Paratext in Bible Translations with Special Reference to Selected Bible Translations into Beninese Languages

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VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

PARATEXT IN BIBLE TRANSLATIONS
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELECTED BIBLE TRANSLATIONS INTO BENINESE LANGUAGES

THESIS
MASTER IN LINGUISTICS (BIBLE TRANSLATION)

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The phenomenon of paratext

Reading a book is a multifaceted encounter. When someone takes a book in his hands in order to read it, he will not just read a text, but will also be confronted – consciously or unconsciously – with a number of marginal phenomena that surround, accompany or envelop that text. Among these phenomena are always elements like the cover, the typeface and the layout. The reader will probably also encounter elements like page numbers, a chapter division and an index. And he might possibly come across elements like a preface, footnotes and illustrations.

The French literary theorist Gérard Genette formulated his theory about paratext in order to give a comprehensive approach to these phenomena. His view is that a reader does not understand a book merely by taking note of the ‘plain’ text, but that his understanding is influenced by the paratext, that is: all the information containing elements that surround and accompany the text. The paratext, mainly originating from the author or an editor, is influencing the way a text is read.

What Genette said about literary texts in general, is also true for a book like a translation of the Bible. Such a book can be described as the translation of a classical text based on a text edition, and its paratext has its own specific characteristics. An example of a translation specific paratextual phenomenon is a footnote presenting an alternative translation. The author’s role in creating the paratext is now more or less taken over by the translator. But, translation or not, the paratext still guides and influences the reader in his perception of the text.

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1 I am not assuming that only male people read. When I use the word ‘he’ in a generic sense, one is free to replace it by ‘she’.
Genette introduced in 1982 in his book *Palimpsestes* the term ‘paratext’ as a comprehensive term to refer to all the phenomena surrounding a text.2 The terminology was elaborated in 1987 his seminal study *Seuils* that was completely dedicated to many of the phenomena.3 The term ‘paratext’ is composed of the term ‘text’ and the prefix ‘para’, from the Greek preposition παρά, ‘beside, near’, thus referring to anything surrounding or accompanying a text. In its ambiguity the term can also refer to the secondary character of a piece of text.4

Nowadays the term ‘paratext’ is part of the scholarly vocabulary in studies of texts of all times and genres.5 The use of the term in relation to Bible editions is from a more recent date and still not common.6 There have been of course in the circles of the Bible Societies and SIL-International many publications about a number of the phenomena that are part of the paratext. Well-known authors in these organizations like Nida and Barnwell refer to the discussed phenomena as ‘supplementary features’7 or ‘supplementary helps’.8

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2 One can often read that Genette ‘coined’ the term paratext. He made it definitely a current term, but it was already used by Michel Martins-Baltar in ‘De l’objet-texte au texte-objet’ in: *Etudes de linguistique appliquée* n.s. 28 (1977), although defined slightly different (8,9). Genette did coin the term ‘paratextualité’, in his book *Introduction à l’archi-texte* (Paris: Seuil, 1979), 87. In this book he used it for what he later called ‘hypertextualité’: the relation of a text to an older text that it has transformed or imitated; see Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: Seuil, 1982), 7.


4 Genette, *Seuils*, 7. And so a piece of art (music or painting) that does not consist of text can be accompanied by some ‘paratext’ like a written title, 373v.

5 Paul Aron and Claire Lelouche advocate the use of the term ‘peritext’ instead of ‘paratext’. Their argument is based on the pejorative connotation they see often attached to the prefix ‘para’ and the fact that in literary works paratextual elements originating from the author play a vital role. Hence their preference for a term that only refers to the position of the paratextual elements in the publication. See Paul Aron, Denis Saint-Jaques, and Alain Viala, *Le Dictionnaire du Littéraire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002), s.v. Péritexte.


7 Eugene A. Nida, *Bible Translation – An Analysis of Principles and Procedures with Special Reference to Aboriginal Languages*, revised edition (London: United Bible Societies, 1961). Nida makes a further distinction
In this study I prefer to use the term ‘paratext’. It is a term in common use and it describes adequately the phenomena it refers to. It focuses on the relation to the text: in a publication the paratext is always accompanying the text. It is not something one can ‘supplement’ to the text at will. In fact, it is what makes a text into a publication.

1.2 The purpose of this study

During the last seventeen years I have been involved as an exegete/coordinator in four different Bible translation projects in various regions. In these projects most of the paratextual elements, like introductions, illustrations, and footnotes, were added after the team had completed the translation, on request of the team members. In addition, the paratext was often more or less following the example of the paratext in one or two ‘model translations’, translations in a major language (Spanish, French) that served as a the main reference text of the translators. That caused sometimes discussions. For example, one of the teams had prepared textual notes to indicate where they had deviated from the Hebrew or Greek text editions. For them that was a matter of honesty and accountability. A translation consultant questioned the use of these notes; he argued that many African evangelicals detested this kind of notes that could easily create doubt and shock the faith of recent converts.

Currently I am involved in a recently started Bible translation project. In this project the team tries to develop the paratext together with the text of the translation. That brought up questions about the need for certain types of paratext, their form, their content and the rationale behind them. It also brought up questions about the status of paratext and the need for it, and also the question whether the paratext really is an integral part of the translation.

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between supplementary features that are printed on the same page as the text and supplementary features that are printed in the same volume, but in separate sections, see Bible translation, 303.

In this study I want to survey existing literature about paratext in general and apply this to the study of paratext in Bible translations. That will result in a description of paratext in general and of paratext in Bible translations in particular. A study of paratextual phenomena in a number of published Bible translations will be the next step. This will be the content of the second and third chapter of this study. In the fourth chapter I want to develop a theoretical framework that encompasses both the text and paratext of Bible translations; such an approach will help translators to see a translation and its paratext as two interrelated parts of an integrated whole, which must be produced as such. In the fifth chapter this framework will be applied to two Bible translation projects in Benin (West Africa).
2. PARATEXT: DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION

In this chapter I will elaborate my definition of paratext. Using Genette’s work, I will extend his insights to paratext in translation, especially in Bible translation. A description of characteristics and functions of paratext will be given. My focus and examples will be in the area of Bible translations.

2.1 Definition

In this study I use the following definition of paratext: *Paratext consist of all information representing elements that are added to a text by an author, editor or translator in order to materialize the text into a specific publication.*

Some elements of this definition need further explanation. I use the words ‘information representing elements’ because paratext has not only the form of text in letters or numbers; paratext can also consist of illustrations, punctuation, blank lines, paragraph division, and of what can be called the materiality of the text (Philippe Lane)\(^9\) or the bibliographical codes (Jerome McGann):\(^{10}\) its material and visual form that it receives through paper, typeface, design, ink, etc.\(^{11}\)

Although it seems obvious, it might be good to state explicitly what ‘text’ is. I follow the Concise Oxford Dictionary that defines text in its primary meaning as follows: “a written

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\(^{10}\) Jerome J. McGann, *The Textual Condition*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 13. McGann misunderstands Genette where he states that for Genette paratext is exclusively linguistic. He gives a valuable insight though in stating that literary works typically secure their effects by other than purely linguistic means. It is the deployment of a double helix of perceptual codes: linguistic and bibliographical.

\(^{11}\) Genette also distinguishes what he calls factual paratext, that not consists of an explicit message, but of a fact of which the mere existence, if known, contributes some commentary to the text and influences its reception, for example: age or sex of the author, Genette, *Paratexts*, 7.
or printed work regarded in terms of content rather than form.” But also its secondary meaning is relevant: “the main body of a book or other piece of writing, as distinct from appendices and illustrations, etc.”

The words ‘author’ and ‘translator’ in the definition can refer to a single person or to a group or team. And in the reference to an ‘editor’, I include all activities that are part of the process of editing a text, preparing it for publication and publishing it.

The distinction between author, editor and translator in the production of paratext, leads to a further distinction between auctorial paratext, editorial paratext and translational paratext. Auctorial information is produced by an author and can include for example the title of the publication, a dedication, chapter titles and footnotes. Editorial paratext is produced by an editor and can include for example cover, dust cover and typeface. Translational paratext is produced by a translator and can include for example an introduction and footnotes discussing the translation. The distinction between auctorial paratext and editorial paratext was introduced by Genette in his book Seuils. In this book he did not include the study of paratextual phenomena in translations, although he was aware of the implications of translation for paratext.

Another distinction made by Genette is the distinction between two types of paratext: peritext and epitext. The term ‘peritext’ is composed of the term ‘text’ and the prefix ‘peri’, from the Greek preposition περί, ‘about, concerning’ or ‘around, about, near’. Genette uses the term to refer to all paratext that is found together with the text within the same

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12 Genette, Seuils, 14. The English translation of Seuils translates ‘paratexte éditorial’ with ‘publisher’s paratext’ (Paratexts, 9). However, the first published translation of Chapter 1 of Seuils translates ‘editorial paratext’ (See Gérard Genette, ‘Introduction to the Paratext’, in New Literary History, Vol. 22:2 (1991), 266). It shows the difficulty of translating the French term ‘éditorial’ into English; it can refer to both an editor and a publisher. In speaking of the “author and his allies” Genette gives the dominant position to the author (Paratexts, 2). He goes as far as stating that in principle allographic notes that in no way involve the responsibility of the author, fall outside the definition of paratext, Paratexts, 337.

publication. The term ‘epitext’ is composed of the term ‘text’ and the prefix ‘epi’, from the Greek preposition ἐπί, ‘at, near, by, in addition to’, thus referring to anything added to a text. Genette uses this term to refer to all paratext that is not found together with the text within the same publication. Examples of epitext are press releases about the book, advertisements and interviews with the author. Genette summarizes with the formula: paratext = peritext + epitext.

Combining the distinction between auctorial/editorial/translational paratext with the distinction between peritext and epitext brings the further distinction between auctorial/editorial/translational peritext and auctorial/editorial/translational epitext. An example of auctorial epitext is a quote from an author in an interview about his publication, an example of editorial epitext is a text in a catalogue promoting a publication, and an example of translational epitext is an article in which a translator explains how a specific translation problem was solved.

In my definition of paratext I have limited myself to what Genette calls the peritext, in speaking of “all (...) elements that are added to a text (...) in order to materialize the text into a publication.” Genette and others consider paratext all elements that surround and accompany a book (or publication). This has to do with the primary position he gives to the author (and his allies) in controlling and producing the paratext and so influencing the (potential) readers of the text. I see an important distinction between what is added to a text and what is –so to speak– added to a book. In Genette’s formula: paratext = peritext (around the text) + epitext (around the book). I would like to reserve the term paratext for what Genette calls peritext and not use the term paratext for the epitext.

14 Den Hollander, Schmid and Smelik, Paratext and Megatext, ix, define ‘megatext’ as “a container term for all textual artifacts that, textually, help make sense of the text.”

15 Genette, Paratexts, 5.

16 Compare Lane, La périphérie du texte, 17.
Although various elements of the epitext certainly might influence various readers in their perception of a text as far they are confronted with it, epitext is not studied here. I am limiting myself to the paratext in the publication, the paratext that presents itself to all readers.

Finally, I used the expression ‘specific publication’. Texts are sometimes published in various editions. Editions might vary in the paratext they include. Therefore a distinction between the various editions of a book is necessary. Each has its own intrinsic characteristics.\(^\text{18}\) A clear example is given by the various editions of the Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling (NBV) in Dutch, by various publishers. One cannot speak of ‘the NBV and its paratext’ in general, only of the paratext of one of the various editions.

### 2.2 Paratext in translations

Where Genette mentions paratext in translation, he only speaks about it as far as paratext originating from the author is concerned.\(^\text{19}\) Kovola gives a wider perspective where he draws the attention to the paratext produced (or adapted) by the translator. He emphasizes a special role for these paratextual elements as “mediators between the text and the reader and their potential influence on the reader’s reading and reception of the work in question.” In a translation, a text is transferred into another language and into another cultural context; the bigger the differences are, the more mediation is needed between the text and the readers of its translation.\(^\text{20}\)

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\(^{18}\) Leo H. Hoek, ‘«Une merveille qu’intime sa structure»’, a2-3.

\(^{19}\) Genette, *Paratexts*, 405.

\(^{20}\) Kovola, *Translations*, 120.
2.3 Paratext in Bible translations

In published translations of a classical text like a Bible translation, almost all paratext is translational paratext, except for some indispensable editorial paratextual elements like the bibliographical information, cover design and layout.

In the study of paratext in Bible translation, it is important to define first what exactly the text is that is translated. This is necessary in order to define what belongs to the text and what to the paratext. In the case of classic texts the boundaries between the two are not so obvious. The Bible comprises many separate texts that have all partly their own history and also partly a common history of tradition. One could for example study possible editorial paratext added to a text between the initial recording of this text and the moment this text was accepted as canonical. Also, in the process of tradition of the canonical text all kinds of editorial paratext have been added to the text. For example, to the Hebrew texts of the Old Testament intratext was added in the form of vowel signs, accents and paragraph divisions. And also other forms of paratext were added, like the masora magna and parva, chapter en verse division, and in later editions a critical apparatus.

In this study I consider the ‘text’ of the Bible the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts in the various text editions that are used by Bible translators as the base of their translation. This is a limited number of editions: there is a rather large consensus in the circle of the Bible Societies with regard to the editions that should be used, as can be seen in the Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible. For the Old Testament it is one text

21 An example is the last sentence of 1 Kings 22:28: “And he said, 'Hear, all you peoples!' ” This phrase serves to indentify the prophet Micah in 1 Kings 22 with the prophet Micah of the book of Micah. Nowadays this kind of information would probably have been put into a footnote. As another example may serve Ezekiel 1:2-3, a rather clumsilly located note (from a redactor/editor) about the author, referring to Ezekiel in the third person, whereas the remainder of the book has been written from the perspective of the first person (Ezekiel). A translation like the NBV has these verses put between brackets.

22 New revised edition (Rome: Vatican Polyglot Press, 1987). The Guidelines specify the text editions for the Old Testament and New Testament that the UBS and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church agreed upon. The Guidelines do not specify which text edition should be used for the so-called deuterocanonical books, which is left for the Roman Catholic Church to decide.
edition, the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, for the New Testament there are two editions with exactly the same text: *The Greek New Testament* and *Novum Testamentum Graece*; these editions differ in their paratext.

This means that certain traditions that are incorporated into the text are accepted. A good example is the division of the book of Samuel into two books that originates from Greek and Latin traditions of the text and later on was applied into editions of the Hebrew text as well. The paratext in the text editions I do not consider part of the text to translate. That is even true for the chapter and verse division and numbers. A translation that is published without verse numbers in the text, like the so-called literary edition of the NBV, cannot be called an incomplete Bible edition.

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25 For a detailed discussion of the differences between the two editions, see Kurt and Barbara Aland, *Der Text des Neuen Testaments – Einführung in die wissenschaftlichen Ausgaben und in die Theorie wie Praxis der modernen Textkritik* zweite, ergänzte und erweiterte Auflage (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1989), 53-56.


2.4 Characteristics of paratext

Paratext can be described from the perspective a number of characteristics. Genette distinguishes the following characteristics: spatial, temporal, substantial, pragmatic and functional. I will describe in this paragraph these characteristics with reference to Bible translations.

2.4.1 Spatial

Paratext can be assigned to various locations:

a. It can be placed in the text. Examples are verse numbers, footnote callers or references to a wordlist.

b. It can be placed in the margin of the text: on the same level of the text, but next to it. Examples are verse numbers and references to related verses in some Bibles.

c. It can be placed on the same page as the text it refers to. Examples are section headings, footnotes and cross-references.

d. It can be placed in the same volume as the text:
   1. preceding the text. Examples are a preface and an introduction.
   2. after the text. Examples are a glossary and tables of measures and weights.

The place a paratextual element has is related to its function.

2.4.2 Temporal

The moment certain paratextual elements appear for the first time in Bible editions, or disappear, varies. With regard to Bible translation, one can refer to the emergence of traditions: paratextual features that appear at a certain moment in Bible editions and that obtain a permanent place in almost all Bibles. An example of this is the division in chapters

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29 Genette, Paratexts, 4-13.
and verses that – with some variation – has a place in almost every Bible. To give another example, a former practice of providing chapter summaries at the beginning of each chapter has almost disappeared; instead there is nowadays a common practice of providing section headings.

2.4.3 Substantial
Paratext can have various forms:

a. It can consist of text itself, for example a footnote or a title.

b. It can be graphic, for example an illustration or a map.

c. It can be material. With this I refer to the material shape of the book, for example the color and material of the cover, including the typographical design. A printed publication communicates something about itself through the quality and the format of the paper that is used for it, through the typeface and type size, the layout, etc.

2.4.4 Pragmatic
With regard to the role of paratext in the communication process, there are various aspects to consider:

a. One can look at the source of the paratext: in the case of a Bible translation that can be the translator (or redactor), but also the tradition, for example in case of the verse division.

b. One can also look at the target for the paratext. The paratext can be meant for potential readers, for example the title, or only for the real readers.

c. One can also distinguish between the various types of information that are presented in the paratext: factual, for example the bibliographical information found in the

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30 An example of an exception is the so-called literary edition of the NBV. In this edition the chapter and verse division is replaced by a summarizing reference at the bottom of the page.
colophon, translation justifying, for example textual notes, explanation of the intention/meaning of the text, for example certain illustrations.\textsuperscript{31}

d. One can also distinguish between obligatory paratext and optional paratext.

