What happened?” (33a) is the most appropriate answer. Which sentence—(33b), (33c), (33d) or (33e)—do you think would be the best answer to each of the following questions (answers below)?

(34) a. Did Eve or Sarah eat the fruit?
    b. What did Eve do?
    c. Did Eve eat the rice or the fruit?
    d. What happened to the fruit?

Sentence (33a) describes the event as a whole; (33b) tells us something about the fruit, specifically what happened to it; (33c) tells us something about Eve, specifically what she did; (33d) identifies who ate the fruit and (33e) identifies what Eve ate.

The five sentences in (33) contain the same information but have different information structure. Information structure describes the way that speakers and writers help the audience to identify new or unpredictable information and combine it with what they already know in order to derive a coherent interpretation. In speech, this can be done using intonation or prosody in languages like English. For example, (33d) could be expressed as *EVE ate the fruit* and (33e) as *Eve ate THE FRUIT*, where capital letters indicate stress. Some languages use morphology (for example, affixes on noun phrases or verbs) to mark an element as new or established, and some languages use changes in word order to achieve the same effect. Many languages use some combination of prosody, morphology and word order to structure information. The eastern Bantu languages primarily express information structure through variations in word order, including TOPIC-COMMENT constructions.

²¹ If the concept of a jailer were unknown, Luke might have written, ‘they threw them into prison. The prison was controlled by a person called a jailer, and they ordered this person to keep Paul and Silas safely.’
²² (34a) ‘Did Eve or Sarah eat the fruit?’ (33a) ‘It was Eve who ate the fruit.’
(34b) ‘What did Eve do?’ (33c) ‘She ate the fruit.’
(34c) ‘Did Eve eat the rice or the fruit?’ (33e) ‘It was the fruit that Eve ate.’
(34d) ‘What happened to the fruit?’ (33b) ‘The fruit, Eve ate it.’
8.1 Topic-comment constructions

Most sentences in narratives describe what the participants did; in other words, they provide information about participants. For example, in Acts 16:20-21 the owners of the slave girl provide the following information about Paul and Silas:

“They are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” (ESV)

The participant or thing that a sentence is about is called the TOPIC, and the information about the topic is called the COMMENT. We can break the example above into topic and comment as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>These men</td>
<td>are Jews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>are disturbing our city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the quote above, the topic is Paul and Silas; in the first clause the topic is expressed in English as *these men*, but in the following clauses it is expressed as *they*. If the topic does not change from one clause or sentence to the next, it is usually expressed using zero reference, a pronoun, or an agreement marker (see chapter 4 “Participants” for details). At the start of a new paragraph, or when the topic changes, it may be expressed using a noun phrase.

Sometimes a topic is introduced specifically, but often a topic is understood from the context. In the case of *these men* (Paul and Silas) in Acts 16:20, they are available to be the topic in direct speech because they have been dragged into the marketplace and are physically present. In Luke’s narrative, Paul and Silas are available to be the topic because they have been mentioned previously. In Acts 16:19, the topic is the owners of the slave girl:

But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. (ESV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>COMMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>her owners</td>
<td>saw that their hope of gain was gone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The owners have not been mentioned previously, so how can they be the topic without first being introduced? Well, the definition of a slave is a person who is owned (like property) and so there must be an owner. In this case, then, *her owners* can be the new topic because of our knowledge of the world (and of the meaning of the word ‘slave’).

The eastern Bantu languages are far stricter in following the order topic-comment than English or Greek. In Acts 16:19 in the ESV, the topic expression *her owners* is inside a time clause introduced by *when*. In the eastern Bantu languages, a noun phrase cannot occur inside a time clause like this if it expresses a new topic. (A noun phrase can occur inside a time clause if it is not functioning as a topic, for example if a time phrase is simply setting the scene for information about a different participant.) Instead, the topic must occur right at the start of the sentence. Here is how the Bantuised Swahili Front Translation (2008) expressed Acts 16:19 (with a free English translation); I have put the topic expression in bold and underlined the time expression:

Hao mabwana_zake wa huyo binti, wakati waliona kwamba hakuna_tena namna ambayo watakuwa wakipata emo pesa, mara_moja wakawamia Paulo na Sira, wakawaokotea ambapo watawala waliokuwa wakikatia sheria.

‘Those owners of that girl, when they saw that there was no longer a way they could get money through her, immediately they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the place where the rulers were holding court.’

In all the eastern Bantu languages, topic expressions come at the beginning of each clause (occasionally preceded by a connective) when there is a new paragraph or when there is a change of topic. When the topic remains the same from one clause to the next, usually the topic expression is not repeated, and there is just agreement on the verb. However, in a few languages, lexical topic expressions can occur after the comment in certain very specific circumstances, such as
• when the topic expression is repeated even though the topic has not changed and there is no new paragraph (Digo and Mwani do this);
• when the topic was not the topic of the previous clause, but has been a topic previously in the text (Mwani does this); or
• if the topic is only temporary; that is, if it functions as the topic of a single clause but the previous topic is resumed in the next clause (Rangi sometimes does this).

Details can be found in Nicolle (2015b) section 6.3.

8.2 Thetic constructions

Some clauses describe situations or events as a whole, rather than mentioning a topic and then providing information about the topic. Such clauses are used to introduce new participants or to describe events that are not developments of existing situations. The term thetic is used to refer to clauses like this that do not have a topic. In the eastern Bantu languages, because of the strict topic-comment structure, a clause with the order subject-verb will typically be understood as being a topic-comment construction. To avoid the subject being understood as a topic, the order verb-subject is used (with a few exceptions in some languages, described in Nicolle [2015b] section 6.4).

A good example of a thetic construction is found in Acts 16:26. Here is how the Bantuised Swahili Front Translation (2008) expresses this (the verb and the subject have been highlighted):

\[\text{Mara moja ndani ya nchi, mukapita tetemeko kubwa sana, ikatingiza msingi wa hiyo nyumba ya wafungwa, mpaka milango yote mara moja ikawa ikijifungua…}\]

‘At once within the earth, there occurred a great shaking/earthquake, it shook the foundation of that prison, until all the doors at once flew open…’

Abstract concepts can also be introduced using thetic constructions, with a verb such as ‘come’ indicating that a thought, illness, shame, etc. is experienced by someone. The following example is from Makonde (Leach 2015: 88).

\[(35) \text{nae, hashipali shagwene, dindimwida ding’ano}\]

he there.was.not of.he.should.see they.came.to.him thoughts

‘…as for him, he couldn’t think what to do, then thoughts came to him…’ (Free translation: SN)

8.3 Identificational constructions

Identificational constructions, as the name suggests, identify some person, thing, time or place. They are used when the audience knows that something has happened, but is missing one crucial piece of information. For example, you may know that someone ate the fruit and I can tell you who, by saying “It was Eve who ate the fruit.” In English, this can also be done by stressing the word Eve in speech. Or you may want to know where Eve ate the fruit, and I can tell you using any of the sentences in example (36):

\[(36) \text{a. In the garden was where she ate the fruit.}\]
\[\text{b. It was in the garden that she ate the fruit.}\]
\[\text{c. She ate the fruit IN THE GARDEN.}\]
The identified constituent, such as ‘Eve’ or ‘in the garden’, is called the FOCUS. The information that is already known (‘someone at the fruit’ or ‘Eve ate the fruit somewhere’) is called the PRESUPPOSITION.

In all of the eastern Bantu languages, when the focus element is anything except the subject, it can occur after the verb (either at the end of the clause or immediately after the verb, which is often the same place). In the Jita example below, the presupposition is that someone will be put by the well to guard it; the focus identifies that someone as lion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESUPPOSITION</th>
<th>FOCUS (Object)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mbamuta-ko</td>
<td>woori nyawatere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they.put.him-there</td>
<td>now lion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Now they put lion there.’ (Pyle and Robinson 2015:18)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some of the eastern Bantu languages, the focus can occur after the verb when it is the subject as well. In the following Kisi example, a man has taken a boat onto the lake to fish; it is presupposed that some kind of fish will eventually pull on the fishing line, and the focus expression mbasa specifies which kind of fish does in fact pull on the line:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESUPPOSITION</th>
<th>FOCUS (Subject)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akajhanda kusopa lukwetulilu, kusopa lukwetulilu.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he.began to.put_in fishing_line to.put_in fishing_line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ah, jhakajhanda kukunya mbasa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ah it.began to.tug type_of_fish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘He began to put in the fishing line, he continued to put in the fishing line. Ah, a mbasa began to tug on the line.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another way to express focus is to use what is called a CLEFT CONSTRUCTION. In English, cleft constructions have a form of the verb ‘be’ and a relative pronoun, as in (36a) In the garden was where…and (36b) It was in the garden that…(with a ‘dummy’ subject it before the verb). In all the eastern Bantu languages, cleft constructions are used when the focus expression is the subject, and in Digo and Fuliru (and possibly other languages) this is the only way in which a subject can be made a focus expression (see Nicolle 2015b section 6.5). The following Digo example describes the moment when people discover who had been committing certain crimes. This is expressed using a cleft construction consisting of the copula ndi (similar to the verb ‘be’ in English) plus a pronominal form ye identifying the subject, followed by a relative clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS</th>
<th>PRESUPPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ndipho atu achimanya kukala iye ndiye</td>
<td>ariyehenda mambo higo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>then people they.knew that she it.was.her who.did things those</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Then people knew that it was her who did those things.’ (Nicolle 2015a:55)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8.4 Discovery procedures

Because narratives have agent orientation, most of the clauses in a narrative are about the participants and describe what they do. This means that most subjects will also be topics, and topic-comment constructions will probably be far more frequent than thetic constructions (which either introduce new participants or describe events without reference to currently active participants) and identificational constructions (which identify the participants or circumstances involved in a known event).

