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## Bible Translations as a Case of Grapevine Communication

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"Everything is more intricate than it seems to us." (Stanisław Lem)

**Abstract:** Grapevine telephone or grapevine telegraph is a popular social game involving a specific way of communication by means of linguistic expressions. The game appears to be a model of communication in general and of translation, as a special case of communication, in particular. All communicative events involve transferring meanings as messages from some person(s) to some other persons directly or indirectly, i.e. via other persons, if necessary including translators, and with or without the help of various technological devices. Every communication event entails communication sequences (Krzeszowski, 2016). A simple communication sequence consists of seven stages: 1. sender's conceptual, 2. sender's neural, 3. articulatory (speaking) or graphic (writing), 4. acoustic (spoken text) or graphic (written text), 5. auditory (hearing) or visual (reading), 6. recipient's-neural, 7. recipient's-conceptual. Most communication events, both spoken and written, and all translations involve compound communication sequences. Various kinds of distortions are very likely to occur at the stages which separate particular speakers' conceptual structures from particular hearers' conceptual structures. Such distortions are mainly due to communication barriers (Krzeszowski, 1997/2013). Translators, like participants in the grapevine telegraph game, may

contribute to increasing the number of distortions adversely affecting original messages. The grapevine telegraph effects and the related communication sequences are illustrated by translation series of selected fragments of the Bible (Psalm 78, Jesus Christ's sermons) in the context of the way in which, according to the faithful, the Bible originated.

**Key words:** grapevine communication, Bible, translation

## Introduction

The Bible can be approached in at least *three* fundamentally different ways:

1) As an object of *philological* studies including comparisons of numerous original and translated versions respectively called source texts and target texts by means of standard analytical and comparative techniques used in linguistics.

2) As a *historical source* by means of the usual methods of verification confronting the contents of the Bible with ascertained and confirmed data derived from other independent sources providing evidential data confirming or refuting what is said in the Bible. This sense includes verifying information about the world at large embracing the validity of biblical statements concerning cosmology, biology, history and other branches of knowledge acquired and accumulated over centuries preceding and following the times when the Bible came into existence.

3) As a *sacred text* revealed by God Himself to help people gain salvation. This approach treats the Bible as the "Word of God", that is the way in which God speaks to people.

In what follows the focus is laid on the first approach with a special stress on divergences among numerous selected translated versions of the Bible including Greek, Latin, English, and Polish. Consequently, historical and theological controversies about the authorship of

the Bible (treated by some as “The Word of God”) are completely irrelevant to our present concerns. The original senders (addressers) of the original messages and the first recipients (addressees) of these messages are explicitly specified in the appropriate places of the Bible: Yahwe addressing Moses on Mount Sinai, Jesus addressing the crowds on the mountain near Lake Genesareth (Lake Tiberias), Jesus addressing Saul (later St. Paul) near Damascus, etc. However, practically all later recipients of these messages are unknown and what is left are written versions, some of which are believed to be reasonably accurate renderings of the original texts in the original languages (mainly Hebrew, Aramaic and perhaps Greek). Other versions, in a great number of modern languages constitute the most numerous and constantly growing translation series ever produced.

At any rate, whatever is said here will concern what can be attested in the course of examining and comparing the relevant texts, i.e. what can be found in these texts rather than what these texts may refer to in the world at large.

## Metaphors of communication

Translation as a form of communication is usually understood as replacing a text in one language (source text) with an “equivalent” text in another language (target text).<sup>1</sup> This simple explication conceals an enormous complexity of what translation consists in. Since translation is an element of communication across languages and cultures, it can be conceived in terms of the same metaphors which mold our understanding of communication.

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1. Cf. Translation is the communication of meaning from one language (the source) to another language (the target). [...] The purpose of translation is to convey the original tone and intent of a message, taking into account cultural and regional differences between source and target languages (*What is Translation? Language Industry Definitions* | GALA, [www.gala-global.org](http://www.gala-global.org) › industry › what-translation).

As an abstract concept communication and discourse are understood in terms of more concrete concepts, through various conceptual metaphors, which are cognitively structured devices essential in our understanding of the world that we live in. One of these metaphors is called the CONDUIT metaphor (Reddy, 1979). According to subsequent reformulations the CONDUIT metaphor consists of four sub-metaphors whereby communication is understood as transfer of meanings, conceived as objects, from one human mind conceived as a container to another human mind also conceived as a container (cf. Johnson, & Lakoff, 1982; Krzeszowski, 1997/2013).

Reddy as well as Johnson and Lakoff (1982) assert that the metaphor is not an accurate model of human communication, mainly because it does not predict frequent communication failures and breakdowns, which can only be overcome by investing energy into both sending and receiving information, and which the CONDUIT metaphor does not predict. Therefore, Reddy suggests that what he calls “the toolmakers paradigm”, might be a better metaphor of what actually happens in an attempt to communicate. According to this paradigm, participants in communication inhabit separate compounds, across which no material objects, such as tools can be sent. Only schematic blueprints can be transmitted between senders and recipients. Enormous intellectual effort is required from the recipient if he is to reconstruct the original object from the blueprint which he receives from the sender. The tool resulting from such a reconstruction may be very different from the original tool. For example, a hoe may be obtained as an unsuccessful reconstruction of an axe.

