THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF SIN, RELATIVE TO ANIMISTIC WORLDVIEW (PART 2 OF 2)

A Case Study for Translating "Sin" in the Tabo Language of Papua New Guinea

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TRANSLATION PRINCIPLES AND LINGUISTIC THEORY

FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENCE, AESTHETICS, AND ADEQUACY

According to Roger Omanson, of the United Bible Societies (UBS), very few readers (even in highly-literate societies) have the exegetical scholarship necessary to bridge the cultural and historical gaps between the biblical mindset and their own particular, cultural worldview. For this reason, he says, a translator, who expends too much energy on the forms, as opposed to meaning, generally ends up hindering communication rather than helping it.[1] This awareness of where primary focus must be directed in the translation process is always critical, especially so where the translation is intended for a receptor audience, unaccustomed to writing, as a form of communication, and previously ignorant of knowledge existing beyond their own group's experiences.

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[1] Roger L. Omanson, "Translation as Communication", in *The Bible Translator* 47-4 (1996), p. 407.

The task of Bible translation for minority languages[2] in earlier years was tackled by only a handful of exegetical or linguistic experts, and by the occasional determined missionary. But, around the middle of this century, especially as a result of the expanding vision of Cameron Townsend (founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT)), the number of projects being attempted around the world suddenly proliferated. Most of these projects were taken on by missionaries, who had completed some coursework in theological or linguistic studies, but who, by no means, were expert in these fields. As a result, at least in mission organisations, which desired quality control, trained consultants carefully checked whatever scripture materials their lesser-trained colleagues produced, prior to any mass publication for receptor audiences.

During this same period, national Bible societies (some of which had existed for over 100 years)[3] renewed efforts to revise popular translations of scripture for their own respective countries, replacing archaic vocabulary with modern terms, and bringing modern scholarship to bear on previously misunderstood passages. While national Bible societies concentrated primarily on majority languages, they were also involved (though to a much lesser degree than WBT) in working with minority languages. Some older translations were revised; some first-time projects were undertaken.

More important, perhaps, than actually producing translations, both the national Bible societies (under UBS) and WBT sought to elevate the excellence and status of the work from the level of a religious hobby to

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[2] See part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1, footnote n. 17, p. 46, where D. J. Clark's article, concerning the difficulty of defining this term, is referenced.

[3] Bible societies are non-profit, interdenominational organisations, committed to the translation, publication, and worldwide distribution of the scriptures, for little or no cost. The first such association is believed to have formed in 1710, at the town of Halle in Saxony, Germany; the first English-language society was established in 1780. The British and Foreign Bible Society (1804), the American Bible Society (1816), and a number of other similar organisations, currently support one another's goals by common association under the United Bible Societies, headquartered in London. (Information is from *Microsoft® Encarta® 98 Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Bible Societies" and "American Bible Society".)

that of scientific discipline. The entire process of decoding a source language message, and rebuilding it into the forms of a receptor language, so that identical audience impact results, was consequently analysed. The goal was to identify all underlying linguistic principles necessary to the task.

The results were threefold. Firstly, through the application of modern biblical scholarship and linguistic theory, success *was* achieved in establishing Bible translation as a respected discipline. Secondly, both Bible translators in the field and scholars at home began producing a volume of academic literature, with the intention of helping others, who were just getting started. To this end, WBT began a quarterly publication, entitled *Notes on Translation*, while UBS similarly started *The Bible Translator*; both organisations started working on a series of handbooks (technical and non-technical) for translating various books of the Bible. More recently, both groups engaged in making the same materials available in a variety of computer software packages, and, in conjunction with all other efforts, scholars of both groups produced textbooks outlining the translation principles, of which they had become aware.[4] From among these principles arose the third great achievement of translation scholarship – functional (or dynamic) equivalence became firmly fixed as the model under which all sound translation is practised today.

Omanson summarises functional equivalence as the basic notion "that meaning has priority over form [such that] the task of translation is seen, not as a literal transfer of codes, but as an act of communication".[5] Now, just because meaning has priority here, does not mean that form is unimportant. It means, rather, that, instead of the translator focusing on a wooden reproduction of the syntax or grammatical forms of the original, focus is alternatively placed on determining to what degree the form must change to preserve the entirety of the original message. The

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[4] Among these, the following deserve special mention, because of the huge impact they have had in shaping the modern discipline – Eugene Nida, Charles Taber, John Beekman, John Callow, Mildred Larson, and Katherine Barnwell. A number of their specific works are mentioned in the bibliography section of this paper.
[5] Omanson, "Translation as Communication", p. 408.

need to modify the literary structure of a source text increases proportionally with the degree to which it is found in its original culture.[6]   Note, too, however, that the preservation of the original message in its entirety necessarily includes aesthetics. If there is literary beauty, strong emotion, or poetic symmetry in the original text, which served to capture the attention of the audience, then forms must be sought in the receptor language, which impact similarly.[7]

While functional equivalence has unquestionably been established, at least among scholars, as the only accepted method by which translation is attempted today, this does not suggest that the breakdown of a source text into its component blocks of meaning, followed by prettily rebuilding these into receptor language forms, is all that is necessary to the completion of a good translation.   Katharina Reiss, for instance, notes that another extremely important consideration for translators, working in highly divergent cross-cultural situations, is that of adequacy

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Cf. H. Salevsky, "The Bible and General Theory of Translation", in *The Bible Translator* 42-1 (1991), pp. 101-110. While arguing for dynamic equivalency being the only satisfactory model for translation as a science, Salevsky points out that in regard to only satisfactory model for translation as a science. Salevsky points out that, in regard to presenting the message aesthetically, translation is also an art. Creativity is required, on the part of the translator, not to go beyond the meaning of the source text, but to express the same meaning, with equal beauty and impact for the receptor. In this, then, translation requires both objectivity (accurately communicating the same message) and subjectivity (securing the same emotional impact).

However, Salevsky goes on to say (p. 111) that creativity in translation, though subjective, can still be evaluated, according to specific criteria. He suggests these to be (1) whether original, sensitive solutions are employed; (2) how effectively implicit, explicit, and associative information is merged within these solutions; (3) whether or not the translator is able to be self-critical; (4) whether there is evidence of innovation, in cases, where literalistic translation would have been possible, yet weak; and (5) whether there is demonstration of the translator grasping visual, acoustic, and emotional impact of text details.

Cf. Eugene A. Nida, "Rhetoric and the Translator: With Special Reference to John 1", in *The Bible Translator* 33-3 (1982), pp. 324-328. Nida describes rhetoric as the feature of language that allows a translator to reproduce a functionally-equivalent, cognitive message, along with its original emotional impact, for source language hearers. Rhetoric, he says, makes discourse comprehensible, aesthetically attractive, and stimulates thoughtful involvement, while allowing focus on special features.   His examples are taken from the gospel of John.

or appropriateness. She defines this as the measure of how closely the means and the purposes of a translation match up, as opposed to equivalency, which measures how closely the source and receptor texts convey the same message.[8]

One example of Reiss's point is that a Bible, intended primarily for the training of pastors, may need to be translated differently than one intended for a largely lay audience, especially if the lay audience has only become literate within recent years. The actual terms chosen for the translations may differ – the former will likely be more technical; the latter more simplistic, but, at the same time, relying on amplification to clarify meaning. Also, while details of publishing style and format are not technically translation, in and of themselves, they are critical parts of any undertaken project; decisions relative to packaging the final product have previously proven to make a difference, as to whether or not the book's message is received. As such, the inclusion or exclusion of footnotes, the number and character of illustrations, the font, and the colour chosen for the cover, are all potential make-or-break issues for certain audiences.[9]

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[8] Katharina Reiss, "Adequacy and Equivalency in Translation", in *The Bible Translator* 34-3 (1983), pp. 301-307.

[9] In some cultures, particular colours are known to be offensive, for instance, red, being cognitively associated with blood, may, culturally, have a very negative spiritual significance, because of long-held taboos. However, for other cultures, the same colour red, for the same reason of cognitive association with blood, produces an entirely different audience reaction, one which is positive. The colour red, for these people, is highly attractive; it signifies the source of life, all that is good and pleasurable.

A personal example of a non-translation issue, proving to affect the end product's adequacy, may be useful. In the first printing of the Tabo translation of Mark's gospel, the typesetting consultant insisted on right-margin justification for the text, because it was aesthetically pleasing to him. Though I had inner reservations, I couldn't actually pin down logical reasons for them, so I gave in. It was not until we produced a revision, four years later (in which we abandoned the right-side justification), that I fully appreciated why the original decision had been wrong. Because of the length of many words in the Tabo language (a number of commonly-used verbs exceed 20 characters in length), right margin justification forced more-frequent hyphenation of words. This, in conjunction with the overall page appearance, simply confused the majority of Tabo readers, many of whom were newly-literate. When faced with the first publication, even though the people appreciated having their first book of scripture, they were not overly

Eugene Nida, one of the pioneers in the development of functional equivalence theory,[10] in an article, discussing how to gauge the quality of a translation, raises issues, which show the necessary linkage of equivalency, aesthetics, and adequacy, in the equation.[11] He claims that the goal of any translator should be to simultaneously interest and inform the prospective reader. To fail in either regard will result in a deficient product.   If a text strongly grips a receptor audience emotionally, but leaves them wondering what the message is really about, the translation is unacceptable. Conversely, if the meaning of a text is rebuilt, with absolute precision, in receptor forms, but the presentation is so utterly boring that the reader is unlikely to press on to a conclusion, the same unacceptability results.[12]

In Nida's list of quality considerations it appears that exegesis alone (that is, the breaking down of original meanings, at the level of sentence or paragraph) can be dealt with in total, objectively, under functional equivalence theory.   Other features, such as the original discourse structure, and the role it plays in communicating the message, the text genre, and the literary style of a particular writer, all necessarily combine equivalence theory objectivity with the subjectiveness of aesthetics.   But still, other features, important to quality, exist, ones completely divorced from scientific analysis of the original text. These features are the adequacy issues Reiss has already brought to our

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enthusiastic about its appearance. It was not, however, until they later had the second book that they could express to me, by comparing the two side by side, why they had first been displeased.   Essentially, what had appeared aesthetically pleasing to the typesetter, did not look attractive to their eyes. Interestingly, the first book sold 400 copies in four years; by way of contrast, 1,000 copies of the revision sold in 24 hours.

[10] See Eugene A. Nida, and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969. Chapter 6, on the transfer of meaning from source to receptor language, is especially good; both semantic adjustments (pp. 112-115) and structural adjustments (pp. 115-118) are addressed.   This book of Nida and Taber's, in which functional equivalency theory was first spelled out in detail, was a classic text in Bible translation, for over a decade.

[11] Eugene A. Nida, "Quality in Translation", in *The Bible Translator* 33-3 (1982), pp. 329-332.   Nida does not actually use the labels "equivalency", "aesthetics", or "adequacy", but the quality issues, he raises, all fit under one, or more, of these cover terms.

[12] Ibid., pp. 329-330.

attention. They are judged, not by features of the original culture or language, but by the purpose the translation is to serve in the receptor community, and include all characteristics of packaging the message for the receptor audience. Publication style, the illustrations, the format, and any supplementary materials that accompany the text, are, therefore, all included within this category.

Now, in our attempt to find the best forms in the Tabo language to represent "sin" and its biblical synonyms, we, understandably, are primarily concerned with exegetical equivalency, and with textual aesthetics, that is the naturalness and emotive power our choices hold for receptor hearers. Regarding translational adequacy, most issues relate only to future publication, and, therefore, affect current translation decisions of text only minimally, if at all. There are a couple of adequacy issues, however, which result from the express purpose the Tabo project has aimed for, and which could have a bearing on the translation of a key term like "sin".

The primary purpose of the Tabo translation is to reach ordinary semi-skilled readers within the target population. As such, the book that is completed will not be a study Bible for pastors, although we certainly hope it will be used by them in general church services. The reasoning is that all pastors are fluent, at least in two (if not more) languages, and receive their formal training in English, Pidgin English, or a majority tribal language. With a population of but 3,500, it is doubtful whether the Tabo people would ever have their own private monolingual training institution, where a Tabo study Bible might be extensively used. At any rate, Tabo pastors currently, by reason of the training they have received, have ready access to other language study materials, which, by sheer volume, will always exceed any that exist in their own language.

