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Resurrecting the Gospel in a Native Environment: An Evaluation of Some Translation Models

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Abstract:

Resurrecting the gospel from the original languages into a new and native environment is not a mere and easy task; it involves making the word of God culturally relevant, original, and appreciable to the indigenes. For God's message to be culturally relevant to the local indigenes such as the Ghanaians and Africans, it demands using an appropriate translation model that will help achieve this purpose. After evaluating intralingual and interlingual model, interpretive theory, skopos theory, formal and dynamic equivalence, and communicative and semantic translation model, it was identified that all the translation models are means to resurrecting the gospel into a new and native environment such as the Ghanaian and African communities, despite some recognised challenges; no translation model is perfect. However, communicative and semantic translation model is the most preferable to resurrect the gospel in a native environment, say the Ghanaian and African environment; communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original text, whereas semantic translation attempts to render, as close as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original text. This method also allows translators to produce the same effect produced by the original text on the receptor language readers, and not an equivalent one which could not be on all levels—the word, sentence, and discourse—at the same time. Bible interpreters and translators have widely accepted Nida's formal and dynamic equivalence in Bible translation, and must now consider engaging with Newmark's communicative and semantic models in translation to help them produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original text.

Keywords: Bible translation, translation models, intralingual and interlingual model, interpretive theory, skopostheory, formal and dynamic equivalence, and communicative and semantic model

1. Introduction

The need to offer the gospel message to people in an environment other than the original hearers, say the African, known as Bible translation—is identified in this article as the resurrecting of the gospel in a native environment—has led to the translation of the Bible into different mother-tongues. The translation of Bible from original languages into a native environment like the African can historically be mapped out to around 260 CE in Alexandria, where Ptolemy II sponsored the translation of the Jewish sacred scriptures from Hebrew to Greek, known as the Septuagint (LXX). This aided the growth of Christianity among Hellenistic groups and also anchored the survival of Christianity in Egypt during the Arab conquest in the seventh century. This brings out the relevance of Bible translation in any new environment the gospel enters, for it gives the gospel message a home to make it understandable and expressible within the culture and worldview of the people. It also makes the indigenes to be conscious for the fact that God speaks their native language. Hence, they see God as their own, and the gospel message as relating to their past as well as emerging from their environment.

Making the gospel message original and native to the new environment while maintaining the original thought of the author to a large extent depends on the type of translation model translators employ. The question is, which translation model Ghanaian and African translators should use in making the gospel message meaningful to the target audience in the new environment while generating the same effect aimed at by the original? This article discusses some available models employed in Bible translation to find out the most preferable one for resurrecting the gospel in a native environment; making the text more native and original to the target audience which will meet their culture and worldview—beliefs, values, and customs—while generating the same effect aimed at by the original.

2. Bible Translation

Asamoah (2020) postulates that Bible translation is a difficult task, for it involves making the word of God culturally relevant, original, and appreciable to the indigenes while rendering it in a manner consistent with the concepts of the original languages—Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. It is not limited to just expressing a text in another language where cross-cultural transfer of information is considered between the source and receptor languages to include ensuring a changed functional, cultural and linguistic conditions while preserving formal aspects as closely as possible. Bible translation is defined as resurrecting the Judeo-Christian scriptures from the original languages—Hebrew, Aramaic and

Greek—used in writing into the new native environment they find themselves to make it become culturally relevant, original, and appreciable to the indigenes (Asamoah and Kuwornu-Adjaottor, 2020). Thus, it is accurately rendering the meaning of biblical texts from their original languages—Hebrew and Aramaic for the Old Testament, and Greek for the New Testament—into the languages of the new native environment.

Bible translation helps users of the Bible such as pastors and teachers of the word to share God's Word in their mother-tongue with people of common language. This assists the local indigenes to be reached with God's word, understood by them, and acted upon in their mother-tongue. It must be stated that the word of God is better understood in a new environment when an appropriate translation model is employed in resurrecting the gospel from the original language into the new environment.