Look at your texts and see how often topic-comment constructions are used and whether topics can occur in any other positions than the usual subject position (i.e. before the verb in eastern Bantu languages). Look for places where different word orders occur. This is made easier if you make a chart to indicate every time a constituent does not occur in its usual position. Try to determine reasons why constituents do not occur in their usual positions. Different word order may be used for emphasis, but it may also be used in thetic and identificational constructions.
8.5 Application to translation

We have already looked at a number of examples from our passage, but in this section I will discuss two verses in detail. To illustrate some of the issues relating to information structure, I will assume that we are translating into an eastern Bantu language.

Acts 16:16

The following is a fairly literal translation of Acts 16:16:

It happened that [as] we were going to the place of prayer a female slave having a spirit of divination came near to us who was bringing her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling.

Major participants are often introduced in thetic sentences (e.g. There came a slave girl. This slave girl… see Appendix B), but the slave girl is a minor participant, so it would not be appropriate to introduce her in this way. At the same time, a simple subject-verb clause, such as a slave girl met us (see the NET version below), could sound like a topic-comment sentence in eastern Bantu languages, especially since they do not have indefinite articles like English a.

Now as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave girl met us who had a spirit that enabled her to foretell the future by supernatural means. She brought her owners a great profit by fortune-telling. (NET)

Instead, many translations maintain the same topic as at the end of the previous verse: we. ESV makes we the subject of a passive clause: we were met by, but the NLT makes we the subject of an active clause we met:

As we were going to the place of prayer we were met by a slave girl… (ESV)
One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl… (NLT)

As well as mentioning the slave girl without introducing her as if she were a major participant, translators need to consider how to express the additional information about the slave girl. She is described as 1) having a spirit of divination (predicting the future) and 2) bringing her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. In Greek, this information is expressed using a participle clause and a relative clause respectively:

It happened that [as] we were going to the place of prayer a female slave 1) having a spirit of divination came near to us 2) who was bringing her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling.

In some English translations these are both expressed in a relative clause:

As we were going to the place of prayer we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and [who] brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. (ESV)

The NLT expresses the information about the spirit using a relative clause (who had a spirit…) which itself contains another relative clause (that enabled her to tell the future). However, the Greek relative clause who brought her owners… is expressed as a separate sentence using a topic-comment construction, She [TOPIC] earned… [COMMENT]:

One day as we were going down to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl who had a spirit that enabled her to tell the future. She earned a lot of money for her masters by telling fortunes. (NLT)

In many eastern Bantu languages, relative clauses that describe some characteristic of a major participant or the VIP occur in the orientation or inciting episode to indicate the overall theme of a story. The fact that the slave girl had a spirit and that she earned a lot of money for her masters are relevant to the story, but they do not constitute the main theme of the story (which concerns how the jailer believes in Jesus). Would you expect a relative clause to be used in this place in your language? If not, the Bantuised Swahili Front Translation (2008) provides a good model to follow:

‘One day, when we were going to the place where people (usually) prayed to God, we were met by one girl, a slave. That girl, she had in her a (bad) spirit, that enabled her to predict the future. And in this way, her owners were getting (through her) much money.’

The final clause has a topic-comment structure with her owners as the topic. In the clauses before and after, the slave girl is the topic, and so to avoid changing the topic unnecessarily, I suggest changing the final sentence to:

‘And in this way, she brought her owners much money.’

Acts 16:37

In Acts 16:35–36 we learn that the magistrates have decided to release Paul and Silas; but in verse 36 Paul tells the police that because he and Silas were beaten publicly they should also be released publicly. The fact that Paul and Silas will be released from the prison is a presupposition, but what is not known is who will release them. Paul states that it is the magistrates themselves who should come and release them:

“They themselves must come and escort us out!” (NET)
“Let them come themselves to release us!” (NLT)

_They themselves_ is the focus expression. In English, the reader can use (or imagine) stress on the word _themselves_ and so most English translations do not use a specific identificational construction here. The eastern Bantu languages are much stricter than English or Greek about using identificational constructions in such cases, and so the _Bantuised Swahili Front Translation_ (2008) uses the cleft construction _wawe ndio…‘they it is’_ to identify the focus (two possible free translations are provided):

“Mwache wenyewe, wawe ndio watakuja kutuoja njie!”
‘Let them (come) themselves, they it is who will come and take us out!’

‘Let them (come) themselves, it is they who should be the ones to come and take us out!’

Recommended readings


9 Storyline concerns

Before you read this chapter, I must warn you that it is fairly technical, and you may find that parts of it are less immediately relevant to translation than the other chapters. In particular, thematic development markers discussed in section 9.2, do not occur in all languages. However, if you have enjoyed the previous chapters, you may want to try reading this chapter too.

Back in chapter 1, we noted that narratives describe events that occur in an orderly sequence and that are influenced by the major participants. We called these features “time orientation” and “agent orientation” respectively. The events which move a story along—or rather, the clauses that describe these events—form the storyline. The storyline clauses have been described as forming the “backbone” of the narrative (Hopper and Thompson 1980:281). This is similar to what is called the “main event line” in Labov and Waletzky (1967) and some other publications. Other clauses, including explanations, descriptions, out-of-sequence events, and non-events such as plans, hopes and things that did not happen, comprise the supportive material.

Not all storyline clauses are equally important. Some clauses describe important steps in the development of the story, and in some languages narrators can indicate such events by using thematic development markers (see section 9.2). Other clauses are less important in the development of the story, and often narrators will express these as if they were supportive material; when this happens, we say that these clauses have been BACKGROUNDED (see section 9.3). In chapter 7 we saw that clauses can be backgrounded in order to highlight the clauses that follow, for example just before the peak episode.

9.1 Features of the storyline

Most languages have some specific types of verbs or constructions that indicate the storyline. Shirtz and Payne (2015:12) list seven main characteristics of the storyline in languages around the world: (1) verb forms with past-perfective or compleitive tense/aspect, (2) verbal constructions that are dependent on some other form for their temporal reference, (3) syntactically independent clauses, (4) clause chaining, (5) clause conjunctions (like the biblical Hebrew wa- verb prefix and the Koiné Greek connective kai), (6) special “voice” marking, and (7) word order. These seven features are not the only ways in which the storyline can be indicated, and many languages use a combination of features in storyline clauses.

In the rest of this section, we will look at examples from various African languages to give an idea of some of the ways in which the storyline can be indicated. These examples are just a sample, and do not exhaust the possibilities.

9.1.1 Tense and aspect

It is common for storyline clauses to use a more limited number of tenses and/or aspects than clauses expressing supportive material. However, there is considerable variation in the tenses and aspects that are used to indicate the storyline, even between closely related languages.

In some languages, such as Ewe (Longacre 1990:154–155), the storyline verbs are grammatically unmarked. Ngoni also uses the unmarked (or present) tense to indicate the storyline in narratives, although in direct speech sequential events are expressed using perfective aspect (Kröger 2016).

23 The title of this chapter, “Storyline Concerns,” is taken from Longacre (1990), and the terms “storyline” and “supportive material” are taken from Longacre (1996:21). These roughly correspond to the traditional terms “foreground” and “background” respectively. I prefer to use “storyline” and “supportive material” because the terms “foreground” and “background” are defined in different ways by different scholars (see Shirtz and Payne 2015 for an overview) and are used for other genres in which there is no story; also, the terms “background” and “backgrounded” are easily confused.
Many languages have two or more past tenses indicating different times in the past (meaning ‘earlier today’, ‘before today’, ‘long ago’). In languages with multiple past tenses it is common for just one of these tenses to be used in storyline clauses. A Bantu language Nyungwe uses the remote past tense to indicate the storyline. (Nyungwe also uses a lot of tail-head linkage within paragraphs, which may help to distinguish events in sequence from other events).

Yet other languages have a tense (or occasionally more than one tense) or special verb form that indicates that the events described occur in sequence. Longacre (1990) discusses a number of African languages that use such tenses to mark the storyline, and many Bantu languages also do this (see Nicolle 2015b:36–39). Longacre (1990:109) divides these tenses into two categories: CONSECUTIVE TENSES and NARRATIVE TENSES.