This is not to say that the Tabo scriptures will not be of benefit to Tabo pastors. If translated well, they will also prove to be, for them, a valuable additional resource, helping, through their heart's language, to understand the finer points of certain passages. While this is recognised as a valid offshoot of the work, the original aim remains unaltered, that of providing ordinary Christians and lay church workers with access to

the scriptures. As such, the Tabo Bible, in its final published form, will not be cluttered with cross-references or glossary, as these features tend to confuse newly-literate audiences. Nor will it include highly-technical or borrowed foreign-language terms, unless such terms are demonstrated to have already been fully assimilated into everyday conversation. At points of the text, where cultural differences between the Tabo and the biblical world are so great that confusion will result without extra-textual explanation, footnotes will be provided. But, even here, amplification, within the text, is preferred to a footnote, because our observation has been that newly-literate readers tend to ignore, or be confused, by smaller print comments at the bottom of the page. In publications to date, while the occasional footnote has been judged as necessary, these instances have not been numerous. It is, therefore, likely that, in any future publications, the same pattern of using footnotes on a limited basis will be continued. Also, as an aid to new readers, and as a bridge across the huge source-receptor cultural gap, the published scriptures will make extensive use of illustrations. Unlike footnotes, pictures have been judged to add to the communication process, rather than confuse; they are subject to intensive study by Tabo readers (including the captions); they are never ignored.

It appears, then, that the adequacy issues of the Tabo translation, which may have a bearing on the rendering of "sin" are but twofold: (a) any technical or borrowed foreign language terms are to be avoided; and (b) amplification of a concept within the text is preferred to incomplete communication, or to a footnote. We note that the danger of amplification is the same as that of using phrases to substitute for single words, which we mentioned earlier. An overly wordy passage may result, in either the natural metre for reading being distorted, or in the idea a sentence starts with being lost, by the time the final period is reached.[13]

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[13] See discussion in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 82ff.

MULTIPLE-SENSE LEXICAL ITEMS

The functional equivalence model for translation effectively addresses most problems that a translator might expect to encounter. Of these, we have identified seven as having particular bearing on translating a key term, for a culture holding significantly different views from the original. These are: (a) how to translate, in situations where lexical items have multiple senses; (b) how to delimit central concepts for a group of synonymous lexical items; (c) how to deal with cognitive clash in cross-cultural communication; (d) the question of concordance; (e) how to establish lexical equivalence, when concepts are shared cross-culturally; (f) how to establish lexical equivalence, when concepts are unshared; and (g) special considerations for the translation of key terms. Each of these potential problems will now be addressed, before moving on to actual solutions for the Tabo language.

How does a translator deal with a lexical item in the source text, which has multiple senses? The obvious answer is to determine what all the possible senses are for the word,[14] and then to discern, context by context, which sense the author intended.[15] For each sense thus isolated, appropriate matches in the receptor language must be found, a process made more confusing, because each of the receptor language's lexical items can also have a plurality of associated meaning. Across

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[14] Mildred Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1985, pp. 102-104. Larson suggests these four steps for analysing the senses of words: (1) collect data, that is, examples of words being used in context; (2) sort the collocates into generic classes, perhaps sorting more than once to get the most basic classes; (3) regroup the contexts according to the collocates of each of the basic classes; and (4) list and label the senses of the word, one for each resultant group.

[15] Robert G. Bratcher, " 'Righteousness' in Matthew", in *The Bible Translator* 40-2 (1989), pp. 228-235. Bratcher's article is noted here, because, in it, he deals with discerning context by context, the various senses, in which the δικαιοσύνη and צֶדֶק word groups (Greek and Hebrew, respectively, for "righteousness") are used. He restricts his study to Matthew and Psalms, but supplies ample evidence that, even within the same book of scripture, the sense of key theological terms varies greatly with context. In order to completely capture how each word is used, Bratcher analyses every reference (seven in Matthew; 476 in Psalms). In conclusion, he says that his process of analysis can be applied, similarly, to discerning the senses of other key terms, and mentions "sin" to be, in his words, "another chameleon of a word".

language boundaries, there is rarely a one-to-one correspondence for the bundling of senses within similar lexical items.

For the purpose of analysis, the senses for any word may be categorised as: (a) primary, that is the first meaning or usage suggested, apart from context; (b) secondary, that is a meaning, different from the primary, but sharing a common thread; and (c) figurative, that is a meaning, based on associative relations with the primary.[16] Mildred Larson says, "a secondary sense will almost always need to be translated by a different word than the word, which denotes the primary sense",[17] and cautions that the secondary sense of a receptor language word will communicate only what is intended, if the context includes the necessary collocates. If these are not present, ambiguity is inevitable; for example, the sentence "This suit is *lighter*" gives no clues as to whether colour or weight are being referred to.[18]

If then, we investigate the Tabo word *kuba*, which some on the Translation Committee have suggested as a translation for "sin", we find that the primary sense[19] means "inimical to the well-being of the community or an individual". By way of comparison, the primary meaning of "bad" is "to be inferior in quality or expectations". Now, for some contexts, both *kuba* and "bad" certainly also have a sense in which moral wrong is intended. This was demonstrated for *kuba* in the earlier discussion of traditional Tabo ethical standards,[20] and can be ascertained for "bad", by looking the word up in any standard English dictionary. Beyond the primary sense of inferiority, and beyond a secondary sense of wrong morality, the words for both languages have yet other recognised secondary senses – practical, forensic, emotional,

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[16] John Beekman, and John Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1969, pp. 94-95.

[17] Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, p. 105.

[18] Ibid., p. 107.

[19] See Beekman, and Callow, p. 94, where they define primary sense as "the first meaning, or usage, suggested, apart from context".

[20] See discussion in part one of this article in *the Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 128-131.

and physiognomical (see Figure 1).[21] The various senses of both words all share a common thread of meaning, that of "being less than desirable to someone".[22] So, for *kuba*, this broad generic usage, in combination with its moral sense being only secondary, results in its suitability for translating "sin" (a word whose primary meaning is undoubtedly moral) to be highly questionable.   Even if *kuba* had been judged to be acceptable for translating "sin", according to Larson, every context, then, in which it was then used, would have to include collocates that unambiguously invoke the moral connotation.[23]

Someone might point out that the English word "love", too, has a multiplicity of senses, and that, in spite of its usage becoming increasingly generic, in more recent years, this phenomenon has not stopped any modern Bible translators from employing its graces. This is indeed true, even though many modern usages have little to do with any of those found in the Bible, for instance, people talk about "loving chocolate cake", "loving the beautiful spring weather", or a "love-making" scene in a movie.   In each of these modern contexts, the

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[21] Besides noting that the moral sense, for both *kuba* and "bad", is only secondary, the comparison of the two words also reveals that there are but five secondary senses for Tabo, as opposed to eight for English. Why? In two cases, Tabo semantically combines what English separates – emotional and physical discomfort are considered as one; legal and moral wrong, likewise. In the third case, Tabo uses a separate word to designate lack of suitability.

We also note that the primary sense is not the same for each language. Tabo conceptualises *kuba* as that, which is detrimental to the well-being of the community or individual. (There is, actually, a tie-in here with the first secondary sense of moral wrong – breaking a taboo will lead to divine displeasure, which, in turn, leads to the community suffering.) English, however, primarily conceptualises "bad" to mean an inferiority of quality, or expectation; the sense of being inimical to well-being is secondary.

Figure 1 does not show that there are also tertiary senses, in which *kuba* is used. In fact, for Tabo, figurative uses of *kuba* abound, as in: *a:kubamo* (literally "I am bad") for "I am absolutely exhausted"; *kubanomola* (literally "it is very bad") for "it is awesome"; *kubamonomo* (literally "with great badness") for "absolutely"; *kubamo emedenamo* (literally "I live badly") for "I am poor".

[22] Note Beekman, and Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, p. 94, where they say that "all the senses (except figurative), of a particular lexical item, necessarily, share a common thread of meaning, yet have differing generic components".

[23] See above, in this same paragraph.

biblical idea of a decision of the will, which results in whole-hearted commitment to another's welfare, is notably absent. Why then is it legitimate to continue using "love" in English Bibles, but a word like *kuba* is deemed unsatisfactory for Tabo? The answer is that, in spite of secondary senses proliferating, the primary meaning of "love" in English is still equal to the biblical sense. Once this is no longer the case (and the modern trend points in this direction), translators for English would do well to, likewise, rethink the suitability of the word, at least for some contexts.

Figure 1
COMPARISON OF NON-FIGURATIVE SENSES
FOR THE ENGLISH WORD "BAD"[24] AND THE TABO WORD
"KUBA"

"BAD"	"KUBA"
Primary Sense:	*Primary Sense:*
(a) inferior in quality or expectations (inferior produce, bad year)	(a) inimical to health or welfare of an individual or the community (rotten food, sickness)
Secondary Senses:	*Secondary Senses:*
(b) morally evil; wrong (bad person)	(b) morally or legally wrong (bad spirit, thought, action)
(c) inimical to health or welfare (bad weather, bad meat)	(c) inferior in quality/craftsmanship (roughly built house, canoe)
(d) unsuited to a particular task (a bad light for reading)	(Tabo uses a different word here – *modoboha:*)
(e) incorrect, faulty (bad light switch, bad grammar)	(d) broken, faulty (broken radio, bad grammar)
(f) offensive to sensibilities (bad smell, taste, sound)	(e) offensive to sensibilities (bad smell, taste, sound)
(g) in pain or discomfort (doing badly, fairly bad)	(f) pain, poverty, discomfort (bad life situation)
(h) emotionally unpleasant (bad experience, bad humour)	(Tabo semantically joins emotional and physical discomfort)
(i) legally, technically wrong (bad check, bad shot)	(Tabo joins legality with morality under the first secondary sense.)

Regarding the use of the word "sin", biblically, we noted earlier that Kittel and Friedrich describe three senses, while Barnwell, Dancy, and Pope observe four.[25]   These authorities all agree, however, that the primary sense is an act of personal offence against God, concomitant with guilt.   Our own attempt at providing a theological definition suggested that the idea of prideful attitude would ideally be linked to

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[24] *Merriam-Webster Third International Dictionary*, s.v. "Bad".
[25] See part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 76-77.

that of personal offence. Further, our study showed that any receptor language form chosen, even if not explicitly including the ideas of lacking conformity to God's moral law, or of alienation from Him, should certainly not exclude them.[26] Between Kittel and Barnwell, we can also identify the secondary senses for the ἁμαρτία word group as, firstly, human nature, set in opposition to God; secondly, sin, personified as poetic imagery; and, thirdly, an accumulated record of wrongdoings, a sense sometimes translated in English Bibles as "guilt".[27] Our study of the other New Testament words, synonymous with "sin", showed that, for each word group, there is always a sharing of the primary sense with ἁμαρτία, but, in regard to the secondary senses, one to three, of those identified above, are variously held in common.[28]

DELIMITING THE CENTRAL CONCEPT FOR SYNONYMS

When a group of semantically-similar words share the same central concept, how does the translator set about delimiting the centrality, so as to distinguish each word from others within the set? As with the identification of different senses, this task is necessarily undertaken for words of both the source and receptor languages. In the case of "sin" and its synonyms, the central concept has already been established – that of personal offence against God, associated with pride and concomitant with guilt. Understanding the central concept thus may be sufficient to identify a word or phrase in Tabo that is suitable for translating the most generic usage. But, translating the synonyms, in most contexts, requires greater specificity. This means that, for each source language synonym, the translator must determine how it uniquely limits the centrality of the concept shared by all. For any topic being investigated in the source or receptor language, all the semantically-related words must first be gathered. Then, for each one, distinguishing characteristics must painstakingly be listed, until the

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[26] See Ibid., p. 56.
[27] See Ibid., pp. 76-77.
[28] See Ibid., pp. 76-82.

translator clearly understands how the words are semantically separate.[29]

Although words are translated as discrete items, they are actually part of a language's cognitive network, that is, they are not isolated, unrelated bundles of semantic meaning. For this reason, the identification of central concepts, and the delimiting of parameters for specific lexical items, is critical to good translation. Meaning can be discovered only in terms of semantic contrasts between the lexical items which make up the system. What distinguishes the English word "whisper" from other forms of communication, for instance, is its characteristics of being voiceless, articulated, and verbal, while having a non-musical pitch.[30] If the delimiting of parameters is done poorly, cultural mismatch can easily occur in a translation. The words for a human dwelling place in English, Greek, and Tabo are respectively *house*, οἶκος, and *genama*. While each of these words share the same central concept, they remain totally different, as regards form, style, and function in their respective cultures, thus demonstrating that components, which are incidental and non-contrastive within a specific language, may be very much contrastive across language. Although language will probably not affect one's translation of the word "house", it certainly must be taken into account for more theologically-loaded terms like "sin".