3. Translation Models

What then are translation models? In the perspective of Newmark (1981), he explains translation models as the body of knowledge which is in existence and which will continue to exist concerning the process of translating. He refers translation models or theory of translation as an 'art theory'. Volkova (2014) adds that 'translation models attempt to describe the translation process that ultimately aims to achieve equivalence between the source text and the target text.' According to Newmark (1981), the main concern of a theory of translation is to be able to determine translation methods that are appropriate for the eclectic possible range of text or categories of texts. Additionally, a translation theory provides a framework of principles, controlled hints and guidelines for the translation of texts and criticism of translations, and a background for solving problems. The role of the theory is also to demonstrate the possible translation procedures and provide the various opinions which are for and against the use of a given translation instead of another in a given context. Newmark (1981) asserts that the concern of the theory of translation is the decisions and the choices and not merely the source language (SL) or target language (TL) mechanics.

Intralingual and Interlingual models by Jakobson, Interpretive theory by Jean Delisle which was later developed by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer, *Skopos theory* by Hans Vermeer, Formal and Dynamic equivalence by Eugene Nida, and Communicative and Semantic model by Peter Newmark are the selected translation models for evaluation. My reason for selecting these translation models is their increasing usage in contemporary scholarship for Bible translation in Ghana and Africa, which helps the local indigenes to access God's word in their ordinary language.

3.1. Intralingual and Interlingual

Intralingual and interlingual models of translation were developed by Roman Jakobson.¹ According to him, knowing the meaning of a word does not automatically carry or decree meaning, and that the ability to recognise and comprehend words without even seeing their meaning in the non-lingual world lies in the ambit of the usage of the words (Jakobson, 1966).

Intralingual translation which is also known as 'rewording,' uses more or less synonymous word or resorts to a circumlocution in translation. It deals with using other signs to interpret verbal signs in the same language. This model essentially uses synonyms and similar verbal signs to describe the original word, and does not ensure a complete equivalence. 'Can you describe him?' and 'Can you depict him?' And 'Enlarge your territory' and 'Expand your territory' are some examples. However, there are situations words or idiomatic phrase-words may be fully interpreted only by means of an equivalent combination of code-units (Jakobson, 1966).

With interlingual translation also known as 'translation proper,' Jakobson (1966) explains that it involves interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language with no full equivalence between code-units. To explain it further, in Italy for instance, *ciao* is 'hello' there, but when answering a phone, they say *pronto* which means 'I'm ready to speak to you now.' In this situation, Jakobson will explain that *pronto* which is other language used in Italy is used for interpreting hello instead of *ciao*. To him, translation is about two equal expressions in two dissimilar codes, while messages may serve as adequate interpretations of alien code-units or messages. Another example is the English word 'cheese' which cannot be completely identified with its standard Russian heteronym 'сыр,' [sear] because cottage cheese is a cheese but not a 'сыр'.² Again, the translation of 'cloud of witness' in Hebrews 12:1 as *adansefo munumkum* (lit. witness cloud) in Asante-Twi Bible (1964) does not match its English counterpart which is a collective noun, for translation was done without considering full equivalence between code-units.

3.2. Interpretive Theory

Interpretive theory of translation also known as 'Theory of Sense or Meaning' was prepared earlier by Jean Delisle to handle translation of pragmatic texts of general interest for translator's apprentices. This was later developed by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer. The theory argues for the translator to play the role of an interpreter since speech starts in an individual before it is written. According to Qiang (2013), interpreters should at all times have it that the goal for translating is delivery of meaning, and should desist from accommodating themselves with words form and sentence structures of the ST. Thus, before writing, the intended meaning of the author has to be understood by the translator, which they transmit to the target audience. Translators have to interpret in the original word orders and sentence structures, for all words and structures are as symbols, which show the path, but not the path itself (Qiang, 2013).

¹ Roman Jakobson also proposed a third translation model known as Intersemiotic translation model. But this is not discussed in the work due to its relevance.

² In standard Russian, the food made of pressed curds is called сыр only if ferment is used.

The personnel of the Academy of Translation and Interpretation of Paris have adopted this model of translation which focuses much on interpreting and translating.³ The interpretive model of translation focuses much on the sense or effects of the original text in the RL, rather than the linguistic units in it (Qiang, 2013).

Theory identifies three interrelated phases of translation and interpreting processes which are understanding, deverbalization, and re-expression (Qiang, 2013). Understanding involves getting a reasonable knowledge of the ST and TL, as well as non-linguistic knowledge of the author. It includes knowing the author's surroundings and those of their recipients in order to capture the exact meaning of the text from a combined effort of interpreters' language knowledge and extra language knowledge (encyclopaedic knowledge) (Qiang, 2013). Deverbalization talks about the replacement of words from the original text with their corresponding equivalents in the TL to give a result that the original text cannot produce in the RL. Re-expression involves analogical reasoning to reframe and recreate deverbaised ideas in the TL, using words that are adequate to reproduce the same ideas in translation.