In earlier publications I demonstrated that if the CONDUIT metaphor as originally formulated by Reddy is an inadequate model of communication for different reasons than those presented by its earlier critiques (cf. Krzeszowski, 1997/2013). It must be noted that the

toolmakers paradigm involves a more specific kind of sending than does the CONDUIT metaphor, so that in fact the former entails the latter. In its original form the metaphor is so general that it does not embrace specific kinds of sending and specific kinds of things being sent, in addition to those making up the toolmakers paradigm. Some, if not most of these specific cases, require enormous effort on the part of both the senders and the recipients. Other inadequacies and limitations of the CONDUIT metaphor will become evident presently. They are conducive to suggesting a new paradigm, which I call the Grapevine paradigm.

However, first it is necessary to look more closely at the inner physical mechanisms communication itself.

## Simple communication events

At the beginning let us consider the simplest communication event with one sender and one recipient, communicating orally in one language, on the face-to-face basis.

In this case we are dealing with an instantiation of the general sender-recipient schema, which may be realized in such material substances as visual or electronic devices.

What is directly observable in communication are physical elements of the process, notably the *energy* transmitted from one place to another. In every communication event a quantum of energy is transmitted from the speaker's brain to the hearer's brain along a certain medium. Every such event is a succession of incredibly complex sub-events, which occur as distinct stages making up what I call the Communication Sequence (cf. Krzeszowski, 2016). Every Communication Sequence begins in the speaker's brain as a certain dynamic pattern of cerebral-neural connections in what is technically called 'the neural circuitry', and, through a sequence of *mappings* along

successive material substances, ends with corresponding dynamic patterns of neural connections in the hearer's brain. A grossly simplified version a fragment of the single strand Communication Sequence can be presented as the succession of five stages:

I → II → III → IV → V  
 SNC ASO AT AHO HNC

where

SNC = speaker's neural connections

ASO = activation of speech organs

AT = acoustic transmission

AHO = activation of hearing organs

HNC = hearer's neural connections

Stage I is *neural* and occurs in the speaker's brain; Stage II is *articulatory* and occurs in the speaker's vocal tract; Stage III is *acoustic* and occurs in the air; Stage IV is *auditory* and occurs in the hearer's ear (middle and inner), and Stage V is again *neural* and occurs in the hearer's brain. It is perhaps needless to emphasize that this is an enormously simplified model of the mappings that are involved in the transmission of even the simplest sound.<sup>2</sup>

However, efficient communication requires even more mappings, namely between dynamic neural structures and conceptual structures at both ends of the sequence. At this point the situation becomes more complicated (intricate). Although neural structures and conceptual structures exist in two different conceptual domains – respectively physical and mental – they are inevitably interrelated through

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2. For example, even the auditory Stage IV requires a sequence of mappings from patterns of sound waves into patterns of vibrations in the ear-drum, and next into patterns of vibrations in the ossicles and from there into patterns of vibrations of the fluid filling the cochlea in the inner ear, and next to patterns of vibrations of the hair cells inside the cochlea which are eventually mapped into nerve impulses in the auditory nerve. But our crude model is quite sufficient to illustrate the nature of the problem which we are facing.

appropriate interfaces between conceptual structures and neural structures in the speaker and between neural structures and conceptual structures in the hearer:<sup>3</sup>

SCS → SNC

HNC → HCS

where

SCS=Speaker's Conceptual Structures

HCS=Hearer's Conceptual Structures

Consequently, the Communication Sequence must now look as follows:

SCS → SNC → ASO → AT → AHO → HNC → HCS

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999) what conceptual structures are largely a matter of inferences and hypotheses. Nevertheless, one must take it for granted that every successful communication event must entail a sufficient degree of conceptual pattern matching between Speaker's Conceptual Structures and Hearer's Conceptual Structures. This means that the appropriate conceptual structures are somehow mapped into neural structures of the sender's brain and at the end of the Communication Sequence they are somehow retrieved from neural structures in the recipient's brain.

The Communication Sequence as formulated above represents what may be called 'a nuclear communication event' involving one sender and one recipient communicating on the face-to-face basis. In every such event the process of sending is purely physical in the most directly meaningful sense since what is actually "sent" are not ideas but various patterns of physical phenomena successively mapped between Speakers' Neural Connections and Hearer's Neural Connections. It is this physical aspect of communication that constitutes experiential

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3. The alternative would be to reduce conceptual structures to neural structures, which would identify neural reality with mental reality. This option is rejected for the reasons expounded in Krzeszowski (2016).

grounding of the CONDUIT metaphor and of the toolmakers paradigm as models of communication, whereby ideas (concepts) are metaphorically understood as “things” being sent from one place (the speaker’s mind) to another place (the hearer’s mind). What happens at the interfaces between Speaker’s Conceptual Structures and Speaker’s Neural Connections, on the one hand, and between Hearer’s Neural Connections and Hearer’s Conceptual Structures can only be described in terms of the CONDUIT metaphor and the toolmakers paradigm.