Obligatory is of course the material paratext, but also elements like the legally required bibliographical information, and the title. Except for the title, the obligatory paratext is editorial.

2.4.5 \textit{Functional}

This is an important aspect. One can give a general description of the function of paratext as influencing the perception of the reader of the text as intended by the author, translator and/or editor. In contrast to the other paratextual characteristics it is not possible to give a formal description of the functions. The same form can perform different functions:\textsuperscript{32} for example, the illustrations by Annie Vallotton that emphasize the message of the text (which corresponds to the aimed function of common language translations in which these illustrations were used: reach the modern not church related reader), are in contrast with the illustrations of Horace Knowles, that are made as visual aids for the reader with factual information.\textsuperscript{33}

In the next section the various functions of paratext will be described in more detail.

\textsuperscript{31} I refer here to the illustrations used in many common language illustrations, made by Annie Vallotton.

\textsuperscript{32} Compare Genette, \textit{Paratexts}, 12.

\textsuperscript{33} The illustrations of Annie Vallotton were prepared for the \textit{Good News Bible: Today's English Version}(GNB), those of Horace Knowles were originally made for the \textit{Revised Standard Version} (RSV).
2.5 Functions of paratext

From a general description of the function of paratext as influencing the perception of the reader of the text as intended by the author, translator and/or editor, a further distinction of the various functions of paratext can be made. I distinguish the following functions:

2.5.1 Presentation

The way in which a book visually and tangibly is materialized enables its public presentation to the potential readers. Its main function is to emphasize the nature of the book and to attract the potential readers. Examples are the title, cover (color and material), a blurb and a gilded edge of a book.

One can distinguish here several aspects:

a. Esthetic aspect

It is especially the cover of a book that attracts potential readers. Besides that it is what a potential reader sees when he picks up the book and opens it: layout, typeface, and illustrations.

b. Distinctive aspect

The way a book is presented, distinguishes it from other books. That is true for Bibles as well, for example in the quality of the edition, intended for long term use. It can even serve to distinguish one translation of the Bible from others; so have Bibles in common language translations often a colorful cover, that apparently marks it as a book or Bible for a modern reader.

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c. Legal/biographic aspect

This is a special form of the distinctive aspect. It is determined by legal statutes and bibliographical practices. Examples are the International Standard Book Number (ISBN), copyright indications, and for Bibles published by Bible Societies their own publication codes.\textsuperscript{35}

2.5.2 Legibility

The layout, the way in which the whole of text and paratext is given shape, is a major factor in facilitating access to the content of a book for a reader. As Wendland and Louw state, the format of a publication is “a vital component of the medium which helps comprise the overall message conveyed by a printed text.”\textsuperscript{36} Examples are the choice of a body type, type size, and the decision to justify or not justify the text to the right margin.

One can distinguish here several aspects:

a. Distinctive aspect

Part of the legibility of a text is the ease with which a reader can distinguish between the various types of text. For example section headings are often clearly marked by a different style (bold or italic) or a different color, footnotes by a smaller typeface.

b. Phatic aspect

The consistency in the use of the various types of paratextual phenomena and in the way each of them is constant in its structure, assures the phatic function of these elements. For example, a section heading signals the beginning of a new section and at the same time maintains the communication after the previous section.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{35} Kovola, \textit{Translations}, 134, footnote 9.


\textsuperscript{37} Example taken from Christiane Nord, ‘Ungerechter oder lebenstüchtiger Verwalter?’, n.p.
2.5.3 Disclosure

The content of a book needs to be disclosed for the reader; he should be able to find his way in the book. That purpose is served for example by the use of page numbers, chapter and verse division, an index, and a running head (in Bibles normally a short version of the name of one of the Bible books together with the number of the current chapter).

One can distinguish here several aspects:

a. Distinctive aspect

The various occurrences of a paratextual feature should be distinctive. Good examples are the section headings: when more sections have the same heading or when the headings are very general, their distinctive function is in danger.

b. Metatextual aspect

Paratext often has a metatextual function in that it makes explicit the text type (parable, announcement of judgment) or discusses the text (poetic features, play of words).

2.5.4 Informative function

Many paratextual elements have an informative function. They provide the reader with information about the text, the culture of the text and information about the decisions that were made in the translation process.

According to the purpose for giving this information, I make the following distinction:

a. Justification of the translation

In a certain sense one could call a translation a kind of paratext itself (epitext) in relation to the source text. A translator has to make choices in his translation, for
example with regard to the textual variation in the source text, or between various interpretations. When these choices are accounted for, the reader will become aware of the character of the translation in relation to the source text. Examples are an introduction or account by the translator and footnotes with alternative readings or alternative translations.

b. *Furtherance of the comprehension of the text*

Many present-day readers of the Bible do not have much insight in the contextual presuppositions of the authors and first readers of the Bible, let alone some knowledge of the language they used. In order to prevent wrong conclusions and to give the readers a better understanding of the text, paratextual elements sometimes provide information about for example the meaning of certain names and cultural aspects that differ from the cultural practices of the readers of a translation. Also references to related passages in other books of the Bible offer help towards a better understanding.

c. *Furtherance of the study/use of the text*

Regularly information is added to Bible translations that is not directly necessary for reading the text, but that does help in the study and use of the Bible. Examples are an index of subjects, tables of measures and weights and a chronological table.

2.5.5  *Expressive and appellative function*

What these two functions have in common is the fact that they express a subjective opinion, conclusion or application related to the text. These opinions originate from a translator or editor. An appellative text wants to evoke a specific reaction from a reader. Paratextual features with these two functions are mainly found in study Bibles like the *Life Application Bible*, as the title already indicates. Examples of these functions are many of the footnotes in

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this Bible edition that are characterized by the frequent use of the pronouns ‘we’ and ‘you’ and the verb ‘should’.

2.6 Conclusion

Paratext can be described as consisting of all information representing elements that are added to a text by an author, editor or translator in order to materialize the text into a specific publication.

Before one can make an inventory of the various paratextual features of a translation, one should first describe what exactly the text to be translated includes. In this study the text of the Bible is defined as the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts in the various text editions that are published and used by the Bible Societies.³⁹

The characteristics that Genette used to describe paratextual features (spatial, temporal, substantial, pragmatic and functional) proved useful for the description of paratext in Bible translation.

My description of the possible functions of paratext is more elaborate than Genette’s.⁴⁰ The following functions were distinguished:

1. Presentation, subdivided into three aspects: esthetic, distinctive and legal/biographic.
2. Legibility, subdivided into two aspects: distinctive and phatic.
3. Disclosure, subdivided into two aspects: distinctive and metatextual.
4. Informative function, subdivided into three aspects: justification of the translation, furtherance of the comprehension of the text, and furtherance of the study/use of the text.
5. Expressive and appellative function.

³⁹ See footnotes 23 and 24.

⁴⁰ Genette, Paratexts, 12f.
The description of paratext according to its characteristics and functions should enable a systematic way of dealing with paratext. It also facilitates the making of an inventory.
3. PARATEXT IN BIBLE EDITIONS PUBLISHED BY BIBLE SOCIETIES

In this chapter I will give an inventory of paratextual features that are found in published Bible translations. Since there is a great variety in Bible publications, I limited myself to Bibles published by Bible Societies. Bible Societies publish the widest variety of Bible translations and have a fairly coherent strategy. Therefore I give first an overview of the development of the Bible Societies’ attitude with regard to paratextual elements in Bible translations before turning to the inventory.

3.1 The attitude of the Bible Societies towards paratext

Paratext with expressive and appellative functions has in the past given reason for considerable debate in relation to publications of Bible translations. The existence of marginal notes in Bible translations that defended own confessional positions or attacked other confessional positions was one of the reasons for the founders of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) in 1804 to state as the object of the Society “to encourage a wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment.” Other reasons were the interdenominational character of the group of founders, their wish to serve the Bible cause generally and to enlist the help of Christians from a wide denominational background.\footnote{Emphasis mine. See Roger Steer, ‘“Without Note or Comment”: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow’ in: Stephen Batalden, Kathleen Cann and John Dean, Sowing the Word: The Cultural Impact of the British and Foreign Bible Society 1804-2004 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2004), pp. 63-67, Donald Coggan, ‘”Without Note or Comment” - Then & Now’, in: Kurt Aland and Siegfried Meurer, Wissenschaft un Kirche: Festschrift für Eduard Lohse (Bielefeld, Luther-Verlag, 1989), 305, Siegfried Meurer, ‘Die Bibelgesellschaften und die Kirchen’ in: Kurt Aland and Siegfried Meurer, Wissenschaft un Kirche: Festschrift für Eduard Lohse (Bielefeld, Luther-Verlag, 1989), 313ff, and Burke, Text and Context, 3f.}

This decision has without doubt furthered large support and rapid growth of the Society’s activities. When Bible Societies in other countries were founded, like the
Netherlands Bible Society in 1814 and the American Bible Society in 1816, the example of the BFBS with regards to notes was followed. Unfortunately this policy also had as a consequence that the majority of the multitude of notes in existing translations like the King James Version and the Dutch Statenvertaling that contained explanations of a textual, linguistic, cultural or historical character, and as such were definitely helpful for readers, also were banned from editions distributed by the Bible Societies.

It should be noted however that not all paratextual features were banned: chapter and verse divisions were always included in published editions, and sometimes also features like running heads, chapter summaries and cross-references.42

The history of the Bible Societies shows a growing disagreement with a strict interpretation of the “without note or comment” principle. In the second half of the 20th century, Bible Societies finally changed their statutes accordingly.43 Already in 1958 Eugene Nida could write an article about marginal helps for readers and state: “The Bible Societies, however, have regarded the restriction of ‘without note or comment’ as referring to doctrinal interpretation of the text and have accordingly published Scriptures with a certain number of marginal helps for the readers.”44

In A Guide for Translators and Revisers of the Holy Scriptures: A Statement of Principles, prepared by the translation department of the American Bible Society in 1961, it is explicitly stated that “the following supplementary matter is inadmissible in American Bible Society publications: confessions of faith, doctrinal notes, tables of lessons or readings, tables

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42 Burke, Text and Context, 6. Some Bible Societies were very strict up to the point of not even allowing references to parallel passages, like the Netherlands Bible Society, see J. Van Dorp, De tekst alleen! – Het Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap en de verspreiding van bijbeluitgaven zonder aantekeningen (lezing op het symposium ‘Bijbels met aantekeningen’ van 23 april 1998 georganiseerd door de NBG-leerstoel Bijbelvertalen van de Vrije Universiteit en het Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap; Ms.), 3.

43 For a description of the developments in the English speaking world, see Steer, ‘Without Note or Comment’, 72ff, for a description of the developments in the Netherlands Bible Society, see Van Dorp, De tekst alleen!

of festivals, glossaries of doctrinal terms, and outlines of chapters and books.” 45 This Guide advised “that all explanatory notes be kept to a minimum,” but that they were important when the meaning of a passage depended upon the derivation of a proper name or a play on words, and in cases where the difference in culture with the source text could create misunderstanding. 46 The Guide also mentioned that the American Bible Society published in some special publications “historical, archeological, and geographical information which is relevant to the understanding of the cultural background of the Biblical text but which does not attempt in any way to interpret the message of the text.” 47

An important factor in this development was the growth of indigenous language projects. As Burke says, “these indigenous audiences presented quite new challenges to the text-only notion of Bible translation and publication, because they were able to bring virtually no background whatsoever to the text.” Which was also true for a growing group in the western world. 48

A conference in 1964 in Driebergen, The Netherlands, of leaders from the UBS fellowship and various churches resulted, amongst other things, in an agreement to recommend the publication and circulation of Bible editions with fuller reader’s aids, “to make the Scriptures more intelligible to the readers” while holding firm to the policy of avoiding doctrinal positioning. 49 At this conference the Roman Catholic Church was among

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45 Included in Eugene A. Nida, Bible Translating: An Analysis of Principles and Procedures with Special Reference to Aboriginal Languages, revised edition (London: United Bible Societies, 1961, 285-340. This was a slightly reworked edition of a guide dating from 1956, see Burke, Text and Context, 8. The statement is on page 307.

46 Nida, Bible Translating, 304.

47 Nida, Bible Translating, 304.

48 Burke, Text and Context, 9.

49 Burke, Text and Context, 10, 32.
the churches represented there, a sign how its view with regard to Bible translation, distribution and the reading of the Bible in the 20th century had changed.50

This approach, in which the formulation “without note or comment” was interpreted as “without doctrinal note or comment”, made it possible to list in an agreement between the Roman Catholic Church and the United Bible Societies in 1968 a number of “annotations or helps for readers” that could satisfy “both the needs of the reader and the traditional requirements of the Church”.51 The list included: a. alternative readings, b. alternative renderings, c. explanation of proper names, d. plays on words, e. historical backgrounds, f. cultural differences, g. cross references and h. section headings. The addition of certain supplementary features such as index, concordance, maps, illustrations, could be considered for certain types of publications. The Guiding Principles also mentioned illustrations that “will either provide background information or promote a measure of psychological identification and involvement.”52

These Guiding Principles were revised in 1987 and published as Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible.53 It is interesting to note that with regard to the helps for readers the document now explicitly states that the notes of the types a.-e. (mentioned above) “created during the translation process to aid the correct understanding of the published text are to be reproduced in all editions of the text.”54

Introductions (to the Bible, testaments, grouping of books, individual book and sections) were newly added in the Guidelines as another type of help for readers.

50 Coggan, ‘»Without Note or Comment« - Then & Now’, 332ff.
52 Guiding Principles, 3.
54 Guidelines, 8 (emphasis mine).
The United Bible Societies officially changed the wording “without note or comment” into “without doctrinal note or comment” in 1971.\(^{55}\) This still left room for discussion with regard to the boundaries of paratextual features. An internal document of the ABS Translations Department written by Newman and Hodgson provides an example of the approach of one of the Bible Societies. Newman and Hodgson defined the principle “without doctrinal note or comment” in terms of acceptable or unacceptable paratextual features in or with a Bible text. The intended meaning of the word ‘doctrinal’ was described as ‘divisive’.

The document posited that

1. an acceptable paratextual feature is anything beyond the biblical text, whether print, sound, or art, that either maximizes the potential for understanding or minimizes the potential for misunderstanding the text, without causing discord among constituencies, whether Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox.
2. an unacceptable paratextual feature is anything beyond the biblical text that could potentially lead to an understanding of the text that is outside the mainstream interpretations commonly accepted by Protestant, Catholic or Orthodox traditions or that take a divisive posture on the text.

The determination of what is acceptable or unacceptable is understood to be found best by means of a consensus approach among trained Bible Society staff.\(^{56}\)

It should be noted however that a consensus among the Bible Society staff does not guarantee that the resulting paratext is acceptable to potential readers. A recent example is the reaction of the deputies for Bible translation appointed by the synod of the Free Reformed Churches in the Netherlands to the introductions in the editions of the Dutch Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling in 2004. In their report to the synod – in general positive about this translation – they expressed disagreement with the tone and content of the introductions in more then one way: they characterized them as objective and distanced, “as if human words in the introductions submit the Word to all kind of human opinions.” According to them, sometimes different opinions (orthodox and critical) with regard to authorship and historical origin of a book were

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\(^{55}\) As did the American Bible Society, see Burke, *Text and Context*, 2.

presented as equal without judgment. For the deputies the tone of the introductions often did not correspond with the function of the biblical text.57

Burke summarizes the current approach:

It is very important to note that this fundamental principle does not rule out notes or helps. The enormous need for context is recognized and the Bible Society movement seeks through all communications media to help provide both Bible text and Bible context for the sake of clearer understanding. This means that only those notes and helps that engage or participate in doctrinal positioning or advocacy are ruled out. Notes and helps which are handled in as even-handed a way as possible (even where long-standing differences characterize the various ecclesial traditions) will always be designed to supply context for understanding for the modern reader. Because of the enormous gap of time and the great cultural distance that modern Bible readers face trying to understand the Bible’s people, events and episodes (…), the notes and helps prepared by the Bible Society seek to bridge that gap by supplying some of the missing contextual information.58

Both the history of the “without (doctrinal) note or comment” formulation and the Guidelines give a clear insight in the general policy of the Bible Societies with regard to many paratextual phenomena. It is also clear from this overview that paratext with expressive and appellative functions do not have a legitimate place in Bible translations published by Bible Societies; it seems only justified in a preface that is focusing on the reason or motivation for producing the translation.

3.2 An inventory of paratext in standard editions of Bible translations

In Chapter 2.4 general characteristics of paratextual elements were described and in Chapter 2.5 their functions were described. In this section I will use the results of these two sections to

57 ‘Rapport deputaten Bijbelvertaling’ in: Acta van de Generale Synode Amersfoort-Centrum 2005 van de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, bijlage V-VII, 44f. Interestingly, their criticism refers to the Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible, in which introductions are described as “short objective guides for the reader’s help in grasping the significance of (…) individual books (…). Outlines, aids for understanding the discourse structure, and brief presentations of major themes may be included.” (Guidelines, 9).