Proponents of interpretive method of translation have it that translation is always possible if the aim of the translator is to communicate the message of the author. But this assertion is objected by some writers from the Linguistic Approach whose impressions are that translation is not always possible. One of such proponents is Cartford (1965), who believes that translation will fail—or untranslatability will occur—since it is impossible to build functionally-relevant features of a situation into a contextual meaning of the TL text. Even if translation could be done in spite of the earlier challenge, Cartford (1965) senses that polysemy and ambiguities can further create difficulties for the translator. But then again, Seleskovitch and Lederer (in Norde, Jonge & Hasselblatt, 2010) argue that translation is possible despite the challenges involved.

3.3. Skopos Theory

Hans Vermeer developed the *Skopos*⁴ theory. This theory was later developed by Christiane Nord. It is a discipline devoted to intercultural communication. *Skopos* theory provides an insight into the nature of translation as a purposeful activity. This theory mainly emphasises the purpose of translation, which defines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed in order to produce a functionally adequate result. It primarily takes into account, the function of the target text (TT) on translating and interpreting, which Vermeer (1996) calls the 'translatum.' Like interpretive theory of translation, this model does not look for equivalence of the source text (ST) for the TT, but an interpretation that will meet the receptor culture (Dan, 2015). In other words, it looks for meaning rather than transfer in the TL. Therefore, in *skopostheorie*, becoming aware why a ST is to be translated and what the function of the TT will be are crucial for the translator. This, according to Esala (2012) enables translators to be empowered and translation agencies to choose from the diverse 'frames of reference,'⁵ priorities, audiences, methods and goals which according to Lynell Zogbo (2007), are among the key elements one should consider in scripture translation work in modern world.

Vermeer (1996) puts forward three rules of *Skopostheorie*, namely, *skopos* rule, coherence rule and fidelity rule, with *skopos* rule being the top-ranking rule for any translation in the *Skopostheorie*. This makes the translation process to be determined by the *skopos* (or purpose), for the overall translational action, which in other words is the end justifies the means. Vermeer explains the *skopos* rule to mean: translating, interpreting or speaking in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function. On coherence rule, he stipulates that a translation should be acceptable in a sense that is coherent with the receivers' situation. That is to say, the TT should be meaningful in the recipient or target culture so that its receivers are able to understand it. With the fidelity rule, Vermeer specifies that the TT should 'bear some kind of relationship with the corresponding ST' since translation as defined is a translational action involving a ST (Dan, 2015).

Esala (2012) believes that the hallmark of *skopos* theory is the production of a guiding document, called the 'translation brief,' which gives a set of instructions or specifications accompanying a translation assignment indicating the target audience (TA) and purpose of a translation. It discusses those involved in the translation project, the end users of the proposed translation and a description of a joint *skopos* for translating. Nord (1997) adds that the translation brief provides explicit or implicit information about the intended text function(s), the target-text addressee(s), the medium over which it will be transmitted, the prospective place and time and, if necessary, motive of production or reception of the text. According to Esala (2012), *Skopostheorie* provides assistances for translators to allow churches to be given a greater voice in the translation process, for they are the people who would use the translated material. He mentions the importance of Likɔɔnl (Komba)⁶NT translation project which was carried out with *Skopostheorie* translation. On his part, Esala (2011) asserts that the translated material serves as a symbol of pride and unity for the Bikɔɔm, as they readily use in both mass and interpersonal media engagements. Adding on, Dan (2015) says that *Skopostheorie* provides simple, plain and easy translated Bibles for every Christian, ranging from the highly educated to the least.

A challenge of this model is the failure to recognise that mother-tongue Bibles are not only found in the hands of local indigenes, but people of other tribes who might have learnt the language of the people in addition to their mother-tongue. Such people are able to pinpoint the loopholes in the translation especially when the concepts of the translated work seem not to agree with works of other languages they could read.

³The school researches into theory and teaching on interpreting and non-literature text. It is also known as 'Paris School'.

⁴The word *skopos* is a Greek word for 'purpose' or 'aim' which Vermeer makes known as a technical term for the purpose of the overall translational action.

⁵They include different choices in exegetical method, stylistic features and the importance of ideological choices in translation that influence translators.