For this reason, we have attempted to identify the delimiting parameters for each New Testament synonym of "sin". Our analysis was based on previously-compiled biblical vocabulary data, and is presented in Figure 2.

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[29] Note how Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, p. 57 relates this task to translation. She says that "to prepare for translating a single word, one must first identify the *central concept*, and in what way that centrality is limited. By focusing on the central concept, the search in the RL can then begin. The word discovered in the RL can then be modified with a phrase, to complete the translation task." But she also says that a translator will often find there is no exact equivalent between words of one language and another, since the accumulation of meaning components within any single word of one language will seldom be paralleled, exactly, in a second language. As a result, the translator often finds it necessary to translate one word of the SL by several words in the RL, or vice versa.

[30] Ibid., p. 92.

Figure 2

DELIMITING COMPONENTS OF MEANING FOR THE PRIMARY SENSES OF NEW TESTAMENT SYNONYMS OF "SIN"

Note: Each synonym's primary sense contains the central concept of a personal offence against God that results in guilt; only the delimiting components of this centrality are indicated here.

1. κακία – grievous; unashamedly participatory; deliberate in opposing good; generic; possibly a focus on an origin in Satan's plan to corrupt the universe

2. πονηρία – grievous; unashamedly participatory; deliberate in opposing good; generic; possibly a focus on an origin in self-will

3. ἀδικία – related to a lack of honesty and a sense of justice; related to a lack of respect for God

4. ἀνομία – disobedience of God's law, resulting from negligence

5. παράπτωμα – resulting from a failure to do the right thing (Augustine)
    – grievous; deliberate (Trench)
    – related to a turning from known truth; deliberate (Ryrie)
    – undeliberate; generic (Kittel)

6. ἀσέβεια – grievous; motivated by rebellion; arising from a contempt for God (or other authority)

7. παράβασις – related to the violation of a specific boundary; deliberate

8. παρακοή – disobedience of God's law or will resulting from a lack of desire to even hear it; deliberate

9. ἄγνοια – related to ignorance of right and wrong

10. ἥττημα – related to negligence; resulting in personal loss

AVOIDING COGNITIVE CLASH

What is cognitive clash, and can it be entirely avoided? Beekman and Callow define cognitive clash as any dissonance between the message, receptors hear, and their intellectual response; they say that clash occurs for grammatical, collocational, or cultural reasons.[31] Any such

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[31] Beekman, and Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, p. 160.

dissonance is, of course, a hindrance to the message being received. Grammatical clashes happen when syntax is disordered, or when there are ungrammatical sequences. Saying "Red-headed boy little the Johnny is", for instance, may communicate a description of Johnny, but it does so awkwardly, and grates on the ears of native English speakers. In contrast, collocational clashes are those occurring when words are in correct syntactical order, but in combinations that are fantastical or nonsense. The sentences "The silent forest screamed a duet", and "A hairy purple ostrich is playing poker" may be acceptable in the context of poetic imagery or fantasy, but are not normative for communication.

By the time a translator is seriously underway with a project, these first two categories of clash are usually not a problem. The translator would have a fairly good grasp of the mechanics of the receptor language, plus a team of indigenous experts would have been assembled, who, in checking sessions, will quickly spot and correct most grammatical and collocational errors. Cultural clashes, however, present more difficulty, because, if the message itself interferes with the cultural belief system (which, in the case of the gospel, is unavoidable), then a clash may actually demonstrate that the translation is accurate.

Beekman and Callow give several examples. In one Vietnamese language, the translation committee protested that the text of John 13:5 must be wrong, because, in their culture, the washing of another's feet was absolutely repugnant. Similarly, the Ifugao of the Philippines were stymied to read in Acts 8:18-24 that Simon could not buy the Holy Spirit's power with money. This was the honest, acceptable means, in their culture, by which witchdoctors gained power, a power which they considered as good, because it could benefit others. Also, some Aboriginal Australians, upon reading vernacular translations of Matt 9:9-13, are quite sure there is a textual error – Matthew, and his friends, must have been *giving away* money from the government, not collecting it.[32] Beekman and Callow advise that these types of clashes be left unresolved, since, firstly, they teach receptor language hearers new

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[32] Ibid., pp. 160-161.

information about other cultures, and, secondly, they communicate the truth and morals of scripture.[33]

So then, in the translation process, grammatical and collocational clashes can and should be avoided. Cultural clash, however, is a different matter. In seeking suitable Tabo language forms for the translation of "sin", it is entirely possible that this kind of cognitive clash will be encountered, even within a very sound rendering of the text. The highly-divergent views between their animist belief system and the Bible will almost certainly create dissonance, at some point, but this should not give undue reason for concern.

WHEN CONCORDANCE SHOULD BE OBSERVED

The translators of the King James Version of the Bible proudly state in their preface: "We have not tied ourselves to a uniformity of phrasing or . . . to an identity of words."[34] They are saying, in other words, that they did not concern themselves with concordance: the effort to translate different occurrences of the same word or phrase identically. But, at least one scholar has accused the KJV of a negligence here, a negligence which resulted in two groups of errors. Firstly, the KJV frequently renders an identical word in a variety of ways, such that artificial distinctions are introduced into the text, which were non-existent in the original. Secondly, in instances, where the original text maintained true distinction, by the use of separate terms, this has been obliterated, by using but one English word.[35]

By no means, does this mean that concordance should be slavishly adhered to. As we observed much earlier, the various original Hebrew and Greek words for "sin", and its synonyms, are not translated consistently in any of the modern translations.[36] The different choices made by modern scholars, however, were not at all arbitrary, but were based on consideration of specific contexts, in conjunction with the semantic ranges of the original words. Indeed, the translator, for a

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[33] Ibid., p. 161.

[34] Ibid., p. 151.

[35] Ibid.

[36] See discussion in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 82-84, especially points (1), (2), (3), and (5).

minority language, wants to be wary of pseudo-concordance, that is where a single word has several different, but legitimate, senses within the original text. On the surface, only one word is used, but, at the level of comprehension for the original hearers, the meaning varied from context to context. Such pseudo-concordance will never carry over into the receptor language; to avoid it, the translator must become familiar with all the senses (primary and secondary) of the words being translated, and in what contexts the various senses are signalled. The translator must never expect that all the senses, embodied in a source language word, are translatable by a single word in the receptor language. As we already pointed out in the discussion of multiple sense words, the bundling of the same set of senses into one word rarely coincides across language,[37] the only exceptions being cases where two languages are extremely close, culturally and etymologically.

True concordance exists when one word in the source language text is repeated many times, with exactly the same sense. In this case, concordance must be preserved, because the intentionality of the original will otherwise be lost. While this goal is a noble one, it is, at the same time, problematic, because, in translation, it is practically impossible not to either reduce or gain the level of overall original concordance. Beekman and Callow give an example of the Otomi of Mexico, who have two separate terms for forgiveness – one human, one divine.[38] When the scripture speaks of forgiveness, the translator is always forced into selecting one, which, for certain contexts, is not necessarily easy. Another well-known example is the disparity between Greek and English, over vocabulary for "love"; Greek has three words (ἀγάπη, φιλία, ἐρος) in comparison to English's one. And, in translating for Tabo, every historic past tense must select between night or daytime occurrence, even though this information is absent for a significant number of scripture's narrative texts. Was the transfiguration of Jesus, for instance, an event that took place in broad daylight, late afternoon, or the dark of night?

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[37] Beekman, and Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, p. 178.
[38] Ibid., pp. 153-154.

Beekman and Callow conclude their discussion of concordance with two pertinent suggestions. Firstly, they say that, if variations from the original text are justified by context, then there is no need to be concerned about maintaining concordance. But, if there is no such justification for a variety of renditions, then, among the possibilities, the best choice should be determined, and used throughout. Following this pattern will help preserve the theme, coherence, focus, and unity of the original. Secondly, while Beekman and Callow admit that change of concordance is, at times, inevitable, they urge that every effort should be made to retain it for key theological terms or words that represent the different themes of a section or a book.[39] These suggestions will be kept in mind, as we develop a Tabo solution for translating "sin".

THE DEGREE TO WHICH CONCEPTS ARE SHARED BETWEEN SOURCE AND RECEPTOR CULTURES

How does the translator establish lexical equivalence for a source language term? The difficulty of the task is proportionate to the distance between the cultures involved, with differences in time, geographical location, daily life experience, and religious practice, all playing a part. As we said in the discussion of concordance, even when two cultures are etymologically close, literal one-to-one correspondence of lexical items is still unlikely. This being the case, the form of a good translation may end up quite different from that of the source text.[40]

Thinking that translation is simply a matter of matching up lexical items, once the receptor language's grammar has been mastered, is probably the grossest error, into which the translator can fall. It is rivalled, perhaps, by the belief of some that all languages share the same concepts. But, from all we have previously covered – the differences between animist belief and biblical teaching, the opposite polarities of Western and non-Western thought, and the data regarding specific features of traditional Tabo belief – it should be obvious that this is not the case. There are some concepts, universal to human experience, but there are many, which are simply not shared. Hinterland tribes, for example, will know nothing about the sea, boats, or fishing. Likewise,

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[39] Ibid., p. 159.
[40] Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, p. 153.

when groups of people have a belief in a spirit world comprised of a multitude of competing deities, none of which are sovereign in power, absolutely knowledgable, nor seeking a loving, lasting relationship with human beings, they obviously do not conceptually share the God, whom the Bible reveals. Furthermore, if morality for these groups has always been subject to their personal interpretations of tradition and experience, their idea of wrongdoing will also surely differ from the sin, of which the Bible speaks.

Some translators may have no problem acknowledging that unshared cultural concepts exist, and that these should be translated with different receptor forms. They may, however, fall into yet another error in situations, where a concept *is* actually shared. They may assume that, because the concept is shared, it should be represented the same way, lexically, that the vocabulary of the two languages would surely cover the same range of experiences and ideas.[41] Unfortunately the assumption is wrong. Even if one could successfully argue the idea of sin to be culturally universal, or, more particularly, that the biblical idea of sin is shared by the language, into which they are translating, great care must still be taken to search for truly equivalent forms.

Dye, who views sin as a universal construct, in that he talks of a cross-cultural definition being obtainable, affords a good example of avoiding this error. Even while believing sin to be universally understood, he does not suggest representing it with literal forms, but encourages finding suitable equivalents. What is his prescribed method? Locating points of conviction within the receptor culture.[42] We pause to admit that Dye is not alone in his view; much earlier, when looking at sin from

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[41] See Beekman, and Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, pp. 175-179, where they deal with three misconceptions regarding equivalence: (1) that all cultures share the same ideas; (2) that, in cases, where concepts are shared, they can be represented the same way, lexically; and (3) that, if a concept is shared, the words from the two different languages will cover the same range of experience and ideas.

[42] See discussion in part one of this article in *the Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), p. 119.

scripture, we encountered theologians, who also believed sin to be cross-culturally apprehended.[43]

Regardless of whether the concept of sin is shared or not, we underscore the need, in either case, to seek for genuine equivalence in the translation process. So, while believing we have adequately demonstrated that the biblical concept of sin is *not* shared by animist cultures, in deference to any, who hold a different opinion, we present four means of satisfactorily arriving at equivalence for a shared conceptual situation. These are presented in Figure 3. If a translator for an animist culture is convinced that the biblical concept of sin is partially shared by the receptor audience (it certainly is not wholly shared), the trap of literal, one-for-one substitution can be avoided by employing one or more of these solutions.[44]

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[43] See discussion in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 49-50, where the comments of A. Hodge, Eichrodt, and possibly Berkhof, support this view.

[44] Beekman and Callow's chart, which shows the four means of achieving equivalence, when receptor and source language cultures, at least partially, share the concept in question, is, for the majority of linguists, self-explanatory. But, in textual discussion (pp. 180-188), they provide further explanation, and give examples of each solution. We summarise this information here.

 (1) Equivalence – translating a single word by a phrase or cluster. Sometimes the reverse solution is required, but rarely. This is because the minority languages, into which Bibles are being translated, tend to have comparatively less-rich vocabulary banks, e.g., Money, in general, and units of foreign currency, in particular – when translation is attempted for some cultures, zero meaning, or wrong meaning, results. A phrase, such as, "valuable stones, used for barter" may be helpful, e.g., Sabbath, or rest day – the same difficulty for translation, as above. A phrase like "a day, when Jews observed a no-work taboo" has been used.