58 Burke, Text and Context, 21f.
give an inventory of paratextual elements in Bible translations. There are several limitations to this inventory.

In the first place, I only included translations that are published by Bible Societies.

There is a second limitation with regard to time of publication of the translations: I limited myself to Bibles published after 1945. In those cases that there was more than one edition I used a standard edition. That means that Study Bible editions and editions for special audiences or for special occasions were not studied.

The third limitation: the growing number of electronically published Bibles is also not studied. That medium is so different from traditional book publication that it deserves a study of its own.

I have tried to include translations from all over the world. The fourth limitation is that I only consulted the editions of Bibles and New Testaments that I had access to.\(^{59}\)

I considered it outside the scope of this inventory to describe the paratextual elements in their relation to each other in the various editions. That would require another detailed study of the individual editions in their communicative settings.

I will use the characteristics and functions described in the previous sections to describe the paratextual phenomena in these editions of Bible translations. I will describe the paratext in the order in which a reader is confronted with it. This means that I start with the outside of the publication, then continue with the first section of the book, the main body of the book and will end with the back section.

The following paratextual elements will be described:

\(^{59}\) I consulted a New Testament edition only when it was the first or only publication of a translation. I refer to the editions by the name of the language; when more editions in one language are consulted, the year of publication is added to the reference. A full list of the consulted editions (including about 30 New Testaments and 30 Bibles) can be found in the Bibliography.
01. **Format**

The format of the consulted editions varies. Page sizes were between 22x17 cm and 18x11 cm. For paperback editions the page size is the same as the book format. For bound editions the cover size was a little bigger. The format enables people to easily handle the book and if needed – to carry it with them outside their home. Only a few editions were paperbacks. Paperback editions are cheaper to produce.

Function: Presentation. The format shows the book as easily to handle. A paperback edition (which costs less) might attract potential readers that otherwise not would buy the Bible (English 1976).
02. **Cover**

Bible editions show a variety of covers: soft covers of synthetic material (vinyl), hard covers of cardboard, sometimes leather covers. The covers are generally made of material that is intended for regular use and protects against wear.

Function: Presentation. The book is shown to be a quality edition intended for regular use.

03. **Dust cover**

Sometimes Bible editions have a dust cover or jacket (Dutch 1989, Dogrib). In those cases the cover is often of a traditional design, whereas the dust cover has an attractive design with an illustration or a picture. A dustcover is used for promotional messages, either on the backside or in the inside. Once it has fulfilled its function in attracting potential readers and the book has been bought, the dustcover with its transitory text can be thrown away.\(^{60}\)

Function: Presentation.

04. **Cover design**

Traditionally Bibles have covers with a plain color with only the title printed or stamped on it. Some editions do not even have a title on the cover (Hungarian). Black is the most common color for a cover, often with the cover text (which consist mostly only the title) in golden characters. Bibles in the western world in a common language translation regularly have a colored design with an illustration or symbol (English 1976, French 1996, Norwegian). Sometimes Bibles are published with more than one cover. Parole de Vie for example, has been published with a traditional cover in a dark color with the text printed in gold and also with a figuratively designed cover in more then one color, on which the text was in white.

\(^{60}\) Genette, *Paratexts*, 27f.
letters. Sometimes embossing is used for a symbol, logo or title, which adds to the distinction of the book (Dutch 1989, Afrikaans 1986).

Function: Presentation. The book is presented as a Bible or a sacred book in general. A colorful design with an illustration often is a sign that the translation in this book is a common language translation or at least not a literal translation (Dutch 2004).

05. **Cover text: front / spine / back**

The front cover text of the consulted Bible editions always consists of the name of the Bible in the language of translation. There is one example of the name of the language mentioned on the front cover (Gun). In languages that have various translations, the name of the specific translation is also mentioned (English 1967, French 2000). In one case the name of the illustrator was mentioned (English 1967: Horace Knowles).61

The spine sometimes has no text (Carib), mostly it bears the name of the Bible, and sometimes the name of the language is mentioned (Tungang, Ngaba), often in regions where multiple languages are used and translations needs to be distinguished. An abbreviation of the name or a logo of the Bible Society or of the United Bible Societies is sometimes added. In some cases it is mentioned whether the so-called deuterocanonical books are included or not.

The text on the spine is sometimes printed horizontally, sometimes vertically. Vertically printed text is sometimes ascending, sometimes descending, depending of the tradition in the language group or country; this can even vary within one country (Sumu, Miskito 1999).

The back cover is often without text. In editions of some modern language translations the back cover is used for a blurb, a text that promotes the content of the publication (French

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61 This edition made a special use of illustrations, which might be the reason for mentioning the name of the artist; for a discussion of this edition, see the discussion of illustrations in this inventory.

The inside cover is either empty or – combined with the first page of the flyleaf - used for maps (see below).

Function: Presentation. It makes the edition easy to distinguish from others. Sales information makes the Bible a modern book like any book in a bookstore, although it is of no use anymore once the edition has been bought.

06. **Colored edge**

Some editions have a colored edge, red (Carib) or green (Doyayo). More luxurious editions sometimes have a gilded edge (Kuoyü).


07. **Marker ribbon**

Bible editions regularly have one or two ribbons in various colors, attached to the upper part of the back of the book block. Ribbons are used in books of reference or luxury literary editions.62 Bibles have often two; that might have to do with the tradition to read in church services multiple passages, both from Old Testament and New Testament.63 The ribbons serve as bookmarks in order to easily find back certain passages.

Function: Presentation; only books worth of study have these.

Furtherance of study and use.


63 J.A. Brongers, *Boekwoorden woordenboek; rondgang door de boekenwereld.* (Amsterdam: De Buitenkan, 1996), 113.
08. **Head and tail bands**

Some editions have head and tail bands in one or two colors related to the color of the cover. These head and tail bands are purely decorative. In the past they served a purpose in the binding process of a book.

Function: Presentation. They add to the beauty of a book and emphasize its durability.

09. **Thumb index**

None of the consulted editions had a thumb index. A thumb index consists of small cut out rounded edges that make dark stickers visible, each sticker having the abbreviation of the name of one or a few books printed on it in gold. It is sometimes applied to luxurious Bible editions. Since it has to be made manually, it raises the price considerably. The Kuoyü Bible has an interesting (low-cost) variant: instead of a manually cut out thumb index, little shaded boxes are printed with the name of the books of the Bible on various heights at the outer page margins, each time on both sides of between 6-9 successive pages. When leaving through the book, one can easily locate the Bible book one wants to look at. The boxes with their various height correspond with indexes on the inside front and back cover.


10. **Rounded corners**

Some Bible editions (with either a leather vinyl cover) have the corners of cover and book block cut rounded (Papiamentu). That marks a book as valuable.

Function: Presentation. It adds to the beauty of a book and emphasizes that it is meant for regular use.
11. **Paper**

Bible editions have a large number of pages. The consulted New Testaments varied between 476 (Twi Akuapem) and 1,200 pages (Burarra), the Bibles (including Old and New Testament) between 932 (Luchazi) and 1,915 (Papiamentu) pages. Bible editions are often printed on special paper: thin and strong, so as to ensure that the size of the book stays within certain limits, that make it possible to carry it for example to church.

Function: Presentation.

12. **Dedication page**

A few editions have a specially designed page where the name of a person who receives the publication as a gift, the giver and the date can be written (Spanish, Sumu). The dedication page is printed on one of the sides of the flyleaf.

Function: Presentation. It marks the book a worth being used as a gift on a special occasion.

13. **Title pages**

Depending on the custom in the country, a title page is often preceded by a half title page that contains only the title, often in a shortened form.

The title page gives the complete title, and the name of the publisher. It might also contain the logo of the publisher, an indication of the version (for languages that have more than one translation of the Bible) and, in case of an interconfessional project, an indication of inclusion of the deuterocanonical books.

Function: Presentation.

Location: Title pages are always located in a right page.
14. **Bibliographical information**

Normally following the title page another page is reserved for bibliographical information. The following information can be included on this page, depending on the legal requirements:

- copyrights (text, illustrations and maps)
- requirements for use of the text in other publications (Dutch 2004).
- ISBN
- internal UBS codes that identify the edition and the number of copies
- the address of the publisher
- typographical information
- a description in a major language of the edition, for example: “The Bible in Éwé: Revised Version” (Ewe)

Function: Presentation  
Location: After the title page, on a left page.

15. **Epigraph**

An epigraph is a quotation placed in separation from the text, generally at the head of a work or section. In literary works it can serve various functions. In the consulted Bible editions, there is one example of an epigraph, a quotation of John 6:63 (French, 2000). It serves the most common function of an epigraph: commenting on the text, whose meaning it emphasizes. This paratext might originate from either the translator or the editor.

Function: Expressive and appellative. The translator or editor expresses his view of the Bible, and is this way does an appeal on the reader.

Location: After the title, before the text proper.

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64 Compare Genette, *Paratexts*, 144.

16. **Imprimatur / Ecclesiastical recommendation**

The *Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible* require for interconfessional editions the Imprimatur of the appropriate Roman Catholic authority) or a joint recommendation by ecclesiastical authorities. In the consulted editions examples are found of an official recommendation of a Roman Catholic bishop (Papiamentu), and of joint recommendations (Miskitu 1974, Ngbandi).

Function: Presentation. The translation is marked as approved and recommended for use.

Location: On the back of the title page.

17. **Typographic design**

The typographic design of a Bible edition is – like the design of any publication – a key factor in presenting the text of the translation to the readers. It is also complicated since there are often many paratextual features that all need to be distinctively marked. A challenge is the choice of the typeface for the body text that needs to be economic (not using much space), but also needs to serve legibility. So the type size in relation to the length of each line and the spacing between the lines are other important factors. Since the Bible comprises much text, all Bible editions use multiple columns: two columns for the main text (in some editions divided by a vertical line), sometimes with one or two additional columns for cross-references; only poetry is regularly given a single column on a page. Editions of the New Testament often use a single column.

I will in this inventory not elaborate all aspects of the typographic design of Bibles. That is an area for specialists in graphic design.

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66 Guidelines, 18.

As Wendland and Louw state, publishers of Bible translations hold strongly to traditional conventions.\textsuperscript{68} Bible editions are easily recognized as such by their typographic design. There is not much innovation.\textsuperscript{69} The cost of production probably plays a role in typographic decisions. For example, many African Bible editions have a smaller typeface than the average European Bible edition, which is remarkable considering the difference in literacy rate and reading skills.

Function: Presentation; the typographic design presents the book as a Bible. Rarely a Bible is printed with a single column. An example is the so-called literary edition of the Dutch Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling\textsuperscript{70} that is printed in a single column, and without numbering of verses, thus inviting the reader to read continuously, as literature.

The typographic design also serves the legibility and disclosure.

18. \textbf{Orthography}

The orthography that is used in an edition normally is not a paratextual feature. However, in cases where there are various orthographies in use, the choice for a specific orthography might have paratextual value. An example is the Papiamentu Bible. Papiamentu is spoken on three islands in the Caribbean, which were originally all part of the Netherlands Antilles. For political reasons, Aruba obtained a status of a country on its own within the Netherlands Kingdom in 1986. Each country had its own orthography. The Bible was published in the orthography of the Netherlands Antilles.

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\textsuperscript{68} Wendland and Louw, Graphic Design and Bible Reading, 1.

\textsuperscript{69} An example of an innovation is the use of burgundy ink for titles and callouts in Dutch 2004.

\textsuperscript{70} \text{DE BIJBEL} (Amsterdam / Heerenveen: Querido / Jongbloed, 2004).
Another aspect of orthography with paratextual value is the use of capital letters in Bible translations for pronouns referring to God and Jesus, and words that refer to God, like ‘rock’ and ‘shepherd’, a tradition that developed in certain languages (English, Dutch).\footnote{Larry Lee Walker, ‘The Use of Capital Letters in Translating Scripture into English’, in: Glenn C. Scorgie, Mark L. Strauss, M. Voth (Eds.), \textit{The Challenge of Bible Translating: Communicating God’s Word. Essays in honor of Ronal F. Youngblood} (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), pp. 393-421; \textit{Werk in uitvoering} [Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling] (Haarlem/’s Hertogenbosch: NBG/KBS, 1998), 227ff.} It is taken as a sign of reverence. Editions of translations in these languages that conform to current practice in the language and do not use these capitals, present themselves as modern translations.

Function: Presentation. The use of capital letters as sign of reverence can be considered to have an expressive function.

19. \textbf{Pagination}

Most books have pagination. The pagination is normally in Arabic numerals. In some Bible the section preceding the text proper has a separate pagination in Roman numerals (French, 1996), sometimes also the back section (Dutch 2004).

The place of the page numbers varies: either on the top or the bottom of the page, either on the inside margin, centered, or on the outside margin.

Some editions do not have continuous pagination. Page numbers may start anew at the beginning of the section with deuterocanonical books and at the New Testament (Dutch 2004). The functional purpose of this has to do with the fact that some Bible are published in two editions: one with and one without the deuterocanonical books. In these cases of a double edition, the section with the deuterocanonical books is placed in a separate section before the New Testament.\footnote{Guidelines, 7. Normal Roman Catholic practice would be to present these books as part of the Olds Testament.} If new pagination starts at the major sections in these editions, the advantage is that the New Testament only has to be typesetted once for both editions.
Sometimes the Old Testament pagination continues in the section with the deuterocanonical books, starting anew at the New Testament; this emphasizes in a subtle way the fact that for the Catholic Church the deuterocanonical books are considered part of the Old Testament (French 2000). If however the paratext in editions with the deuterocanonical books is more extended, for example including references to the deuterocanonical books, new type setting is still required, although new pagination might be applied, apparently as a practice typically for Bibles (Spanish). There are Bible editions that have new pagination starting at the New Testament, although there is only a single edition of the Bible (Sumu). Sometimes new numbering starts at the back section as well (Maya).

Function: Disclosure.

20. **Table(s) of contents/ Index**

Bible editions always have at least one table of contents in front of the book, in which the Bible books – and often the additional material – are arranged in order of appearance. In such a table the names of the Bible books are given in abbreviated form (as used in the running heads). In some Bibles an additional table of contents for the New Testament is included at the beginning of the New Testament section. Sometimes the number of chapters is added for each book (Ewe 2000). Some editions have separate indexes for Old and New Testament (Polish).

Additionally, many editions have a table of content in which the Bible books are arranged alphabetically, sometimes with the names of the Bible books in the national language included (Miskito 1999). Some editions have a separate index of maps and plans.

Function: Disclosure.

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73 See also below the discussion of the ‘titles of major groups of books’.
Location: In the front section. Sometimes the alphabetically ordered table is in the back section (Melpa).

21. **List of abbreviations and signs**

In some Bible editions the Table of contents is followed by a list in which abbreviations and signs are explained (German, French 1996).

Function: Disclosure.
Location: In the front section.

22. **Preface**

The consulted editions show great variation with regard to prefaces. About half of the editions do not have a preface; some editions even have two. A variety of titles is used; some examples: the Good News Bible (English 1976) has both a ‘foreword’ and a ‘preface’. The foreword states briefly the character and aim of the translation. The preface gives an account of the principles followed for the translation, and concludes with expressing the conviction of the translators, a prayer of the Bible Societies and a doxology. In the Papiamentu Bible the preface is called ‘Pa e lektor’ (“To the reader”) and explains the paratextual features added to the text. In La Bible en français courant (French 1982), there is a preface called ‘Lettre au lecteur’ and a ‘Presentation’. The letter to the reader, signed with the names of the five translators, has an expressive and implicitly appellative character. The presentation gives an account of the principles followed for the translation.

The following elements that can have a place in a preface can be distinguished:

1. Information about the history of the translation
2. Information about the character of the translation
3. Information about the translation principles and procedure
4. Information about the order of material in the book and the paratextual features

5. Personal statements of translator and/or editor

Part of the information sometimes is found in a postface or justification of the translation (see below).

Function: Presentation (1,2,3), informative (1-4), disclosure (4), expressive and appellative (5).

Location: In the front section, before the text proper, before any introduction.

23. Introductions

Bible editions can have various introductions: introductions to the whole Bible, to a part (Old or New Testament, deuterocanonical books), a group of books (e.g. the Pentateuch) or a book.74 The introductions can contain the following type of information:

1. A brief presentation of the content of a book
2. An outline of the book with indication of the chapters
3. Background information: historical setting, author

Function: Informative, disclosure.

Location: Directly preceding the text section the introduction refers to.

24. Outline

This is related to the introduction. One of the consulted editions has beside an introduction preceding each book, a separate outline of the content at the end of each book (Papiamentu). One edition has only an outline, preceding the book (German).

Function: Informative, disclosure.

Location: Directly preceding or following the text section it refers to.