⁶According to Esala, the Komba is a bigger cultural identity tribe in the northern part of Ghana often known as Konkomba. They dispersed largely in northern Ghana and northern Togo. They refer to themselves as Bikɔɔm and more generally Birkupkam. Likɔɔnlis the language they use.

Also, the tendency of going beyond the original of the target audience is high since translators and interpreters would want to meet the needs of the group; they are translating for who would use the material.

3.4. Formal and Dynamic Equivalence

Eugene Nida distinguishes two main words in translation theory; 'formal' and 'dynamic', with formal equivalence been more literal and 'word-for-word' focusing attention on the message itself, in both form and content. Nida (1991) referred to this translation as 'gloss translation,' for it purposes to make the person who reads comprehend as much the SL as possible. It places much emphasis on dogmatic presupposition over the linguistic, socio-cultural and literary considerations. It is a translation that emphasises formal correspondence towards the source message, and tries to preserve as much as possible of its grammatical form, sentence and clause structure in terms of the SL, as much as possible.

Dynamic equivalence, on the other hand, uses 'thought-for-thought' in translation. This principle is on the assumption that any message can be communicated to any audience in any language provided that the most effective form of expression is found. Nida's theory of translation is based on the principle of equivalent effect, which seeks to maintain the relationship between the receiver and message as same as the original receivers and the SL message. While formal equivalence of Bible translation seeks to maintain word-for-word in translation, the dynamic equivalence shifts attention from strictly following the arrangement of words, grammar or syntax to the receptors of the translation.

Since formal equivalence involves conveying of the vocabulary terms and grammatical forms of the ST, in addition to the claim that the original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) of the Bible are the only inspired languages, it allows less room for subjectivity in translating. This makes message to be good-looking to many as it seems to give great reverence to the word of God. However, technically speaking, translators engage in no interpretation in translation as they only stay close to the grammar, syntax, structure, words etc. of the original language to ensure that the Bible retains its originality and inspiration. King James Version (KJV), New English Translation (NET), English Standard Version (ESV) and New American Standard Bible (NASB) are example of such translations.

According to Van der Watt (2002), formal translation reduces the tendency of 'interpretation' since many translations end up interpreting the texts. He further asserts that since interpretation is the responsibility of the exegete and not the translator, this method of translation enables the translator to transcode what is 'said' and not what it 'means'. But, Landa (1993) in an opposing view posits that a translator can also be an interpreter, for they turn into one language the meanings they understand in another language. This makes dynamic equivalence one of the models that meet the needs of the TA.

Dynamic equivalence seeks to project the import of the message as plainly as possible using forms native to the RL. This approach upholds rightness which is determined by the extent to which the average reader for which a translation is intended will likely understand it properly. According to Nida and Taber (1969), it aims 'to make certain that such a person is very unlikely to misunderstand it.'

Dynamic equivalence is concerned primarily with the reply of the addressees and thus emphasises upon realising the closest accepted way to say the same message in modern-day language. Some Bible translations which used this method are the New International Version (NIV), Christian Standard Bible (CSB), and the New Living Translation (NLT). This theory highlights the communicative functions of translating and to avoid misunderstanding.

From Jakobus intralingual translation which essentially uses synonyms and similar verbal signs to describe the original word, dynamic equivalence involves the rewording of expressions and customs not well known today to ensure a complete equivalence. To achieve this, dynamic translators always ask a question while translating, such as 'How would the target audience normally say 'this' (referring to a word or phrase) in their mother-tongue?' This, according to Metzger (1993) enables the ST to be translated into the TL that the response of the TA is essentially like that of the original receptors.' However, Lewis (1991) thinks that where both form and content cannot be preserved in the translation, form is sacrificed in the interest of meaning.

Despite the pluses of Nida's translation model, some critics believe that it has shortfalls. One of such is Umberto (2001) who argues that since some meanings are given by looking for synonyms in other language. Since 'father' in English cannot be a synonym for 'daddy,' Umberto holds that a fruitful translation cannot be fastened in the notion of word equivalences. This is because, on his part, translation does not only involve in translating a text on the basis of the dictionary. Rather, it is done 'on the basis of the whole history of two literatures.' Hence 'translating is not only connected with linguistic competence, but with intertextual, psychological, and narrative competence.' Thus, in translating, the translator is made to go beyond linguistic competence to the cultural spectrum at all times. This makes it become an interpretation of two texts in two different languages, and not a mere comparison between two languages. Umberto (2001) asserts that 'a good translation must generate the same effect aimed at by the original.'