Even the nuclear communication events can be seriously disrupted or even rendered impossible when the sender’s and the recipient’s conceptual structures are realized in different languages. In such cases the recipient’s neural and conceptual structures cannot reach a certain threshold level of similarity with the sender’s conceptual and neural structures. Remaining above this critical level is *conditio sine qua non* of every successful communication. Any failure in this respect requires some sort of metalinguistic explication or interpretation if reasonably successful communication is sought. One obvious way is to reconstruct what happens in the sender’s conceptual structures is to express it in a language that is familiar to the recipient. Such a reconstruction is called translation.

## The grapevine paradigm

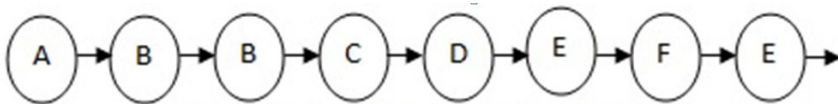
Seemingly, the title of the present paper is based on a conceptual metaphor, which in consistence with Johnson and Lakoff’s notation could be formulated as TRANSLATION IS GRAPEVINE. However, by analogy with Reddy’s toolmakers paradigm, I prefer to call it the grapevine paradigm, mainly because, unlike in the case of the CONDUIT metaphor, so far there exist virtually no conventional linguistic expressions that are coherent with these paradigms. This is so because the CONDUIT metaphor is an



element of the toolmakers' paradigm as well as of the grapevine paradigm: both conceptualize communication as sending, both involve senders and recipients and both conceptualize ideas, messages, thoughts, etc., as things. The difference is that of complexity. The CONDUIT metaphor in its original form and the toolmakers paradigm concern nuclear communication events, involving one idealized abstract sender and one idealized abstract recipient. The grapevine paradigm embraces very long and complicated complexes of communication events involving an indefinite number of recipients-becoming-senders.

The crucial word 'grapevine', used in this paradigm, is explicated as "an informal person-to-person means of circulating information or gossip" (*Merriam-Webster*), or as "The informal transmission of information, gossip, or rumor from person to person" (*The Free Dictionary*). The grapevine does not have any definite pattern or direction. It can be effective horizontally, vertically and even diagonally. Keith Davis (1969) distinguishes four basic types of grapevine communication, two of which, namely Single Strand Chain and the Cluster Chain, are immediately relevant to our present concerns:

Figure 1. Grapevine Pattern - Single Strand Chain



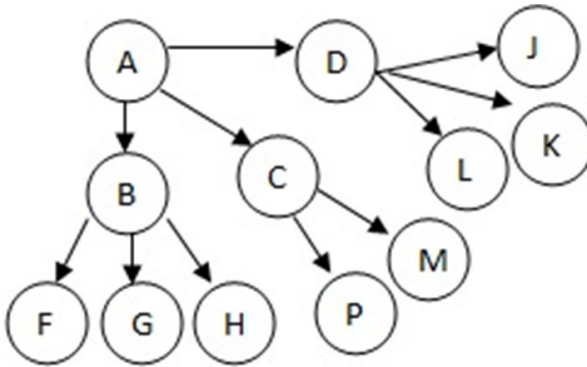
Source: Davis, 1969.

This type of grapevine communication is implemented in the popular social game called 'grapevine telephone', 'grapevine telegraph', or 'Chinese whispers'<sup>4</sup>. The game is played by a group of participants sitting or standing side by side in a row or a circle. The first person as .....

4. The game is also called 'Russian scandal', 'whisper down the lane', 'broken telephone', 'secret message', 'the messenger game', or 'pass the message'.

the originator of a message (sender) whispers it into the ear of the next person, who whispers the message into the ear of the next person, and so on. Finally the last person – the ultimate recipient of the message – announces it loud. It rarely happens that the message arrives in its original form. On the contrary, the final version is often so distorted that it can hardly be recognized as being somehow related with the original message. As will be shown later this simple version of grapevine may serve as a fairly accurate model of some rather simple communication events and translations. However, Davis specifies a few other versions, at least one of which, namely ‘the cluster chain’ is particularly relevant to other, more complex cases:

Figure 2. Grapevine Pattern - Cluster Chain



Source: Davis, 1969.

In the grapevine telegraph game, in which the single strand version of grapevine communication is used, distortion of the original message may be deliberate to increase the element of fun and entertainment. In real-life grapevine communication it is gossip that is often highlighted.

Distortion, which is likely to occur in both real life grapevine communication and in the grapevine telegraph game, is to a large extent

rooted in three features of the grapevine communication, namely flexibility, rapid communication and spontaneity (cf. Davis, 1969).