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74 The Guidelines also mention the possibility of introductions to sections (of a book), 9.
25. **Chapter and verse division and numbering**

All consulted Bible editions use a chapter and verse division. This division is a later addition to the text and facilitates easy reference to specific passages of the text. There is a little variation in the numbering between Bible editions in a number of chapters, often only a difference of one verse. The chapter and verse division does not necessarily represent the units of composition of the Biblical text. As H. von Soden says,

> There is no doubt, that the chapter divisions which we have inherited from Langton leave much to be desired. These divisions do not rest upon a comprehension of the literary structure of the Biblical books ... But it is utterly impractical today to think of trying to correct this system of chapter divisions. From practical considerations, this system must be kept as the means for designating individual passages. All that we can do is to realize that this system falls far short of doing justice to the inherent units of Scripture. Therefore, if future editions want to aid rather than hinder a reader’s understanding of the New Testament, it should be realized that the time is ripe to cause both the verse and chapter divisions to disappear from the text and to be put on the margin in as inconspicuous a place as possible. Every effort must be made to print the text in a way which makes it possible for the units which the author himself had in mind to become apparent.

In many so-called common language translations verses are combined in order to facilitate a more natural rendering of the text. This is mostly a combination of a few verses, but might go as far as combining verses 12-83 in chapter 7 of the book of Numbers (Dutch 1989).

The continuation of verse numbering is sometimes interrupted where – based on text critical considerations – a part of the (Greek or Hebrew) text no longer is considered original and not included in the translation. Translations sometimes explain this in footnotes.

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75 For the history of this division, see footnote 27 and the literature mentioned there.

76 This variation parallels the variation in versification between the versification in editions of the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Bible, and in editions of major translations of the Bible, like the Septuagint and the Vulgate.

77 H. von Soden, Die Schriften des Neuen Testamentes (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1911), I. 484. Quoted by Daniel P. Fuller in ‘Chapter Two: Grammatical-Historical Interpretation’ in Notes on Translation No. 51 (March, 1974), 15-23.

Translations that do not have textual footnotes sometimes include only the verse number between brackets followed by a blank space (French 2000).\textsuperscript{79}

Function: Disclosure.

Location: There is considerable variation in the placement of the chapter and verse numbers. Some editions put the number next to the text in the margin. The advantage is that the text not is interrupted or divided by the numbers. The disadvantage is that it sometimes not is clear where a verse starts. One edition overcame this disadvantage by putting slashes in the text between the verses. Some editions have each verse start at the left margin of the text (Renell-Bellona, Piro). Most editions put the verse numbers in the text preceding the verse they refer to. The verse numbers are often in a smaller size, superscript, to indicate that they are not part of the text proper. Sometimes the first verse number of a paragraph is of the same size as the text (Fon).

26. **Division of the text in semantic units**

I use this description to refer to the division of the text into sections and paragraphs. The description distinguishes this division from the division of the text into chapters and verses that does not necessarily relate to the content. Most translations that are published nowadays use a division in sections and paragraphs or –in poetry– in strophes. The sections have titles (see below). The sections divide the text of the Bible books into smaller units making them appear more like other books; the paragraphs give a further division on a lower level. Sometimes there is another level of division between section and paragraph, indicated by blank lines (Dutch 2004). The units are intended to be based on the content of the book. They

\textsuperscript{79} N. A. Mundhenk, ‘User-Friendly Translation’, in *The Bible Translator* Vol. 51 (2000) No. 4, 405f, recommends in those cases a combination in the verse numbering as a reader friendly solution that does not raise questions when the main text only is read.
encourage the reading of complete semantic units, thus furthering the understanding of the text.

Function: Presentation: the Bible looks more like other books.

Legibility and disclosure: the division into smaller units helps the reader to more easily navigate in the text.

Location: The beginning of a section is indicated by a typographically distinctive title. Paragraphs are typographically indicated by starting at the left margin, often preceded by indented space.

27. **Titles: titles of major groups of books**

The major groups of books are the Old Testament and the New Testament. These are normally introduced by a separate title page, although not always (French 2000). Editions that include the deuterocanonical books as a separate section between the Old Testament and the New Testament have a similar title page preceding this section. That this section is in fact considered part of the Old Testament can be seen in the layout of the Index where the deuterocanonical books are presented as a section of the Old Testament (French 2000, Spanish). This is not always the case (Papiamentu, Dutch 2004).

Function: Disclosure.

Location: Directly preceding the book it refers to.

28. **Titles: titles of minor groups of books**

In some editions groups of books like the Pentateuch or the Gospels are preceded by a title page for each group (French 1997).

Function: Disclosure.

Location: Directly preceding the book it refers to.
29. **Titles: book titles**

Most Bible books have a longer and an abbreviated form of their title. The longer form only appears at the beginning of the book (for example: ‘The letter of Paul to the Philippians’), whereas the shorter form is used in the running head and also to refer to the book in other paratextual features (‘Philippians’), if there are no abbreviations of Bible books in use (‘Phil.’) (Papiamentu).

**Function:** Disclosure.

**Location:** Directly preceding the book it refers to.

30. **Titles: headings to major sections**

Most editions use section heading to identify the smaller sections of the individual books. Some editions have two levels of headings, the upper level identifying larger sections in the book, for example the sermon in the mount (Matthew 5-7), or Isaiah 40-55 (English 1967). These heading are typographically distinguished from the section headings, often by the use of capitals.\(^{80}\)

**Function:** Disclosure.

**Location:** Directly preceding the book it refers to.

31. **Titles: section titles**

Section titles, or – as they commonly are called – section headings, are nowadays a common feature of Bible editions. They came only in common use in the second half of the 20\(^{th}\) century. Before that time in Bible editions often a summary of the page content was given in the running head, or a summary of the content of a chapter was given at the beginning of a

\(^{80}\) The major sections might be identified by regular section headings to which an indication of the passage concerned is added between brackets, e.g. ‘The sermon on the mount (Chapter 5-7)’ (German).
chapter. Of the consulted editions only two have these headings at the beginning of a chapter (Ewe, Negro-English). Only a few of the consulted editions do not have section headings. One edition has page summaries on the bottom of each page and no section titles.

Some editions include a reference to the actual verses included in the passage (Usan).

Section titles serve various functions: they indicate the division of the text of the Bible books into smaller units based on the content of the book. They give an idea of the content of the passage, which helps the reader in understanding the passage. This description of the content also makes it easier for a more experienced reader of the Bible to locate certain passages. When coherently composed, the sections titles of a complete book can give the reader a good idea of its overall content. Section headings are typographically distinguished from the main text: they are often centered, having different font size, bold or italic.

Function: Disclosure, informative (furtherance of the comprehension of the text).
Location: Directly preceding the section it refers to.

32. Running heads

All consulted editions have running heads on top of the page. A running head mostly consists of the shorter form of the book name, often followed by the number of the current chapter. Sometimes it is even more precise in giving the number of the first verse in the running head of the left page and the number of the last verse of the page in the running head of the right page (Melpa), or the exact verses on each page (Ewe).

82 Both are editions of an older translation.
83 The literary edition of the Dutch Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling, see footnote 70.
Function: Disclosure.
Location: On top of the page.

33. Notes

Half of the consulted editions have notes. A note can be described as an informative statement connected to a specific part of the text. Notes are almost always footnotes, placed at the bottom of the page that contains the text it is connected to. Two of the consulted editions have their notes grouped in the back section as endnotes. Some of these notes are connected to various passages in the text, which makes this collection of endnotes a kind of in-between between endnotes and a glossary. A glossary is in fact a systematically arranged collection of notes. When the same subject in multiple passages needs explanation in a note, translators are likely to treat the subject in a glossary instead of in repeated footnotes.

A special kind of footnotes are the cross references, that only consist of references to other passages; they are treated separately.

Notes can give various kinds of information:85

- textual information: alternative readings of the Hebrew or Greek text
- translational information: alternative renderings of the original text
- linguistic information about the original language: explanation of proper names and plays on words
- historical and cultural information about the world of the text
- identification of significance of persons and places
- dates

Function: Informative, with two aspects: justification of the translation and furtherance of the comprehension of the text.

Location: Footnotes are located close to the part of the text they are connected to. Mostly they are placed in one column on the bottom of the page, sometimes – in editions with two columns – on the bottom of the left column of the left page and on the bottom of the right column on the right page (French 1997). In one case they are located at the end of the section (Frisian). Endnotes are located in the back section.

34. Cross-references

A cross-reference is a reference to another passage involving parallel content, similar historical events, quotations, clear cases of allusion and parallel treatment of subject matter. It gives only the book, chapter, and verse without any comment.\(^86\)

Function: Informative (furtherance of the study/use of the Bible).

Location: There is considerable variation in the location of the cross-references: some editions have a small column in between two text columns with cross-references in smaller type face (Nuba, Ewe),\(^87\) or two small columns with cross-references in the outer margins of two text columns (Greek). Other editions have the (numerous) cross-references right after the verse they relate to (Rumanian). Others have them at the end of a section or at the end of the chapter (Frisian). It is more common however to have them placed at the bottom of the page.

In one edition of a New Testament the references to the Old Testament quotations were put between brackets immediately after the quotation in the text against the right margin (Siroi).\(^88\)

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\(^87\) Both are editions of an older translation, reflecting an older tradition.

\(^88\) Nida, *Marginal Helps for the Reader*, 8, mentions this as an option.
35. **References to parallel passages**

These are references to other passages that are closely parallel. These references are mainly found for the Old Testament in the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles and for the New Testament in the synoptic gospels.

**Function:** Informative (furtherance of the study/use of the Bible).

**Location:** Beneath the section title of the passage concerned (often between brackets).

One of the consulted editions has these references grouped together in a list in the back section (Dutch 2004).

36. **Callouts**

When editions have footnotes, cross-references or a glossary, there are often callouts (also called indicators) in the text that call the attention towards these extratextual elements.

When footnotes and cross-references are combined into one system, they have a single system of callouts. When there is a separate system of footnotes, the footnote callout usually consists of a small raised number right after the piece of text it refers to. A subtle callout is the footnote callout in the edition that gives the number of the verse to which the footnote refers a different color (Dutch 2004). When there is also a separate system of cross-references, the callout usually consists of a small raised letter right after the piece of text it refers to. A callout for a glossary item often consists of an asterisk (*) right after a word that has a lemma in the glossary. Glossary callouts are only once applied in a section for each specific word. (Papiamentu gives an example of all three types of callout.)

**Function:** Disclosure.

**Location:** Right after the piece of text it relates to.

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90 This second colour is also used for the various titles and the running heads.
Illustrations

About half of the consulted editions contain illustrations. The absence of illustrations in a Bible might be on purpose; for example, in some communities with an Islamic background, there is a conviction – related to the physical appearance of the Quran – that there should be no illustrations in God's Book.\(^{91}\)

There are various types of illustrations.\(^{92}\) The collection of illustrations by Horace Knowles is used in half of the cases, in later editions including the revised and added illustrations by Louise Bass. These realistic black and white drawings often illustrate things that are likely unfamiliar to modern readers. Other collections of realistic drawings are mainly illustrating incidents in the Bible. They do what The Guidelines describe as: “promote a measure of psychological identification and involvement by means of the symbolic and dramatic character of the illustrations”\(^{93}\). Among these collections are the series by John Lear and Graham Wade. One of the consulted editions has illustrations in this style in a local design, in which the characters have the physiognomy of the people of the region (Melpa). The Annie Vallotton series is also more focusing on illustrating incidents in the Bible; they intend to draw the reader to the text. Nida calls them “triggers for thought and windows for inspiration.”\(^{94}\) In these illustrations details are reduced as much as possible; the illustrations often depict attitudes and emotions. They are less used in areas with a high number of new literates.

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\(^{93}\) Guidelines, 10.

Colored illustrations are rarely used. Part of the series of John Lear is in color; sometime colored and black and white illustrations are used in one edition (Miskito 1974). Two of the consulted editions have a number of color pictures of Israel in separate sections (Cheke Holo and Siroi).

Special mention deserves the edition of the Revised Standard Version with illustrations by Horace Knowles (English 1967). In this edition illustrations serve as visual aids. As in other editions, the illustrations illustrate things that are likely unfamiliar to modern readers. But there is more: nations that regularly appear in the text are identified by a symbolic illustration that is placed whenever the nation concerned appears in the text; the same is done for Israel and Judah after the division of the kingdom. Some pictures have been used more than once to emphasize the unity and coherence of the Bible in marking recurring subjects like the book of the law and the fall of Jerusalem. Little illustrations of milestones are used to indicate distances; there are also repeated pictures with a reference to the date of the events described in the text. Among the visual aids are also little route-maps.\textsuperscript{95}

Especially the illustrations that provide background information regularly have a caption underneath that explains the illustration or refers to the verse it relates to.


Legibility: illustrations can break up long blocks of text, encouraging new literates to read a larger publication.

Disclosure: little recurrent symbolic illustration can help reader to recognize recurring subjects or characters.\textsuperscript{96}

\textsuperscript{95} See English 1967, viii-x. This systematic use of illustrations has been applied in editions of the Authorized Version and the New English Bible by the BFBS as well. In the edition of the Authorized Version the name of the editor is explicitly mentioned on the title page, before the name of the artist.

\textsuperscript{96} Mundhenk, \textit{User-Friendly Translation}, 408, brings up the suggestion to place illustrations at passages that people might want to refer to frequently, which would enable them to find them back easily.
Informative: illustrations that illustrate unfamiliar things, further the knowledge and comprehension of the text.

Appellative: this function can be seen in many of the illustrations that illustrate incidents.

Location: Illustrations are placed in the text, at the page of the specific page they refer to. In two editions illustrations are put at the beginning and end of each book, serving more an aesthetic than an informative function (Afrikaans 1986, Papiamentu). One of these editions has also illustrations in the glossary, where they are highly informative (Afrikaans 1986).

38. Maps

Most editions contain maps. Editions of the New Testament have often only maps of Palestine and the travels of Paul. The number of maps in editions of the Bible varies between zero and eighteen (Sumu). One of the maps in the Sumu Bible is a simple world map where besides the continent only two countries are marked: Israel and Nicaragua, where the Sumu live.\(^{97}\) Maps are in black and white, a few colors or multiple colors.

Function: Presentation: an edition with maps, especially when printed in color add to its attraction.

Disclosure. Informative: they further the study and comprehension of the text.

Location: The location varies: Color maps are often printed on the inside covers which facilitates easy reference. Often there is a separate section with maps in the back section. Sometimes maps are placed in appropriate places in the text, for examples maps of Paul’s travels in the book of Acts. In these cases the maps are often also in the back section.

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\(^{97}\) Similar maps in Siroi and Miskitu 1999.
39. **Register to maps**

Only one of the consulted editions has a register to the maps, which helps to easily locate certain places (German).

Function: Informative (furtherance of study).

Location: In the back section.

40. **Glossary**

A glossary provides information that is relevant for multiple Scripture passages. If the information applies only to one passage, it might be more appropriate to give the information in a footnote. The information given in a glossary can include information about key terms, biblical cultural and historical information and information about important characters, especially when they appear both in Old and New Testament.

Glossaries are alphabetically arranged by the discussed terms and names.

Function: Informative.

Location: In the back section.

41. **Index**

An index gives a list of references to specific topic, names, places and events, arranged alphabetically (Spanish, German). For example, the entry ‘blood’ in the Good News Bible gives a subdivision in: (a) of animals, (b) of men, (c) of Christ, each followed by a number of references to verses and page numbers (English 1976).

Function: Disclosure, informative.

Location: In the back section.
42. **Subject index**

Some editions have an index of important passages in the Bible that are frequently referred to (German). One edition has a list of passages for the ecclesiastical year (Norwegian).

Function: Disclosure, informative.
Location: In the front section after the table of contents (German) or in the back section.

43. **Chronological outline**

Sometimes editions of Bibles include a chart that gives a brief overview of the history of the biblical times until the first century (Miskito).

Function: Informative.
Location: In the back section.

44. **List of differences in versification**

In countries where various versification systems are used, sometimes a list of the differences in versification is included (Dutch 2004).

Function: Informative.
Location: In the back section.

45. **List referring to OT quotations in the NT**


Function: Informative.
Location: In the back section.
46. **Tables of measurements, weights, coins, etc.**

Some editions have tables that include the various measurements, weights and coins with their equivalents in the metric system.

One edition has a table of the names of the months in the Bible with local equivalents (Baatonum). Other editions include all this information in the glossary (Afrikaans 1986).

**Function:** Informative.

**Location:** In the back section.

47. **Tables relating to the language of translation**

Editions in language that are recently reduced to writing or that have had changes in orthography sometimes contain information about the orthography, often in the front section (Gun). One edition had a section about the numerical system of the language (Kabiyè).

**Function:** Legibility.

Informative (comprehension).

**Location:** In the front section, preceding the text proper.

48. **Promotional message**

Some editions have a brief section informing about the work of the Bible Societies and inviting the reader to participate.

**Function:** Appellative.

**Location:** In the front section at the page with copyright information (Sumu) or in the back section (Norwegian).
49. **Justification of the translation**

Sometimes editions have a separate section in the back section in which information is given about all or various of the following subjects: the translation principles that are followed, the text editions that are used, treatment of proper names, treatment of divine names, paratextual elements in the translation and a list of persons who contributed to the translation. (German, Dutch 2004). Other editions that provide this information often do that in the preface.

Function: Presentation, Informative (justification).

Location: In the back section.