 (2) Equivalence – using synonyms. Regarding translation of "sin", Beekman and Callow say, "It is not uncommon for a translator to find that while the SL has several synonyms for a particular concept, there is only one term for that concept in the RL. For instance, such terms as "trespass", "unrighteousness", "bad", "evil", and "offend" can, in a particular context, be synonymous with "sin". If the RL has only one way to express the concept of sin, then the translator has no choice, but to use it in those contexts, where terms, such as the above, are found in the source text, and are, indeed, synonymous. But care must be taken if the words are not exactly synonymous – here, the RL must render them also in a separate way." The linguistic use of synonyms in stylistic doublets, or in generic-specific contrasts, is also discussed, e.g., "He is faithful .

Figure 3
**FOUR MEANS OF ACHIEVING EQUIVALENCE
WHEN CONCEPTS ARE (IN PART) CROSS-CULTURALLY SHARED,
AND WHEN NO SINGLE-WORD SUBSTITUTE IS AVAILABLE**[45]

STRUCTURAL FEATURE		SL LEXICAL FORM		RL NON-LITERAL OF LEXICON EQUIVALENT
(1)	Componential complexity	Single word	>	Phrase or cluster
		Phrase or cluster	>	Single word
(2)	Synonymy	Several synonyms	>	Fewer, more, or none
		No synonyms	>	Several synonyms
(3)	Generic; specific	Generic	>	Specific
		Specific	>	Generic
(4)	Figurative; non-figurative	Figurative	>	Non-figurative
		Non-figurative	>	Figurative

The solutions of the chart can be verbally summarised as follows. When a word of the source language cannot be rendered (at least not

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. . to forgive us our *sins*, and to cleanse us from all *unrighteousness*" (1 John 1:9), or, "He was *in need*, and was *hungry*" (Mark 2:25).

(3) Equivalence – using generic term for a specific, or vice versa. This results when the SL uses a specific term, for which the RL has only a generic term. The generic term may be used as it stands, *if* it can represent the specific sense, in the particular context in focus. If not, it may be modified, to take on a more-specific sense, e.g., lilies > flowers (Matt 6:28), or, bread > food (John 6:33)

(4) Equivalence – using figurative expressions. Beekman and Callow say that, as an alternative to the first three solutions, it is always acceptable to use an appropriate idiom from the RL. The translator should check carefully that the idiom represents the same sense the lexical item has, literally, in the SL.

[45] The chart is taken from Beekman, and Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, p. 178. Cf. Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, pp. 155-159, where she presents five non-literal equivalent solutions for translating shared, or partially shared, concepts across language. These are: (a) descriptive phrases (which are, basically, definitions used within the text); (b) synonyms (for which she cautions that synonym sets don't match across languages); (c) generic-specific doublets (which may be stylistic, or else are semantically significant word pairs, where the second member adds information to that of the first); (d) negating antonyms (e.g., Aguaruna of Peru has no word for "bad", and, instead, uses "not good"); and (e) generic-specific shifts (which can be used in either direction). In Larson's presentation, she does not include Beekman and Callow's figurative/non-figurative solution, because she treats it in a later chapter as a special case. Also her 2nd, 3rd, and 4th solutions are covered by Beekman and Callow's category of synonymy.

without an associated semantic shift) by means of a receptor-language word, carrying the same selection and number of meaning components, then non-literal equivalence is obtained by one of two choices. Firstly, the translator can find and use the *total* number of words, which *together* match the selection and number of meaning components found in the original word – this is accomplished by means of a substitute word-phrase, synonymy, or a generic-specific shift. Secondly, the translator may search, instead, for an appropriate idiom in the receptor language, one that provides readers with equivalence of meaning.[46]

Such non-literal solutions are even more necessary, when concepts are not shared between two cultures. A few examples of scriptural terms obviously not found in every culture are snow, rudders, phylactery, scribes, and dragon. In translating these, one of three solutions is typical: cultural substitution, use of a loan word, or modification of a generic receptor-language word.[47] An example of cultural substitution can be drawn from groups accustomed to building houses with thatch roofs. Their term for thatch-roof could be used in a translation of Mark 2:4, where the paralytic's friends "removed the roof" above Jesus' head, even though the receptor audience's mental picture of "roof" is quite different from that of the source text. In cases of any cultural substitution, however, the wise translator is cautious; reader reaction must be carefully tested. When foreign loan words are used, they need to be accompanied by receptor-language collocates, which provide clues to the meaning. Without these, the foreign word will be nonsensical or misunderstood. For a culture, which has never seen a camel, for instance, one could translate "*kamel*-animal", and ensure that the context makes clear the animal's use as a beast of burden, or a form of transport. As with cultural substitution, the meaning conveyed by using loan words should be tested for each literary context.

But, according to Larson (and others),[48] it is only the third non-literal solution – modifying a generic receptor-language word – that can be

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[46] Beekman, and Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, pp. 189-190.

[47] Ibid., pp. 191-193.

[48] Cf. John Beekman, "Anthropology and the Translation of the New Testament Key Terms", in *Notes on Translation* 1-80 (1980), p. 32, where he asserts that borrowing

used for translating a key source-text word.[49] In the case of translating "sin" for Tabo (where we have argued that the biblical view is foreign to the receptor culture), this means that solutions will best be found in indigenous descriptive phrases that employ a generic Tabo word as the noun head. Therefore, while the Tabo words *kuba* (generic "bad") and *talona* ("taboo") are inadequate, by themselves, as translations for "sin" and "holy", since both are rooted etymologically in animist belief and practice, the possibility remains that they can be used in carefully-constructed phrases to convey biblical truth.[50] In deriving genuine equivalence, the wording of the associated descriptive phrase becomes all-important. The phraseology functions, to both build a mental picture of a previously-unfamiliar concept, and to distinguish the noun head from any traditional beliefs, with which it could be confused.[51]

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foreign words should never be used to represent such basic concepts as prayer, conversion, repentance, salvation, forgiveness, and sin.

[49] Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, p. 166.

[50] See our opening discussion in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), p. 41, where phrases, employing these words, were entertained as possibilities. Cf. P. G. Katoppo, "Translating 'Sanctification' ", in *The Bible Translator* 38-4 (1987), pp. 429-432. Katoppo is a Bible translation consultant for the Indonesian Bible Society. As an Indonesian, he has special insight into Bible translation problems, unique to situations of former animist and current syncretist belief. His article deals with trying to find the best word or phrase to translate "sanctification" in this type of context. Like "sin" in the Bible, "sanctification" has a variety of meanings, which are determined, largely, by context. His brief study looks at how the word is translated for Bahasa Indonesia versions of the Bible, and why the more-recent BIS translation rejected earlier renderings. His conclusion is that a theological key term (where all existent vocabulary is heavily loaded with semantically-undesirable baggage) probably needs to be translated by a phrase, adding on qualifications for each sense required by different contexts.

[51] See Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, pp. 166-167, where she says that the associated phrases are necessarily one of four types: descriptions of form, of function, of a combination of form and function, or a simile. Larson gives appropriate examples, but so do Beekman and Callow, *Translation and the Word of God*, pp. 191-194, from which the following are drawn:

(a)   phrases, describing form – mustard is "a plant, whose seed is very small";

(b)   phrases, describing function – synagogue is "a house, where Jews studied God's law";

(c)   phrases, describing both form and function – winepress is "a hole in the ground, where they squeezed grapes into juice";

TAKING CARE WITH KEY TERMS

Key terms are defined as words, used over and over in the text, which are crucial to the theme or topic being discussed,[52] a definition, under which "sin" in the text of the Bible easily qualifies. Besides our suggestion that, for such terms, a descriptive indigenous phrase represents the best means of obtaining equivalence (especially in cases where the degree of conceptual sharing between cultures is vague), what other considerations must be given to translating them? Larson suggests that not treating key terms carefully results in an overall message skewed from the original.[53] She further says that, among key terms, those that deal with religious aspects of a culture, are by far the most difficult. Why? Because such "words are intangible, and many of the practices [and responses to them] are so automatic that the speakers of the language are not as conscious of the [underlying] meaning involved."[54]

After explaining in detail, and with examples, that equivalence is achieved through a variety of non-literal solutions (many of which result in a more-wordy receptor-language rendering), Larson surprises by stating that "for key words, it is highly desirable to select a single item in the receptor language, to avoid cumbersome reading".[55] But she is here speaking of key terms, which are a part of the material culture of the receptor language. For many religious terms, the fact remains that single lexical items will not accurately convey scriptural meaning into an animist culture.[56] If there is conceptual sharedness, it is, at best, partial. Obviously, in these cases, a tension arises between accuracy and naturalness in the translation process; to consistently over-amplify every key word in a text will most likely result in a very awkward

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(d)   phrases, using a simile – crown is "a hat, like an important person wears".

[52] Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, p. 177.

[53] Ibid., p. 153.

[54] Ibid., p. 178.

[55] Ibid.

[56] P. Sjolander, "Religious Terms in Simple Language", in *The Bible Translator* 34-4 (1983), pp. 426-431. The author says that, for key religious terms, translators must: (1) evaluate their audience's degree of literacy and familiarity with Christianity; (2) analyse the components of meaning of each religious term; and (3) choose a simple word or phrase to convey the components of meaning, which are in focus in any given context.

reading, but to fail in accurately communicating the meaning of these terms causes message distortion.

In summary, the solution for translating difficult religious key terms lies in making some of the receptor-language's meaning components explicit, whereas they were implicit in the original.[57] If a theological term is shared conceptually to a large degree, one of Beekman and Callow's four non-literal solutions should be employed, to obtain an equivalent – a descriptive phrase, a synonym, a more-generic cover term, or a figure of speech. If, however, the term is absolutely unshared (or shared to only a minor degree), then the translator is restricted to using an indigenous descriptive phrase. In these cases, though, the translator is wise to keep readability and naturalness continually in mind. Wordiness can, at times, be reduced or avoided by means of other contextual clues. For instance, if the term "sin" is repeated in a pericope several times, and true equivalence can be achieved, only with a phrase like "offence against God", after the first full use of the phrase, the other references could be translated more simply by "offence" alone. Or, if the context bears out that a human action resulted in God being offended, again, it is not necessary to spell out the obvious with a longer phrase. These abbreviations of a key term's equivalent form within the text are legitimate, as long as accuracy and fullness of meaning are not sacrificed.[58]

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[57] Larson, *Meaning-Based Translation*, p. 184.

[58] Norm Mundhenk, "Translating 'Holy Spirit' ", in *The Bible Translator* 48-2 (1987), pp. 201-207. This article is here mentioned and summarised, because it illustrates the deliberation necessary to establishing equivalence for key theological terms in languages that are traditionally animist, as well as the seriousness of not doing this well. Mundhenk says that the dangers for translating "Holy Spirit" are fourfold: (1) using a word for spirit, which describes a malevolent group of beings; (2) using a word for spirit, which refers to the soul of one who has died; (3) using a word for an impersonal life force, characteristic of rocks, trees, and rivers; and (4) using a borrowed term, which, ultimately, has zero meaning. If there is no word for "holy" in the language, the adjective "clean", "forbidden", or "pure" may suffice. Alternatively, just the possessive "God's", as in "*God's* Spirit", may be used. Regarding the more-difficult member of the word pair ("spirit"), the term chosen must conform to the biblical representation of who the Holy Spirit is. In the example, five receptor language possibilities are identified, and each, then, discussed, in comparison with the biblical view. The choice

A CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC SOLUTION FOR TABO

TWO PRELIMINARY CAUTIONS

John Beekman succinctly states what our attempts, thus far, have aimed for when he says, "A good translation results, when a translator recognises the interrelated importance of biblical exegesis, anthropology, and linguistics."[59] Now the recognition of an action being important, and subsequently acting upon that recognition to obtain satisfactory results, are two separate entities. While, from the beginning, we have recognised the importance to our study for each of the disciplines Beekman mentions, we now seek, in this section, to "put it all together". Our ultimate aim is a comprehensive and valid paradigm for translating "sin" and its synonyms in the Tabo language.

