Berichte

The Diccionario bíblico hebreo-español (DBHE)

Luis Alonso Schökel (Rom)

1. Etymology and the comparative method

At the present time there is general agreement that neither etymology nor comparative linguistics is the proper approach to determine the meaning of a word. Who would venture to deduce the present meaning of Tisch merely by going back to its greek origin diskos? From the meaning of humus one cannot deduce the meaning of humilitas in a sermon of Augustine. If I know the meaning of humilitas I can return to its origin in humus in a spiritual reflection or for linguistic pleasure. To take a more complex case: the German word Ungeziefer is well defined in present day usage. I can translate it in Spanish as sabandija. It is of no help either in understanding the word or in translating it to know that it comes from $\bar{a}ne = sin$, a negation, and zebar = sacrificio.

Something similar applies to comparative linguistics. The meaning of modern English knight is not clarified by the German Knecht. Knowing the meaning of selig is of no help in defining silly. I can know the relationship of words as Zahl, taal, tale, zählen, erzählen etc, and get lost in the ramifications of their meanings. On the other hand, knowing the individual meaning, I can find it useful and pleasurable to go from the various branches to the single trunk.

This much is clear and commonly admitted. Still our Hebrew dictionaries continue to pay attention to etymology and comparative matters. And they do well, for the information can be useful. BDB in the introduction (p. VI) considers the advantages of etymology but at the same time recognizes that its results are provisional and debatable. But etymology is not the most important thing. We have given up this concern, we have sacrificed this value, to concentrate on showing the use that Biblical writers make of the Hebrew vocabulary.

We have put together a dictionary of usage for usage providing equivalents in the receptor language rather than describing the semantic content in a metalanguage. In our concern for usage, we have kept in mind the fact that we are dealing with a language that in great part is a literary one: narrative, poetry, rhetoric (Dt Dtr), essay (Ecl).

2. Tradition and change

Preparing a bilingual dictionary of Biblical Hebrew today means putting oneself in a firm tradition: from the "Roots" of Qimchi, through Reuchlin and Buxtorf, to Gesenius and his descendants. We are not deciphering nor inventing. The problem is how to enter into their tradition. In Spain, although we have a strong Biblical presence in our classical literature, including sermons and spiritual writings, and although we can be proud of a modest renaissance of Biblical studies, our most

famous ancestor is still a Hebrew-Latin dictionary incorporated into the Polyglot Complutense. (The Thesaurus of Gesenius, as well, was written in Latin). In Spanish we have a new task set before us, and no specific antecedents.

How to enter into the tradition. Some would recommend translating from Latin (Zorell) or from English (BDB), or from German (GesB). But such a detour would mean being doubly sidetracked. The path followed was a complete literary translation of the OT into modern Spanish and a brief commentary on each of the books. Nothing contributes so much to one's intimate knowledge of a foreign language, especially a literary language, as translating it at a corresponding literary level. The translator must immerse himself in the original text, appreciate its resources and shades of meaning. Then, like a St. Christopher, he must carry it over to the shore of his own language. Translating involves studying different possibilities, comparing, testing, discarding, and finally keeping what seems best. To translate is to weave a web of interlocking correspondences without getting entangled or losing one's way.

At the first stage, the translator makes use of dictionaries in other languages, of translations in his own and foreign languages, of commentaries. He thus enters fully into the tradition. The second stage, the step from the original to the receptor language, allows of no detours.

The director of the Hebrew-Spanish dictionary went through the preliminary steps of translating and preparing commentaries on the whole of the OT. He had collaborators, but this did not mean that the Bible was divided into sections and distributed for each collaborator to work on his own. There was strong, unified direction, uniformity of criteria and literary exigence, as collaborators in turn worked on different sections or books.

The dictionary has been worked out in the same way. The director has planned all the entries, with various occasional collaborators as the work proceeded. The first entry 'ab was completed in the summer of 1976. The last entries (mem and nun) were finished in 1989.

But the fact that the dictionary was prepared only after the translation does not mean that an option is imposed on the user. At the beginning of each entry there is a list of possible correspondences from which the user is to make his choice. Not all the choices are repeated throughout the entry. The spread of the proposals is wider than the de facto use in our translation. For instance:

dbq 1. Sentido físico: pegarse, adherirse, ligarse, juntarse, unirse, aglutinarse, conglomerarse, amalgamarse, soldarse.

mdynh Provincia, comarca, territorio, circunscripción (en castellano pervive el topónimo Medina).

3. Minor observations

Modern linguistics has, in many cases, formulated and formalized things already known and practiced. But the formulation brings them to one's consciousness and makes them usable as tools of analysis and exposition. The newness of these points may be merely relative, but not something to be scorned.