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3.3 Conclusion

From their founding early in the 19th century, the Bible Societies have operated with a policy of publishing Bibles “without note or comment.” After the Second World War, the number of translation projects in indigenous language increased considerably. The audiences for these projects often had no background in the Bible, much like a growing group in the western world. This made the need evident to add to the translations helps for readers to make the Bible more intelligible for its readers. This led to a shift from “without note or comment” to “without doctrinal note or comment”. The *Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible*, agreed upon between the United Bible Societies and the Roman Catholic Church, list a number of possible subjects and forms of helps. The intention was to give information that helps to understand and prevents misunderstanding of the biblical text. There is a subjective element here, where the translators decide what is relevant for the audience.

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98 There is some tension here with the *Guidelines* that state: “It is not the practice of the United Bible Societies to associate the names of the translators or revisers with translation of the Scriptures.” (11)
The discussion within the Bible Societies centered around paratext with an informative and expressive/appellative function. The paratext with informative function in the inventory was all within the limits as described. A few instances of paratext with expressive/appellative function were found: one instance of an epigraph and some instances in the content of prefaces and in promotional messages; all clearly marked as not belonging to the text proper. Also a type of illustrations with appellative function was signaled.

For the paratext with informative function the Cooperative Principle of H. Grice is significant. Although he developed it with regard to spoken conversation, it can be applied to written text that is intended to communicate with a reader. Grice describes the principle as follows: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged." This principles is expanded into four maxims which guide the communicative interaction:

**Maxim of quantity**  Make your contribution as informative as required.  
Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

**Maxim of quality**  Do not say what your believe to be false.  
Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

**Maxim of relation**  Be relevant.

**Maxim of manner**  Avoid obscurity of expression.  
Avoid ambiguity.  
Be brief. 
Be orderly.

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99 In this application of the Cooperative Principle to written text I follow the example of Waller, *The typographic contribution to language*, 264ff.

The usefulness of these maxims for translators that produce paratext with an informative function is obvious. A question that immediately surfaces is however: What information is relevant? To answer this question, one needs to have an idea of the communicative setting: the intended function(s) of the translation and the intended audience. In view of the intended function the question of relevancy is pertinent for all types of paratext.

To find help in answering these questions, the possible contribution of the so-called skopos theory will be studied in the next chapter.
4. PARATEXT AND SKOPOS THEORY

In this chapter I want to study the possibilities skopos theory offers to arrive at a systematic approach to translation, especially with regard to the addition of paratextual elements to the text. Therefore I will first discuss the relation of a text and its paratext. I will explain the need for a comprehensive theory. Then skopos theory will be introduced and its application to Bible translation discussed. Finally its possible contribution will be evaluated.

4.1 The relation between a text and its paratext

In his book Paratexts Genette gives an often-quoted description of the relation between a text and its paratext:

More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a threshold, or [...] a "vestibule" that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back. It is an "undefined zone" between the inside and the outside, [...] a zone not only of transition, but also of transaction: a privileged place of a pragmatics and strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that [...] is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it (more pertinent of course in the eyes of the author and his allies).\footnote{Genette, Paratexts, 1f.}

Genette expresses the crucial role of paratext where he describes a few lines earlier paratext in the words of Philip Lejeune as “a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one’s whole reading of the text.”

There is no paratext without text: paratext comes into being because there is a text.\footnote{It happens sometimes that a text gets lost and that only some of its paratext survives, for example the title of a book, Joshua 10:13.} The opposite is also true: there is no text without paratext: it is the paratext that materializes a text and presents it to (potential) readers. There is always paratext in a publication and it is always influencing the reader, whether the paratext originates from the author, his allies or
another source. That is also true when paratext is limited to the bare minimum like in the approach of the Bible Societies with the policy of “without note or comment”. It cannot be denied that such an approach of limited paratext also guides the readers in their reception of the text. For example, a Bible edition in which books only have a title and a chapter and verse division, without a division in sections, and in which each verse is presented as a paragraph, tends to be taken as a book of references, which is more likely to be read and studied by verse than by story or discourse. Another consequence of a Bible edition without any note about alternative readings and renderings might be that it is taken in a Quranic manner as pseudo-original.\footnote{103}

With regard to paratext in translations there is another element in the paratext that comes to the fore: the cultural gap that might exist between the culture of the source text and the culture of the translation. There is often cultural information, aspects of the political or economic situation, connotation of certain terms or other information, that is presupposed or assumed by the author as shared or known by the people he is addressing; information that is not implied by the source text. Depending on their degree of knowledge of this background information, readers might come to completely different understandings of the text; it might make a difference whether or not readers of translations are served with paratextual information that is intended to bridge that gap.

It is clear that there is a close interrelation between a text and its paratext on a practical level: it is the paratext that makes the text into a publication; together they influence the understanding of the reader, whether the paratext has been chosen deliberately or not. In order for paratext to be more than a rather arbitrary or subjective addition to the text of a translation, an approach is needed in which text and paratextual features of a publication are treated as an

\footnote{103 Burke, Text and Context, 28, who refers to the history of the King James Version.}
interrelated unity and in which the choice for paratextual elements is made deliberately from the perspective of this unity.

4.2 In search of a comprehensive theory

In the search for an integrated approach Genette’s work is of some help. However, the focus in his study is only on paratext of literary texts. The unifying factor he sees in the manifold practices that are part of paratext is “to ensure for the text a destiny consistent with the author’s purpose.”

Using this approach to study the paratext of Bible translations is problematic for several reasons. First of all, Genette’s approach would presuppose for a translation that the author initiates the translation or at least is involved in its initiation. Secondly, the subject of authorship of the Bible, or more precisely, of the various books included in the Bible, let alone the subject of authorial intention, has given ground for many differences of opinion. Ideas about the nature, origin and authority of the Bible vary greatly among readers of the Bible. That has as a consequence that verbal paratext in Bible translations easily can become subject of debate, caused by difference in opinion and conviction about the nature, origin and authority of the Bible.

Although speaking about the author is problematic in the case of translation of the Bible, there are still those that Genette calls ‘the author’s allies’. These allies are all that are involved in the editing process (editor, book designer, publishing house). But the same problems arise here: Whose allies are they? Do they consider themselves allies of the

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104 Genette, Paratexts, 3f, footnote 6.

105 Genette, Paratexts, 407. Compare also: “the correctness of the authorial (and secondarily, of the publisher’s) point of view is the implicit creed and spontaneous ideology of paratext.” (408).

106 For an example, see the case of the Dutch Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling in Chapter 3.1.
author(s)? And are they really allies? Who decides about that? And there is also the translator (or translation team). Can he be considered an ally of the author(s)?

It might be more fruitful in dealing with translations of the Bible to relate these allies to the initiator or publisher of the translation. Initiator and publisher might be the same person, but not necessarily. An initiator might commission a translator or a publisher to produce a translation. A publisher might see a market for a new translation; an initiator might see a need for a new translation. In both cases potential readers are in focus and a translation might be made according to a certain method and with paratextual features that attract these readers and/or meet their needs. Related to this there is another element: in translating the Bible there is hardly any paratext to translate. Most paratext is added for the readers during the translation process and produced by either translator or editor.

Therefore, when dealing with paratext in Bible translations in its interrelatedness with the text of the translation, a target text oriented approach is most fruitful. That would also be in line with Genette’s approach that paratextual features are chosen deliberately with the potential readers in view. A question that remains open at this point is what the criteria for choosing certain paratextual features or specific forms for these paratextual features and leaving others aside, are based upon.

An approach of translation that seems helpful here is the approach of the skopos theory.

4.3 Skopos theory

Skopos theory, which was developed in the late 1970s in Germany, is one of the communicative or functional approaches to translation. Characteristic for these approaches is a view of translation as more than a mere linguistic process and attention for the context in
which the translation process takes place. Functional (or functionalist) means focusing on the function(s) that texts and translations have.

Before the rise of the communicative approaches, translation was mainly seen as a linguistic process. Traditionally translators focused on the relation between the source text and the target text. Later on some translators started to pay attention to the relation between source and target language. Another step was the attention paid to the cultures of the source and target texts in order to get a better grasp of the meaning of words and texts that depend strongly on the culture of its use. Eugene Nida is exemplary for this last group. In his approach there was more attention to translation as a process of communication, but translation was still essentially a linguistic process in which bits of information encoded in the source text were decoded en re-encoded by a translator in a target language. Although the focus shifted in the 1970s from word or phrase to the text as unit of translation, it was still a linguistic process. For example, in the equivalence-based approaches, equivalence was measured in terms of equivalence between source text and target text.

The communicative or functional approaches went one step further in paying attention to the whole communicative framework referred to by the formula: Who says when, what, where, why and how in which channel to whom to what effect? The text was no longer seen as an entity in itself, divorced from the circumstances of its production and reception. And specific attention was given to the purposes of the end user. This concern with the


109 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 7.

communicative function of a translation is an important factor in the work of Reiss, Vermeer and Nord, whose names are connected to the skopos theory.

In skopos theory, translation is not seen as a process of trans-coding (decoding and re-encoding), but as a specific form of human action, as “an intentional, interpersonal, partly verbal intercultural interaction based on a source text.”

Like any other human action, translation has an aim, a purpose. This intentional, purposeful action takes place in a situation. It is part of that situation and modifies it as well. Situations are embedded in cultures and as such

any evaluation of a particular situation, of its verbalized and non-verbalized elements, depends on the status it has in a particular cultural system. (…) Within the framework of such a comprehensive theory of human communication, a translation theory cannot draw on a linguistic theory alone, however complex it may be. What is needed is a theory of culture to explain the specificity of communicative situations and the relationship between verbalized and non-verbalized situational elements.

Discussing the difficulty of defining the borderlines between cultural systems or sub-systems, Nord suggest a more flexible approach in defining the cultural barrier between two groups as “consisting of the ‘rich points’ where different behaviour may cause communication conflicts – from lexical items through speech acts to fundamental notions of how the world works.”

The word skopos (from the Greek σκοπός) is used as the term for the aim or purpose of the translation. There is always a skopos in translation. What skopos theory does is

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111 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 19.

112 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 11, summarizing Vermeer’s approach. For a description of Vermeer’s definition of culture (“Culture is the set of norms and conventions for behaviour of a society and the results from behaviour according to these norms and conventions”; my translation), see Skopos und Translationsauftrag – Aufsätze, 36f.


stating that one must deliberately translate in accordance with some principle regarding the target text.\textsuperscript{115} Vermeer writes that he wants to find a criterion that could be a general guiding rule for translational action. I believe, that it exist in this, that each text is produced \textbf{for a certain use}, and that it should function in that use: speak/write/translate/interpret in such a way that it enables your text/translation/interpretation to function where it should and with the people for whom it is intended, and in the way it should function. We call this our \textit{skopos} rule.\textsuperscript{116}

This \textit{skopos} rule can vary, because there are many possible goals. A translator should be able to justify why he chose a particular \textit{skopos} in a certain translational situation.\textsuperscript{117}

Since translation always presupposes a \textit{skopos} and is directed by a \textit{skopos}, every translation commission should explicitly or implicitly contain a statement of \textit{skopos} in order to be carried about. Talking about “a” statement of \textit{skopos} for the translation implies that it is not necessarily identical with the \textit{skopos} attributed to the source text.\textsuperscript{118}

\textit{Skopos} theory talks about a commissioner or initiator of the translation, since in professional settings translators normally do not act on their own account. They are asked by someone else (sender or receiver of a message, or a third party) to translate.\textsuperscript{119} Vermeer describes a commission\textsuperscript{120} as “the instruction, given by oneself or by someone else, to carry out a given action – here: to translate.”\textsuperscript{121} This description implies that every translation is based on a commission. A commission should contain as much detailed information as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115} Hans J. Vermeer, Skopos und Translationsauftrag – Aufsätze, 118.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Hans J. Vermeer, \textit{Skopos und Translationsauftrag – Aufsätze}, 20, my translation, emphasis in the original.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 29.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Vermeer, \textit{Skopos and Commission}, 228. \textit{Skopos} theory does not imply that that a translation is adapted to the expectations of the target audience; that is a possible skopos, but a so-called formal equivalent translation can also be a legitimate skopos, see Nord, \textit{Translation as a Purposeful Activity}, 29.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 20.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Also called ‘translation brief’ by Nord (German: ‘Übersetzungsauftrag’); see Nord, \textit{Translation as a Purposeful Activity}, 30.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Vermeer, Skopos and Commission, 229.
\end{itemize}
possible about the goal and the conditions under which the intended goal should be attained, and be negotiated between the commissioner and the translator who, as the expert, knows whether a certain goal is realistic. It is the commissioner who defines the goal; this communicative purpose may or may not be identical with the purpose of other participants. Whether a commission can be realized depends on the circumstances of the target culture only.

The specification of a commission has the advantage that it implies agreement about the method of translating a certain text. Not because there is only one ‘best’ method of translating, but once the skopos of a translation has been defined, this can help to determine the best strategy to realize that specific goal.122

The commission usually includes the source for the translation. Nord problematizes speaking of ‘the source text’, unless it refers only to source-language words and sentences. In an approach based on action theory, the agents in the translation process (sender, receiver, initiator, translator) play the most important roles. And

the meaning or function of a text is not something inherent in the linguistic signs; it cannot simply be extracted by anyone who knows the code. A text is made meaningful by its receiver and for its receiver. Different receivers (or even the same receiver at different times) find different meanings in the same linguistic material offered by the text. [...] This concept does not allow us to speak of the meaning of the source text being transferred to the target receivers. Guided by the translation brief, the translator selects certain items from the source-language offer of information (originally meant for the source-culture addressees) and processes them in order to form a new offer of information in the target language, from which the target-culture addressees can in turn select what they consider to be meaningful in their own situation.123

This is what Vermeer calls ‘intratextual coherence’: the receiver should be able to understand the target text. It should make sense in the communicative and cultural situation in which it is

122 Vermeer, Skopos and Commission, 229ff.

123 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 31f.
received. This ‘coherence rule’ means that a translation should be coherent with the receiver’s situation.124

Besides this there is what Vermeer calls the ‘intertextual coherence’ or ‘fidelity’, leading to the ‘fidelity rule’: since a translation is an offer of information about a preceding offer of information, it is expected to bear some kind of relationship with the corresponding source text. The actual form of this intertextual coherence will depend on both the interpretation of the source text by the translator and the skopos of the translation.125

Nord adds to the idea of intertextual coherence the notion of loyalty. This is the “responsibility translators have toward their partners in translational interaction. Loyalty commits the translator bilaterally to the source and target sides.” It means that “the target-text purpose should be compatible with the original author’s intentions.”126

The skopos rule is the main rule. The coherence rule is subordinated to this, but comes before the fidelity rule.127

The usefulness of using skopos theory is that it brings the target text in focus. As a text, a translation is not primarily determined by a source text, but by its own skopos. This skopos is not determined by the source text, but by the needs as formulated by the commissioner. Translation is a decision making process. The criteria for the decisions are provided by the skopos, i.e. the concrete purpose and aims in a concrete translation

124 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 32.

125 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 32. For a fuller discussion of intertextual coherence, see Hans J. Vermeer, Skopos und Translationsauftrag – Aufsätze, 133ff.

126 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 125. Nord admits that one cannot always speak with certainty about the intentions of the original author, especially in the case of ancient texts, but states: “Sometimes a thorough analysis of intratextual function markers helps the translator to finds out about the communicative intentions that may have guided the author”, 126.

commission. Skopos theory emphasizes the social function of a translation and the important role of translator, commissioner and intended readers in the translation process.

Nord makes here a useful additional distinction between addressee and receiver: the addressee is the prospective receiver from the text producer’s standpoint. The receiver is the person (or group) that actually reads the translation after it has been produced.

4.4 Preliminary questions in applying Skopos theory to Bible translation

In applying skopos theory to the translation of the Bible, one is confronted with the question whether this theory can be used in translating the Bible. There are at least two issues here. In the first place: is the Bible as a book not a category of its own that in translating it should be treated different from other categories like literary translation or translation of technical texts?

The Bible is indeed a special book as the canon of the Christian Church. The communicative setting of its translation is seldom comparable to that of other books: mostly the addressees of a translation of the Bible have already strong ideas and expectations about its content and status. The (translation[s] of the!) Bible already has had its ‘Wirkungsgeschichte’ in the communicative setting. In situations where that is not the case, mostly situations where the Bible is being introduced for the first time in translation (sometimes by missionaries), at least the commissioners have these strong ideas.

129 Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 22.
130 Klaus Berger and Christiane Nord refer to Wolfram Wilss, Übersetzungswissenschaft: Probleme und Methoden (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1997; the reference must be to 154f.) as an example of those who consider Bible translation as a special type of translation that needs a special type of treatment in translation studies, see: ‘Verstandene Fremdheit. Ein neuer Skopos für alte Texte’, in: Mira Kadric, Klaus Kaindl and Franz Pöchhacker, Translationswissenschaft. Festschrift für Mary Snell-Hoernby (Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 2000), 223. This is not correct. Wilss gives Bible translation a special place because of its unique history, and indicates that theoretical developments in the field of Bible translation are relevant for translation in general, 155.
But this unique position of the Bible does not make a difference in applying *skopos* theory in Bible translation. It might only lead to a specific *skopos* and a particular commission for a translation. *Skopos* theory does not make judgments about the right method of translation; it only helps to decide what the right method is for this specific translation with its clearly defined *skopos*. *Skopos* theory pretends to be valid for all types of text. Individual factors can differ in weight in relation to each other, but there should be no essential changes in the relevant factors.¹³¹

The second issue to deal with is: does the fact that the Bible is a book with a strong authorial intention not conflict with the idea that *skopos* theory allows for a variety of *skopoi* for the translation of a text?¹³² In other words: should the authorial intention not become clear in the translation?