In providing translators with general direction for tackling the concept of sin, Barnwell and her associates identify one prerequisite to formulating a solution, followed by two cautions, ones which we will keep in mind in the following pages. They suggest that, prior to any decisions, a study of all receptor-language words in the same general area of meaning be made. It is from this lexical pool that, ultimately, words will be selected to be used on their own, or else developed into phrases. In this prior endeavour of data collection, it is of great importance to consider how each lexical item is used indigenously within the culture.[60] Regarding the Tabo situation, we believe we have already fulfilled this requirement; the terminology used to describe traditional views of the spirit world and morality were discussed, at some length, in a previous section.[61]

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of God's Spirit being akin to a human spirit is shown to be best. Mundhenk ends by cautioning that, if the wrong choice is made here, it should not be surprising, years later, to find that receptor language Christians have a very inadequate understanding of the Holy Spirit.

[59] Beekman, "Anthropology and the Translation of the New Testament Key Terms", p. 32.

[60] Barnwell, et al, *Key Biblical Terms in the New Testament*, Dallas TX: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1995, prepublication CD-ROM. Cf. J. Loewen, "Understanding the World of the Supernatural", in *Practical Anthropology* 12-4 (1965), pp. 183-187.

[61] See discussion in part one of this article in *the Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 122-128, under "Traditional Tabo Belief in the Spirit World". Beyond

As far as cautions, Barnwell says that, in making selections from the lexical pool, one should always be wary of using a receptor-language word that refers only to certain offences, judged as major within that culture, that is a word that references only traditional-value judgments. Such a word may be semantically restricted to a short list of taboos, for example, murder, adultery, inhospitality, and getting angry. Accordingly, the list (which is based on human experience and tradition) may exclude some acts that God regards as sinful, and may include others, for which there is no scriptural prohibition.[62] Unfortunately for the translator, seeking a simplistic solution, this errant list will be conjured up every time the word is used. In contrast, we recall the semantic components of the biblical definition of sin – it is, first and foremost, any personal offence against God; secondly, it often includes, or focuses, on human pride, disregard of His laws, or alienation from Him.[63] So a non-restrictive term, one which can be further defined by inclusion in a phrase, or by surrounding context, is far better to select, as a rendering for "sin".

Barnwell's second caution is that any term selected (or phrases constructed from it) must have enough flexibility to include all that the Bible speaks of as sinful. New Testament references to specific sins illustrate how varied the offences are, and how broad the general receptor-language term must, therefore, be. Actions, words, thoughts, attitudes, and motives are all, at times, judged to be offensive to God. The long list comprises blasphemy (Matt 12:31); treating God, or a parent, disrespectfully (Luke 15:18); adultery, and other forms of immorality (John 8:11; 1 Cor 6:18; 2 Cor 12:21); unbelief and rejection of the Messiah (John 16:9); deliberate disobedience of God, and rejection of His truth (John 15:22, 24); rejecting, or killing, one who

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words associated with traditional belief, many other non-religious lexical items were considered. While no Tabo word was deemed acceptable as a single-word substitute, a number of terms, we discussed, could prove effective in communicating the biblical sense of "sin", as part of a larger phrase. Among these, the ones considered as potentially effective in phrases (as well as the phrases, into which they could be formed) will be presented shortly.

[62] Barnwell, et al, *Key Biblical Terms in the New Testament*.

[63] See our earlier summary definition in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), p. 56.

testifies to the Messiah (Acts 7:60); lacking fear of God, lying, bitterness, and causing strife (Rom 3:9-18); doing something that you are not sure is right (Rom 14:23); causing a fellow-Christian to offend God (1 Cor 8:12); being angry (Eph 4:26); and idolatry (Rev 18:4-5).[64]

REJECTION OF *KUBA* AS A SOLUTION FOR TABO

We now return to where we began, considering whether either the Tabo word *kuba*, or the phrase "doing *kuba*", is a suitable rendering of scripture's most basic word for "sin". Our earlier concerns were threefold. Firstly, we were uncomfortable with the extremely general level of meaning ascribed to *kuba* in ordinary conversation; frequently moral connection is totally lacking. Secondly, even when morality is in focus, an undesired association with animist religious beliefs remains; traditional lists of right and wrong for the Tabo people (and their basic understanding of what constitutes offence) are at variance with scripture. Thirdly, perhaps most importantly, no other alternatives have previously been truly considered.

Now, in the earlier discussion of animist religion, we demonstrated that concern over *kuba*'s association with past belief and ritual practice is, indeed, valid. In the next section's discussion of equivalence for key terms, we then noted various authorities' opinion that it would be extremely unwise to rely on such a word in isolation. We also demonstrated, in the joint analysis of multiple senses for *kuba* and "bad", that (a) both words are highly generic,[65] in the range of sense

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[64] Barnwell, et al, *Key Biblical Terms in the New Testament*.

[65] Joseph E. Grimes, "Sin", in *Notes on Translation* 1-22 (1966), p. 13, says, though, that a generalised term (one like *kuba*) that reflects a personal evaluation is, in the long run, far better (than a specific term, which covers a list of traditional taboos), even though the general term may, at first, seem too non-specific for theological use. He continues, saying that a general term may be "sufficiently similar to the biblical understanding of sin to permit close correspondence of thought to develop in either an inner-directed, or an other-directed, context. The biblical contexts will show readers that God makes His own evaluations, so that sin is not linked to human whims, even though it is talked about with the same vocabulary." But, in spite of Grimes seeing no difficulty with using a highly generic term for "sin" (in fact, he argues, convincingly, that such terms are preferred), the fact remains that *kuba* has a moral sense, only secondarily, and that its moral sense is tainted by associations with traditional animist belief.

they cover; and (b) both refer to moral badness only secondarily. The latter point is especially significant, because it means that, apart from contextual clues, the primary sense that comes to the minds of hearers or readers is non-moral. For both anthropological and linguistic reasons, then, we reject *kuba* as a suitable translation of "sin" in the Tabo scriptures. On rare occasions, where it is deemed necessary to use *kuba* for "sin" (because of naturalness, or readability issues), the context should explicitly highlight the intended moral focus.

Now, some have seemingly dismissed the potential problem of using vocabulary with a different prior-religious tradition. H. G. Meecham, for instance, argues that, even within the original scriptures, the various authors took words from out of pagan backgrounds, and invested them with new theological meaning. He believes, therefore, that receptor cultures will learn correct theological meaning of initially unfamiliar terms in the Bible, either by the Holy Spirit's direct transformation of their understanding, or by solid Christian teaching.[66]

We disagree with Meecham, on two counts. Firstly, out of an aversion for solving a difficult linguistic problem, the translator must not purposely choose an inferior, vague form, and then expect the Holy Spirit to supernaturally bring about accurate and unambiguous meaning. The translator is responsible to conscientiously investigate all other choices. As human beings, we have no power to change the life of another; this is, indeed, the Holy Spirit's work alone. We have, however, been enabled with sound minds, academic training, and cultural experience, to translate His message into forms that people can readily understand. While using the Word to change people's lives has been, and always will be, the responsibility of God, following sound principles in translating, it remains the task He has given over to us. Furthermore, even if a receptor-language word will eventually develop

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[66] See H. G. Meecham, "Old Words with New Meanings – a New Testament Study, Part 2", in *The Bible Translator* 4-2 (1953), pp. 71-74. Meecham's examples include the Greek words for glory, grace, sin, Lord, Almighty, salvation, peace, life, love, and Saviour. He believes these examples prove that, in the context of Christian faith, pagan theological words can and will acquire new meaning; such words need not be avoided in translating the Bible for minority groups of a differing religious background.

new theological meaning, there is no guarantee that new understandings will actually develop, as the translator might hope. It may take several generations of time for a word to develop new meaning. Knowing this, what justification can there be to expose even a single generation to confused understanding?

The second problem with Meecham's argument is its dependence on the premise that the writers of scripture successfully borrowed pagan terms. While the major premise is factually true, the argument's falsity lies in comparing the New Testament situation to translating for minority languages today. Greek had become the international language of its time, spoken by all, who were educated, and by many who were not. When using a majority language to express ideas, one seldom borrows from obscure smaller languages, unless the term is already widely accepted by the majority-language speakers. Furthermore, the audience,[67] being addressed by the New Testament writers, was one already familiar with Old Testament scriptures, Jewish culture, and thus, the theological basis for the Christian message. Using Greek words from philosophical or mythological contexts, and transplanting them into Christian dialectic, did not present readers with huge, insurmountable semantic hurdles. This, however, is the exact opposite of today's minority-language situations, where most first-time translation work is being done. The people groups, who make up the receptor audiences are essentially unfamiliar with both the historical basis for Christianity, and its underlying theology. Whatever they hear will inevitably be interpreted, according to the cultural framework they already know.[68] Therefore, to use unmodified, traditional religious

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[67] The 1st-century church was (at least initially) comprised, primarily, of believers, who were Jews to begin with, or who were Gentile proselytes, already somewhat familiar with Old Testament teaching.

[68] On this point, see A. R. Tippett, *Verdict Theology in Missionary Theory*, South Pasadena CA: William Carey Library, 1973, p. 149. Regarding the importance of bridging cultural gaps with the Christian message, Tippett argues for retaining, to some extent, the traditional religious forms the receptor culture has used. He suggests that the outside Christian worker keep positive meanings from receptor culture forms, even if the actual practice is discarded. The actual forms can be replaced by "functional substitutes", that is, corrective mechanisms, which cover up any cultural voids, resulting from customary practices being discarded. When a custom is rejected by the outside

terms from this type of cultural milieu, as a means of translating key biblical concepts, will, far more likely, result in distortion of the new message, rather than changing the meaning of vocabulary used for untold centuries before.

TABO SOLUTIONS FOR TRANSLATING ἁμαρτία AND 10 NEW TESTAMENT SYNONYMS

In the introduction to this paper, we suggested five alternatives to *kuba*, as possible translations for "sin". The first of these was to employ a phrase containing the idea of taboo. For the Tabo people, one of two words is possible as the head of this kind of phrase. The first is *talona*, which represents those prohibitions passed down from previous generations, and supposedly originating with *Galegae*, the tribal deity, and ancestral being, from whom they have all descended. The second is *kukala*, a word, which designates privately-made, but publicly announced, prohibitions regarding personal property. The *talona* are made strong by the power of *Galegae*; *kukala* are made strong by localised jungle spirits that a man has befriended through appeasement. When he has offered gifts of food to the spirits resident on his property, they will then look after it for him, and defend it against any trespassers. A phrase, built upon one of these words, to refer to generic sin in

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worker (because it is inherently anti-Christian), the question ought to be asked, why it existed in the first place. Some other means of meeting the felt need, which is now left unsatisfied, should be sought; preferably the local church leaders, themselves, should do the searching. Now, while Tippett's argument is applied to forms of practice, its validity extends, also, to language. Functional equivalence attempts to do, linguistically, what Tippett's functional substitution intends to do practically in the developing church. Instead of accepting animistic terminology outright (along with its unwanted semantic associations), it is best to search for suitable, equivalent forms of communication. Linguistically, this is what we are seeking to do, by means of a phrase, which, while built upon receptor language terms that may carry animist connotations, are constructed in such a way that new theological truth successfully replaces the old beliefs. These phrases should, of course, be constructed naturally; they should be identified and approved by leaders in the developing community of believers, rather than by the translator alone.

scripture would be along the lines of "violating God's *talona*", or "breaking God's *kukala*".[69]

The advantage of either of these solutions is that, firstly, they take a culturally-understood form, and apply it to offending God (the most basic understanding of sin in scripture), and, secondly, that they are very natural in their construction. The disadvantage of using *talona* is that, culturally, it refers to an explicit list of disapproved community actions, a list that most certainly differs from the prohibitions of scripture. In fact, the cultural specificity of *talona* may be more of a drawback than the generic quality of *kuba*.[70] While *kukala* may be less specific, in that no proscribed list of "thou shalt nots" is referred to, it is limited, in the sense that it refers, usually, to protection of personal property. The idea of "breaking *kukala*" coincides nicely with the personal affront, sin presents God in scripture. Its primary sense being restricted to protection of property, however, makes it harder to use. We do note, though, that the Bible teaches that all things in the material universe

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[69] See our earlier remark, in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), p. 133-134. There, we argued that, tying in the translation of "sin" to the idea of taboo may be a good solution, because both, semantically, share the idea of offending a powerful spirit being.