I begin with minutiae. We use the term *allomorphs* to refer to two forms which have the same meaning but different phonetic shapes, as in Spanish *hubiera* and *hubiese*.

Allograph refers to a variant way of writing the same phoneme. In Hebrew these and related principles are frequently useful. They apply, for instance, to different pronunciations (whether or not dialectical) such as shq and shq, z qh and sqh, to the confusion in writing of qr and qrh, dk and dkh; the indecision between the forms of reduplicated root "" or the vocalic second radical (type qwm). It would seem that the Hebrew writers were not always certain themselves about the verbal form and had not done their school homework. This kind of detail can itself cast light on many problems in a dictionary.

Going further and thinking of the confusion which a dictionary user experiences, we expanded the material to include other practical (not theoretical) applications. For consonants like HL, SR, DM, L etc we give first a chart of the words which are formed with these consonants, so as to orient the one who is using the dictionary. Teaching experience has made us realize that both the student and the exegete are

sometimes bewildered. E.g.

swr 1 estrechar, alomorfo srr 1 asediar, encerrar swr 2 ser enemigo, alomorfo srr 2 hostilizar swr 3 formar, alomorfo de ysr modelar sr/srh 1 estrecho, aprieto, peligro sr/srh 2 enemigo/a, rival, adversario srwr 1 de srr 1 zurrón, bolsa, escarcela syr de swr 3 figura syrym de swr 1 espasmos, dolores swr roca, peña, montaña swr sílice, Tiro srwr piedra syr mensajero legado sw r cuello, pescuezo mswr, mswrh, msr

Naturally, these charts are not scientific assertions about the composition and derivation of words.

From this detail, which might appear irrelevant, we go on to the linguistic forms which we call morphemes. Naturally, morphology is the discipline which treats of what morphemes are, their structural differences, and their function. Perhaps it is not worth while to put them all in a dictionary, for instance, the morphemes of the conjugations; some morphemes, however, are elusive and therefore require special attention. This is especially true since we are accustomed to see a text, to look at a language, rather than to hear it spoken. For instance we are used to the morpheme un- in German used as a prefix. We don't look at it as something separate. Originally (historically) it was a negative particle ane ohne. Now look at the other language. In Hebrew there is probably a negative prefixed morpheme 'i- ('y-kbwd 1 Sm 4,21); Zorell records the data even though the cases are rare and somewhat dubious. But then consider the negatives l^2 or bl joined to the following word in pronunciation and sometimes in writing. We then look for what corresponds to this in our languages. Donner Ges¹⁸ correctly gives nicht, nein ... noch, un-, -los, various particles and morphemes. So then such a simple, unquestionable matter can be extended to other linguistic entities, autonomous or not, but always in view of their

function. For example, $b\bar{e}n$ corresponds to the word hijo; ben- can correspond to the morpheme -ita, -ite, -it (Israelita/ite/it); b c would correspond to -ble, -il (irascible, volátil in b c l hmh, b c l hmp).

The Hebrew morpheme *ma*-, *mi*- has many uses in forming nouns. The student quickly learns this in principle. For the user of a dictionary a preliminary schematic overview can be of great help. For example (selective):

participio pasivo: -do/a; adjetivo: -so/a
-or, -ero, -ario: salvador, candelero, incensario
-ción, -sión: acción, visión
-anza, -encia: esperanza, dolencia
-al, -el, -il: manantial, plantel, carril

 $MAQT\bar{A}L$: m°kl alimento, m°rb emboscada, asechanza, m°rb occidente, $mwr\bar{s}h$ herencia, mwldt nacimiento, m°yn manantial, mnwrh candelero etc.

Something similar applies to ta-, ti-.

From the smaller functional elements we pass on to words (without, however assuming the difficult task of trying to define what a word is). I think that here is one of the principal contributions of our dictionary: differentiation, justification and articulation of the semantic content of a term. A Hebrew word in passing into a modern language is refracted, not only shifted in the spectrum of the receptor language, but broken up, differentiated for grammatical or stylistic reasons. For Hebrew 'kl I can not be satisfied with German essen; I must distinguish at least fressen and speisen, and in a figurative sense verzehren. This is quite simple and in part, at least, put into practice. But it has constant application above all for the socalled verba-omnibus such as to make, to say, to go, to get. Differentiation is, at times, obligatory. Originally, when people sat on the ground, the bench for paying taxes or changing money or making a deposit was what the word says, a bench. Later the commercial function of the physical object was separated from its function as a place to sit. If I translate the Spanish banco into English, I must necessarily distinguish bench and bank. Likewise a function can be dissociated from its physical object, as $\xi^c r$ = tribunal. Sometimes differentiation can be required or recommended by the poetic or literary style of the texts we are discussing.