First of all, the subject of authorial intention is very troublesome in the case of the Bible. The Bible records many instances of communication in different situations; these communications have been recorded by various authors in a number of books, which were multiplied and guarded with other communicative intentions and which functioned as such. Later these books were collected as a unity in the Bible and used in another communicative context. So it is already difficult to determine whose intention is decisive: the final editors’ intention,¹³³ who created/accepted the collection as a unity, or the intention(s) of the various (sometimes even unknown) authors? It seems at least wise to speak of the supposed authorial intention. And it should be defined in the commission for a translation of

¹³¹ Vermeer, Skopos und Translationsauftrag – Aufsätze, 56.
¹³² Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 29.
the Bible how the Bible is seen in this project: as a collection of religious texts, as the canon of the Christian church, or else.

Once that has been defined, the question still remains open whether multiple skopoi are allowed. The answer to this question is positive; the skopos of a specific translation depends from the function that this translation is intended to serve. But then the question can be reformulated as: is any skopos allowed for a translation of the Bible? How should the translation’s skopos relate to the (supposed) intention of the author?

As mentioned in the previous section, Nord has introduced in skopos theory the concept of loyalty. Loyalty is the responsibility of translators toward both the source and target sides. It should be distinguished from the concepts of fidelity or faithfulness that relate to the relation between two texts, the source text and target text. Loyalty “means that the target-text should be compatible with the original author’s intentions.”¹³⁴ Sometimes information about the authorial intention can be retrieved from the communicative setting in which the source text originally was used, for example ‘conventional’ intentions linked to certain text types, and extratextual factors as author, time and place. Sometimes an “analysis of intratextual function markers helps the translator to find out about the communicative intentions that may have guided the author.” Nord concludes: “Loyalty limits the range of justifiable target-text functions for one particular source text and raises the need for negotiation of the translation between translators and their clients.”¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 125.
¹³⁵ Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 126.
4.5 Skopos theory applied to Bible translation

We will now see how skopos theory has been applied to the field of Bible translation. I will give attention to three authors: Vermeer, Nord and De Vries, who all wrote about skopos theory in relation to existing translations.

Hans Vermeer wrote an article about skopos and Bible translation. In this article he wanted to show how skopos theory could influence Bible translation. His analysis of the translation of a few selected passages in six German translations from a variety of backgrounds, one translation in English and one in French, brought him to the following general observations with regard to these translations from the perspective of skopos theory:

1. The intratextual and intertextual coherence in these translations is limited. They show a peculiar mixture of various translation strategies (e.g. pursuit of literalness or free rendering), tradition, an effort to be comprehensible, faith and knowledge, and based on all that a fear for a consequent following of a coherent strategy, fear for a real and independent translation skopos.

2. This situation leads in view of both a translation that is as literal as possible and the mentioned incoherence, to changes in perception and effect (“Wirkung”), i.e. function variation.

3. In the Christian tradition of translation the tradition itself has not been unchanged; since words sometimes change meaning in the course of time, this might lead – combined with

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136 See footnote 128.


138 Luther’s translation; Die Bibel. Die heiligen Schriften des Alten und Neuen Bundes (a catholic translation); Die Einheitsübersetzung; Die Gute Nachricht; Jörg Zink’s translation; Buber-Rosenzweig; the King James Version; la Bible de Jérusalem.
the tendency to maintain target language formulations – to wrong understanding or no understanding at all. Not to mention the fact that the target culture itself changes continually.

(4) No translation can be an exact reproduction of a source text. Every translation changes inevitably the denotations and connotations of a source text, because facts are replaced by translations in other cultural and linguistic “networks” of denotations and connotations. A good translation does not give less than a source text, but something different.

(5) A coherent translation with or without variation in function with regard to the source text is only possible when the translation skopos has been established beforehand. Without a previously formulated skopos there will be no coherent translation. Precision ands “fidelity” of the translation are only to be determined relative to skopos adequacy.

(6) A previously formulated skopos legitimizes variation in function. That is possible in the frame of target cultural norms, conventions and acceptance. This makes a source text – holy as it may be – only one factor amongst others for translation.

(7) Translation is enabling communication through communication. Every act of communication changes the world in its connectedness. Refusing to act (e.g. to bring an antiquated text in a form that is adequate for the present time) is also an act.

(8) Because of the previous considerations one cannot speak of “the” text for all recipients (translator/reader).

Thus Vermeer wanted to show that

(1) any translation should make explicit what its purpose (its skopos) is, so that it is clear what it is aiming at;
(2) a specific translation should be preceded by research about already existing exegesis and analysis of the text;
(3) the motivation for bringing together philological-cultural-anthropological and christian-theological investigation should explicitly follow, – because every translation reflects its presuppositions.\(^{139}\)

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\(^{139}\) Vermeer, ‘Skopos und Bibelübersetzung’, 81 (my translation).
Christiane Nord, one of the advocates of *skopos* theory, was involved in a Bible translation project herself. Together with her husband, New Testament scholar Klaus Berger, she published in 1999 a German translation of the New Testament and other early Christian literature.\(^\text{140}\) In various articles it was explained how they systematically applied *skopos* theory in this project.\(^\text{141}\) First the audience that the translation addresses was defined. In this case, the addressed audience was

- laypersons interested in the basis of their Christian faith who often do not find the existing translations comprehensible, especially when read aloud in Church, because they lack the cultural knowledge of the world to which the texts refer, and
- theological mediators (pastors, teachers, ministers, preachers, catechists) who are no longer familiar enough with the source language(s) and culture(s) to be able to prepare their classes or sermons using the original texts or a word for word rendering.\(^\text{142}\)

There was also a secondary audience defined, consisting of laypersons and theologians analyzing and comparing various translations in order to learn more about the source text, and persons at the periphery of the Christian community whom the translation could offer a better insight in the Christian religion.

Secondly, the main communicative purposes of the translation were defined:

- First, […] to present the culture in which the New Testament originated in such a way that readers from a German-speaking culture distant in time and space are enabled to

\(^{140}\) Klaus Berger and Christiane Nord *Das Neue Testament und frühchristliche Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag 1999).


\(^{142}\) Nord, ‘Making Otherness Accessible’, 871. Nord notes after more than five years of the publication of the translation, that most of its readers indeed belong to those two groups, 872. Nord makes explicit that the translation was not addressed to scholars and to people that accept only a literal translation as a legitimate rendering, 871.
understand and respect its *otherness*. This intention corresponds to the referential or representative function.

- Second, the translation was intended to show where the New Testament texts in spite of their strangeness and ancientness have something to say to people living in a modern culture. This is a kind of appellative function. We might call it *indirectly appellative* because a specific way of realizing the referential function is used to raise the reader’s attention and curiosity for the subject in question.\(^{143}\)

Nord subsumed the two intentions, which at first glance might seem opposed or even incompatible, under the heading of “Otherness Understood” (“Verstandene Fremdheit”).

In applying *skopos* theory to Bible translation in an article entitled 'Bible Translations: Forms and Functions',\(^{144}\) Lourens De Vries paid attention to the various functions translations can have. In a situation where the translation of the Bible is the first in a certain language, as is the case for example in many projects in New Guinea, a translation has a missionary function. In languages with a long history of Bible translation, like Dutch, there will be function specialization: there are various translations with different functions: “liturgical and church function, study function, common language function, secular literary-cultural functions, and private reading/home function.”\(^{145}\) He notes the consensus in translation circles with Nord’s statement that the “function of the target text is not arrived at automatically from an analysis of the source text, but is pragmatically defined by the purpose of the intercultural communication”,\(^{146}\) and quotes with approval the implications of this statement formulated by Douglas Robinson:

1. that translations are intended to serve some social function or functions; (2) that these functions are not textual abstractions like ‘the rhetorical function’ or ‘the informative function,’ but extratextual actions designed to shape how people behave in

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\(^{143}\) Nord, ‘Making Otherness Accessible’, 872.


a social context; (3) that these functions cannot be determined in stable or permanent ways but must be renegotiated ‘pragmatically’ in every new communicative context; and (4) that the guiding factor in these negotiations is the purpose (skopos) of the intercultural communication, what the various people hope to achieve in and through it.”

He adds that a translation never can reflect all aspects of the source text. A selection is made, determined by the skopos of the translation. For example, in a missionary translation, clear communication of the basic message of the source text has priority over conveying literary and rhetoric aspects of the source text. Translations inevitably always highlight certain aspects of the source text at the expense of other.

According to De Vries, the skopos of a translation should be defined through negotiation between the translators (or translating agency) and the communities that are served with the translation. Translation agencies like the United Bible Societies and SIL have the expertise in the field; De Vries sees it as a major challenge for them “to develop a theoretical framework within which such functional profiles of Bible translations can be defined and compared both within one language community and across language communities, and within which methods are developed to link forms and functions of Bible translations in a systematic fashion.”

He then discusses two issues that should be included in the description of the functional profile of any translation: the division of interpretative labour between translator and audience, and the degree of inference from the source text. He concludes that the

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147 Robinson, Becoming a Translator, 208.


149 De Vries,'Bible Translations: Forms and Functions', 308, 312.

150 De Vries,'Bible Translations: Forms and Functions', 308.
strategies that are chosen in these areas for a translation primarily are based on the basis of the answer to the question: “what kind of audiences are going to use the text and what are they going to go with it.”

4.6 Skopos theory and paratext

In the first section of this chapter I described the close relationship between a text and its paratext. Since a text and its paratext together influence a reader’s perception of the publication, it is important to deal with them together in the production of a publication. This is even more important in the case of the translation of the Bible. Almost all paratext in Bible editions is not found in the source text, but added by the translator or editor. Nevertheless, the close interrelatedness is evident. To give an example, Paul Ellingworth, in addressing the issue of providing information that is intended to bridge the cultural gap, considers the best solution “to convey, as far as possible, the entire semantic content in the translation and to provide as fully as necessary in reader’s helps [...] supplementary information about the source situation which is absent from, or runs counter to, the receptor’s situation and consequent principles.” Since there is a clear distinction between text and the paratextual features he calls ‘reader’s helps’, a translator must decide where to locate a particular item or piece of information: either in the text or in the paratext. This decision is ultimately a matter of judgment, depending on a number of factors: whether or not the item is deemed to be implicit in the text; whether, if implicit, to make it implicit would involve distortion of the focus or balance of the context; and whether the item is relevant or of interest to the intended readers of the translation.


Ellingworth’s remarks make clear that there is a close relationship between a translation and part of the translational paratext. And also that translators need guidance in deciding where to put certain information. This guidance can be provided by using the *skopos* approach.

In using the *skopos* approach in translation, a translator will be guided by the commission or brief, which contains a functional profile of the translation: a description of the intended audience and the function(s) that the translation should fulfill for this audience. Such a functional profile can guide a translator in deciding what method is chosen for the translation and what type of paratext will be added, including the most adequate form for the paratext.

It is useful to study paratextual features from a functional perspective. Unfortunately there has not been much written about paratextual elements from the perspective of *skopos* theory. Christiane Nord is an exception; she wrote one book and various articles about the translation of titles and headings, including one article about section headings in the New Testament. I will give an overview of this article to give an example of the treatment of paratext.

In this article Nord gives a systematic analysis of section headings in the Gospel of Matthew (and a few from other books) in seven German translations. She analyses the following elements:

- The form of the headings: the typographical variation and the way they are distinguished from the text.

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• The structure of the headings: types (simple, compound or enumeration), forms (nominal, adverbial, attributive, verbal title or title as a sentence, consisting of a principle or subordinate clause or both), patterns (NP, NP+Gen/Adv, complete sentence, etc). Nord's notes a tendency to follow general conventions for titles: most section headings are nominal titles; in the second place are the section headings consisting of a sentence, that in general are used for stories or children’s books. The advantage of nominal forms is that it enables compressing information. She also notes that in Bibles with diversity in structure of the section headings, there is a greater effort required from the reader in understanding the headings, while uniformity in headings facilitates easier access.

• The functions of the headings: Nord distinguishes three basic functions for all titles, with three other optional functions. The distinction proves useful for section headings or section titles as well:

1. distinctive function: distinguishing one section from the other (when the title is sufficiently clear).

2. metatextual function: especially clear when referring to the text type or text function.

3. phatic function: an unambiguous general convention for section headings facilitates the phatic function of the headings in marking the beginning of new sections and continuation after the previous section.

4. referential function: indicating the content of the section. Nord notes here that when the gospels are seen as biography, narrativity (as subfunction of the referential function) would be a legitimate function of the section titles, referring to the actions of the protagonist. But if one follows the more traditional view that the gospels represent the theological projections of the Christian message, then the
message would be central. Compare for example: Matthew 1:1-17: ‘Jesus, the goal of Israel’s history’\textsuperscript{155} instead of: ‘The genealogy of Jesus’.\textsuperscript{156}

5. expressive function: expressing the view of the translator about the content of the section. According to Nord, a translator should not bring his opinion or evaluation into the section heading.

6. appellative function: Since many headings have however expressive denotations, one should assume an indirect interpretation guiding function (“Interpretationssteuerungsfunktion”). An example: For Luke 16:1-8 “The parable of the steward” would be a plain referential heading. Adding interpretation guidance would give: “The dishonest steward,” or, in view of Jesus’ praise of the steward in 16:8,9, probably doing more justice to the text: “The shrewd steward.”

The kind of analysis Nord offers is helpful. And this kind of analysis can be applied to other paratextual elements. When paratext is approached in such a systematic and well-considered way, this will facilitate a systematic use of paratext in such a way that the intended addressees of the translation are served and the translation fulfills its intended function.

In dealing with paratext in Bible translations that is only for a very small part an element of the source text and mainly originating from translator and editor, skopos theory offers a helpful approach. It makes it possible to have a theoretical foundation for translation that allows translators to justify their decisions in order to make others (translators, readers, publishers) understand what was done and why.\textsuperscript{157}

\textsuperscript{155} “Jesus, das Ziel der Geschichte Israels” (Die Gute Nachricht, 1982).


\textsuperscript{157} Compare Nord, Translation as a Purposeful Activity, 91ff.
4.7 Conclusion: skopos theory applied to paratext in Bibles

In this section I will summarize the findings of the previous sections of this chapter. In the next section I will try to apply them into a model for a translation project that includes careful handling of paratextual features.

Paratext is added to a text in order to transform it into a publication. Paratext is added to guide the perception of the reader of the text. In the case of a translation of the Bible, almost all paratext is added by the translator and/or editor. These two facts make it opportune when deciding about the paratextual elements to be added to a translation, to look for help from an approach to translation that focuses on the target side. Skopos theory is such an approach.

Skopos theory considers translation a specific form of human action. It is an intentional, interpersonal, partly verbal intercultural interaction based on a source text. Attention is given to the communicative situation of the source text and to the communicative situation of the target text. The functions of source text and target text are not necessarily equal; that depends on the intention that one has to produce the translation: the intended function of the translation, its skopos. There are many possible functions, skopoi.

Translators normally do not work on their own account; they are commissioned to work on a translation. The commission, or translation brief, should contain detailed information about the goal of the translation, and the conditions to fulfill the task. It can also contain details about the source for the translation, the method of translation and other elements. Important elements are the division of interpretative labour and the degree of interference from the source text (De Vries). The specification of some elements can be left out of the commission and left to the responsibility of the expert. The commission should be
the result of consultation between the commissioner and the translator (as expert in translation). From the translator loyalty is expected (Nord).

Used in Bible translation, skopos theory helps to have a theoretical foundation for translation that allows translators to take systematically purposeful decisions and to justify their decisions in order to make others (translators, readers, publishers) understand what was done and why. The central element in the decisions will be the skopos that is established for the translation. The fidelity of a translation is measured in terms of complying with its skopos (Vermeer).

Bible translation can have many functions: when it is the first translation in a language of which most of its speakers are monolingual, it often will have a missionary function. In situations with established churches in the language area, the functions can multiply; function specialization inevitably takes place (De Vries). Possible functions are: liturgical and church function, study function, common language function, secular literary-cultural functions, and private reading functions.

The close interrelatedness of a translation and its paratext in serving the skopos of a translation requires that the treatment of paratext be dealt with in the translation commission and that the paratext is prepared at the same time as the translation. Decisions about the paratextual elements that are added to the translation depend from the skopos of the translation. In case there is more than one edition of a translation prepared, one should speak of the skopos of each edition. Each skopos might require its own paratextual features.

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158 The skopos of an edition might influence the translation in the edition and require adaptation. For example, in Catholic editions the order of books in the Old Testament sometimes is changed. In the case of an edition of the Dutch Nieuwe Bijbelvertaling, an edition of the Old Testament as the Tanach for a Jewish audience, the personal name of God in the translation was given as ‘YHWH’ instead of ‘HEER’ as in all other editions.
4.8 Elements for a model of a Bible translation project including attention for paratext

In this section a I will describe a number of elements of a the organization of a translation project that are important to ensure a good use of paratext.