**Flexibility** manifests itself in the fact that in principle, though not necessarily in practice, “there is no formal control over grapevine, so it is more flexible than other forms of communication” (Davis 1969, p. 269). This is consistent with the existence of numerous possible and acceptable translations of source texts technically called translation series. Innumerable translations of the Bible very well illustrate this property of the grapevine. Considered by many to be a sacred text, it owes its continued existence to an enormous number of versions in an enormous number of translations. This phenomenal wealth of translations results from the fact that in the unanimous opinion of experts, for example, Nida (1964), Swanson and Heisig (2005), Majewski (2015), there is no such thing as a single correct translation (interpretation) of the Holy Scripture.

**Rapidity** manifests itself in the fact that owing to translations the transfer of meaning from the sender to the recipients is supposed to be and in many cases indeed is more “rapid”. There is no doubt that reading and understanding any text translated into a language familiar to the recipient is less time consuming than attempting to read the text in any of its original source versions whatever the word ‘original’ could mean in the case of the Bible. To say the least one would have to be able to understand texts written in ancient Hebrew, New Testament (Koine) Greek and possibly even Aramaic. To learn these languages would consume a lot of time and effort. In this way the property ‘rapid’ characterizing grapevine communication turns out to be critically important in establishing analogies between translation and grapevine communication.

**Spontaneity** in grapevine communication manifests itself in the technique of passing information (meaning) from the sender to (the) recipient(s), which consists in passing the relevant information

“automatically from the top level of the organization to the bottom level without any difficulty in delivering the message.” (Davis, 1969, p. 269). This property of grapevine communication will turn out to be particularly relevant to describing the technique of God’s communication with people through His prophets and through Jesus of Nazareth.

Before more is said about translation of the Bible as an element of GOD TO MAN communication, it is necessary to look more closely at what happens when the recipient is not familiar with the language of the original text. In such cases the original text must be *translated* into whatever language is familiar to the intended recipient.

## The Translation Communication Sequence.

Introducing translation into the Simple Communication Sequence results in a longer sequence, which will be called Translation Communication Sequence:

*Translation Communication Sequence*

→ [ Transfer Station ] →

SCS → SNC → SPA → A/VT → [-----] → A/VT → RRA → RNC → RCS

The ‘transfer station’ consists of the following subsequence:

TRA → TNC<sub>sl</sub> → TCA → TNC<sub>tl</sub> → TPA

where

TRA = Translator’s Receptive Activity.

TNC<sub>sl</sub> = Translator’s Neural Connections in the source language.

TCA = Translator’s Conversion Activity, which consists in mapping source language structures into target language structures.

TNC<sub>tl</sub> = Translator’s Neural Connections in the target language.

TPA = Translator’s Productive Activity.

In the Transfer Station meaning, i.e. conceptual structures are reinterpreted and packed into suitable new containers familiar to the

recipient. In the course of this process source conceptual structures are likely to undergo modifications, alterations and distortions, which in principle, though not necessarily in practice, are not supposed to cause communication breakdowns.

The Translation Communication Sequence presented above does not reveal *the enormous complexity of what actually goes on in the minds and brains of the sender and of the recipient when they communicate by means of translated texts*. For a long time, to a large extent this will remain one of the greatest mysteries pending continued explorations of various scholars and scientists. In terms of our present concerns the Communication Sequence and even the Translation Communication Sequence represent only a few initial links in a very long sequence of links making up a much longer and much more intricate cluster-strand-grapevine.

There are at least four sources of intricacy of actual grapevine communication:

1) **Heterogeneity of source and target texts.** Written texts may be translated into written texts, spoken texts into spoken texts, but also spoken texts may be translated into written texts and written texts into spoken texts. In addition, gestures (sign language) and electronic devices, may be used in different interactions and configurations with spoken and written texts.

2) **Number of participants.** Even in single-strand types of communication, such as the game called Chinese whispers, the number of participants is indefinite. At any rate, the degree of intricacy is directly proportional to the number of participants.

3) **Number of off-branches.** In cluster-strand types of communication particular links may branch off in various directions. Grapevine communication becomes still more intricate in proportion to the number of off-branches.

4) **Indirect translations.** Direct translations involve only one transfer station and result in 2-texts (cf. Krzeszowski, 2016). Indirect translations involve more than one transfer station and result in n-texts, each consisting of a text translated from some language, which may serve as a source text for a new target text in some other language, and so on, as depicted in the formula:

$$ST_1 \rightarrow TT_1 (=ST_2) \rightarrow TT_2 (=ST_3) \rightarrow \dots ST_n \rightarrow TT_n (=ST_{n+1})$$

Such translations are *indirect*, which means that instead of dealing with 2-texts we deal with n-texts.<sup>5</sup> For example, the Polish *Pismo Święte w Przekładzie Nowego Świata* (1997), which, as the title page informs, has been translated from *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* “z uwzględnieniem języków oryginału” [taking into consideration the tongues of the original], edited in 1984, is a case of indirect translation, in which the English target text is used as the source text for the Polish rendering. Also those fragments of the Vulgate which are translation from the Septuagint rather than from the original Hebrew constitute yet another link. All this yields the following 5-text:

Hebrew → Septuagint → Vulgate → English → Polish

Grapevine communication becomes more intricate in proportion to the number target texts becoming source texts for successive target texts in successive languages.