[70] Besides Larson's caution (see pp. 88 of this article), cf. Grimes, "Sin", p. 13, where he writes that "a word, which covers an explicit list of sins, usually excludes at least part of what the Bible intends to be understood as sin. . . . But, by moving away from an explicit list of sins, to the more general area of evaluations of behaviour, it is easy to find a good equivalent for 'sin'. People, in any culture, constantly make invidious comment about the actions of others, by means of forms such as 'it is bad', or 'he is acting wrong', and related expressions. Forms like these, refer more to a personal judgment on the part of the speaker, than to an express code of behaviour, which is exactly the point. Any word that is oriented toward a list of disapproved actions, or an explicit code, automatically disagrees with whatever 'list' one might compile from the Bible. Worse, it reflects a tradition-oriented mode of thinking that is fundamentally incompatible with the Bible's emphasis on guilt and responsibility." Cf. Beekman, "Anthropology and the Translation of the New Testament Key Terms", p. 32, where he states, "The proper translation of the scriptural concept of sin always faces the translator with a crucial decision. All societies have one or more words to refer to conduct and activity, which is considered to be wrong. Very frequently, however, the word or words available, as potential renditions for the concept of 'sin', represent a rather restricted specific list of unacceptable activities. When it is determined that the words are unduly restricted in their range of application, even if no unacceptable items appear in the list, there is little likelihood that the influence of context can help."

belong to God, who created them; accordingly, when humans misuse the creation, or abuse one another, they are, in effect, violating God's personal property. Perhaps the semantic appropriateness of using *kukala*, in a phrase to translate "sin", is stronger than one might first conclude.[71]

Our second, earlier suggestion for translating generic "sin" was a phrase meaning "not submitting to God". While this is linguistically natural to form, it fails to carry the idea that sin, in scripture, may be unintentional; it may be committed in total ignorance. In this regard, such a phrase, while perhaps more suitable than *kuba*, is less than satisfactory for a general term. It is more suited to translating one of the synonyms for sin that has greater specificity. παρακοή, for instance, includes semantic components of both disobeying God's law and deliberateness.

Similar to the phrase "not submitting to God", is that of "breaking (disobeying) God's rules". This was suggested as a third possible alternative to using *kuba*. But this phrase has exactly the same drawbacks as "not submitting to God". It also is too specific to cover all that the Bible speaks of as "sin"; semantically, it cannot be divorced from intentionality. "Breaking God's rules", like the phrase before it, would be legitimately used to translate παρακοή, but not ἁμαρτία.

Among the earlier suggestions, we also posited finding a natural term to parallel the etymological roots of ἁμαρτία, something along the lines of "missing God's mark". Such a phrase would avoid the problems of the last two suggestions, by avoiding being too specific, and being locked into deliberateness. Since the Tabo people are a traditional hunter-gatherer society, one would be sure that they would possess linguistic forms to describe "missing a target". And so they do, but, perhaps surprisingly, the Translation Committee has rejected using them to refer

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[71] Two other useful semantic parallels can be noted. Firstly, while a man depends on jungle spirits to watch over his property, and make his *kukala* strong, God is self-sufficient; He has His own Spirit to enforce His laws. Secondly, breakage of a *kukala*, and scriptural sin, are alike, in that they may be either deliberate or unintentional; negative consequences will result, regardless of intentionality on the part of the violator.

to offending God. The semantic crossover apparently is lacking. However, in gathering data for the purposes of this article, we came across another natural phrase, which semantically relates to "missing one's goal", and which met with initial native speaker enthusiasm as a term for "sin". The phrase refers to taking a wrong jungle trail, so that misfortune is encountered. The path appears right and safe to the physical senses, but is wrong and dangerous. While the traveller chooses this wrong path of his own volition, he never intended to get into the troubles that lurk ahead.

The advantages of using this phrase to translate ἁμαρτία are, first of all, that there is no connection whatsoever to traditional religious practice or belief. In addition, the phrase, being generic, makes it highly adaptable to any scriptural context, in which sin is used. It can, thus, refer to sins that are deliberate or unintentional, grievous or incidental, of the mind, or of the body. Being both free of animist religious thought, and being non-specific, use of the phrase runs little risk of conjuring up a list of past tribal prohibitions, ones which might, somehow, become confused with God's holy character and law today.[72] Finally, the phrase closely parallels the semantic notion of the Greek word, originally used in the New Testament; by so doing it also captures that an action may be volitional, yet unwitting, that a choice can seem right to one's physical senses, but be terribly dangerous, in its eventual outcome.

There are, of course, disadvantages; seldom does a translation solution achieve absolute perfection. Firstly, we note that the phrase does not explicitly carry the idea of personally offending God, the central concept of "sin's" biblical definition. Similarly, there is no connotation of pride, an almost equally important conceptual adjunct. We reason, however, that since the ideas of offensiveness and pride are almost always communicated in ἁμαρτία's scriptural contexts, the lack of their explicitness in the proposed phrase need not disqualify it as a good

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[72] Beekman, "Anthropology and the Translation of the New Testament Key Terms", p. 32, says that a generic term, referring to any wrongdoing, may, at first, be considered too weak, because it may include such errors as dropping a dish, or taking a wrong path on a journey. However, such generic terms often prove to be the best choice, when modified within a phrase, and when the influence of context is given consideration.

solution. But, for any "sin" contexts, where we choose to use the phrase, if offence of God and pride are semantically absent, the onus will be on us, as translators, to purposely find a means of making these fundamental aspects explicit.

A second disadvantage of using the phrase "taking the wrong path" to translate ἁμαρτία is that, while the nominal and verbal forms are easy to come by, producing an adjectival form is not. To communicate the attribute "sinful", therefore, grammatical restructuring would be necessary. However, of the 219 New Testament occurrences of the ἁμαρτία word group, we note that, in one modern English translation, an adjectival form is used less than one percent of the time.[73]

The final suggestion, from our earlier list, was to search for a suitable idiom. While some translators have certainly found figures of speech to be effective,[74] we recall the previous section's caution against using them for key terms. The degree, to which the concept is shared by source and receptor cultures, must be considered. Beekman and Callow legitimise using a figure of speech in cases where the concept is unequivocally shared.[75] But, they say (and Larson agrees) that figures are unsuitable, when the key-term concept is not a cross-cultural one.[76] Regarding "sin" being understood by traditional animist groups, we have argued that, at best, the concept is shared only in part, and have further demonstrated this to be the case with the Tabo people. For this reason, we have not searched for a figurative expression, nor has the Tabo Translation Committee offered any to date.[77]

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[73] See *NIV Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, Edward W. Goodrick, and John R. Kohlenberger III, eds, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1990, p. 1678.

[74] Note Ross Webb's work among the Tuma-Irumu as one example. See part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 38-39.

[75] See Beekman and Callow's chart of equivalency solutions, which we presented earlier (Figure 3, p. 85) and the related comments in footnote n. 45.

[76] See earlier discussion, pp. 85-87.

[77] Two other possible solutions, which were not included on the earlier list, have been considered and rejected. The first was to focus, semantically, on the negative, repulsive aspect of sin, as a means of conveying its offensiveness before God. As such, adjectives/nouns dealing with physical human senses and reactions to unpleasantness were investigated thoroughly. The words for "ugly", "smelly", "disgusting", "vomit",

So, among the many possibilities we have considered, having determined that the Tabo phrase "taking the wrong path" is a good translation for the central concept of sin, having settled on it being the best rendering of the word ἁμαρτία, for most of its New Testament occurrences, having concluded that the advantages of its use far outweigh the disadvantages, and having received an initial positive audience reaction to its use in the Tabo scriptures, we now present suitable forms for translating each of the other New Testament synonyms for sin.

To achieve this overall solution, the delimiting components of meaning, for the primary sense of each synonym,[78] were placed into a matrix (see Figure 4).[79]

"bad taste", "painful", "tragedy", "disaster", and "rottenness" were considered. All were ultimately rejected, because, firstly, they did not fit closely enough with the definition of "sin", derived earlier, and, secondly, the Translation Committee said an unequivocal "no" to each possibility. Another possibility was the word *agoe*, which, in investigating traditional religious belief and practice, had come to light. (This word was discussed in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 130-131). But, while *agoe* represented the most serious category of traditional tribal offence, it was deemed unsuitable for translating "sin", because it was even more restrictive than *talona*. Semantically, it refers to but two prohibitions – homosexuality, and women coming to the male toilet/washing area.

[78] See Figure 2, p. 78, for the earlier analysis.

[79] Barnwell, et al, *Key Biblical Terms in the New Testament*, summarise the contrasts for these New Testament synonyms by saying:

(a) ἁμαρτία (the most generic Greek word for "sin") has four senses – a specific sinful act; humanity's general sinful condition; "sin", personified poetically; accumulated record of wrongdoing (or guilt).

(b) the usage of all the other synonyms is with one of ἁμαρτία's first two senses, except for κακία and πονηρία, which mean generic "bad", and more intense generic "bad", respectively.

But, for the purposes of contrasting the synonyms with greater clarity, in construction of the above matrix, we have gone beyond Barnwell's rather simplified view, to include the other meaning components identified in Figure 2, p. 78. These components, in turn, were derived from the New Testament word study data presented earlier (see part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 76-82), where we synthesised the views of a number of respected scholars. Finally, each word's primary sense (except for ἀνομία) contains the central concept of personal offence against God, resulting in guilt. In ἀνομία's case, the primary sense is simply "a lack of knowledge",

Figure 4
A CONTRAST OF MEANING COMPONENTS
FOR NEW TESTAMENT SYNONYMS OF "SIN"

Synonym	Deliberate	Intense	Specific	Source	Other
κακία	+	+	–	External?	No shame
πονηρία	+	++	–	Self-will?	No shame
ἀδικία			Dishonesty, injustice, disrespect		
ἀνομία	Negligent		Disobedient to God's law		
παράπτωμα	?	?	?		
ἀσέβεια	+	+	Contempt for authority		
παράβασις	+		Violation of a boundary		
παρακοή	+		Disobedient to God's law/will		No desire to even hear
ἀγνοία	Ignorant		–		
ἥττημα	Negligent		–		Personal loss, failure results

Characteristics of "deliberateness", "intensity", "specificity", and "source" were identified. Another category of "other" was then added to include any extra-semantic aspects that a particular synonym might carry. Under "deliberateness", each synonym was marked with either a "+" to indicate intentionality, left unmarked, or labelled with "negligence". The category of "intensity" was marked with one or two "+"s (to show moderate or strong grievousness, respectively), or it was

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without any accompanying moral connotation; its moral sense (synonymous with the other words' primary senses) is but secondary. For this chart, then, we restrict ourselves to the secondary, moral sense of ἀνομία.

left unmarked. For "specificity", either a synonym was left unmarked (if representative of general kinds of sin), or it was labelled to show the particular kind of sin semantically in focus. Only two synonyms were marked as to "source", because we have noted, earlier, that some authorities argue a distinction between them, saying one is linked to Satan's perpetration of evil, but that the other is associated with evil, arising from self-will. In contemplating the breakdown of semantic components, we must not forget that all the synonyms share the central concept: that of personally offending God, concomitant with guilt. We recall that each synonym is defined, not by its particular bundle of meaning components alone, but by these, in conjunction with the shared central concept. While the differing bundles of meaning components distinguish the synonyms from each other, their shared centrality maintains their relatedness. Therefore, in seeking representative forms in the receptor language, both the distinctions, *and* the central concept, must be kept in mind by the translator.[80]

Once we had thus isolated the components of each synonym, we then established non-literal equivalents in Tabo, by carefully constructing distinguishing phrases, ones which conveyed biblical meaning, both accurately, and naturally. These functional-equivalent solutions for

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[80] See Stephen Pattemore, "Principalities and Powers in Urak Lawoi", in *The Bible Translator* 45-1 (1994), pp. 116-129. Pattemore works among a tribal group of 4,000, living on the SW coast of Thailand; the people are traditionally animistic, unlike the surrounding and dominant Islamic-Malay culture, from which their language derives dialectically. Pattemore's translation problem involved determining the correct receptor forms, to represent each of the various instances, in which Paul refers to spiritual powers; natural forms were desired, but these often carried unwanted theological baggage that contradicted the original intended meanings of the source text. Pattemore discusses using a single generic (low specificity) term, and then qualifying it in the different contexts, with adjectives. In Pattemore's solution, he develops semantic fields for each of nine texts. He forms a matrix by identifying four pairs of characteristics (e.g., good, evil) and then marking "+", "-", or "?" for each reference to spiritual powers. The discrete groupings, thus identified, allowed Pattemore to determine essential parameters for translating the Ephesians/Colossians references. In our solution, we have similarly constructed a matrix to aid the analysis. Our solution, however, looks at individual synonyms of the source text, determining their ordinary parameters of meaning. Pattemore looked at one phrase ("principalities and powers") to determine how it semantically differed across nine contexts.