3.5. Communicative and Semantic

'Communicative' and 'Semantic' translation seem to be in line with Nida's receptor-oriented model but departs as a result of the sensation that the success of equivalent effect is 'illusory' and that 'the conflict of loyalties, the gap between emphasis on SL and TL will always remain as the overriding problem in translation theory and practice' (Newmark, 1981). In other words, Newmark distances himself from Nida's equivalence if the text is out of the TL space and time. This model of translation is centred much on equivalence, narrowing the gap, and to make it become applicable in most translations.

Communicative translation attempts to produce a very important transmission of foreign elements into the RL and culture where necessary. It does not look ahead for obscurities and difficulties in reading the text which renders translations in a manner that is not smoother, simpler, dearer, more direct, and more conventional, an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original language. Fengling (2017) explains that communicative translation focuses on the reader, aiming at making the text more native and original.

On the other hand, semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original text (Newmark, 1981). Thus, the translator is constrained by the semantic and syntactic constructions of the RL and therefore attempts to produce the author's precise contextual meaning. It emphasises the contextual meaning of original. Unlike Nida's approach of translation which focuses on equivalence only, the goal of this model is for translators to produce the same effect produced by the original text on the RL readers.

Communicative translation places much concern on the second reader to enable them to understand the translated text in their religio-cultural setting, while semantic translation renders as close as the original culture gives. This corroborates Fengling (2017) assertion that communicative translation addresses itself solely to the second reader and would expect a generous transfer of foreign elements into his own culture as well as his language where necessary. But the translator has to respect and work on the form of the source language text as the only material basis for his work. Semantic translation, on the other hand, remains within the original culture and assists the reader only in its connotations if they constitute the essential human message of the text. This, according to Newmark (1981) makes translation 'more complex, more awkward, more detailed and more concentrated' and tends to over-translate which makes it more specific than the original in transferring nuances of meaning.

Communicative translation focuses much on the context of the cultural and language variety of the receptors, whilst semantic translation is much concerned with the individual transmitting, and normally in contradistinction both to their culture and to their language norms (Newmark, 1981). Communicative translation purposes at pursuing processes of thought instead of the transmitter's intention. It becomes disposed to the direction of specifying more than the original text—over-translation—to include meanings in its search for a single nuance of meaning. However, the accurate flavour and tone of the original text is recreated with semantic translation, since words are considered as 'sacred' for a humble reason being that form and content are one, and not for the reason that they are more significant than the message (Newmark, 1981).

Newmark (1981) asserts that the consideration of some words as 'sacred' makes semantic translation to be more out of time and local space; hence the need for it to be done again over every period of time. This can be demonstrated by the use of archaic and obscure words in ancient versions of the Bible which applied the theory of formal equivalence like the King James Version (KJV). On the other hand, communicative translation is often free from such ancient versions as translations are made to meet the culture and language of the receptors. Newmark, however, cautions that in as much as communicative translation puts much concern to the second reader, translators ought to still not relegate the importance of the SL. Rather, they must appreciate and work on the SL's form, since it serves as the only material source for the work. Since communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original text, translation generally becomes smoother, clearer, simpler, direct, conventional, and conforming to a particular register of language. In so doing, it preserves the loss of meaning for text translated.

The *God's Word Translation* could be said to be an example of such translation, for it looks for meaning from the original language to TL. Using 'meaning-for-meaning' model⁷ for translation, God's Word Translation produces on its readers a naturally close effect to that obtained on the readers of the original language.⁸ This method of translation considers the thought-processes in the words as important as the intention behind the words. "I am *the A and the Z*," says the Lord God, the one who is, the one who was, and the one who is coming, the Almighty" (Revelation 1:8, emphasis added), is an example of the God's Word translation in English. This is to make the text meaningful and original to the reader in their mother-tongue. Since 'A' begins the English alphabet and ends with 'Z', the translators chose them to represent the 'A' (Alpha) and 'Ω' (Omega)—the first and last Greek alphabet. Hence, it is argued that it engages in under-translation since it uses more specific than the original language, to include more meanings in its search for one nuance of meaning. On the other hand, semantic translation at times leads to loss of meaning of the text, since it attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, in other to preserve the author's style, idiolect, and peculiar form of expression in preference to the source or the target language's spirit (Newmark, 1981).