Each one of these four complicating factors can be expected to increase the number of distortions and other grapevine' effects.

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5. It is worth remembering that with one exception (*Hedda Gabler*), all Polish versions of plays by Henrik Johan Ibsen published by Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy in 1956 had been translated into Polish from German versions on the basis of English and Russian versions. The ultimate Polish target texts were created by such renowned translators as Włodzimerz Lewiń, Jacek Frühling, Cecylia Wojewoda, Józef Giebułtowicz, and Anna Maria Linke (cf. *Nota od redakcji* in Ibsen, 1956, p. 829). In regard of biblical translations when ST1 is the original source text (in this case the Bible in Hebrew), and TT1 is the target text (in this case the Septuagint or the Vulgate), the latter may become the source text for the subsequent translations, yielding TT2's in vernacular languages (for details see Krzeszowski, 2016).

## Who speaks to whom and how, or other links in the grapevine chain

Translating the Bible evokes its ultimate sender at one end of the Translation Communication Sequence and the ultimate recipients at the other end of the Translation Communication Sequence. Because of its flexibility, consistent with its grapevine character, communication in general and translation in particular may involve an indefinite number of intermediate and ultimate recipients although the ultimate author – God – is assumed to remain constant.

This assumption is based on the dogmatic description of the Bible as the 'Word of God' (λόγος του Θεού – Verbum Dei). It is impossible to ascertain exactly the identity of the ultimate recipient(s) of the Bible and *a fortiori* the identity of its intermediate recipients. The only sensible thing to do is to assume that every reader of the Bible in whatever language and in whatever doctrinal version is its ultimate recipient. Otherwise, all those who participated in transmitting the content of the Bible in whatever form and in whatever language must be considered as participants in the grapevine cluster chain.

The books making up the Hebrew Bible (Tora) and the Christian Pentateuch, i.e. the first five books of the Old Testament are attributed to Moses as the first of the intermediate recipients and at the same time the first of a long sequence of intermediate senders of the message to subsequent recipients-becoming-senders.<sup>6</sup> During his encounter with Yahwe on Mount Sinai Moses acted as the first intermediate recipient of the word of God, which according to traditional lore, he committed to writing. His testimony was supported by the written certificate in the form of the Decalogue engraved on two stone tablets. The Ten

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6. Significantly, in a number of early Polish versions of the Bible (Biblia Brzeska, Biblia Warszawska, Biblia Gdańska) the first five books of the Old Testament are called "Mojżeszowe" (Moses') rather than "Rodzaju" (Genesis), "Wyjścia" (Exodus), etc.

Commandments are listed twice in the Hebrew Bible, first in Exodus 20:1–17, and then in Deuteronomy 5:4–21. Even as the presumed author of the Pentateuch Moses still is the first recipient of the message directed first to Israelites as the Chosen People, but later, through translations into other tongues, to an endless succession of recipients-becoming-senders, with each and every person reading a particular version as an individual recipient at the end of the gigantic grapevine.

Other parts of the Bible were authored by other intermediate recipients-becoming-senders, in the first place by a number of prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Elijah, Amos, Hosea, and others), and by Israeli Kings (David, Salomon). In Christianity the most important recipient-become-sender was Jesus Christ believed to be the Word of God (Λόγος /Logos/) incorporated, whose first and foremost recipients were the Apostles as well as numerous innumerable disciples, followers, and all those who read the Holy Scriptures. This fragment of the grapevine chain is aptly described by the following quotation from the New Testament: "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe." (Hebrew 1:1–2, *New International Version*). According to the traditional Christian doctrine, some of the first participants in the communication sequence are: the Evangelists Mark, Matthew, Luke (believed to have authored also *Acts of the Apostles*), and John, as well as Paul the Apostle (former Saul of Tars), and the alleged authors of other New Testament epistles, i.e. Peter, James, and Jude. In all these cases and at every place of the communication sequence in which a recipient becomes a sender, a transfer station may have to be inserted to sustain further communication and to continue the transmission of the source message, even at the price of distorting it in the process.



## Some examples of the grapevine effects

As was said earlier the number of grapevine effects is in proportion to the length of the communication sequences, the number of off-branches and the number of transfer stations in the sequence. In extreme cases these adverse effects may distort the original message beyond recognition. In the case of sacred texts, such as the Holy Bible, one should not expect anything extremely drastic. Yet, the very nature of the grapevine techniques implemented in transferring, disseminating and translating "the Word of God" forces one to regard the matter with a considerable amount of wariness. Even the first example should suffice to switch the amber light on. Verse 65 of Psalm 78, with King David, presumed to be the first immediate recipient-become-sender, in the original (though Romanized) Hebrew reads:

**a·do·nai** – Lord

**vai·yi·katz** – awake

**ke·ya·shen** – (from) sleeping [kə·yā·šên] – the only occurrence in the Bible

**ke·gib·bo·vr** – (like) mighty

**mitrownen** – that shouts [miṭ·rō·w·nên] – the only occurrence in the Bible

**mi·ya·yin.** – by (because of) wine.<sup>7</sup>

In a slightly more liberal but also more comprehensible rendering the English version could read as "And then the Lord woke up as a warrior overcome by wine."<sup>8</sup>

The following target texts demonstrate the grapevine effects connected with off-branching:

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7. The Latin transliteration is based on Bible Hub (<https://biblehub.com>).