After the differentiation the problem becomes how to justify each meaning, how to organize the different meanings. If there is a semantic logic and not just pure chance, the dictionary cannot rest with a mere listing. In this matter Zorell surpasses all his congeners and we have tried to follow and even improve on Zorell. I will outline an example without specific quotations:

³š Fuego, lumbre, candela, brasa; rayo, relámpago, centella; incendio, conflagración, lumbrarada; hoguera, fogata, hogar; llama, llamarada.

1. General. a) Sentido genérico, b) Uso doméstico, culinario o artesano, profano o cúltico, c) Meteoro. 2. Como sujeto o complemento directo de verbos que enuncian el comienzo, desarrollo o final del proceso; muchas veces con valor expletivo. a) Comienzo, b) desarrollo, c) final. 3. Como adjetivo o regido. Muchas veces queda incluido como sema componente del significado de la palabra castellana: traducción sintética. 4. Uso

adverbial, instrumental; puede ser expletivo, traducción Ø. 5. Con determinaciones. Notas críticas.

(Prepared with the collaboration of V. Morla. Can be compared with the listing of HALAT).

4. Words in combination

When there is question of a dictionary of usage (parole rather than langue), it is of great interest to see words in relation to one another.

a) The word in its *syntagm*: as subject, complement, with different verbs. This kind of information is not lacking in the ordinary dictionaries.

b) The word in poetic parallel. Poetry and rhetoric frequently cast the paradigm in the syntagm. We have been able to classify parallels in three well defined groups with a fourth to cover all other cases: synonyms, antonyms, correlatives (thirst/water, fire/fuel), associated. The category that is most helpful to define the meaning of a usage is antonym since it narrows the scope. From the repertoire of parallels some are repeated, others are found only once.

c) The words in the *paradigm*, that is, a series of words which can substitute, or be related in absence. Compiling these paradigms would take the dictionary into

semantic and lexical field, a project which right now is for us far off.

d) The word in its *semantic field*. The semantic field is usually given by the context, either immediate or remote. The meaning of words can be specified by their field according as it is military, judicial, cultic, familiar, etc.

e) The word in special sytagms which we call *idioms*. These demand in the receptor language something which corresponds to the whole; they can not be analyzed by

parts.

In presenting correspondences, in addition to the spread of variations, some particular cases must be taken into account:

- a) The explanatory (expletivo) use of certain words, which do not have to be translated explicitly. Its correspondence may be Ø. For example hlk, qwm, wyhy.
- b) The use of the parts of the body with a *merely descriptive significance*, a remnant of a way of looking at things anterior to the abstraction of the "I". For example, your eyes see, your mouth says, my ears have heard. These expressions can remain linguistic fossils or they can recover an emphatic meaning, "I saw him with my own eyes".
- c) The different *point of view* which two languages adopt. For example, frequently the German expression "Ich komme gleich" in Spanish is "voy enseguida" (point of view of the interlocutor or speaker). Or śmhh = feast, srh = danger, bst = failure: the objective point of view prevails over the subjective.
- d) The synthetic translation of an analytic formula. Sometimes a single word in our language (when it is more differentiated) has the semes (or meaningful elements) of two Hebrew words. For example, the Hebrew gbh means physical elevation, so to transfer the word to a psychological or spiritual domain, it is necessary to add rwh. Our words altivez, soberbia (from alt-, super-) already have these semes. špl means low and to express humility it is necessary to add rwh, a precision which is not necessary in our languages.

Data such as these can be presented in two ways. One would be simply to label them "emphatic use, descriptive, explanatory, point of view changed, synthetic translation". Or being more explicit, one would offer correspondences in one's own language. Being conscious of such phenomena and drawing appropriate consequences from them can, I believe, make for great progress in lexicography and will surely be helpful to one who uses the dictionary.

5. The stylistic factor

I mentioned previously the refraction which words and syntagms undergo in passing through the prism of another language. Should we also speak of a Doppler effect which accentuates the displacement in the spectrum? Should we register it or compensate for it? I think that literary usage forces us to reflect seriously. As I have mentioned, by far the greatest part of the OT uses literary language. On the other hand ever since the Greek translation of the Septuagint we have witnessed a massive process of "spiritualization" of what is corporeal, of abstraction of what is concrete. This process has become crystallized in other translations and perpetuated into our own, in part because of the intellectual and conceptual formation of our culture. Poets and other literati save themselves, not so every exegete. The dictionaries instead of correcting the lack of focus justify and perpetuate it. And one way of practising the historical critical method is closed to the historical fact that we are dealing with literary language, or at least is closed to the consequences of this fact.