Consecutive tenses occur in the second and subsequent clauses in a sequence, but the first clause in the sequence must have another tense or aspect (called the “establishing” tense/aspect). This means that consecutive tenses cannot initiate the storyline, and they typically cannot be used across paragraph boundaries; that is, each new paragraph must start with a clause with another tense or aspect before the first consecutive tense can be used. Bantu languages with consecutive tenses include Bena, Digo and Swahili. The following example from Digo shows a past tense being used at the start of a paragraph, followed by a consecutive tense in the following clause:

\[
(40) \text{Ná-fika skuli n-chi-a-ambira alimu ayangu.} \\
\text{1SG.PST-arrive school 1SG-CONS-3PL-tell teachers my_fellows} \\
\text{‘I arrived at school and told my fellow teachers.’ (Nicolle 2015:88)}
\]

Narrative tenses only occur on the storyline and do not depend on a previous tense or aspect; this means that they can initiate the storyline or start a new paragraph. Bantu languages with narrative tenses include Jita, Malila and Suba-Simbiti. The following example from Suba-Simbiti shows a narrative tense being used at the start of a paragraph followed by another narrative tense in the next clause:

\[
(41) \text{Bhoono òröndë rono a-ka-raara a-ka-roota...} \\
\text{now another.day this 3SG-NARR-sleep 3SG-NARR-dream} \\
\text{‘Now another time he fell asleep and dreamed...’ (Masatu 2015:51)}
\]

Some languages have more than one narrative/consecutive tense, which may be distinguished for different reasons. For example, Malila and Digo each distinguish two narrative/consecutive tenses on the basis of temporal reference: Malila uses narrative \text{kha-} for ‘far past’ and consecutive \text{anza a-} for ‘near past’; Digo uses consecutive \text{chi-} if the establishing tense is ‘far past’ but \text{ka-} with other establishing tenses or aspects. Mwani and Makonde, on the other hand, use different narrative/consecutive tenses depending on the importance of the event being described: in Mwani, the consecutive tense and perfect aspect can both be used for the storyline, but only the perfect is used for pivotal events (see 9.2); in Makonde, the narrative tense (which has the same form as the infinitive: \text{ku-VR-a}) is used for most events, but the consecutive tense (which has the same form as the conditional: \text{SC-ka-VR-a}) is used for less important events.

Many languages allow more than one verb form to be used in the storyline. In Bena, the storyline in some narratives is indicated primarily by the consecutive tense (marked by the suffix -aga) and in other narratives by the far past perfective verb form. In addition, some storyline events are marked by the connective \text{neke ‘then’} followed by a subjunctive verb form. Table 8 presents a short narrative in which the storyline and the supportive material have been arranged in separate columns (direct speech has been omitted).

\[\text{24 Speech clauses may be an exception. As we noted in section 5.2, speech verbs in some languages can have a different tense from other verbs in storyline clauses.}\]
Table 8. Bena narrative charted for storyline and supportive material (based on Broomhall 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Storyline</th>
<th>Supportive material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1         | Aali pwali uNdandadzi nu mudzela vakwe uSude.  
There was Spider and his friend Hare. |
| 2         | Awo vahegile pamwinga kuhelela kuwuudza umuhiindza.  
They left together to propose to a girl. |
| 3a        | Pe aavye vafiike  
When they had arrived |
| 3b        | vakumuwudzaga umuhiindza uyo  
they explained to this girl |
| 3c        | neke idikilage.  
and she agreed. |
| 4a        | Usude akumutyegaga uNdandadzi  
Hare tricked Spider |
| 4b        | ipiluhaga hangi kwa muhindza uyo  
and returned to that girl |
| 4c        | itigilaga, “…”  
and said, “…” |
| 5         | Umuhiindza itigilaga, “…”  
The girl said, “…” |
| 6         | Umuhiindza itigilaga, “…”  
Hare said, “…” |
| 7         | Umuhiindza uyo ikwidikilaga  
That girl agreed |
| 8         | Iwe amupavye uSude.  
as Hare had told her. |
| 9a        | Undandazdi ihelelaga kwa muhindza uyo  
Spider went to that girl |
| 9b        | itigilaga, “…”  
and said, “…” |
| 10        | Neke uNdandadzi ahegage ahelelage  
kukyanya ku mafunde...  
Then Spider left and went up into the clouds...’ |

All the supportive material has remote past tense verb forms, apart from line 8 in which there is one infinitive verb and one subjunctive verb without a preceding connective neke. The storyline mostly consists of the consecutive tense, with neke in lines 3c and 10. Interestingly, although line 2 describes an event, it uses the remote past tense, which indicates that this event has been backgrounded. This suggests that the narrator is treating line 2 as part of the orientation, and that the inciting episode is sentence 3 where the consecutive tense first occurs (in line 3b).

Different tenses and/or aspects may also be used when the storyline is expressed in dependent clauses (e.g. ‘when...’, ‘after...’) which may have the effect of backgrounding less important events (see section 9.3). In Digo, such clauses may use the infinitive, but in Vwanji the anterior is used. Very closely connected events, such as eating and drinking, or getting dressed and leaving the house, may use a different tense/aspect for the second and subsequent clauses: for example na + infinitive in Digo and nu + infinitive in Bena, but present tense in Vwanji, and the ci ‘simultaneous’ aspect in Nyungwe. Elaborations of storyline events are typically expressed using the past tense in Digo, but the anterior or present in Vwanji; repeating a verb using the same tense or aspect as in elaboration can be used to highlight the event described.
9.1.2 Lumun: Clause conjunction

In the Kordofanian language Lumun, storyline clauses begin with the clitic a-, which attaches to the start of the first word in each storyline clause (after any points of departure or connectors). This first word is usually either the subject or the main verb. Stirtz (2011:11) therefore calls it a “foreground clitic,” although he notes that the “most basic function of the clitic a- is as a connective.” It does, however, also occur in some clauses which are not considered part of the storyline, including events that do not occur in sequence and dependent clauses indicating purpose or intention. The foreground clitic a- is absent in the peak and pre-peak episodes of some narratives, but it used more often than necessary in the peak of other narratives.

The following example from near the start of a Lumun narrative (adapted from Stirtz 2011:50) shows how the clitic a- is not used in the orientation (sentence 2 of the narrative) but first appears in the inciting episode (sentence 3). It is used in 3a, which is the start of the storyline and also in 3b which describes what the subject had done previously in the forest; this is an event, but it is not part of the storyline as we have defined it.

(42) Lumun narrative

2 Ukkul w’rek wokat cik woccot k’ran itti Olotti ana okin thonat kuthuk ken…
   boy other was PART given name that Lotti and they had animal.pens theirs

3 a. Ana ca’ri c’rek cipin a=Lotti paat nti ithu’rit tho kie
   and time other evening FC=Lotti came from shepherding of cows
   b. a=kw-okkat ngere appik ngo tethhuk …
   FC=he-did.all work of place forest
   ‘A certain boy named Lotti had animals… One evening, Lotti came from tending the cows
   and all the other work in the forest…”
   a PART = particle
   b FC = foreground clitic

9.1.3 Northern Mao: Clause chaining

Northern Mao is an Omotic language with a basic constituent order of SOV. Narratives in Northern Mao typically contain long sentences consisting of a number of non-final verbs followed by a final verb that indicates the subject and the utterance type (declarative, interrogative, imperative or jussive). The non-final verbs fall into two categories: one category has suffixes indicating that the subject is the same as the previous verb or different from the previous verb. Verbs in this category either have no aspect marking, perfect aspect marking, or progressive aspect marking. The other category (called TEMPORALLY INTEGRATED) has a suffix that indicates that the event described by the verb overlaps in time with the event in the next clause (regardless of whether the subject is the same or different).

In narratives, the same-subject and different-subject verb forms usually express main events. The unmarked and perfect aspect forms indicate main events in sequence (i.e. the storyline), with perfect forms helping to divide the narrative into temporal sections (what we have been calling “paragraphs”). The progressive aspect form indicates events (main or non-main) which overlap in time with other events (and which are therefore not part of the storyline). The temporally integrated form expresses non-main events or provides additional information about main events; in other words, the temporally integrated form is used for supportive information. This is represented as follows (from Ahland 2015:113):
9.1.4 Safaliba: Special pronouns

In the Gur language Safaliba, the storyline mostly uses unmodified perfective verbs in independent clauses, but supportive material can also contain such verb forms, along with other tense and aspect markers (Schaefer 2009:188). However, in addition to aspect marking, all storyline clauses which contain a pronoun must use a particular form of pronoun, called the N-pronoun. N-pronouns can occur in a few non-storyline clauses, such as when the pronoun is the subject of the verb ‘be’, when the pronoun refers to an object or location that has been fronted for focus, and occasionally with imperfective verbs (Schaefer 2009:200–201), but in storyline clauses only N-pronouns can be used. Schaefer (2009:257) comments:

The extra pronoun set in Safaliba is primarily used to indicate agents that move the story along, marking a narrative step: as such, it is an additional indicator of narrative storyline beyond what is marked on the verb itself. Although full noun phrases or null reference may occur in the subject position of a storyline verb, pronouns do occur quite frequently in that position, and those pronouns are (without apparent exception) always taken from the N-pronoun set.