Tabo are presented in Figure 5.[81] For all but one synonym (ἀδικία), phrases were constructed, because no suitable single word-substitutes were available.   In our earlier discussion of how to establish equivalency (when concepts are shared), we noted that Beekman and Callow's first solution was use of a phrase or word cluster.[82] For translating unshared concepts, Larson similarly advocated modifying a generic receptor-language word within a phrase.[83] Later on, Larson again, this time specifically addressing the translation of key terms, suggested modifying selected non-restrictive terms to bring out full biblical meaning.[84] To this weight of combined scholarly opinion, we add yet the wisdom of Grimes, who, in the context of translating "sin" for animist cultures, speaks of using "a phrase, serving as an acceptable equivalent" to be advantageous.[85] The phrase, he cautions, is not to be built around a restrictive "list-bound" religious term. Instead, a generic, non-religious term, one that ideally refers to evaluations and judgments, individuals make about each other's actions, should be selected. When such a term is used as the head of a phrase, the phrase itself is capable of semantically moving beyond the realm of human evaluation, to bring in the scriptural notion of God's assessment of us.[86]

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[81] The proposed solutions have been accepted by Gunuwa Kaiku and Pastor Naila Kakale, but not by the Tabo Translation Committee, in its entirety. Gunuwa Kaiku is the highly-respected, oldest member (and, therefore, the recognised Tabo language expert) of the Committee. Pastor Naila is the first Tabo graduate from Bible school to continue on in active pastoral ministry; in advising the Committee, he has proved to be an invaluable resource, uniquely combining knowledge of his own culture with a profound understanding of the scriptures, and a heart that his people will embrace its message.

[82] See Figure 3, p. 85, and the related comments in footnote n. 45, pp. 86-87. On phrases versus single-word substitution, see P. S. Cameron, "Functional Equivalence and the Mot Juste", in *The Bible Translator* 41-1 (1990), pp. 101-108. Also see Jan P. Sterk, "Translation as Recreation", in *The Bible Translator* 45-1 (1994), pp. 129-138.

[83] See earlier discussion, pp. 87-89.

[84] See earlier discussion, pp. 88-89, giving special attention to footnote n. 56, on Sjolander's article. He, too, supports the use of phrases to translate key religious terms.

[85] Grimes, "Sin", p. 14.

[86] Ibid. Note that Grimes further says that, in several cases, expressions used, in initial translation work, had to later be rejected, because they were too specific, and tradition-oriented, to satisfy the biblical context. The terms (and phrases built upon them), which

Figure 5
TABO TRANSLATION SOLUTIONS FOR
"SIN" AND ITS NEW TESTAMENT SYNONYMS

GREEK WORD	TABO RENDERING/ BACK TRANSLATION/COMMENTS
ἁμαρτία	***hibo gabo ududi (komo)*** *hibo* – that which appears right/safe to the senses, but is wrong/dangerous *gabo* – path *ududi* – to follow confidently *komo* – nominaliser

Advantages: No connection to traditional religious practice or belief; generic and, therefore, highly adaptable to scriptural contexts as the most basic word for "sin"; carries similar semantic notion of the Greek word ("missing the mark").

Disadvantages: Does not explicitly carry the idea of personally offending God, or of pride, but these are implied in most scriptural contexts, where "sin" is mentioned; no easy way of forming an adjectival form.

| κακία
 πονηρία | ***koko kuba hilopoheno ododili (komo)***
      "   "   "   "   "
 koko – great (plural)
 kuba – generic bad deeds
 hilopoheno – without shame
 ododili – to do (transitive verb/plural object) |

Advantages: Includes all the meaning components analysed for the two Greek words within a natural phrase; association with a lack of shame, and the verb "to do"; brings out the moral sense of *kuba*.

Disadvantages: Traditional bad deeds are not the same as biblical sin – individual contexts will have to carry the idea that bad deeds are defined by God's standard, not ours; the possible distinction of the two words, regarding external or internal origin, and of πονηρία being more grievous, are not made.

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end up being most suitable are those which, at first, may seem too broad in meaning, too non-specific.

ἀδικία　　　　　*tuputupuha: (emede) (komo)*
　　　　　　　　tuputupuha: – crooked
　　　　　　　　emede – to live (intransitive verb/singular subject)

Advantages: Like the Greek word, degree of deliberateness and intensity is solely determined by context; semantic association with injustice and lying is strong; adjectival, verbal, and nominal forms are all easily produced.

Disadvantages: Doesn't convey disrespect or impiety, apart from an explicit context.

ἀννομίᾳ　　　　*Godokono tutumu emalagidoleha: (komo)*
　　　　　　　　Godokono – God's
　　　　　　　　tutumu – laws
　　　　　　　　emalagidoleha: – to not think about (transitive verb/plural object)

Advantages: Carries the idea of negligence; offence of God is explicit; adjectival, verbal, and nominal forms are all easily produced.

παράπτωμα　　With authorities unable to reach agreement about this word's meaning, componential analysis and identification of a corresponding Tabo language form are impossible. In translating, each context will be analysed, case by case.

παράβασις　　　*Godoko holoholoha: (komo)*
　　　　　　　　Godoko – God (with honorific marker of person)
　　　　　　　　holoholoha: – lacking image/character

Advantages: Parallels the frequent English rendering of "ungodliness", adjectival, verbal, and nominal forms are all easily produced; sin's basic opposition to God's character is made explicit.

Disadvantages: Deliberateness, intensity, and contempt for God are not explicit, and will, therefore, have to be carried by context.

παράβασις　　　*Godokono kukala adikamida (komo)*
　　　　　　　　Godokono – God's
　　　　　　　　kukala – publicly-announced personal taboo
　　　　　　　　adikamida – to violate (transitive verb/singular object)

Advantages: Carries the idea of deliberateness, and the idea of trespass against a person.

παρακοή   ***Godokono tabo ubiha: (komo)***
                  Godokono – God's
                  tabo – word
                  ubiha: – not desiring

Advantages: Carries the idea of deliberately not wanting to even know God's will.

ἀγνοία   ***Godoko iya:tawaha: (komo)***
                  Godoko – God (with honorific marker of person)
                  iya:tawaha: – not knowing

Advantages: Does not imply deliberateness; can mean either not knowing God personally, or not ever hearing about Him.

ἥττημα   ***Saitanatamo ga (komo)***
                  Saitanatamo – in the direction of Satan
                  ga – to fall (intransitive verb/singular subject)

Advantages: Carries the idea of negligence, and resultant failure; has moral connotation; its non-specificity can suit any scriptural context.

For these reasons, then, we have not hesitated to search for, and develop, these kinds of phrases – ones which are simultaneously natural, generic enough to adapt to biblical contexts, and unhampered by traditional religious belief – to serve as equivalent forms for translating ἁμαρτία's New Testament synonyms. The solutions presented for each synonym in Figure 5 include a back translation of the phrase components into English, plus any perceived advantages, or disadvantages, of the chosen form. κακία and πονηρία ended up being represented by a single equivalent form, because the bundling of their semantic components is practically identical. We noted, earlier, that one group of authorities suggests a distinction may exist between the two terms, regarding evil's origin being internal or external, but the evidence for this is by no means conclusive. Also we purposely did not provide a solution for παράπτωμα, given that there is such wide disagreement as to the semantic components it represents. Its 20 New Testament occurrences will be translated on a context-by-context basis, perhaps resorting most often to our proposed rendering of ἁμαρτία, which, since it is generic, can adapt readily to most biblical "sin"

contexts. The other translation solutions presented require no additional comment.[87]

We do, yet, remind ourselves that the translation solutions given are intended only for the primary senses of these synonyms in scripture,[88] that is, those usages conveyed by the distinctive bundles of meaning components we isolated. When any of these synonyms are used, in a secondary or figurative sense, alternative solutions will necessarily be sought, context by context.[89] Furthermore, as the primary sense solutions are applied, we will not slavishly chain ourselves to consistency for its own sake. To avoid pitfalls, in this regard, Nida's three principles for checking concordance will be followed: (a) the same words in the same contexts should be translated the same way; (b) differences in parallel passages should be preserved just as faithfully as any similarities; and (c) the study of consistency should be made, after the respective portions have been naturally translated.[90] Having

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[87] The acceptability of the proposed solutions was mentioned in footnote 81, p. 103, but a word is in order about how they were derived in the first place. Generally, we followed one or more of the four methods Beekman suggests in "Anthropology and the Translation of Key New Testament Terms", in *The Bible Translator* 15-3 (1964), pp. 32-34. These are: (1) native-text method; (2) hypothetical example method; (3) question method, and (4) listening to others converse. Beekman says that "new combinations must be completely natural, both semantically and grammatically", and that "the combination, itself, may represent a new, or unknown, concept, but the manner, in which the words are combined, must be completely natural". The naturalness of new combinations is only validated, when there is full acceptance on the part of native believers.

[88] Except for ἀγνοίᾳ; see footnote n. 79 for Figure 4, p. 101.

[89] See earlier discussion, in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 68-69. Even with the primary senses of the "sin" synonyms, context-by-context analysis is necessary, if, for no other reason, than that this is how primary and secondary senses will be distinguished. Barnwell, et al, *Key Biblical Terms in the New Testament*, write: "In translating any key biblical term, the translator needs to consider: (a) the context, in which the term occurs . . . and (b) the . . . different senses it can have in other passages, in which it occurs. These two factors will help the translator decide the particular meaning the term has in a given passage." Also, they say: "Since many words have a number of different senses, according to the context . . . the decision, concerning how a term will be translated in any specific passage, should be left until the full context is being translated."

[90] Eugene A. Nida, "Checking a Translation for Consistency," *The Bible Translator* 5.4 (1954), pp. 176-181.

proposed what appear to be excellent Tabo renderings for each of the New Testament "sin" words, we have no desire to undermine excellence, by introducing mechanical substitution into the translation process ahead.

Finally, we are not reluctant to admit that the proposed solutions are not final. Checking, and *more* checking, and *yet further* checking, comprise an essential part of the seemingly never-ending process necessary to quality Bible translation. A number of excellent methods for checking a translation's accuracy and naturalness are known to exist. Included among these, are reading aloud, in various contexts, to check for audience satisfaction and comprehension, publishing preliminary versions, or individual books of scripture, to gauge both quality and overall usefulness to the church community, using back translations to check if information has been unintentionally deleted or added from the original, running tests for emotive accuracy, and checking for theological bias, with a trained consultant.[91] For the Tabo Translation Project, all of these have been consistently utilised from early on, and there is no intention of abandoning them now, not even in the case of sin's synonyms, for which we have so laboriously obtained equivalent forms.

FURTHER APPLICATIONS

RETRACING THE JOURNEY

En route to providing a Tabo translation solution for ἁμαρτία, and its New Testament synonyms, we have succeeded, also, in a number of other disparate, yet related, tasks. In the area of theological study, we first issued a caution, regarding both its limits of application, and the inevitable cultural bias Westerners bring to their work. Then, by

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[91] Jacob A. Loewen, "Testing Your Translation", in *The Bible Translator* 31-2 (1980), pp. 229-233. Loewen also mentions the Cloze technique, the checking process, which entails blanking out every fifth word of a translated text, with the native speaker trying to ascertain which words are missing. This is the only testing measure he suggests that we have not already been using regularly in the Tabo project. Cf. Beekman, "Anthropology and the Translation of the New Testament Key Terms", pp. 32-34, where he presents, and describes, his two means of validating meanings of potential translation solutions for key terms – the cycle check and componential analyses.

consulting a number of scholars, we obtained a general definition for biblical sin; primarily, it is any personal offence committed against God, and is concomitant with guilt. Human pride, breaking God's laws, and alienation of being, are other biblical ideas commonly associated with sin. Going on to specific doctrine, we noted that the scriptures (both Old and New Testaments) teach sin to have originated in the choice of rational, created beings, to be powerfully deceptive, to hold all people in its power, to result in death, and to never be beyond God's sovereign control. We then looked at the Hebrew and Greek words, used in scripture to describe sin in its various aspects, attempting to get an overview of the semantic range covered by each. We finally noted the linkage of one's view of sin with the comprehension of other Christian doctrines; teaching about God's character, and Jesus' work of substitutionary atonement, are affected, in particular.