8. This fragment of the Psalm expresses God's indifference in view of calamities suffered by Israelites in consequence of their disloyalty and disobedience. Verse 65 is preceded by a lengthy passage providing the context in which this verse occurs: "they put God to the test and rebelled against the Most High; they did not keep his statutes. Like their ancestors they were disloyal and faithless, as unreliable as a faulty bow.[...] When God heard them, he was furious; he rejected Israel completely [...]" (*New International Version*).

Then the Lord awoke as from sleep, as a warrior wakes from the **stupor** of wine. (*New International Version*).

Then the Lord rose up as though waking from sleep, like a warrior aroused from a **drunken stupor**. (*New Living Translation*).

But then the Lord awoke from his sleep; he was like a warrior in a **drunken rage**. (*The New English Translation Bible*).

Then the Lord woke up like one who had been sleeping, like a warrior **sobering up from [too much] wine**. (*God's Word @ Translation*).

Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that **shouteth by reason of wine**. (*King James Bible*).

Lecz Pan ocknął się jakby ze snu, Jak wojownik, **który sobie podochocił winem**. (*Biblia Warszawska*).

I powstał Pan jakby ze snu, jak wojownik **odurzony winem**. (*Biblia Warszawsko-Praska*).

Lecz potem **ocucił się** Pan jako ze snu, jako mocarz **wykrzykający od wina**. (*Biblia Gdańska*).

A wszakoż **się** Pan **ocucił** jako ze snu, a jako mocarz **wykrzykając podpiwszy sobie**. (*Biblia Brzeska*).

Ale Pan się przebudził, jakby śpiący, jak bohater **co wydaje okrzyki od wina**. (*Nowa Biblia Gdańska*).

In the New Testament Jesus's teachings, particularly His "Sermon of the Mountain", can be used to show how the grapevine technique had originally functioned in the spoken medium, even before the written translations further complicated the grapevine chain. Jesus Christ's sermon, His first public address, is reported in Matthew's gospel (Matthew 5:1–12) and is known as the Sermon on the Mountain. However, in Luke's account both the setting and the content of the sermon are quite different. It is not even clear whether they describe the same event. Compare the following introductions to the sermons:

**Matthew** (5:1–2): "Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them." (*New International Version*).

**Luke** (6:17–20): "He went down with them and stood on a **level** place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of

their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. Looking at his disciples, he said: *Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.*" (New International Version).

These and many other divergences result from the technique of transmitting Jesus Christ's words to His listeners.

Like other Hebrew rabbis Jesus taught while sitting with the crowd gathered around Him. The teaching always took place in the evening. When the crowd counted several thousand people (cf. Mark, Matthew, Luke?) the cluster strand grapevine telegraph technique has to be implemented: Jesus's words were repeated and those who sat near the Speaker repeated His words to the nearest neighbours, until message (had) reached those who sat or stood at the most remote limits of the assembled crowd.<sup>9</sup>

Obviously, these teachings were intended as something to remember and to convey to other recipients who were not present at the time when the original sermon was delivered. Eventually, changing the medium, someone committed these teachings to writing beginning a new stage in the long chain of the grapevine communication.<sup>10</sup> Notably, Luke's account of the situation in which the sermon was delivered is more detailed, but the sermon itself is shorter than in Matthew's version, which strongly suggests the presence of grapevine effects affecting

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9. This description is largely based on one of Waldemar Chrostowski's biblical conferences as reported by Rev. Michał Bednarz „Pytania do Biblii” Czy tłumy, które otaczały Jezusa, mogły Go usłyszeć? [*Questions about the Bible, Could the crowds surrounding Jesus hear Him?*] [parafia-siennica.pl/index.php?pokaz=a\\_czytelnia/pytania/r2\\_21](http://parafia-siennica.pl/index.php?pokaz=a_czytelnia/pytania/r2_21).

10. Not all Jesus's teachings took place on a mountain. Sometimes he preached in quite different circumstances, for example sitting in a boat: "That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore." "One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. (Luke 5: 1-3).

the transmission of information from the ultimate sender to various intermediate recipients including those who wrote the Gospels. It, therefore, cannot come as a surprise that Matthew's and Luke's versions of the Sermon on the Mountain, in which the opening verses contain the *Beatitudes*, also differ in matters of contents and structure:

**Matthew's version** (Matthew 5-7)

Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (*New International Version*)

**Luke's version** (Luke 6:17-49)

Looking at his disciples, he said:

Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now,

for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,

for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you,

when they exclude you and insult you

and reject your name as evil,

because of the Son of Man.

Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

But woe to you who are rich,

for you have already received your comfort.

Woe to you who are well fed now,

for you will go hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,

for you will mourn and weep.

Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,

for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. (*New International Version*)

The editors of *Biblia Tysiqlecia* admit in a footnote that the two versions differ, but they do not attribute these differences to grapevine effects: "Matthew's version of the Sermon on the Mountain<sup>11</sup>, much longer than Luke's relation, is perhaps a more *faithful* account of Jesus' *original* speech." (italics supplied). In this case the grapevine effects consist not only in *adding* some new information concerning the circumstances in which the sermons took place but also in *omitting* some elements of the sermons' contents.

Another rather telling example of grapevine effects are the most .....

11. In Luke's version the sermon does not take place "on the Mountain" but on some flat plane!

important words in the New Testament, namely those uttered by Jesus Christ during the Last Supper when He broke bread and offered it to his Apostles as His real flesh. The chain of links which these words have been going through is formidable. The earliest extant account comes from St. Paul ca 65 A.D., who claimed that he heard them directly from Jesus Christ during Paul's encounter with the risen Christ near Damascus (1 Corinthians 23–26). Later descriptions of the Last Supper come from the two Evangelists, Matthew and John, who as Apostles took part in the event, unlike the other two Evangelists, Mark and Luke, who could not hear the words uttered by the Lord during the Last Supper. However, only Matthew quotes Jesus Christ's words, while John, the "beloved disciple", does not, even if he extensively elaborates on the idea that Jesus Christ is the true bread, indispensable on the way to salvation. According to the current state of knowledge, Matthew's version is to a large extent based on Mark's relation, which chronologically precedes not only Matthew's but also Luke's account. Given that all these accounts were written several decades after the Last Supper, there is no telling what other links had been involved before whoever wrote the Gospels decided to commit the story and the words attributed to Christ to writing. In principle, however, Paul's version is the one least affected by grapevine effects of any sort. Nevertheless, it is now obvious that already the earliest fragments of successive links represent the cluster strand version of the grapevine. Some, though by no means all links of this extremely complex chain could be:

JC — Paul<sup>12</sup>

JC — Matthew

JC — X — Matthew

JC — X — Mark — Matthew

.....

12. See also Galatians (1:12): "I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, **I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.**"

JC — X — Mark — X — Matthew

JC — Paul — X — Luke

JC — X — Luke *where X stands for unknown or uncertain sources.*

According to what is said in the New Testament, only Paul and Matthew could be direct recipients of Jesus Christ's words uttered during the Last Supper. Later grapevine effects appear in subsequent translations into Latin and numerous vernacular versions of Paul's epistle as well as in liturgical texts referring to this fragment. Compare – arranged in the most probable chronological order – different versions of the words which Jesus Christ is believed to have uttered during the Last Supper about the bread offered as His Body. No exact map of various off-branches is possible to suggest, but what is presented below sufficiently well demonstrates the complex nature of the grapevine:

**Paul** (1 Corinthians 11:24, ca 65 AD, the earliest extant version in Greek)

ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ἣ  
παρεδίδοτο ἔλαβεν ἄρτον

καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ εἶπεν, τοῦτό μου ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν  
ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.

*Latin Vulgate* (since 4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup> century)

ego enim accipi a Domino quod et tradidi vobis quoniam Dominus Iesus in qua nocte  
tradebatur accepit panem

et gratias agens fregit et dixit **hoc est corpus meum pro vobis hoc facite in meam  
commemorationem.**

*Clementine Vulgate* (1592)

Ego enim accipi a Domino quod et tradidi vobis, quoniam Dominus Iesus in qua nocte  
tradebatur, accepit panem,

et gratias agens fregit, et dixit: Accipite, et manducate: **hoc est corpus meum, quod pro vobis  
tradetur: hoc facite in meam commemorationem.**

[For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he  
was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my

body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”] (*New International Version*).

**Mark 14:22** (ca 66-70 A.D.)

Καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐλογήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν· λάβετε· τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου.

*Latin Vulgate*

et manducantibus illis accepit Iesus panem et benedicens fregit et dedit eis et ait sumite **hoc est corpus meum**

*Clementine Vulgate*

Et manducantibus illis, accepit Iesus panem: et benedicens fregit, et dedit eis, et ait: Sumite, **hoc est corpus meum.**

**Matthew 26:26** (ca 80-90 A.D.)

ἐσθιοντων δε αυτων λαβων ο ιησους τον αρτον και ευλογησας εκλασεν και εδιδου τοις μαθηταις και ειπεν λαβετε φαγετε τουτο εστιν το σωμα μου.

*Latin Vulgate*

cenantibus autem eis accepit Iesus panem et benedixit ac fregit deditque discipulis suis et ait **accipite et comedite hoc est corpus meum**

*Clementine Vulgate*

Cœnantibus autem eis, accepit Iesus panem, et benedixit, ac fregit, deditque discipulis suis, et ait: **Accipite, et comedite: hoc est corpus meum.**

**Luke 22:17-20** (date uncertain, The oldest witness is a fragment dating from the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century, while the oldest complete texts are the 4<sup>th</sup> century Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus)

καὶ δεξαμενος ποτηριον ευχαριστησας ειπεν λαβετε τουτο και διαμερισατε εαυτοις

[And having taken a cup, having given thanks, He said, “Take this and divide [it] among yourselves.]