9.2 Thematic development markers

According to Longacre (1990:5),

many languages not only have a storyline but a category of pivotal events/actions which, when taken together, constitute a tolerably good abstract of the story, while the pivotal events plus the main storyline forms yield a somewhat fuller abstract. The pivotal events are marked in some fashion which may or may not be formally similar to the marking of the main storyline.

What are “pivotal events”? A pivot is a central point on which something turns, and so a PIVOTAL EVENT can be thought of as an important “turning point” in a story. A well-told story has a theme: a situation or problem that the narrator typically introduces in the inciting episode and resolves at the peak. A good narrator will make sure that the audience notices the important turning points in the story. In certain languages (but not all!), these turning points are marked by special constructions. Since these constructions exist to help the audience recognize important developments relating to the theme of the story, we will call them THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT MARKERS (TDMs).

TDMs can occur in the inciting episode (where the problem, conflict or situation which constitutes the theme of the story is introduced), at various points in the developmental episodes, and in some cases at the peak. They do not occur in the orientation, because the theme of the story has not been established at this point, and they do not occur after the peak (i.e. in the denouement and conclusion) because the theme has already been resolved by this point. Sometimes, a TDM occurs at the peak, but in some narratives the peak has distinctive features that make a TDM

25 Dooley and Levinsohn (2001) and Levinsohn (2015) use the term “developmental marker” or “development marker.”
redundant. Because TDMs indicate pivotal events, they only occur in storyline clauses, and not in supportive material which describes non-events.

TDMs can take various forms, and they are often “recycled” linguistic elements that have a different function outside of narratives. As I have mentioned many times already, narratives are characterized by time orientation and agent orientation. Related to this, Levinsohn (1976) showed that TDMs usually have some connection either with time orientation (which he calls the “linkage axis”) or with agent orientation (which he calls the “agent axis”). In other words, TDMs are often either connectives that show how clauses are linked, or they are expressions which refer to the participants in a narrative (the agents). In eastern Bantu languages, for example, TDMs can be temporal connectives (often derived from locative demonstratives or locative relative markers), or demonstratives and relative clauses that refer to participants.

9.2.1 TDMs and time orientation

If TDMs are connectives, they do not necessarily signal discontinuities of time, place, action or participants, and can therefore be found at various places within a paragraph (not just at the beginning or end). In the following Nyakyusa text (43), the TDM is Po leelo. The connective po paapo ‘for that reason’ introduces the denouement/conclusion. Po ‘so’, is a logical conjunction that introduces expected results, so it is not a TDM.

(43) Nyakyusa narrative showing thematic development markers

Orientation
1 There was a certain man who was a thief in our village (whom) everyone knew.
2 He often used to go to steal in people's gardens.

Inciting episode
3 One day he had stolen a certain man's tomatoes in his village.

Developmental episodes
4 Po leelo the wife of the householder went early to their tomato garden.
5 On seeing that their tomatoes had been picked, she cried out loudly, saying, 'Alas, I've been robbed'.
6 Po when people heard her cry, they decided to go to investigate.
7 They asked her, 'What is the matter?'
8 She told them, 'My tomatoes have been stolen'.
9 'Don't cry, mother! We know who troubles us in this village.'
10 They said, 'Let's go to his house and search!'
11 When they reached it, they found the wife of the man who was known to be a thief.
12 Po they asked her, 'Your husband is where?'
13 She replied, 'I didn't see where he went'.
14 'Why didn't you come when you heard our companion Ameenye's cry?
15 Po we suspect that you (pl.) have stolen (some tomatoes).
16 Let us search your house!'
17 The wife of the thief showed them some tiny ones and said, 'Here are the ones I bought in the market just now'.
18 Po leelo her father-in-law sent them in on his orders,
19 'Enter the house and search it; these kids make me ashamed'.

Peak
20 Po leelo they found a lot of tomatoes—a whole bucket-full.
21 Po the woman from whom they had been stolen recognized the kind, that they were theirs.
22 Po leelo the wife of the thief herself also cried, 'Alas! I am mortified.'
Denouement and Conclusion

23 Po paapo the people arrested her and brought her to the village leader.
24 Po the village leader also sent her to the police station.
25 That woman remained in jail until her husband was caught.

As noted above, po leelo marks the significant turning points or developments in the story, following the theft in line 3:

- the discovery of the theft, which leads to the decision to search the suspect’s house and his wife’s efforts to deceive them (4-17)
- the father-in-law’s order to search the house (18-19)
- the discovery and identification of the tomatoes (20-21)
- the response of the thief’s wife (effectively admitting their guilt) (22)

The TDMs above do not correspond to paragraph or episode breaks. Although there are temporal discontinuities at lines 6 and 11 (which could therefore start new paragraphs), no new development in the story occurs within these paragraphs, as far as the author is concerned, since no progress is made in proving that the suspects are guilty until the father-in-law intervenes in line 18.

9.2.2 TDMs and agent orientation

In Fuliiru, important thematic developments are indicated by the use of distal (or “remote”) demonstratives to refer to participants in the narrative, whilst new but less important developments are indicated by the use of proximal demonstratives. Proximal demonstratives are used to indicate relatively predictable developments, whereas distal demonstratives indicate critical developments, and so perhaps only the distal demonstratives should be termed “TDMs.” For a detailed account of the functions of these demonstrative forms, see Van Otterloo (2015), sections 4.1 and 4.2.

9.3 Backgrounded clauses

Backgrounded clauses present events that could be part of the storyline as if they are supportive material. In many languages, including English, backgrounded clauses are often grammatically subordinate (or dependent) clauses, such as participle (-ing) clauses, time clauses with ‘when’ or ‘after’, and relative clauses.

In example (44a), Longacre (1990:3–4) distinguishes “backgrounded events,” which are events that prepare for or result from storyline events and “backgrounded activities” which take time to happen and overlap rather than occur in sequence. Backgrounded clauses are in bold.

(44) a. Jumping up and grabbing the edge, I managed to pull myself up. Then I tossed down the rope which Harry had brought.
    b. All the time the two “decoys” were making their way around to the other side of the property.

The events in (44a) could be presented as if they were all on the storyline, but I hope you agree that this is not good storytelling:

(44) a’. Harry brought the rope. I jumped up, grabbed the edge, and managed to pull myself up. Then I tossed down the rope.

The activity of “making their way around to the other side of the property” in (44b) can not be presented as an event on the storyline, as it overlaps in time with the events described in (44a).

The constructions in (44a) are the same kind as constructions that can be used to express supportive material that does not involve events. Compare (44a) with (45) which also uses participle (-ing) verb forms and a relative clause.

(45) Concentrating hard and using all my strength, I managed to pull myself up. Then I tossed down the rope which was strong enough to bear Harry’s weight.
The bolded clauses in (44a) and (45) have the same forms, but those in (44a) describe events whereas those in (45) describe supportive material. When events are described using forms that are typically used for supportive material, we say that those clauses have been backgrounded. This has the effect of drawing the reader’s attention to the storyline events: “I managed to pull myself up. Then I tossed down the rope.”

Different languages—and even different narrators—can vary greatly in how many events are expressed in storyline clauses and how many are backgrounded.

9.4 Discovery procedures

We have seen that different languages indicate the storyline in different ways. We have also seen that features that typically indicate the storyline often do not exactly correlate with the storyline. For example, the foreground clitic in Lumun indicates clauses on the storyline but also clauses that describe events out of sequence. Similarly, the N-pronoun in Safaliba may also occur in some non-storyline clauses in certain grammatical constructions, and of course the N-pronoun does not occur in storyline clauses that contain a full noun phrase instead of a pronoun. Note also that there may be variation in the peak.

We have also seen that some languages (but not all) have thematic development markers that indicate important turning points in a narrative. All languages have ways of backgrounding certain clauses so that they do not form part of the storyline, but languages differ concerning how many clauses are typically backgrounded and how many are expressed on the storyline.

Your task is to discover a) whether there are any particular features that characterize the storyline in your narrative texts, b) whether your language uses thematic development markers, and if so what these are and how frequently they occur, and c) how many clauses are backgrounded and how this is achieved.

One way to do this is to divide your text into storyline clauses and supportive material. Be aware that it is sometimes difficult to know whether a clause is part of the storyline or not. You can make a chart like the one below. In this chart, which is a translation of the start of a Digo story, I have used ordinary type for supportive material, bold for the storyline, and bold + italic for backgrounded clauses. Direct speech does not form part of the storyline vs. supportive material distinction, so it has been put in grey.