In the area of anthropology, we noted five basic differences between biblical and animist worldview, which have a bearing on the translation of "sin". We observed that animists feel shame, rather than guilt, in response to perceived moral wrong; they subjectively determine morality; in doing so, they hold to plural (sometimes contradictory), oral traditions simultaneously; they blame outside forces for human actions; and they believe that spirit beings can be manipulated. We then looked, in some detail, at the Tabo people's traditional belief system and ethics, especially the vocabulary associated with various spirit beings, and lists of specific offences.

We then turned to linguistic study, by introducing functional equivalence theory, and noting it to be the model, under which all sound translation is practised today. Functional equivalence is the insistence that meaning has priority over form in the translation process. But, in the goal of presenting a source-text message to a receptor audience, with an impact equal to what original hearers experienced, we noted that aesthetics and adequacy of the final product must also be given consideration. We went on to discuss specific issues that translation of "sin" into a minority language could raise, looking briefly at multiple-sense lexical items, delimiting central concepts for a group of synonyms, cognitive clash, concordance, and special considerations for

establishing equivalence of a key theological term. In the process, we demonstrated the unsuitability of the Tabo word *kuba*, for representing ἁμαρτία, the most-general word for sin in the New Testament. Also we semantically distinguished 10 of ἁμαρτία's synonyms, by isolating components of meaning for their primary senses.

Finally, we considered specific solutions for the Tabo language situation. A phrase, which essentially means "taking the wrong trail", was adopted for translating "sin" in its most basic form. It was chosen, in spite of not explicitly including mention of offence against God, human pride, or resultant guilt. The advantages of the chosen phrase are its lack of connection to traditional religious practice, its adaptability to any scriptural "sin" context, its semantic parallel with ἁμαρτία, and its non-specificity regarding deliberateness, seriousness, and locus of operation (thought versus action). From here, we went on to similarly establish equivalent Tabo forms for each of the ἁμαρτία synonyms.

APPLICATION TO BIBLE TRANSLATION IN GENERAL

What features of these accomplishments are applicable to Bible translation in general? First of all, while giving theology its due regard, we do well to remember that biblical exegesis alone cannot provide answers for every translation problem encountered. Compounding systematic theology's natural limitations is the fact that the vast majority of its accumulated knowledge is a by-product of Western civilisation. Cultural heritage is inextricably bound to any people's understanding of scripture, so much so, that we should always be careful about the conclusions we reach, checking that underlying assumptions are based on revealed truth, rather than our own ethnocentric worldview. While any self-evaluation will, itself, always remain suspect – being a product of human cognition, it, too, can never be totally free from cultural bias – the goal of integrity must not be abandoned. Our example is Jesus, who, although restricted by particular human languages, thought processes, and cultural milieu, during His time on earth, nevertheless consistently communicated absolute truth.

To make this disclaimer about traditional theology's reliability is not to say that we have nothing to learn from it. Translators should derive benefit from both the overall definition of sin, and the doctrine of sin, which we have drawn from the opinions of respected scholars. In both cases, we have attempted to reduce all pertinent data to a summary form, which is succinct enough to be useful. Also, we have presented an argument that, in spite of various aspects of sin being emphasised in different parts of scripture, for the purposes of translation, no Old Testament-New Testament distinctions need be made.

Perhaps, most significant for translators at large, would be the lexical data we have compiled for all Hebrew and Greek synonyms of sin. Though none of the information is new, we have brought together the knowledge of lexicographers (Kittel, Girdlestone, Trench, and other less-well-known scholars), combined it with that of Old and New Testament theologians (Davidson, Eichrodt, Bultmann, and Barclay), and then added the opinions of authorities in Bible translation (Barnwell, Dancy, Pope, and Grayston). The information, presented on pages 71 to 82 in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (part 1 of this article), is, thus, a unique and valuable summarisation of the various words used to describe sin in scripture.

The word study data demonstrate the differences that exist between languages, regarding richness and semantic flexibility of its vocabulary, and the problem this poses for translation. Hebrew is far more flexible, and slightly richer, than Greek; English far surpasses both, in terms of vocabulary, but is similar to Greek in having usually precise semantic distinctions for its terms. For the Bible translator, working in a minority language, however, most likely a smaller vocabulary pool, than available in either biblical language, will be encountered. So, while faithfulness to the original text is greatly desired, one of the primary tools for attaining it is withdrawn; choosing from a large group of synonyms, each with subtle distinctions of meaning and emotive power, is not an option. The translator has to seek essential semantic distinctions of the source text (and reflect its original beauty and emotive power) through alternative means.

In minority language situations, then, a group of synonyms in the source text should be analysed, firstly to discern their shared centrality, and then, again, to determine how this concept is delimited for each. The resulting discrete bundles of meaning components can be used to form a matrix, showing semantic distinction of the lexical items from one another, a process, during which, care should be taken to not confuse primary and secondary senses. The more key a scriptural concept is to the overall message, the more critical becomes careful analysis. Once the analysis is complete, however, the translator can then start a search in the receptor language for forms that describe the same bundles of meaning. Often phrases will be required, but the translator should not fear using a more-complex grammatical form than the original. Furthermore, in seeking equivalence, the translator should not consider accuracy of meaning alone, for naturalness, emotive force, and readability of the translation are equally important. We note that, within any culture, a reader will seldom pursue biblical accuracy that is boring, irritating, or confusing. To the degree that a receptor culture is newly literate, this problem will be compounded.

For New Testament renderings of "sin", and its synonyms, a translator can take advantage of the semantic distinctions we presented in Figure 4.[92] Regarding Old Testament synonyms, then, one might assume that discrete bundles of meaning components could be obtained by using a similar model, but this is not necessarily the case. We have observed that Hebrew is not as precise as Greek in its semantic distinction of individual lexical items; for this reason, following the pattern of what we have accomplished for the New Testament may prove difficult. An alternative would be to follow one of the models for reducing the contexts, in which Hebrew "sin" synonyms are found, into clusters of semantic polarity.[93] After establishing receptor-language forms for each of these clusters, the translator would then determine, context by context, which cluster of meaning is intended, and translate accordingly, without undue regard for the specific synonym used in the original text.

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[92] See p. 101 of this article.

[93] See earlier discussion, in part one of this article in the *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 18-1 (2002), pp. 85-87 ("Conclusions from Word Studies", point (7)).

Finally, we would remind all translators that one must not assume a concept can be shared between source and receptor cultures, simply because a semantic connection appears on the surface. (Certainly we have demonstrated this to be a problem, in the case of translating "sin" for animist cultures; the animist concept of wrongdoing differs significantly from the biblical idea of personally offending God.) To wrongly assume a concept is shared will lead to problems of communication, especially if the concept is key to the overall theme, or message, of a text.

The determination of the degree, to which a concept is shared, is by no means easy: a continuum exists, along which there is no precise means of measurement. About all that can be said with certainty is that few concepts are ever found at the 100 percent extreme. For instance, even the idea of a home as a dwelling place, while universal in some respects, differs widely from culture to culture as to form and specific use. Therefore, the translator must try to estimate (especially for key terms) to what degree sharing exists, and then choose from among the possible equivalency models Larson, Beekman, and Callow provide. If it is judged that a key concept is unshared, or shared only to a minor degree, then rebuilding the components of the source word, by means of a phrase in the receptor language, usually proves the most suitable for establishing equivalence.

APPLICATION TO BIBLE TRANSLATION FOR TRADITIONALLY ANIMIST CULTURES

For translators, working in animist cultures, Van Rheenen's four essential differences between the worldview of Western secularism and that of traditional animism should prove useful. Both cultural extremes deviate significantly from the culture in which the biblical message was first revealed. While translators for animist groups often focus attention on the dissonance between a particular culture's belief system and the Bible, it is important that they also realise the great extent to which Western secular worldview has taken hold of their own biblical interpretation.

Translators, working within these cultures, do well also to apply the five basic differences we have noted between biblical and animist views regarding "sin". Understanding the thinking of animist groups in general, and applying this knowledge to the specific situation of the Tabo people, was of great benefit to us in finding equivalent forms for "sin" in the Tabo language. It enabled us, in some cases, to eliminate single-word substitutes entirely, and, in other cases, to see how traditional religious terms could avoid undesired connotations, by means of modification within a phrase.

We would hope that translators, working in similar cultures, would not only consider the beliefs of animists, in general, but that they would (as we have done) go further, to investigate the specific religious traditions of the group they serve. For, rendering "sin" in any of its forms, terms, which are too closely tied to traditional religious practice, may simply have to be avoided. The translator should especially steer away from any terms that represent lists of taboos, for these end up being too restrictive to cover all that the Bible refers to as "sin". Such list-bound terms may also create, for the receptor audience, a confusion of their tribal deity (who initiated the prohibitions long before) with the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. Multiple-sense words for "bad", which are too generic, should also evoke caution. Translators should ensure, for these words, that the sense describing moral badness is, indeed, the primary meaning, which comes to mind for the receptor audience. If not, there are sound reasons to avoid using such a word as a rendering for "sin". In summary, should a receptor-language word have too wide a range of meaning, it may be inappropriate to use it alone to represent "sin". Should it be too restricted in its meaning, it may, likewise, be unsuitable. And should it carry theological overtones, which directly contradict the Christian message, if used at all, it most certainly will require modification.

APPLICATION TO THE TABO TRANSLATION PROJECT

Finally, for the Tabo Translation Project itself, the solutions proposed as equivalent forms for the New Testament "sin" words are not considered as final. Firstly, we intend to present the solutions, in a variety of scriptural contexts, to the entire Translation Committee for their

approval, rejection, or modification. Then, in the coming years, as we translate the epistles, we intend to continually reevaluate each rendering, which the Translation Committee accepts. Since we believe both accuracy and grammatical correctness have already been established for our proposals, we do not expect rejection on these counts. Instead, what we will especially be concerned for, in the checking processes ahead, is proof of naturalness, a feature, which the translator runs the risk of decreasing, whenever phrases of equivalence are used as substitutes for single words. We want the scriptures, which we are translating, to be highly readable, not unnecessarily wordy, or cluttered by over-amplification. Again, we reiterate that, in spite of believing we have worked carefully to date, we remain open to yet better equivalent forms being discovered in future work. For any solutions that do prove satisfactory in the long run, we will use them only judiciously, avoiding any process of mechanical substitution, by which specific contexts of the original words are disregarded.

Indeed, even when a measure of confidence has been obtained, regarding a particular solution's accuracy, a careful translator stays alert for evidence of wrong meaning being apprehended. We illustrate with three examples of supposedly good solutions for translating "sin", or its collocates, that went awry. One translator adopted a word for "sin", which, unknown to him, was semantically restricted to being caught red-handed in the act of adultery. When he used the word of himself, in a personal testimony, the whole church broke out in laughter, his first clue that he had missed the mark in choosing an equivalent. Another translator was sure he had correctly discovered the word for "repent", but, much later, in the process of checking Acts, he realised, with dismay, that the word he had placed such confidence in was severely limited semantically. Its normative use was for legal contexts, in which a court witness, having initially told the truth against the accused, then feels remorse, and falsely changes his testimony. And, finally, there is the case of a highly-respected linguist, who worked, some years ago, on translating a minority language Bible. Much to his chagrin, he discovered, during checking, that the word he had initially settled on for "sinner" was inappropriate; it referred only to the mentally deficient, or physically handicapped, for these were people whom the receptor

culture labelled as "bad ones", not because of any moral issue, but because of their congenital defect.[94]

So, while the Word of God, itself, is inerrant in its original inspiration, the one who translates it will never achieve this same perfection. Unlike the original, our work is never truly complete, for there is always further checking, and further revision, which can be undertaken. The goal of finding perfect forms in translation is reminiscent of what we said earlier, concerning the need to shed our cognitive bias. In both cases, the goal, while practically unattainable, must, nonetheless, be targeted, for, in so doing, the quality of our communication will be enhanced. Perhaps, the more important result of pursuing perfection, though, has less to do with linguistic achievement than it does with personal character. As we continually aim for excellence and integrity in the entirety of our experience, we will keep ourselves from the mistake (should we say sin?) of concluding that we have arrived, that our work is completed, that room for improvement no longer exists.

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[94] These three illustrations are taken from Beekman, "Anthropology and the Translation of the New Testament Key Terms", p. 32.

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