Perhaps it is precisely in this area that our dictionary makes its second contribution. We should illustrate this with some more examples.

Again, imagine the beloved in the Song of Songs. She, who worked, exposed to the weather, in other's vineyards, is now the chosen consort of the fictional Solomon in the wedding. Today she is given a throne not in a palace but in the gardens. At the conclusion she is "the princess of the garden" hywšbt bgnym. BDB recognizes this frequent use of yšb for persons and personages; he does not recognize it in the eighth chapter of the Song. –

The author of Ps 33 in his anthropomorphic vision of God as creator, surprisingly combines two complementary aspects: the word as articulated sound and the puff of air or expelling of breath rwh (the very air one breathes). To reduce here rwh pyw to "a word of command" (BDB) is to substitute a concept for an image. The same thing happens in Is 11,4.

If *mšl brwh* of Prov 16,32 can be translated "govern one's temper" (NEB), would not *nšmrtm brwhkm* of Mal 2,15 be equivalent? The prophet is counselling the husband to control his passion so as not to be unfaithful to his wife. In Hab 1,11 it

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seems to me more prudent to admit a transitive use of hlp rather than to insert a comparative k- without any documentary support. In his case hlp rwh would be the equivalent of hsyb rwh "to catch one's breath".

Returning to personifications. The fugitive who has been received and kindly entertained, sets out again on his journey. His host offers two of his men (personifications) as escorts for the journey. In this way of looking at things, rdp means to follow or more precisely to escort (Ps 23).

One who has lived in Palestine or Rome or in other places where the phenomenon occurs is well aware of the effect of the hamsin, the scirocco, the Föhn. He who has experienced the effect that this kind of wind can have on body and soul alike would not translate *rwh trdmh* of Is 29,10 as "insensibility of spirit". He would translate "enervating wind" or "wind of drowsiness".

Ps 59 pictures evil men as starving, furious dogs roving through the streets of the city. Does v. 8 still refer to the image of the dogs or to its referent, the evil men? I believe that the poet primarily pictures the dogs, foaming and frothing at the mouth with fangs like knives glistening in the night, and he hears their growling. The Einheitsübersetzung successfully translates "sie geifern mit ihrem Maul. Die Schwerter zwischen ihren Lippen" (8), "knurren" (16). BDB reduces yby w b pyhm to language and for ylynw gives "murmur". It is also possible that the poet gives the verse an expressive ambiguity (W. Empson).

In Job 16 there is an accumulation of images: judgment, law-suit, war. In v. 14 Job is assaulted, as though a city in a war, by an enemy, his ulcers are the breaches which the enemy opened in the wall. The Einheitsübersetzung translates correctly "Bresche über Bresche bricht er mir". BDB puts the phrase in a generic category "break out upon".

"Undoubtedly, some of the above proposals are debatable. But even discussing them is a step forward, it means being aware that there is a "razón poética" in Biblical language. It is indeed strange that reading poetry as though it were prose is accepted without discussion whereas it is necessary to discuss and justify a poetic reading of poetry. To discredit the imagination as a heuristic principle for the exegete is the same as condemning the imagination as a creative faculty for the poet.

Finally this DBHE is the first scientific dictionary of its kind published in Spanish. Consequently it could not rely directly on any tradition in Spanish.

We hope that as it stands, and even more when corrected and emended, it will be helpful to coming generations of Spanish speaking Biblical scholars. And I believe that it may have a few things to teach scholars of other languages from whom I have learned so much.

Here I give a selection of our writings on the subject:

L. Alonso Schökel y Eduardo Zurro, La traducción bíblica: Lingüística y estilística, Madrid 1977

V. Morla, Estudio sobre Lexicografía hebrea descriptiva en los diccionarios a partir de Gesenius, Cuadernos Bíblicos 11 (1981) 28-72

L. Alonso Schökel, El punto de vista en las correspondencias lingüísticas, en I Simposio Bíblico Español (Madrid 1984) 359-369

idem, Morfemas hebreos y correspondencias castellanas, en: II Simposio Bíblico Español (ed. V. Collado y V. Vilar, Valencia 1987) 199-205

idem, Manual de poética hebrea: (Madrid 1987); English (Rome 1988); Italian (Brescia 1989)

idem, Hebreo-Español. Notas de semántica comparada, Sefarad 47 (1987) 245-254; 49 (1989) 11-19

idem, El Diccionario Bíblico Hebreo-Español, Sefarad 48 (1988) 373-389 The reader will find a sample of our dictionary on the next page.