Table 9. Digo story and discussion of supportive material, storyline, and background clauses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Long ago a man and his wife had a child.</td>
<td>Formulaic orientation: the birth is not part of the storyline (neither the wife nor the child are participants in the rest of the story)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>They farmed a small hill</td>
<td>Consecutive tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>and had enough food to last them three years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The man said, “Just as I have farmed this hill and got a lot, if I also farm like that somewhere else and harvest even more I’ll be able to get lots of things that I can sell so I can buy a cow.”</td>
<td>Consecutive tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a</td>
<td>The man dug a huge field,</td>
<td>Past tense starting new paragraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b</td>
<td>but he didn’t get as much as one grain of maize to sell.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>He asked himself, “I made this field large yet I haven’t got a single grain of maize, why is this?”</td>
<td>Consecutive tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a</td>
<td>But he kept quiet</td>
<td>Describes a situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6b</td>
<td>nor did he speak to anyone.</td>
<td>Elaboration: what did not happen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a</td>
<td>Then he made the field even bigger,</td>
<td>Consecutive tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b</td>
<td>but still got nothing.</td>
<td>Describes what did not happen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He said, “I’m going to ask the god what I have done wrong even though I and my wife made the field big.”

Consecutive tense

He said this

Repetition (past tense but same paragraph)

but he didn’t know how to find the god,

Describes a negative situation

he was just talking.

Elaboration (past tense but same paragraph)

However right there was a crocodile.

Describes situation, not event

The crocodile said to him, “If you are going to tell your problems to the god, I’ll give you a message to give to the god. If you see him, tell him that the food he gives me isn’t enough.”

Present tense (common in speech verbs)

The crocodile had just been given water as his food

Describes an out of sequence event

and didn’t eat anything else.

Describes a negative situation

In this example, we see that the default tense in the storyline is the consecutive tense, except in line 4a where the past tense is used to start a new paragraph. The past tense is also used to background events which are not part of the storyline as in lines 9a and 9c. If you have charted your texts as described in Appendix A, all of the verbs should be aligned in a single column. This makes it easier to find the verbs and identify the tense or aspect of each.

When you have done this for your texts, decide how most of the storyline clauses are marked. Look out for clauses that have been backgrounded, that is, clauses that describe events as if they were supportive material and which do not use the usual storyline marking.

Next, think about the theme of each text and underline the clauses that describe important turning points that develop this theme. (These clauses will occur between the inciting episode and the peak.) Now look at these clauses and see if there is any special linguistic expression or construction that does not occur elsewhere. If there is, this could be a TDM. Some TDMs indicate only very important turning points, and may occur only a few times. Other TDMs indicate every step that develops the theme (but not every storyline clause).

Storyline and supportive material in Acts 16:16–40

Identifying the storyline

Below is the text of the ESV for the whole passage. I have used ordinary type for supportive material, bold for the storyline, and bold + italic for backgrounded clauses. I will discuss verses 16–18, but for the rest of the passage I will simply mark up the text. (Note that I suggested paragraph breaks in chapter 2 at verses 29 and 38 which the ESV does not include.)
As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. 

She followed Paul and us, crying out, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.” And this she kept doing for many days.

Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. And when they had brought them to the magistrates, they said, “These men are Jews, and they are disturbing our city. They advocate customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to accept or practice.” The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods. And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely.

Having received this order, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone’s bonds were unfastened.

When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.” And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas.

Then he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family.

But when it was day, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let those men go.” And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The magistrates have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace.” But Paul said to them, “They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out.” The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens.

The verb ‘be’ is not usually used in storyline clauses, as it typically describes states or situations rather than events. Here, however, it describes an event and is a translation of the Greek verb ἐγένετο ‘it happened’.
So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

Alternative verse 40:
After Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met the believers and encouraged them, and then they left the city.

9.5.2 Thematic development

What do you consider to be the theme of this passage? At a very basic level, we see that God used a bad situation (Paul and Silas were put in prison) to bring about a good result (the jailer and his family were saved). This also contributes to the larger theme that runs through much of Acts of how the gospel reached the Gentiles. Given this, the important turning points in the story will be the events that lead to Paul and Silas being put in prison and the jailer and his family being saved. These could be appropriate places to use a TDM. We would not expect any TDMs in the denouement (verses 35–40).

- Paul said to to the spirit... It came out that very hour.
- They seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers.
- They threw them into prison.
- Suddenly there was a great earthquake.
- The jailer said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”
- They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”
- He was baptized at once, he and all his family.

9.6 Application to translation

In Bible translation, translators must include all the events in each passage. It is not okay to omit or change the facts! However, translators have a lot of freedom as to how they describe the events. Specifically, translators have freedom to decide which events to express in storyline clauses and which events to express in backgrounded clauses.

To illustrate this, compare the following three translations of Acts 16:23 from the ESV, the NLT and my proposal from section 4.5.1 of this manual. The backgrounded events are expressed using subordinate clauses which I have marked in italics, and storyline clauses are expressed using independent clauses which I have marked in bold. All three translations are accurate and clear, but they differ in the way in which the events are expressed.

ESV  And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailer to keep them safely.

NLT  They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn’t escape.

Ch4  When the police had inflicted many blows on Paul and Silas they threw them into prison, and the magistrates ordered the jailer to keep them safely.

We can also see differences in verse 40. In this case, we have already been told (in v.39) that the magistrates escorted Paul and Silas out of the prison, so the first clause is not a new storyline event but rather a repetition of information that we already know (an example of tail-head linkage). Be careful not to express it as a storyline event! Let’s compare the ESV, the NLT, and my suggested translation from the end of chapter 6. The ESV expresses the first clause as a storyline event and backgrounds the third clause, whereas the NLT and my suggestion only background the first clause.
ESV  So they went out of the prison and visited Lydia. And when they had seen the brothers, they encouraged them and departed.

NLT  When Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met with the believers and encouraged them once more. Then they left town.

Ch.6  After Paul and Silas left the prison, they returned to the home of Lydia. There they met the believers and encouraged them, and then they left the city.

Check your translation of Acts 16:16–40 to ensure that you have used the correct storyline forms for storyline events, and that you have not included supportive material in storyline clauses. Compare the proportion of backgrounded clauses in your texts and in your translation, and make sure that your translation uses an appropriate number of backgrounded clauses and that these are expressed using appropriate clause types.

Recommended readings


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language name</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Language family</th>
<th>Country where spoken</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Adioukrou</td>
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<td>Kwa</td>
<td>Côte d'Ivoire</td>
<td>Hill (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akɔɔse</td>
<td>bss</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Hedinger (1984)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bafanji</td>
<td>bfj</td>
<td>Grassfields Bantu</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Cameron Hamm, p.c.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bena</td>
<td>bez</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Broomhall (2011), Eaton (2015b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berta</td>
<td>wti</td>
<td>Nilo-Saharan</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Susanne Neudorff, p.c. 21/03/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digo</td>
<td>dig</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Kenya and Tanzania</td>
<td>Nicolle (2015a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuliiru</td>
<td>flr</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>Van Otterloo (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik</td>
<td>ikx</td>
<td>Nilo-Saharan (?)</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Terrill Schrock, p.c. 27/06/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jita</td>
<td>jit</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Pyle &amp; Robinson (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Ubangi</td>
<td>South Sudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northern Mao</td>
<td>myf</td>
<td>Omotic</td>
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<td>East Cushitic</td>
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<td>Safaliba</td>
<td>saf</td>
<td>Gur</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Paul Schaefer (2009); p.c. 25/06/12</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ssc</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
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<td>swh</td>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Kenya, Tanzania and DRC</td>
<td>Personal knowledge</td>
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<td>Bantu</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>Masumbukho Shabani, p.c.</td>
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<td>Omotic</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Zayse Language Development and Translation Project, 25/05/12</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* This is the ISO 639-3 code that provides three-letter identifiers for all known human languages. It is administered by SIL International and is used in the *Ethnologue* ([www.ethnologue.com](http://www.ethnologue.com)).
Appendix A: Text charting

These instructions come in two parts: Part 1 deals with how to create a text chart using SIL’s FieldWorks Language Explorer (FLEx) software, and Part 2 deals with general issues relating to the content and use of text charts. Menu items, button names, or keys on the keyboard that need to be clicked are indicated in bold.

Part 1: Creating a chart using FLEx

Preparing to chart

Step 1
If you have not already done so, install the FLEx software (http://fieldworks.sil.org/flex/) and create a new project. Setting up a Project involves various steps such as selecting fonts and styles which I will not discuss because I want to concentrate on the text charting function.

Step 2
Select Texts and Words from the left hand column on your screen.

Step 3
Add a new text to the corpus by pressing the “+” button (under the Help tab) or by holding down the Ctrl key and pressing T.