4.8.1 The commission

An influential description of the organization of translation projects has been the one in *The Theory and Practice of Translation* by Nida and Taber.\(^{159}\) They gave a sample set of “Principles of Translation” that were needed for translators and reviewers in order to guide them in their work. This set needed to be adapted under supervision of a translation consultant to the specific needs of the language of the project.\(^ {160}\) The four important areas covered in the principles were: text, exegesis, form of language and supplementary features.

In Nida and Taber’s description of the organization of a translation project, the role of the Christian community is limited. It is the Bible Society that evaluates the need for a translation, based on three aspects: size and role of the language, distribution potential and Christian opportunity; this last aspect includes the interest and motivation of the Christian community. They emphasize that the Christian community should be involved in the translation project by the Bible Society, by proposing candidate translators and reviewers. The selection from these candidates is made by the expertise of the Bible Society.\(^ {161}\) Besides the translators and reviewers, there should be a consultative group, representing the various parts of the Christian community. This group receives drafts at a late stage of development and

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\(^{160}\) Nida and Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, 180f.

\(^{161}\) Nida and Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, 176-179.
should give their written reaction individually. All final decisions about the translation should be made by the translators.\textsuperscript{162}

The challenge in such an approach in which the translating agency has the authority over all decisions, is to have a group of reviewers and a representative consultative group that expresses well the interests and perception of the Christian community with regard to the translation, besides the needed willingness among the translators to take the feedback from these groups serious. This has proved to be a weakness in translation projects, resulting in Bible translations that were only limitedly distributed and remained unsold. Various authors mention a number of reasons for this: insufficiently taking into account the socio-linguistic situation of the language, insufficient involvement of the community in taking decisions, for example in establishing the orthography of a language, in the choice of dialect for translation, or in translating key-terms, insufficient quality of the translation or a translation that does not meet the demands of the Christian community, lack of understanding of the translation principles by the community.\textsuperscript{163}

Applying a \textit{skopos} approach for a translation project helps to identify three ‘partners’ in the translation process: the commissioner, the translator and the source text including its communicative setting.

I limit myself here to Bible Societies, who intend to serve the churches. In the case of a Bible translation, either the churches or the Bible Society are the initiator. The churches normally play the role of commissioner, even if the Bible Society employs the translator(s). The Bible Society, as translating agency, brings in the expertise in translation. The churches

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{162}] Nida and Taber, The Theory and Practice of Translation, 180, 185f.
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are the ones that need the translation; their members will use the translation. This means that
the churches should play a crucial role in the preparation of the commission. They should
bring in information about the addressees of the translation, time, place, preferred
medium/media and the function(s) of the translation. Their expectations should be clear. The
experts of the Bible Society should help here to get the relevant information, e.g. language
situation, dialectal variation, socio-linguistic situation, literacy rate in the language, (variation
in) church traditions, etc. With assistance of the experts, the churches should formulate the
commission, including the *skopos* of the translation: addressees, function(s). The commission
should give directions, even including ideas about the form of publication, but should not be
detailed and technical. The experts of the Bible Society will have their input with regard to the
viability of the translation in view of the details given by the commissioner. Consultation and
negotiation with respect for the other’s position are important elements in reaching a viable
commission. The translator has a double loyalty here: loyalty towards the commissioner and
loyalty towards the third ‘partner’ in the process: the source text in its original communicative
setting.

4.8.2 *The Manual of translation*

The translators elaborate the commission into a Manual or set of Translation Principles, which
outline how the commission is put into practice. They should arguably be derived from the
commission. Here the technical elements find their place, like how to deal with long
sentences, degree of inference, treatment of implicit information, standardization of names
and terms, just to name a few.

It is here that the paratextual features need to be dealt with. Once the addressees of the
translation are defined, and the function(s) of the translation has been defined, the method of
translation can be worked out in detail. An important element is the division of interpretative
labour. Then the translators can work out what paratextual features are needed, guided by the functions paratext can have, as described in chapter 2.5: presentation, legibility, disclosure and informative function. Translators normally are no experts in the areas of presentation and legibility, but preliminary decisions should be made in these areas by the publishing department with input from the translators. In other areas, translators can use their own expertise to elaborate the commission. For example to serve the function of disclosure, preliminary decisions can be made about the use of (multiple layers of) headings, the handling of versification issues, the indexes to prepare, etc. For paratextual elements that have an informative function, they can decide what kind of information needs to be provided and in which way. To give an example, should information be given to justify decisions regarding textual problems in the source text? And if so, in what way: in footnotes or in the back section, in detail or only in general terms?

4.8.3  Review and testing procedures

Important moments to verify if the translation complies with its skopos are the moments of review and testing of the translation. Review can take various forms:

- a committee of experts with regard to the source text/culture/language or the target culture/language reviews the draft translation in a certain stage and its feedback is processed by the translators. The committee can also be consulted, for example in standardization issues and the translation of key terms.

- A consultative group, consisting of leaders from the Christian community that receives copies of the translation in a certain stage and has the opportunity to give its feedback. In this procedure it is important that the paratextual elements are presented together with the text as a unity. This is important since paratextual elements are added to serve the addressees.
The text should preferably be presented to these groups in the layout that is preliminary determined for the translation. That is especially important because it enables research to find out if the paratext fulfils the function(s) that were intended for it.

Testing in this area has not much done with regard to Bible editions. Many projects, especially projects with SIL involvement do some field testing for comprehension, which has as its main goal “to determine if the hearer or reader’s understanding of the meaning matches the meaning and clarity of the original as the translator understands it.” But testing to verify if the paratextual features serve their intended function(s) is hardly ever done. It is important though, to verify if the paratext that serve the function of presenting the text is adequate. As Wendland and Louw state, “translators should take special care in evaluating the actual competence of readers for whom they are translating before they decide on the level of sophistication to be applied in formatting a text. Overdoing the lay-out of a text is as undesirable as neglecting the impact that graphic design has on the reader.”

They report a study of the perception of a large varied group with regard to the formats of two Bible translations published in Afrikaans (1933 and 1986). They found out that preferences and understanding of formatting features varied in relation to level of education. Higher educated people preferred for example right justification. Most skilled readers interpreted larger verse numbers introducing paragraphs as marking passages with more significance, less skilled readers did not even notice the difference in size of verse numbers. The distinction in formatting of prose and poetry was appreciated; less educated people said they could now see, for example in Isaiah, where the Lord spoke (poetry) and where the

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165 Wendland and Louw, *Graphic Design and Bible Reading*, 30. Note that they speak here of the translators!
prophet spoke. Others tended to ignore poetry as not really important as it served more to
please emotions then to speak words of truth.\footnote{166}

According to Louw and Wendland the variation in response shows two things: in the
first place it is important to know who the addressees of the translation are. In the second
place, they should be informed about the nature and purpose of the format. This can be done
by providing information in for example the Preface, or by the Churches. An example of that
strategy gives Ralph Hill, who reports about the Adioukrou project in Ivory Coast. He shows
that people with little education learned to use and appreciate footnotes in a couple of minutes
and continued to use them. As he states, “the ability to make use of any supplemental helps is
of course an acquired skill.”\footnote{167}

4.8.4 Research

Besides a systematic approach in these standard elements in the procedures of a Bible
translation project, I want to suggest more research in the area of graphic design of the Bible.
Wendland and Louw wrote in 1993 their study on Graphic Design and Bible Reading. Their
focus in this study was to study typographical resources that could serve to format the
discourse framework of the Biblical texts, as the sub-title of their book indicates: Exploratory
Studies in the Typographical Representation of the Text of Scripture in Translation.

More important than this experimental study would be a study of the typographical
resources available to effectively format the paratextual features according to their respective
functions and the effects of format on use of the features and perception of the text.

\footnote{166}{The study was done by Johannes Louw and Herman du Toit of the University of Zululand; see Wendland and
Louw, Graphic Design and Bible Reading, 35f.}

\footnote{167}{Ralph Hill, Contextual Adjustment Strategies and Bible Translation, unpublished ms, 2004.}
5. PARATEXT IN TWO BENINESE BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

In this chapter I will describe the two Bible translation project in Benin (West Africa) that I serve as coordinator/exegete. I chose to use these two projects since they are considerably different: one project is in its final stage, the other started recently. As such they probably reflect some of the developments and variety among the translation projects. In this chapter I will first give an overview of the translation context of both projects and the way they deal with paratextual features. Then I will describe the policy of the Bible Societies in the region with regard to paratextual features. This is followed by an evaluation in which I give some recommendations for the use of paratext in a context like the one in Benin.

5.1 Bible translation in Benin (West Africa)

5.1.1 Bible translation

According to Mojola, the history of Bible translation in Africa can be divided in three periods: The Biblical and early church era, the missionary era and the modern era.\(^{168}\) This corresponds more or less to the distinction in the history of translation in Africa in general between precolonial, colonial and postcolonial era.\(^{169}\) In the first period there was no Bible translation activity in sub-Saharan Africa. The second period saw in the 17\(^{th}\) century some incidental translation work, for example into the language of Alladah in what is nowadays the country of


Bénin. The era really started in the 19th century with many translations by missionaries, sometimes by African Christians. In Benin there was in this period some translation done by African Christians associated with the Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society: the Gospel of Mark was published in Mina in 1920; the translation of the Bible in Gun started with the translation of Gospels in the 1880’s, and was finished in 1923 with help from missionaries. Like many other translations in Africa, these were published by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The modern era coincides with the era of independence of nations and churches. National Bible Societies were founded (in Benin in 1983), and SIL started work in a number of African countries (including Benin in 1985). In Benin Bible translation projects were also started by missionaries of SIM (Société Internationale Missionnaire/Serving in Missions; working in Benin since 1946). Projects organized by these three organizations resulted in the publication of New Testaments in seven languages between 1977 and 2004, of which languages four also received in this period a complete Bible (Old and New Testament). The Guiding Principles enabled cooperation of the Bible Societies and the Roman Catholic Church in Bible translation; the first project in which there is official cooperation in Benin is the Aja project.

Nowadays the Bible Society of Benin is involved in translation projects in three languages, Fon, Gun and Aja, and serves sometimes as publisher of translations done by

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170 This is one of the Gbe languages, maybe Fon. The translation of common prayers, the creed and a brief catechism in this language, published in 1658 in Madrid as Doctrina Christiana, constitutes the first publication in a West African language; see Robin Law, ‘Religion, trade and politics on the Slave Coast: Roman Catholic missions in Allada and Whydah in the seventeenth century’, in Journal of Religion in Africa XX1:1 (1991), 48.


others. SIL has work going on in five languages. SIL also gives support to the Fon project and cooperates in the Aja project. SIM has projects in five languages.\textsuperscript{173}

5.1.2 Benin: Context of translation

Benin (until 1976 known as Dahomey) is a relatively small nation (112.620 km\(^2\)) bordering Nigeria and Togo on the coast of West Africa. It has a population of 7.8 million.\textsuperscript{174} 45\% of the population is under the age of 15. A French colony since 1872, it gained in 1960 independence. From 1972-1989 it had a government based on Marxist-Leninist principles. In 1990 there was a peaceful transition to a representative democracy. Politically it is a stable country.

More than fifty different languages are spoken in the country; a number of these are also spoken in neighbouring countries. Most of the languages pertain to one of four language groups: Ede, Gur, Kwa and Gbe. The Fon and Aja languages belong to the Gbe-cluster of languages (‘gbe’ means ‘language’) that extends in the coastal area from The Volta region in Ghana, Togo and Benin up to the border region with Nigeria. There are only a few speakers of Fon living outside Benin, Aja is also spoken in Togo; some 25\% of the Aja live in Togo.

French is the official language of administration, also used in the education system. Less than 25\% of the population has a good command of French.\textsuperscript{175} The government granted six national languages a special status, which means that they are used by regional authorities and actively supported, for example by developing post-literacy material in these languages. Fon


\textsuperscript{175} According to data of the ‘Haut Conseil de la Francophonie’ given by Médard Dominique Bada in ‘Développement des langues béninoises: mythe ou réalité?’ in \textit{West African Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistic Teachers} Vol. 2:2 (2002), 33, almost 75\% of the population of Benin does not have a minimal level of French (SMIC, Seuil Minimal Individuel de Competence).
and Aja are among these six. Fon is the mother tongue of about 25% of the population, Aja of 10%. Fon is in use as a language of wider communication, especially in the south of Benin. Fon is a fairly well described language with published grammars and dictionaries; Aja is less developed in this respect. The literacy rate in Benin is about 34% (men 46%, women 22%).

Benin is among the poorest countries; on the list for Human Development Index it is 162nd of 177, on the list of Human Poverty Index it is 95th of 103. 95% of the economy is informal. There is some economic growth.

Benin is known in the world as the ‘cradle of voodoo’. ‘Vodun’ is a word in the Fon language, referring to the deities of the pantheon in then traditional religion. Missionary efforts did not have success until after the abolition of the slave trade. Nowadays up to half of the population still is adhering to these ancestral religious practices. Up to a third of the population is Christian, some 75% of them belonging to the Roman Catholic Church, others to numerous protestant and evangelical churches. The Islam is the religion of roughly 20% of the population, mainly in the north.

Most churches use national languages in their services, in some cases French. Many churches have oral translation in their services to another language. Where a translation in the local language is available, it is often used, although not always. When such a translation is not available, a French version is used (most often Segond), or a translation in a related

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176 Bada, ‘Développement des langues béninoises: mythe ou réalité?’, 37ff gives an overview of the Beninese government policy with regard to the national languages.

177 Grammars and dictionaries of Fon published in the last 15 years: Hildegard Höftmann, *Grammatik des Fon* (Leipzig/Berlin/München : Langenscheidt Verlag Enzyklopädie, 1993; Claire Lefebvre and Anne-Marie Brousseau, *A Grammar of Fongbé* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2002); J. Rassinoux, *Dictionnaire Français-Fon* (Cotonou : Société des Missions Africaines, 2000); B. Segurola and J. Rassinoux, *Dictionnaire Fon-Français* (Cotonou : Société des Missions Africaines, 2000); Hildegard Höftmann, *Dictionnaire Fon-Français, avec une esquisse grammaticale* (Köl: Rüdiger Koppe Verlag, 2003). Due to linguistic and economic reasons, only the publications of Rassinoux and Segurola are widely accessible and used in Benin. There are no comparable publications for the Aja language.

178 Based on the definition: age 15 and over can read and write.
language. That is the case in the Aja region where besides Segond a translation (originally dating from the early 20th century) into Ewe (a neighbouring Gbe language) predominantly is used in churches as the source for oral translation. The Catholic churches often have their lectionaries translated into the local language. Besides those, they use catholic French Bible translations like the Bible de Jérusalen, Bible de Maredsous and the Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible as the source for oral translation.

5.2 The Fon Bible Translation project

5.2.1 Description of the Fon project

This project was initiated by the Bible Society. It was organized with help from SIL who provided in the course of time several expatriate coordinators-exegete. Initially six translators, selected in a seminar from candidates proposed by their churches, started in 1984 work on the translation of the New Testament, supervised by a UBS translation consultant. The translators were supported by their respective churches; after 1999 only one translator continued to be supported by his church, the others got employed by the Bible Society. The translators had secondary school level, two with a few years of university training. They received training through several workshops organized by SIL or UBS. One translator received later on a master’s degree in linguistics in France and left afterwards to coordinate a translation project in a related language. Currently he is working on a doctoral thesis as part of his preparation to become a linguistic consultant. Another translator followed two courses in Hebrew in Jerusalem when the team was working on the translation of the Old Testament.

The content of this section is based on information I received from the translators and from the former exegete for the project, Hans Hoddenbagh, the current director of Wycliffe Bible Translators the Netherlands, and additionally, my own experience in the project from 1998-2006.
The translation into Fon was made with help of French translations, notably Segond and Français Courant. After an initial draft by one of the translators, the translation passed through a team review, and was subsequently checked by the coordinator-exegete. The result was sent to a group of reviewers that sent their comments back. These comments were processed. The final text was checked by a UBS translation consultant and approved for publication.

After the New Testament translation was finished in 1992, the team continued with the translation of the Old Testament, now only with a part-time coordinator-exegete on long distance who visited the project at least once a year. At the end of 1998 I was assigned through SIL to the project. Since then I worked with the team from my home in the Netherlands through regular visits and e-mail contact.

The New Testament was published in 1993. It is regularly reprinted (until 2005 70,000 copies were sold) and it is used by many churches. Before the New Testament was published, there were no portions of the translation published, except for a selection of passages in six so-called New Reader portions in 1996. One of the translators prepared a ‘syllabaire’ in collaboration with ‘la Direction d’Alphabétisation’ and an SIL linguistic consultant; this was published in 1992 and well received.

Together with the UBS consultant the team prepared in 1996 a transition primer, for people who are literate in French and want to learn to read Fon. This booklet has been revised and expanded in consultation with various government institutions and has been published officially in 2006. One of the target audiences for this publication is the group of interpreters in church services who sometimes feel more comfortable in giving an oral

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180 La Sainte Bible (Nouvelle Version Segond Révisée, 1978).

translation of a French translation of a Bible passage than in reading it aloud from the Fon translation.

Due to lack of funds, there has not been involvement of reviewers in large part of the Old Testament translation, nor were there publications of portions except for a little one containing the book of Ruth in 2004.