Book-title and address of the authors:

Diccionario Bíblico Hebreo Español, preparado por Luis Alonso Schökel.

Director técnico: Vicente Collado Bertomeu; Jefe de redacción: Víctor Morla; asistentes de redacción: Santiago Bretón y Juan Esquivias.

Colaboradores: J. Asurmendi, F. Echeverría, A. Gil Modrego, O. González, S. Guijarro, J. Lamelas, R.H. Lugo, C.A. Maciel del Rio, J. Menchén, J. Pérez Basanta, M. Peinado, T. Ramírez, J.M. Samper, J.P. Tosaus.

EDILVA Trinitarios 3, E-46003 Valencia, Spain

Nota. Algunos tratan como Hi. formas que pueden corresponder a la forma אָיץ.

רְצְרֹ [Est. cstr. אוֹצְר, c. suf. וֹדְרוֹ, pl. אוֹבְרוֹת, אֹרְרוֹת, אִרְרוֹת, אִרְרוֹת, אֹבְרוֹת, אֹבְרוֹת, אֹבְרוֹת, אֹבְרוֹת, אֹבְרוֹת, הַאַרְהָי, ל. suf. יאָרְהָי, אִרְהָיף, אֹבְרוֹת, tetc.] Tesoro, lugar y contenido.

- 1. Lugar donde se guardan, conservan, protegen objetos de valor: depósito, almacén, despensa, granero, silo, bodega, troj, hórreo, cilla, ropero, guardarropa, archivo, arsenal.
 a) De riquezas: Prov 8,21 אליף llenar; Jos 6,24
 1 Re 15,18 Esd 2,69 Neh 7,70; del palacio 2 Re 14,14 2 Cr 12,9; ropero Jr 38,11. b) De viveres y provisiones: almacén 2 Cr 11,11 Neh 12,44; און אין בי הואס בי הואס
- 2. El contenido: riquezas, bienes, provisiones. a) Genérico Is 2,7 Jr 20,5 = אָרָי almacén = lo almacenado, יְּנִישָׁי bienes producidos, אָרָי objetos valiosos; Is 33,6 30,6 = אַרָי הַיְמָרָ riqueza Jr 49,4; בַּמּר בְּמַרוֹ opulenta Jr 51,13; Os 13,15 = אַרָּי הָמְּרָי מְטֵּרְ מִבְּעִי הַיְּתְּרָ ajuar precioso. b) Sagrado, del templo 1 Cr 28,12 = הַשְּרָ שִׁ dones votivos; 1 Cr 26,20.22. c) Calificados: אַרָּי הָשִּר injustos, mal adquiridos Prov 10,2 = אַרָּקָרִי הַשְּרָי justos; 15,16 בּמִימְנֵי poco; אַרֶּים ocultos Is 45,3 = מַמְמָרִים caudales escondidos; אַרָּיקָרִים precioso, valioso Prov 21,20.

Verbos usados: נתן entregar, הקל apoderarse, מלֵא meter, הוציא sacar, מלֵא colmar, מלֵא מcumular, איז hacerse, labrarse, חתם se-

llar, חחם abrir, שסה בוו שסה saquear, ושא llevarse, confiar.

Q. Brillar, lucir, resplandecer: los ojos 1 Sm 14,27.29; la ciudad en la colina Is 60,1 = מרור amanece; amanecer 2 Sm 2,32 correl. מְלֵיְלָה חוֹלְךְי noche; אוֹר הוֹלְךְי se va esclareciendo Prov 4,18.

Ni. Ser alumbrado Job 33,30 ≠ ภูกูพู่ fosa; ptc. deslumbrante Sal 76,5.

De la misma raíz: אור, אור, אוֹרָה, מָאוֹרָה, מָאוֹרָה.

- אוֹרָה בא, 3 m. אוֹרָה אוֹרָה אוֹרָה לאַנְה אוֹרָה אוֹרָה אוֹרָה בא, 3 m. אוֹרָה אוֹרָה בא, 3 m. אוֹרָה אוֹרְה אוֹרָה אוֹרְה אוֹרְי או
- 1. El brillo y su fuente. a) Luz, resplandor: Gn 1,3-5.18 Is 30,26 60,3 Sal 78,14 + אַאָּ fuego; Job 18,18 ≠ אָשֶׁר oscuridad; 26,10 30,26 ≠ אֶשֶׁל oscuridad; Ecl 2,13 Lam 3,2 Eclo 3,25 33(36),7.14 43,9 + מוהיר resplandecer. b) La fuente luminosa: lumbrera Sal 136,7 = sol y luna; Job 18,5s = אַוֹ lampara, שׁבִּיב llama.