Step 4
Open the Info tab and give the text a title. Add any other information that you want here. Click on Refresh to show how the title now comes up to the left. This is useful once you have more than one text.

Step 5
Open the Baseline tab. The baseline is where you input texts. Copy your text (from any word processing document) and paste it into the Baseline tab.

Step 6
Open the Gloss tab and check that the text displays correctly. Some diacritics and special symbols may be interpreted as punctuation marks which will cause words to be split. If this happens, check the fonts which you are using and if necessary replace the diacritics and symbols with plain text equivalents in the Baseline tab.

Step 7
If desired, provide a gloss for each word and any grammatical information. This is where things can be very detailed, or very simple, according to your preference. To change how many lines are shown, go to Tools—Configure—Interlinear and choose what you want.

Fill in the glosses by hand, clicking on the green tick or pressing Enter. This goes faster once you have other texts and information in the project; if a word has already been glossed, the gloss will appear each time that word occurs—you just have to agree to it. If the word gloss suggested is wrong, select Add new word gloss. If you have two glosses for the same string, you will need to choose between them when you see that word again.

If a string of separate words has one gloss, you can chain them together. If you change your mind again, you can break the chain, and if you change your mind a second time, you can link it up again.

Step 8
Open the Text Chart tab. The default columns are:

Outer | Inner | Subject | Verb | Object/Complement | Inner | Outer.

These instructions are based on text charting directions prepared by Helen Eaton.
Step 9
To add or change columns, select Lists from the left hand tab, and choose Discourse Constituent Chart Templates. This is where you fix the number of columns you would like and what they should be called. The default options give you a start and then you can add sub-items and rename as you want to. Click back and forth between Lists and Texts and Words to show the effect.

- To move columns, right click on the label.
- To add columns, select Insert—Subitem.
- To delete or hide columns, click on the category label (Default/Pre-nuclear/Nucleus/Post-nuclear), select the sub-item to be deleted/hidden, and click on the blue triangle that appears on the left.

Charting
Once you have interlinearized your text to your satisfaction, it is time to chart. If possible, try to ensure that changes to the spelling of the vernacular or the glosses are made before starting the chart, otherwise things may go horribly wrong—you have been warned!

1. Select Texts and Words from the left hand column and select the Text Chart tab. Words are entered into the chart by clicking on the appropriate button at the bottom. Notice how the numbering starts automatically in the far left hand column. Which words go into which columns is obviously up to you to decide and work out the rules for.

2. If you make a mistake, and realize one word is in the wrong cell, you can move it by clicking in the cell where it is and choosing Move Word. To move it again use Ctrl + left or right arrow. You can also move a whole cell.

3. If lots of words need to go into one column, you can highlight them by clicking on the last word, and move them up together.

4. If you put words in a column which is to the left of the last words you entered, FLEx will automatically start a new line. If on putting several words in one column, you end up with several rows of words within one cell, you can deal with this by “merging” the cell with the one before or after it.

5. The automatic labelling assumes that each new row is a new clause in the same sentence, and will label each row 1a, 1b etc., unless you tell it otherwise. If a new row is a new sentence, you click in the row above and select Last row in sentence. Notice that the numbering adjusts itself automatically. Every new sentence gets a new number, every new clause gets a new letter. You can also make a sentence the Last row in paragraph, and get a thicker line.

6. If you want to start a new clause (and a new row) with a word that could come after the last word of the previous clause, go to the right of the button and click Insert into new row. You can ensure that a second verb gets its own line in a different way too—by clicking on the last line and choosing Insert row below.

7. If you have a verbless clause, you will automatically get three dashes in the Verb column. The same goes for missing Subjects. If you want to mark anything else as missing, you can do this manually by clicking in the appropriate cell and choosing Mark as missing from the list.

8. FLEx uses colour to show dependent clauses, speech, songs and words/phrases that are not in their usual position.

   If you want to show that the first clause is dependent on the second, click in whichever column you have decided will show clause markers and choose Make dependent clause out of previous clause. The dependent clause is now blue and you have a marker in the main clause on which it depends.
You could also have chosen Other, if you wanted more than one clause to be marked as dependent. (Click on Remove clause marker and then choose Other.) In whichever cell you click, you get a clause marker, showing the label of the clause that is dependent.

Do the same for dependent clauses that follow the main clause. Click in the cell where you want the marker to be and choose Make dependent clause out of following clause.

9. Speech clauses are marked in a similar way. Click in the speech introducer clause and choose Make speech clause out of the next two clauses. Speech is marked green. You could choose more clauses than that by picking Other. Songs are also marked in the same way but are marked purple.

10. You can indicate that a word or phrase is not in its usual position. Imagine you have columns in the order SVO but one clause is said Joseph. Here Joseph is the subject but it is after the verb. You will put the words into the chart in the normal way, putting Joseph into whichever column you have chosen for moved constituents (either Post-nuclear Inner or Post-nuclear Outer). You then click in that cell and choose Mark as postponed from subject. The moved constituent will be marked red and there will be a marker in the column from which it has moved. It is also possible to mark something as moved from another clause by choosing that option.

It is also possible to do the same thing but in just one step. Click to the right of the button and choose Insert as moved from—Subject.

11. If you make a mistake and notice it at the time, you can just undo it by holding down Ctrl and pressing Z (Ctrl + Z), but if you spot it later, just click in the cell, go as if to mark the constituent as moved and you will undo the marking.

If you realize you have made a mistake some way up in the table, it is possible to fix it by moving words and cells, unmarking and marking, adding and removing sentence breaks, and so on. However, trying to change the number of rows can destroy the chart! If there are many mistakes, you can choose to clear the chart from a certain point on.

12. The charting tool has further features. One is the ability to label constituents, either as you go along, or after finishing the initial chart. Tense-aspect-mood, pronouns, and demonstratives can be marked by clicking on the relevant cell.

The default labels may not suit the language you are charting, but you are able to change them. Go to Lists and Discourse Chart Markers and then change and relabel in the same way that you did for setting up the text-chart columns—inserting sub-items, deleting, and renaming. Fortunately it is possible to make changes after charts have been done without messing anything up.

13. You can save, print and export your chart. You can print directly from FieldWorks in the usual way or first export the text: File—Export Discourse Chart—Microsoft Word XML. You then get a document that is much, much smaller than the project file so you can email it easily. This is the only way to send someone the chart without sending them the entire project. You have to adjust the fonts once the document is in Word.

You can also save your chart as a PDF document. In the File dropdown menu, rather than choosing the Export Chart option, choose the Print Chart option. Select a PDF writer (e.g. Microsoft Print to PDF). Click on Properties/Advanced. Make sure that the paper orientation is landscape, and in the paper size tab select either 11x17 or A3. Click OK. Then click OK again to Print the chart to your PDF writer and, save the PDF to the location that you choose.

14. FLEx has various concordance and search facilities that you can use once you have a corpus of texts inputted. Go to Words then Concordance, then Search. The interlinearization jumps to the right place automatically, but the text chart doesn’t. You can specify concordance criteria in the usual way.
Part 2: General issues

Tips

- It is a good idea to do a test chart to make sure that the columns and labels that you have selected work well for texts in your language. The orientation and peak episodes often contain unusual constructions, and so it is best to make a test chart using about ten clauses from within the developmental episodes of a text.

- There may be certain complicated constructions that occur a number of times in your texts. For each construction, decide once how you will chart it and follow this decision every time you chart similar constructions elsewhere.

Dealing with variations in constituent order

Many languages have a consistent default constituent order; for example, English and the Bantu languages are fairly consistently SVO. As far as possible, insert all verbs into the Verb column and treat other constituents as having moved when the default constituent order is changed. For example, if the default constituent order is subject before verb but one clause has the order verb before subject, put the verb in the Verb column and put the subject in another column (e.g. Post-nuclear Inner) labelled as “Post-posed from Subject.” This is preferable to putting the verb in the Pre-nuclear Inner column labelled as “Pre-posed from Verb.”

Some languages, however, make frequent use of alternative orders. For example, Greek usually has VSO order but SVO order is frequent enough that we do not want to think of every subject in a SV or SVO clause as having been pre-posed. In such cases it is acceptable to add a column. For example, Greek could have:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outer</th>
<th>Inner</th>
<th>Subject 1</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Subject 2</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Inner</th>
<th>Outer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sometimes variations in the default constituent order are specified by the grammar rather than by discourse factors. For example, some languages may have a default VSO order in finite clauses, a default SVO order in participial clauses, and a default OS order in copular clauses (where there is no verb, only a copula or juxtaposition of object and subject).

Similarly, pronouns (and short prepositional phrases containing pronouns) may behave differently from full noun phrases. For example, object pronouns occur immediately after the verb in some VSO languages, and immediately before the verb in some SVO languages. In such cases, it may be preferable to include such pronouns in the Verb column rather than adding a new column just for pronouns or marking every such pronoun as “moved” (when in fact they have not been moved at all).