Though, communicative and semantic translations often give the text a lighter, smoother, more idiomatic and easier readable features in the Textual Language (TL), and also decreases the translation unit as it is argued, it takes the text closer to the formal and figurative elements of the original language. It does this by including its sound effects where possible, and makes the text turn out to be idiosyncratic and 'sensitive' (Newmark, 1981). This makes the text to maintain its position and integrity of clauses especially when there is no deviation between the relevant norms of the SL and TL.

Newmark (1981) asserts that communicative and semantic translation may coincide well particularly where the text carries a general and not a message that is culturally-bound, and where the matter is as significant as the manner. This is notably seen in the translation of most essential artistic, philosophical, religious and scientific texts, in the assumption that the target readers are as informed and interested as the initial readers.

⁷Meaning-for-Meaning model of translation or 'Closest equivalence' is similar to *Thought-for-thought* model of translation developed by Eugene Nida.

⁸It seeks to avoid the awkwardness and inaccuracy associated with word-for-word translation, and avoids the loss of meaning and oversimplification associated with thought-for-thought translation.

Adding on, Newmark (1981) posits that neither of the two methods—Communicative and Semantic—could be used separable without referring to the other; they are overlapping bands of methods. According to him, a translation can be more, or less, semantic—more, or less communicative. By familiarising and making the cultural and thought content of the SL to be accessible to the reader, it provides another dimension for semantic translation.

4. Relationship with the Translation Models

Since 'the central problem of translation-practice is that of finding TL equivalents, and the central task of translation theory is that of defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence' (Cartford, 1965), it is important discussing the relationship between these models of translation to know the nature and conditions of translation equivalence for each. This will help to know the type of translation model to use in resurrecting the gospel in a native environment, to assist the local indigenes to access the word of God in their environment while generating the same effect aimed at by the original.

Jakobson theories of equivalence is helpful for translation since messages may serve as adequate interpretations of code units. But, according to Jakobson (1966), there is ordinarily no full equivalence through translation, even apparent synonymy does not yield it. Though, Jakobson translation proper model uses equivalence in translation process from SL to TL, it limits the art of translation which involves interpretation to just using synonyms and similar verbal signs to describe the original words. This makes translation as a discipline be seen as ordinary exercise for those who can provide synonyms for words. But translation goes beyond just finding synonyms of words to understanding the socio-political and cultural worldview of the receptor people. It encompasses translating (and interpreting) to portray the language of the TA in their worldview. This is affirmed by Seleskovitch and Lederer (in Qiang, 2013) who believe that translation focuses much on the sense or effects of the original text in the RL, rather than the linguistic units in it.

The interpretive theory of translation focuses much on giving the target readers the ability to understand translated materials in their language. Hence, it explains interpreting and translating as not just putting down what is said in the ST using words of correspondence in the TT. Unlike other models like Jakobson's rewording and translation proper which interpret lingual messages by means of other verbal and nonverbal signs respectively, interpretive model emphasises accuracy in translation as texts are understood by the translator, deactivated and re-expressed in the TT. Since the translator or interpreter is good and at times fluent in the mother-tongue, they are able to do good translation. A major challenge to interpretive approach is its failure to recognise equivalence in translation as it purposes on meaning. Unlike Nida and Newmark models which focus much on equivalence in the TL, which is the central problem of translation, this theory fails to allow translators to interpret in the original word orders and sentence structures which may allow for less room for subjectivity in translating as translators (and interpreters) stand the chance to include much of their ideas and creative skills. This is established by Qiang (2013) who posits that the target of interpretive theory is the transition of meaning instead of language symbols. This can surpass the limits of an accurate translation in an effort to speak as one would expect in the native language.

Compared to other models of translation, *skopostheorie* defines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed in order to produce a functionally-acceptable result for a group of people. This model enables the TT readers to get the understanding of author or the original text. Also, it helps the indigenes (those meant to serve) have greater voice in the organisational and political processes. Words that are known and used by them are carefully selected to meet their cultural worldview.

However, unlike other translation models such as formal and dynamic equivalence, and communicative and semantic models of translation which could be carried on without a guiding document and with few people, there is always delay in work with *skopostheories* since translation is done by quite a number of people. Again, the challenge to meet the demands of the RL is very high even in situations where there may be differing inputs by the group and the translator (and interpreter). And there is always the tendency for translated material to deviate from the original text, since the indigenes have a greater voice.