λεγω γαρ υμιν οτι ου μη πιω απο του γεννηματος της αμπελου εως οτου η βασιλεια του θεου ελθη

[I say to you, by no means shall I drink of the fruit of the grapevine until which [time] the kingdom of God comes.]

καὶ λαβων αρτον ευχαριστησας εκλασεν και εδωκεν αυτοις λεγων τουτο εστιν το σωμα μου το υπερ



υμων διδομενον τουτο ποιειτε εις την εμην αναμνησιν

[And having taken bread, having given thanks, He broke [it] and gave [it] to them, saying, "This is My body, the [one] being given on your behalf; be doing this in remembrance of Me.]

ωσαυτως και το ποτηριον μετα το δειπνησαι λεγων τουτο το ποτηριον η καινη διαθηκη εν τω αιματι μου το υπερ υμων εκχυνομενον.

[And in the same manner [He took] the cup after [they] ate, saying, "This cup [is] the New Covenant in My blood, the [blood] being poured out on your behalf.]

*Latin Vulgate*

[et accepto calice gratias egit et dixit accipite et dividite inter vos dico enim vobis quod non bibam de generatione vitis donec regnum Dei veniat

et accepto pane gratias egit et fregit et dedit eis dicens **hoc est corpus meum quod pro vobis datur hoc facite in meam commemorationem**

similiter et calicem postquam cenavit dicens hic est calix novum testamentum in sanguine meo quod pro vobis funditur]

*Clementine Vulgate*

Et accepto calice gratias egit, et dixit: Accipite, et dividite inter vos.

Dico enim vobis quod non bibam de generatione vitis donec regnum Dei veniat.

Et accepto pane gratias egit, et fregit, et dedit eis, dicens: **Hoc est corpus meum, quod pro vobis datur: hoc facite in meam commemorationem.**

Similiter et calicem, postquam cœnavit, dicens: Hic est calix novum testamentum in sanguine meo, qui pro vobis fundetur.

Liturgical texts are not fully consistent with the fragments of the New Testament quoted above. The most important part of the Holy Eucharist in the Roman Catholic rite – the transubstantiation – is performed by the priest, who utters translated words which Jesus Christ reportedly uttered, probably in Aramaic, to His disciples during the Last Supper. However, it is not clear which fragment of the New Testament is used in the formula accepted by church authorities. The exact phrasing underwent modifications in the Latin version and in its translations into vernacular languages. After the Council of Trent,

in the middle of the sixteenth century, the formula HOC EST **ENIM** CORPUS MEUM has been used. After the second Vatican Council in the middle of the twentieth century, the formula was further expanded to read HOC EST ENIM CORPUS MEUM, **QUOD PRO VOBIS TRADETUR**, which is partly consistent with Luke's Gospel as it appears in the Clementine Vulgate, where the word 'datur' not 'tradetur' is used. This is, however, inconsistent with Paul's account and the earlier versions of the Vulgate, where neither datur nor tradetur are used in the accurate renderings of Paul's τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν (Lat. pro vobis, Eng. for you). Notably, the word 'enim' (Pol. 'bowiem') is not used in the Vulgates, and there is no equivalent word in any original Greek text. Likewise, no equivalent of 'enim' is used in English versions but mainly because in this particular context the word is virtually untranslatable.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, the words διδομενον τουτο ποιειτε εις την εμην αναμνησιν (Lat. hoc facite in meam commemorationem do this in memory of me), are used only at the very end of the transubstantiation, not as in Paul's account after the 'bread' part of the rite. However, the present version is at odds with the texts approved by the Roman Catholic authorities after the Council of Trent, viz. **Haec quotiescumque feceritis, in mei memoriam facietis** [lit. This whenever you do it, do it in memory of me]. I am not competent to comment on the theological and doctrinal ramifications of this shift of focus. However, the linguistic fates of the transubstantiation formula well illustrate the grapevine effects: firstly, those that result from both the cluster- strand type of transmission of the message itself as conveyed by various original authors of the New Testament; secondly, those resulting from translations of the source texts into target texts in different languages.

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13. The closest English approximations are 'since' or 'as', i.e. subordinating conjunctions introducing adverbial clauses of reason, cannot be inserted *into* the clauses which they introduce.

## Conclusions

The traditional Jakobsonian model of communication and translation concerning face-to-face communication between one sender and one recipient in real time, correct as far as it goes, is inadequate when it comes to considering complex communication events involving an indefinite number of recipients separated from the sender in space and in time, with an indefinite number of intermediate recipients-becoming-senders. The grapevine model of communication in its cluster-chain variant makes it possible to give more accurate accounts of why messages are prone to undergo modifications, alterations and distortions in the process of transfer in space from one site to another, i.e. from one mind to other minds in both synchronic and diachronic dimensions. The off-set is a better understanding of some reasons why people so often go astray and deviate from the path which presumably God expects them to follow on their way to salvation.

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