Complement clauses

Complement clauses (also called “noun clauses”) function as the argument (subject or object) of a larger clause (called the “matrix clause”). Object complement clauses are more common than subject complement clauses. In the following examples, [the clauses that are presented like this] are complement clauses:

Subject complement clause:  (1) [That Paul entered the room] surprised Silas.
Object complement clauses:  (2) Silas remembered [that Paul entered the room].
                           (3) Silas noticed [Paul’s entering the room].
                           (4) Silas wanted [Paul to enter the room].

There are two ways to chart complement clauses:

1. Keep the complement clause as part of the matrix clause without using a separate row:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>Silas</td>
<td>remembered</td>
<td>that Paul had entered the room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Make a new row for the complement clause and mark it as dependent on the matrix clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2a)</td>
<td>Silas</td>
<td>remembered</td>
<td>[2b]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2b)</td>
<td>[that]</td>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>had entered</td>
<td>the room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The choice is yours as to how to deal with complement clauses, however you should be guided by the discourse role that the complement clause plays in the text. If it describes an actual event, especially if this is part of the storyline, use a second row. If it describes an unrealized event (such as a plan or desire) or supportive information, it is probably not necessary to use a second row.

**Relative clauses**

Relative clauses (also called “adjective clauses”) modify noun phrases. In *The man built the house* the subject is *the man* and the object is *the house*; both can be modified by a relative clause:

Subject relative clause: (5) The man [who built the house] was very pleased.
Object relative clause: (6) The house [that the man built] was large.

There are two ways to chart relative clauses:

1. Keep the relative clause as part of the matrix clause without using a separate row:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>The man who built the house</td>
<td>was</td>
<td>very pleased</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Make a new row for the relative clause and mark it as dependent on the matrix clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(5a)</td>
<td>The man [5b]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5b)</td>
<td>[who]</td>
<td>built</td>
<td>the house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5c)</td>
<td>[5a-b]</td>
<td>was</td>
<td>very pleased</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general I recommend keeping relative clauses in the matrix clause unless they are very long or describe actual events, especially as part of the storyline, in which case use additional rows.

**Parenthetical clauses**

Parenthetical clauses are clauses which occur within a matrix clause but are not part of it. They are typically separated from the rest of the clause by pauses or in writing by commas or parentheses:

(7) William, although only eleven years old, understood adults perfectly.
(8) William, the rest of the gang having deserted him, ran home.

If the parenthetical material expresses supportive material—for example by providing additional information about another constituent, as in sentence (7)—I recommend keeping it within the matrix clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>William, although only eleven years old,</td>
<td>understood</td>
<td>adults</td>
<td>perfectly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the parenthetical material describes an actual event, even if presented out of sequence, it may be best to chart it using a separate row. However, when this happens you will need to make sure that the relations between the disconnected parts of the matrix clause are made clear.
In sentence (8), *William* is the subject of the matrix clause and *the rest of the gang* is the subject of the parenthetical clause. To indicate this, right click on *William* and choose **Preposed from**—**Advanced** to get the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-nuclear</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Object/Complement</th>
<th>Post-nuclear</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(8a)</td>
<td>William,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8b)</td>
<td>the rest of the gang</td>
<td>having deserted</td>
<td>him,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8c)</td>
<td>[8a] &lt;&lt;</td>
<td>ran</td>
<td>home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Introducing new major participants

Major vs. minor

When a participant is mentioned for the first time it is a new participant. Languages often have restrictions on how new participants are introduced. If an existing participant has not been mentioned for some time, it may be necessary to re-introduce it. The way participants are introduced differs according to whether the participant is a major or a minor one.

- Most (but not all) major participants are introduced formally in some way.
- Minor participants typically just appear and disappear.

New participants are often introduced in special constructions:

- with PRESENTATIONAL ARTICULATION using a locative expression, e.g. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. (Acts 9:10 ESV/NRSV)
- with a verb of arrival, either following the subject or preceding it, e.g. As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea... (Mat 27:57 NIV) and When it was evening, a rich man from Arimathea arrived... (Mat 27:57 TEV)
- as the object of a verb of seeing or hearing, or in some other indirect way, e.g. …and he saw a tax collector named Levi (Luke 5:27 ESV) and As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. (Mrk 1:16 NRS)
- by association with another participant, e.g. After a while, his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Come to bed with me!” (Gen 39:7 NIV)

The existence of rulers (e.g. Herod the king in Mat 2:1 discussed below), servants, supernatural beings, and well-known characters in traditional stories (hare, tortoise, etc.) is often assumed, in which case they may not formally be introduced. In Acts 5:19, there is no introduction for the “angel of the Lord.”

But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors... (Acts 5:19 RSV)

Look at your texts. How are the major participants and the episodic major participants introduced? What about the minor participants?

All of the examples above except the last one, follow the rule: “Do not introduce a participant and say what he or she does in the same clause.” Look at your texts. Do they follow this rule?

In Mat 2:1 the wise men are new participants; they are also major participants so in Greek they are preceded by idou ‘behold’ to show that they are important for the development of the story.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, idou wise men from the East came to Jerusalem...

Translate this verse into your language, bearing in mind natural ways of introducing major participants in your language. If you have already translated this verse, compare the two translations. Are both natural?

Exercise: New participants in the Gospels

Note: In the Gospels, Jesus (as an adult) is the VIP. Thus he does not need to be specially introduced for each narrative story. Only new major participants need to be introduced. Note that many times, but not always, the major participants are listed in the section headings of translations. This can be a
good clue to help you recognize them. Also note that major participants may be inanimate, for example, a ‘storm’.

Who are the new major participants in the following verses?

Luke 2:8

Luke 5:12

Luke 8:41

Luke 8:43

Acts 10:1

For each of the verses above, introduce the major participants in a way that reflects what is natural in your language. Experiment with rearranging the words, for example by repositioning the locative at the beginning of the sentence. After translating, provide a word-for-word back translation.

Luke 2:8

Back translation

Luke 5:12

Back translation

Luke 8:41

Back translation

Luke 8:43

Back translation

Acts 10:1

Back translation

A more difficult introduction to translate is that of Joseph of Arimathea, discussed below.

Joseph of Arimathea

The story of how Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for Jesus's body so that he could bury it is recorded in all four gospels. The way Joseph is introduced in each account is different, but in each case the translation should indicate naturally that Joseph is a new (episodic) major participant. This is complicated by the large amount of additional information which is given concerning Joseph in each gospel. Below we can see how Joseph is introduced in the Greek and in various English translations.

Matthew 27:57-58 NRSV

When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who was also a disciple of Jesus. He (houtos) went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth...

Notes

This passage begins with an introductory phrase setting the time. Joseph’s attributes in verse 57 (in the order given in the Greek and also the NRSV) are that he was a (1) rich man (2) from Arimathea, (3) named Joseph, and a (4) disciple. Which attribute(s) is/are the most important? How can these
be emphasized? The order of these attributes can be changed, but an accurate and faithful translation should still include all the information somewhere.

In the first clause of verse 58 (He went to Pilate) Joseph is referred to by a pronoun (He) in the NRSV and by a demonstrative (houtos 'this one') in Greek. In your language, what is the natural way to refer to a new participant after he has been introduced and the storyline starts?

In the 2nd clause of verse 38 (and asked for the body of Jesus) there is no overt pronoun or noun phrase.

In the 3rd clause of verse 38 (Pilate ordered that...) Joseph is now part of a passive clause (he be given it or it to be given to him), which is the complement of the verb 'ordered' in Pilate ordered that.... How can this be expressed naturally in your language, making sure that it is clear that Jesus' body was given to Joseph (and not to Pilate, for example)?

In Greek, verse 59 seems to employ the “VIP heuristic,” whereby the most important participant is minimally marked, as there is no overt reference to Joseph. All the English versions find it necessary to repeat the name Joseph, because a minimal reference (pronoun or agreement) would be interpreted as referring to Pilate, who is mentioned twice by name in verse 58. What about in your language?

**Mark 15:42-43 Greek/NRSV**

42 When evening had come, and since it was the day of Preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, 43 Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God, went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

**Notes**

This passage has an introductory phrase setting which NRSV (like the Greek) links with Joseph coming to Pilate, but with an intervening description of Joseph. Attributes and actions are in the order given in the Greek and also in the NRS.

(1) Joseph, (2) from Arimathea, (3) respected member of the council, (4) waiting for the kingdom of God, (5) went to Pilate.

**Luke 23:50–52**

Attributes and actions in these verses are in the order given in the Greek.

50 And behold (idou) a man (1) named Joseph (2) a council member came, (3) a good and righteous man 51 (4) this one did not agree with the council and their action (5) from Jewish town of Arimathea, (6) who was waiting for the kingdom of God, 52 (7) this one went to Pilate...