Contrasting other models of translation, Nida's work has generally been accepted by a number of scholars, and used in quiet recent years for Bible translations. Works that have used Nida's *word-for-word* are New American Standard Bible (NASB), English Standard Version (ESV), New English Translation (NET), and King James Version (KJV). Also, Christian Standard Bible (CSB), New International Version (NIV), and New Living Translation (NLT) used *thought-for-thought*. However, Nida's work has not been without critique.

4.1. Critique of Nida's usage of 'Equivalence'

Nida's equivalence theory has generally been accepted by a number of scholars and Bible translators as said earlier. However, it has suffered resistance by other scholars. One of such is Umberto (2001) who contends that 'equivalence in meaning cannot be taken as a satisfactory criterion for a correct translation.' According to him, the naïve idea that equivalence in meaning is given by synonym in language is unacceptable. He justifies his argument with the example that *father* is not a synonym for *daddy*, and *daddy* is not a synonym for *papa*, likewise *père*⁹ is not a synonym for *padre*. Nord (1997), another critic of Nida's equivalence, prefers 'adequacy' as a substitute for 'equivalence' as equivalence cannot be achieved on all levels—the word, sentence, and discourse levels—at the same time. On his part, when a text is viewed pragmatically in terms of its rhetorical action or text function, equivalence even becomes partial. Newmark (1981) also complains that the success of equivalent effect is 'illusory' and that 'the conflict of loyalties, the gap between emphasis on SL and TL will always remain as the overriding problem in translation theory and practice.'

⁹ It is used after a name to distinguish a father from a son.

5. Resurrecting the Gospel in a Native Environment: A Preferable Translation Model

Newmark proposes Communicative and Semantic translation model which is based on the comparative linguistics and mainly the semantics to deal with some of the challenges raised on Nida's translation model. Like Nida's translation model, Fengling (2017) postulates that Newmark's translation models engage obtaining enlightenment about translation considering equivalence between different languages and cultures, applying scientific approach and employing an aesthetic skill. But at a level of translation where equivalence cannot to achieve as argued by Nord, communicative and semantic translation model goes beyond to provide meaning for translators to engage in translation exercise.

Communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original text, whereas semantic translation attempts to render, as close as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original text (Newmark, 1981). This method allows translators to produce the same effect produced by the original text on the RL readers, and not an equivalent one. According to Fengling (2017), these translation models—semantic and communicative—provide effective and scientific guidance for translation practice. Though communicative translation gives the text a lighter feature, yet it is smoother, more idiomatic and easier readable features in the TL which is the goal of translation. It takes into effect the cultures and languages of both the source and target audience, as well as the writer and the translator to be able to make the text become more native and original to the TA. It also makes the text reachable and handy to the readers, and cause an outcome on their minds. It avoids resorting to circumlocution or using more or less synonymous words. Unlike interpretive approach which does not recognise equivalence in translation as it purposes on meaning, communicative ensures there is no gap between emphasis on SL and TL. In as much as communicative and semantic model make the text become more native and original to the TA, it does not allow the church [and local indigenes] to have a greater say in the translation process, even though they are the people who would use the translated material; they might not be translators or interpreters. However, local indigenes must be consulted for a more preferable word in their language when the translator or interpreter wants to know much of a word or text's meaning in their mother-tongue to be used in the translation process. This is to make the translation become native and original.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusions

The process involved in resurrecting the Judeo-Christian scriptures from the original languages used in writing into the new native environment they find themselves to make it become culturally relevant, original, and appreciable to the indigenes—which is known as Bible translation—is not done in a vacuum; it engages with a selected translation model. Since the essence of Bible translation is to make the local indigenes or target audience access God's word in their local dialect or mother-tongue with same effect produced by the original text, it is more preferable for Bible translators to engage in translation models that would draw them closer to their objective, if not to have a perfect translation.

6.2. Recommendations

From the discussions so far, it could be seen that almost all the models seek to make the gospel message relevant to the target audience despite their recognised challenges; no translation model is perfect. However, Newmark's communicative and semantic model seems to be a most preferable one for Bible translators to bring the word of God closer to local indigenes like Africans who are not the original recipients, especially for the revising of my mother-tongue Bible. This is because communicative translation attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original text, whereas semantic translation attempts to render, as close as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original text. Though, Bible interpreters and translators have widely accepted Nida's formal and dynamic equivalence in Bible translation, they must now consider engaging with Newmark's communicative and semantic models in translation to help them produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original text.

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