The translation of the Old Testament has been finished and currently the team is involved in the final corrections and the preparation of paratextual additions.

There has not been a formal involvement of the Roman Catholic Church, although there were a few reviewers for the New Testament from this church and there were good relations with the hierarchy. Since 2000 contact about a possible cooperation in finishing and publishing the Bible slowly developed; that would imply the publication of the Bible in two editions, one with and one without the so-called deuterocanonical books. Such cooperation would be based on the Guidelines for Interconfessional Cooperation in Translating the Bible. The Roman Catholic Church has translations of its lectionaries for use in the liturgy. Outside church services, the New Testament published by the Bible Society is well used.

The Fon project has no explicit description of its *skopos*, translation principles or methods. Much has been done intuitively. When the project started, most new translations projects at that time without much questioning aimed at a dynamic- or functional-equivalent translation. The Fon project was no exception. François Courant provided a model.

In the initial stage much attention was given in workshops on selecting appropriate translations of key terms that were acceptable to the major churches.

The Fon translation will be the first translation that is available in the language, aimed at a wide public. One could speak of function specialization, not with regard to other translations into Fon, but with regard to translations in other languages. Pastors in churches nowadays use Bibles in French and English, sometimes study Bibles with extensive paratext,
in preparing their sermons and teaching; they were trained in the use of these resources. When the New Testament in Fon was published, they continued to use these resources, since it did not provide comparable additions.

5.2.2 Paratext in the Fon translation

The New Testament, published in 1993, has the following paratextual features:

- Size 18.5 x 11.5 cm, page size 18 x 11 cm, and printing area 15.8 x 8.7 cm.
- Black hard cover, the title *ALÉNUWEMA Yọ́Yọ́* (‘New Testament’) in gold on the cover and vertically on the spine.
- 530 pages, including a 4 pages glossary and two maps.
- Single column with full justification (except for poetry), 40 lines per page, an average of 58/59 characters (17 words) per line, type size 9 pts.
- Including title page and a page with bibliographic information, a one-page preface and an index that also includes the abbreviation of each book name.
- Each book starts with a full book title, the text is divided in sections and paragraphs. Sections are marked by a section title in bold type, paragraphs by a three-space indent; the number of the first verse of each paragraph is larger than the other verse numbers.
- There are running heads on top of each page indicating book name and chapter number(s).
- There are references to parallel passages underneath the section titles, between brackets, in italic.
- The publication contains a total of 26 illustrations chosen from the series by Horace Knowles.
According to the translators and the exegete of that time, not adding paratextual features like introductions or footnotes to the translation of the New Testament was a deliberate decision based on two reasons: an advice of the translation consultant to not apply footnotes and lack of time; also, it was not really customary at the time. The translators were not consulted with regard to formatting features (typography, font, font size, etc.).

When we started discussing in 2000 what needed to be done before finish the project, the translators expressed a need for additional paratextual features. In this they had their audience in mind, and also what they thought to be characteristics of a Bible translation. Based on a discussion of possible paratextual features, we decided to expand the following items of the features in the New Testament publication: the index with an alphabetical index, additional maps for the Old Testament, illustrations and glossary entries; and to add the following items: a general introduction to the Bible, introductions to all the individual books, footnotes, a system of cross-references and a chronological outline.

Working on some of these features for a book a long time after finishing the translation of that book, turned out to be complicated. For example, for an introduction one has to make sure that the introduction corresponds in terminology and outline of content with the translation and the division of the text. This is much easier to accomplish when the introduction is made in combination with the translation of the book. For footnotes, one has to go over the translation again to see where a footnote would be helpful. And one should decide which type of information to be included in the footnotes. For example, after we decided to use footnotes, we kept during our checking sessions of the remainder of the Old Testament track of all instances where we deviated from the masoretic text in order to place a corresponding footnote to justify our choice. When a translation consultant checked the last book of the Old Testament, he advised us strongly to not include textual footnotes since those would not serve the audience but rather confuse them and create doubt. When reconsidering
the use of this type of footnotes, we realized these most textual footnotes would not serve our audience, so we had to agree. We also realized that we had not clearly defined the function(s) of the footnotes and of the other features. The strategy was adjusted and in the case of the footnotes the team continued with the preparation of a sample set of footnotes for a couple of books that will be reviewed before continuing.

Another example is the glossary. There was a small glossary made for the New Testament, but during work on the Old Testament there was not systematically kept a list of list glossary entries. Fortunately, the team has translated the key terms that might be treated in the glossary in a consistent way, but in order to make the glossary useful for the readers, callouts should be placed at relevant places in the text of the translation, which is a time consuming activity.

5.3 The Aja Bible translation project

5.3.1 Description of the Aja project

The Aja project started officially in November 2003 after long preparations. Part of the preparations was a socio-linguistic survey by SIL conducted in 1996, and linguistic work, notably aiming at standardizing the orthography for the Aja language. The socio-linguistic survey made the need for a Bible translation evident and helped to provide data for the choice of dialect for translation. In 2002 the partners in the translation project, the Bible Society, SIL and a committee of Aja churches, signed an official ‘Protocol of Agreement.’ One could consider this protocol a kind of commission, detailing the responsibilities of each partner and of the people working in the project. There was nothing mentioned however about the

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183 Protocole d’Accord entre les Partenaires du Project de Traduction de la Bible en Ajagbe (PTBA), signed September 7, 2002 in Tado (Togo).
character of the translation. The document only stipulated that the coordinator of the project should develop the Translation Principles for the project in cooperation with the translators and in consultation with the UBS translation consultant.

The team started with three translators, two of them university graduates, the third still studying, and me as coordinator/exegete. The project could count on SIL’s Aja team for training and research. Unfortunately, one of the translators had to leave the project because of an urgent call from his church; so far he has not been replaced due to lack of funds. The translators participate regularly in training workshops for translators and might receive advanced training in the future.

The team started working with a concept set of Translation Principles, adapted by me from a document prepared by UBS translation consultant Dr John Ellington. That document was based on books of Nida and Taber and Barnwell. The concept is divided into six sections, dealing with: (1) text and interpretation, (2) the receptor language, (3) functional equivalence, (4) technical details, (5) content and presentation and (6) organization and structure. Thus the document is intended to ensure that all important issues are covered in the Translation Principles. For all items in the various sections the document provides two or more options that show various translation approaches, from literal to functional equivalent; for each item the first option reflects a functional equivalent approach. When the project started, the document had for many items still multiple options; in those cases, the provisional choice was to follow the first option.

Besides the Translation Principles a Manual is developed that elaborates many of the principles so as to guide the translation team in its daily work. It includes working procedures, planning, orthography rules, rules for transliterating/standardizing names, lists of

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185 *Manuel de travail pour le Projet de Traduction de la Bible en Ajagbe.*
standardized names and key terms, regulations for the reviewers committee, etc. As the project develops, the Manual grow

The translators were initially trained using the book of Barnwell, which is favoring a functional equivalent approach, an obvious choice in the case of the Aja project aiming at a first translation in the language. Barnwell gives some attention to a number of paratextual features to provide background information and a detailed discussion of section titles.

To date the team worked on the text of the translation of nine different books from both Old and New Testament in various stages. A review committee is expected to start next year. The reviewers will be selected based on expertise in the language, dialect, sex, age, geographical distribution and church adherence. Besides the review committee, the text of all books in a pre-final stage will be sent to a number of church officials. A field-testing program is also planned.

The team intends to have a number of portions published in the course of time from both the Old and New Testament. That will serve multiple purposes: provide the Aja with Bible text in their mother tongue, promote the translation project, create a possibility to give and receive feedback on the translation, and enhance acceptance of the Bible to be published.

5.3.2 Paratext in the Aja translation

During their work on the various books the Aja translators kept a list of key terms to be standardized and a list of possible glossary items. During the checking sessions with the teams the discussion of specific verses of passages gave often rise to discussion about the need for paratextual features as part of the translation, and also their usefulness with regard to the

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187 Barnwell, Manuel de traduction biblique, Chapter 16.

188 Barnwell, Manuel de traduction biblique, Chapter 32.
audience. Now after three years of working experience, the team has made the first decisions with regard to adding paratextual features based on a clearer understanding of the needs and expectations of their audience. The Translation Principles are being revised accordingly into a second version.

The primary audience for the translation is defined as all Aja between 15-45 years. That means that the translators aim at a clear and natural translation, avoiding terminology that is only known by churchgoers. For the paratext this description of the audience means that the audience will be served by providing a good introduction to the Bible as the first item in the published Bible and by an introduction to each individual book.

Since the literacy rate among the Aja is probably under the national estimate of 34% (men 46%, women 22%), more people will listen to the translation than actually read it. This has in some cases consequences for the distribution of information between the text and paratext. For example, in contexts where the meaning of a name plays a role in the text, this meaning is more likely made explicit in the text than explained in a footnote. Footnotes will be used to provide information that helps to understand (or prevents misunderstanding) the text. Textual footnotes will only be provided if really necessary, either for understanding the text or to explain the difference with major translations. There might be a place for that kind of technical information in a justification of the translation in the back section. In the meantime, this information is kept in a log file of each book in which textual issues, exegetical/translational decisions, decisions about standardization and glossary items are registered. A glossary is considered necessary, with callouts in the text. Work on that will start with the entries that came up during work on the first books that are now in an advanced stage. Illustrations might be provided that provide background information; it has not been

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189 Since –as mentioned– the old Ewe translation is often used in churches, the religious vocabulary of Christians contains loanwords from Ewe that are not (well) known by other Aja.
decided yet whether the illustrations will be limited to the glossary. Some maps will be included.

5.4 UBS and SIL guidelines with regard to paratext

As the UBS' Africa Area Publishing Manual states, "because of financial constrictions and the overwhelming need for Bibles and New Testaments, it has become necessary to standardize the various sizes of these books and their layouts."  Such a policy exists also within other Bible publishing agencies like the International Bible Society (IBS) and The Bible League (TBL). Unfortunately, I was not able to get access to the specific standard specifications of the UBS Africa Area. For the current purpose it serves to note that they follow more or less the same pattern as described in SIL's Publication Guidelines, which means that the number of paratextual features is limited (SIL's Publication Guidelines mention: a preface, Bible book introductions, parallel passage references, cross-references, footnotes, glossary and topical index, illustrations and maps), and that limitations are set for the page size, the size of the typeface for the body text, the length of the preface and the introductions to individual Bible books, the length of a glossary and a topical index, and the number of illustrations and maps.

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191 See Barnwell, 'Supplementary Helps in Scripture Publications'. When translations that are made in SIL projects are not published by a national Bible Society, they are normally published through one of these two agencies; see also Robert Critchfield (Ed.), Publication Guidelines For New Testaments, Portions, and Complete Bibles (updated and revised by Alan Conner) (Dallas: SIL International, September 2005).

192 They are described in the Africa Area Production Manual (Nairobi: United Bible Societies, 1992).

193 Critchfield, Publication Guidelines, 2.


195 Barnwell mentions a limitation to 200 footnotes in a New Testament, the Publication Guidelines (written eleven years later) do not limit the number of footnotes anymore, provided the information in the footnotes is specifically relevant for the text on that page, see page 34.
The *Africa Area Publishing Manual* mentions that the publication of portions should be used to test the reaction of the audience. For such a 'Scripture Acceptance Survey' the Manual provides a two-page form that includes questions about the language used (dialect, orthography, key terms, level of language) and a few questions about paratextual features (size of print, general appearance and whether one liked or did not like the illustrations, maps, footnotes, glossary, type of cover, and the colour of cover).

### 5.5 Evaluation

#### 5.5.1 *The procedure*

The description of the way the two beninese projects handle the paratext of their translation proves the usefulness of having a well-thought *skopos* and procedure as outlined in chapter 4.8.

The history of the Fon project shows the difficulties that arise when the goal with regard to paratextual features is changed in a late stage and when one has not a clear idea of the function of the various items.

Having a set of Translation Principles as the Aja project does, helps to develop the thoughts about paratextual features in a systematic way, based on the functions of the features and their compatibility with the needs of the audience of the translation. The advantage of developing the paratextual features together with the text of the translation is that it is possible to present these together with the text of the translation to the reviewers and in the publication of (trial) portions.

The fact that the Bible Society published only a few new reader portions for the Fon project before the New Testament was published and afterwards only the book of Ruth is

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196 *Africa Area Publishing Manual*, Form SAS.
unfortunate. On the other hand, from the fact that the New Testament is well sold and used one might conclude that the paratextual features as presented in that publication are acceptable for the audience, although no formal research has been conducted. However, one does not know whether this is an acceptance because of lack of alternative.

5.5.2 Publishing limitations

Since I had no access to the standard specifications of the UBS Africa Area for publications, I limit myself to some general observations on publishing limitations.

It seems reasonable to have a standard size and page layout. But it would be interesting to know whether research has been done with regard to the legibility of this layout. For example, the African Bible publications that I have consulted have a body type that ranges between 8 and 11 points size, which is comparable to the European Bibles. In a context with audiences that include a fair amount of new literates and less access to visual aids for those that have sight problems, that seems at least remarkable.

Setting limitations on paratextual features like illustrations, footnotes and length of a glossary easily conflicts with the view presented in chapter 4 that text and paratext in a translation are closely interrelated. Appellations like 'supplementary features' and 'supplementary helps' are misleading in the sense that they suggest that these features can be optionally added to a text that is already complete in itself. If one wants to criticize the number of occurrences of a certain paratextual feature, one should instead criticize the skopos of a translation and the methodology that is developed accordingly to realize a translation that fulfills that skopos. Paratext that demonstrably complies with the skopos should be considered part of the translation. Paratext that cannot be shown to comply with the skopos can be justly criticized and should be omitted.
When talking about limitations one should also look at the function of paratextual features. For example, one can more easily set a limitation on the number of illustrations that fulfill merely a function in presenting of a book by adding to the esthetic value and attractiveness than to illustrations that have an informative function in providing background information.\textsuperscript{197} That kind of illustrations has a function that equals that of many footnotes.

The paratextual features that are not printed on the same page as the text they relate to, but in a separate section, like a glossary and a topical index, seem more 'optional' and liable to limitations. But here should one be careful as well: A glossary is in fact an alphabetically on keywords arranged set of footnotes turned into endnotes.\textsuperscript{198} And whether a topical index is optional or not, depends from the \textit{skopos}; it is easier to imagine a topical index necessary based on a \textit{skopos} for a translation in an African context where people have no or limited access to other resources besides their Bible then in a Western context.

5.5.3 \textit{Publications and research}

The \textit{Africa Area Publishing Manual} has some good observations on the importance of doing preliminary publication research:

Little research has been done in the past to determine ahead of time which kind of publication will not only be acceptable, but be most effective for the intended readership. Although the range of options in the field of publication may be limited due to lack of resources, it should not be assumed that all situations are alike. The researcher should keep an open mind. Rather than being predisposed to the production of one particular product presented in a standard format, he should try to assess what the intended readers expect to receive in their hands as the finished publication. UBS may not be able to publish exactly what the readership is in need of, but if the product is going to be entirely different from what is expected, there is a good chance that the publication will have a lukewarm reception, if not a negative one. Sales may be low, and even fundraising in the area where the publication was distributed may suffer. This turn of events would be counterproductive: what was saved on the production was clearly lost elsewhere. If the audience has been tested and the expectations of the intended readership established, it will be up to the Production department, in close

\textsuperscript{197} For the various functions that illustrations can have, see item 37 of the inventory in chapter 3.2.

\textsuperscript{198} See item 40 of the inventory in chapter 3.2.
cooperation with the CEO and the TO, to determine the degree to which those expectations can be met.\textsuperscript{199}

The accompanying four-page form 'Target Audience Research' focuses mainly on assessing the linguistic situation and the exact need for a certain type of publication. It has four questions dealing with paratextual issues: (1) which of four sample print sizes is preferred, (2) whether one would like to see the text printed in one or two columns, (3) form what material the cover should be made (hard, plastic or paper), and (4) which colour the cover should have.

When dealing with a project to translate and publish the Bible (or the New Testament), I want to suggest to publish regularly portions in a format and with features within the boundaries proscribed by the \textit{Africa Region Production Manual} of the UBS for Bibles, including all paratextual features. This will enable to test the effectiveness of both text and paratext and adjust these in case that is necessary before the Bible is published. Testing should include research to find out if the paratextual features perform the functions that they are given by the designer.\textsuperscript{200}

Regularly publishing portions also allows for experimenting with and testing newly designed features. For example, missionary or first translations into a language could be supplied with more features with a disclosing function.\textsuperscript{201} Audience expectations about Bible publications play a role of course, but research with help of trial portions could help to find out which paratextual features are needed, adequate and acceptable.

\textsuperscript{199} \textit{Africa Area Publishing Manual}, 60. CEO stands for Chief Executive Officers of national Bible Societies and TO for Translation Officers. About the need for research before Scripture publication, see also Sterk and Muthwi, 'The publishing of Christian scriptures in Africa: sociolinguistic challenges', 160ff.

\textsuperscript{200} See the research by Louw and Du Toit referred to in footnote 167.

\textsuperscript{201} Like the recurring little symbolic pictures in English (1967), see item 37 of the inventory in chapter 3.2.
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