The list of attributes and actions of Joseph is long, and most English versions reorder these pieces of information. For example, in the NRSV, the order is 3, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7.

**NRSV**

50 Now there was (3) a good and righteous man (1) named Joseph, who, though (2) a member of the council, 51 (4) had not agreed to their plan and action. (5) He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and (6) he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. 52 (7) This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

In the TEV, the order is 1, 5, 3, 6, 2, 4. 7 (verses 50 and 51 are combined).

**TEV**

50,51 There was a man (1) named Joseph (5) from Arimathea, a town in Judea. (3) He was a good and honourable man, (6) who was waiting for the coming of the Kingdom of God. Although (2) he was a member of the Council, (4) he had not agreed with their decision and action. 52 (7) He went into the presence of Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.

**John 19:38-39a**

This passage is interesting because Joseph is one of two new major participants, along with Nicodemus. For an example of how not to introduce a new participant in English, see the NIV below.
NIV violates the principle: “Do not introduce a participant and describe his or her actions in the same clause.”

NRSV

38 After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, though a secret one because of his fear of the Jews, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. 39 Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came...

NIV

38 Later, Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he feared the Jews. With Pilate's permission he came and took the body away. 39 He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night...

Here is the back-translation of these verses in Digo, a Bantu language spoken in Kenya and Tanzania:

38 Afterwards, there came one person called Joseph, who was born in the town of Arimathea. He was a disciple of Jesus, but in secret for fearing the Jewish leaders. He went and asked permission of Pilate to take the body of Jesus, and Pilate permitted him. He came and took that body 39 together with Nicodemus, who another time had come to Jesus at night.

Exercise

For each of the passages above, introduce Joseph in a way that reflects what is natural in your language. Do this without looking at any existing translations of these passages in your language. Experiment with rearranging the information. When you are happy with your translation, provide a word-for-word back translation.

If you have already translated any of these passages, compare the translation you have just made with the earlier translation. Which is most natural, according to your analysis of natural texts?
Appendix C: Other types of represented speech

In many languages, narrators have to choose between direct speech and indirect speech to record the words and thoughts of participants. However, in some languages there are additional forms of represented speech. In this appendix, we will look at two more types of represented speech: semi-direct speech, which is found mainly in Africa and in the Papuan area, and free indirect style, which is found in English and other European languages.

Semi-direct speech

Semi-direct speech (called ‘combined speech’ in Hedinger 1984) combines certain features of direct and indirect speech, particularly in the way first and second person participants (the speaker and the addressee) are referred to. Semi-direct speech takes different forms in different languages, and many languages do not have semi-direct speech at all.

The following two examples in Manambu are adapted from Aikhenvald (2008:394). In the first example, a mother tells her son that the things belonging to him and his sister are in a certain place. The narrator reports this using direct speech. The pronominal form ɓər ‘you two’ is used for the addressees (the son and daughter) and the form tua ‘I’ is used for the speaker (the mother).

you.two-OF-PLURAL things these.here put-I-them then she.said
‘The things belonging to you two, I put here,” she said.’

Later, the son tells his sister what their mother had said. This time the narrator reports this using semi-direct speech. The pronominal form an ‘we two’ is used for the son and daughter (which is the same as indirect speech) and the form tua ‘I’ is used for the mother (which is the same as direct speech).

we.two-OF-PLURAL things these.here put-I-them then she.said
‘The things belonging to us two, I put here,” she said.’

In Akɔɔse, the original speaker is referred to using a first person pronoun in direct speech but a third person pronoun in semi-direct speech (Hedinger 1984: 92).

(3) ɑ̀ kɛn “Nzé è-kàlè mètóm, má-bèl wè čán?”
RP Q if you.told lies he.will.do you want
‘He asked, “If you told lies, what should I [literally: he] do with you?”’
* RP = reporting particle, Q = question particle

In Mündü both the speaker and the addressee are referred to using third person forms in semi-direct speech (Jeffrey 1984). Direct speech is given in (4b) and the semi-direct equivalent is given in (4c). In (4c) the subscript number “1” refers to Darama, and subscript “2” to his brother; ye is a pronoun that is used if the subject remains the same; and the first ni is a “logophoric” pronoun, which refers to the speaker.

(4a) Ƒu Darama amala ngi ƒu enga-ni ye, gu ba dene,
then Darama spoke word to brother his said like this
‘Then Darama spoke with his brother saying,
(4b) “Enga wiṇa, ni nih ngbù eke ake, mü nù, mü giri rù fefe.”
son (of) my.mother mother our stays ill ill you go you look.for medicine for.her
“My brother, our mother is still very ill, go and look for medicine for her.”

(4c) “Engani ni deyi ni ani ngbù eke ake, ye nù, ye giri rù fefe.”
brother, his, vocative mother theirs₁,₂ stays ill ill he₂ go he₂ look for medicine for.her
“His brother, their mother is still very ill, he (the brother) goes and looks for medicine for her.”
These are just a few examples of semi-direct speech. Although they are different, they all involve some kind of shift in pronoun use. In the Manambu example the son uses ‘I’ rather than ‘she’ to refer to the mother (the original speaker, whose speech he is reporting); in the Akɔɔse example the speaker uses ‘he’ to refer to himself; and in the Mündü example the speaker uses a logophoric pronoun to refer to himself, ‘their’ rather than ‘our’ to refer to himself and his brother, and ‘he’ rather than ‘you’ to refer to the addressee.

Semi-direct speech has different functions in different languages. In Adioukrou, semi-direct speech is the default type of represented speech in third person narratives, where the speech itself is “crucial to the development of the story” (Hill 1995:104). Direct speech is used when a narrator can guarantee the truth of what is being said, so is common in first person narratives; it is also used in third person narratives when the speech contains “pivotal information” in the story (1995:105), for example, at the peak. Indirect speech is used only when the speech is backgrounded (for example when one participant tells another to do something but the event itself does not occur).

In contrast, in Mündü, semi-direct speech is used for emphasis, including at the peak of a narrative. In the next example, a man has tracked and killed a fierce buffalo and the importance of this event is expressed through the use of semi-direct speech in which the man addresses the buffalo. (Ni ‘his’ is a “logophoric” pronoun, which refers to the speaker, indicated by “1.”)

(5) *Fü ah asö gba biringbö de mere siti dü'balı, asö engu, agbo kötö, ga, “Engani ni, ni só eyti!”*  
then he stabbed buffalo once with big bad spear stabbed him threw on ground  
say brother his, he stabbed COMPLETIVE  
‘Then he stabbed the buffalo once with his very long spear, and threw him to the ground, saying, “My brother, I have stabbed him!” ’

**Free indirect style**

English narratives often combine features of direct and indirect speech in what is called “free indirect style.” Free indirect style involves “a shift in perspective from the narrator to a vantage point close to or inside the narrated event(s).” (Nikiforidou 2012:177)

Free indirect style can include speech in which the speaker’s viewpoint is retained through the use of interrogatives, exclamations, discourse markers, etc. In the following example, past tense *did*, the pronouns *he, her* and *she* are features of indirect speech, but the question form *did he mind...?* and the discourse marker *just* are features of direct speech.

(6) She opened her scissors, and said, *did he mind her just finishing what she was doing to her dress?*  

The use of quotation marks in example (7) indicates that the audience is meant to understand that Mr Woodhouse expressed the ideas and many of the words, beginning “*She should always send for Perry...*”. However, this is not a straightforward case of direct speech. Although *perhaps, last night and now* are appropriate in direct speech, the past tense in *appeared, were, could, was,* and *seemed,* and the third person pronoun *she* are features of indirect speech. The relevant words have been highlighted in bold.

(7) Mr Woodhouse...commended her very much for thinking of sending for Perry, and only regretted that she had not done it. “*She should always send for Perry, if the child appeared* in the slightest degree disordered, *were* it only for a moment. *She could* not be too soon alarmed, nor send for Perry too often. *It was* a pity, *perhaps,* that *he* had not come *last night,* for, though the child *seemed* well *now*—very well considering—it would probably have been better if Perry had seen it.” (Jane Austin, *Emma*, cited in Nikiforidou 2012:180)

If the narrator, Jane Austin, had used direct speech, the first two sentences would have been:

“You should always send for Perry, if the child appears in the slightest degree disordered, be it only for a moment. You can not be too soon alarmed, nor send for Perry too often.”

The expression *perhaps* describes the speaker’s opinion rather than the narrator’s opinion, and the temporal expressions *last night and now* describe time from the perspective of the speaker; the
same time from the perspective of the narrator would be *the previous night* and *then*. These are therefore features of direct speech as they are words that Mr Woodhouse would have used and not words that the narrator would usually use in her narration. This allows the narrator to represent the perspective of Mr Woodhouse without switching entirely to direct speech (which would interrupt the flow of the narrative).
References

General reference works


www-01.sil.org/~/levinsohns/narr.pdf


Greek text and Bible translations


