St. Jerome's Approach to Word-for-Word and Sense-for-Sense Translation[1]

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Abstract

St. Jerome's major contribution to the field of translation is his introduction of the terms word-for-word and sense-for-sense. These two terms were later to be adopted by many translators, opening the heated debates in the coming centuries. Though the terms dated back to Cicero and Horace, St. Jerome is still credited for kindling the argument. The purpose of this paper is to examine how St. Jerome, through his letter to Pammachius (Letter 57) entitled "On the Best Method of Translation, approached the word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation, what difficulties the translators face when translating, and how aimed at reinforcing the reasons behind his new Latin translation of the Old and New Testaments: the Vulgate.

Keywords: St. Jerome, Pammachius, Letter 57, word-for-word, sense-for-sense, Vulgate, sacred text, non-sacred text.

مُقاربة القدّيس جيروم
لترجمة كلمة بكلمة ومعنى بمعنى

الاستاذ الدكتور   الباحثة

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المُلخص

أسهَمَ القدّيس جيروم إسهاماً فاعلاً في حقل الترجمة عبر تقديمهِ لمصطلحي الترجمة: كلمة بكلمة ومعنى بمعنى حيث شاع تداول هذين المصطلحين لدى المترجمين فيما بعد فاتحاً بذلك جدلاً حامياً لما تلاه من القرون. و مع ان طريقة الترجمة كلمة بكلمة ومعنى بمعنى عُرفتْ منذ زمن شيشرون وهوراس، الا ان الفَضل يعود للقدّيس جيروم في تأجيج الجدل حولهُما حتى العصر الحديث. يُسلّط هذا البحث الضوء على مقاربة القدّيس جيروم لترجمة كلمة بكلمة ومعنى بمعنى، والمصاعب التي يواجهها المترجم عند الترجمة، و الأسباب التي دعتهُ لِتقديم ترجمته اللاتينية الجديدة آنذاك للكتاب المقدس بعهديه القديم والجديد (الفولغاتا) من خلال رسالته المشهورة لباماكيوس عام ٣٩٥ م بعنوان "حول الطريقة الصحيحة للترجمة"

1. Introduction

Although St. Jerome was not the first translator of the Bible, he was the first one who left us with a detailed and analytical written record of the mental process he went through as he translated. He was the first person, as Child (2010:14) asserts, to lay out a theory of translation and explicitly address the eternal dilemma of the translator: do I translate words or do I translate meaning? He approached his task in a systematic and disciplined way. In his letter to Pammachius in 395 AD, St. Jerome justified his method of translating by making a distinction between sacred and non-sacred text and described his strategy in translation by using word-for-word for the former, and sense-for-sense for the latter.

St. Jerome, following Cicero and Horace, declared to be in favor of a sense for sense translation. In his letter to Pammachius in 395 AD, St. Jerome defended himself against criticism by describing his strategy in translation:

> I not only admit, but freely   proclaim that in translation from the Greek– except in the case of Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery– I render not word for word, but sense for sense (St.Jerome's letter to Pammachius, section V, line 85 in Venuti, 2000:23)

His influence on translation theory was important because he insisted that the sense should have priority over the form.

2. St Jerome: The Patron Saint of Translators

St. Jerome is considered to be one of the greatest biblical scholars, translators, Doctors of the Church[2], and Church fathers. He is well known for his Vulgate Bible. This Bible represented his working on the translation of biblical texts into the Latin language used by the people of his day. His analytical approach, his willingness to be subjective, and his courage to understand and

convey the deeper meaning of what he was translating have earned him the nickname of "Patron Saint of Translators". His strategy of translating the sense of the text and not the literal words is a basic guideline for every translator since his day.

St. Jerome's importance lies, as Schaff et al (2007: xi) states, in the facts that he was the author of the Vulgate translation of the Bible into Latin, that he bore the chief part in introducing the ascetic life into Western Europe, that he revised the four Gospels for he mastered more than three languages, and that his writings, which were more than those of any of the fathers, bring before us the general as well as the ecclesiastical life of his time. It is worth mentioning that September 30th is celebrated as a feast day in the Catholic Church and as International Translator's Day all over the world.

3. Word-for-Word or Sense-for-sense?

A distinction clearly made between word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation dates back to the Latin times. Jacobsen (1958:43) asserts that translation is a Roman invention as being "the first to articulate an attitude of reverence towards another nation felt to be historically older and culturally superior". Both Cicero and Horace had great influence on successive generations of translators to the fact that Renaissance theoreticians recurrently invoke them in their systematic reflections.

The sense-for-sense versus word-for-word debate was employed for the first time by the politician, orator and philosopher Cicero (106-43BC). He produced translations of Greek philosophical texts as well as transferring Greek ideas into Roman contexts to form a Latin philosophical vocabulary. In his *De optimo genere oratorum* [3] (The Best Kind of Orator, 46 BC) , Cicero pointed out that the translator should avoid a word-for-word translation and reproduce the sense of the original text   by translating in a   way that

communicates style and effect. He wrote that "If I render word-for-word, the result will sound uncouth, and if compelled by necessity, I alter anything in the order or wording; I shall seem to have departed from the function of a translator", opening a debate that has continued for centuries between literal and free translation (Bassnett: 2002, 51).

Word-for-word translation concerned with the level of words, in which each linguistic element of the source language (SL henceforth) is replaced by its closest target language (TL henceforth) correspondent, i.e. the close adherence to the surface structures of the source text (ST henceforth) message both in terms of semantics and syntax. Sense-for-sense translation is more concerned with creating a target text (TT henceforth) that sounds natural in the TL, i.e. it tends to go beyond the word level, which means that the unit of translation can be a phrase, clause, sentence or even a larger unit (Munday, 2009:239).

In his *Ars Poetica* (Art of Poetry, 17 BC), as Leonardi (2010:69) points out, the Roman poet Horace reiterated the importance and role of the artistic translation where a strict imitation of the source text wording should be avoided. He, like Cicero, rejected word-for-word translation by stating that:

> a theme that is familiar can be made your own property so long as you do not waste your time on a hackneyed treatment; nor should you try to render your original word-for-word like a slavish translator, or in imitating another writer plunge yourself into difficulties from which shame, or the rules you have laid down for yourself, prevent you from extricating yourself (Bassnett, 2002:49)

Horace emphasized and encouraged poets to negotiate between imitation of Greek models on the one hand and exploration of Latin

and subjects closer to Rome on the other allowing them some creativity and freedom and not to enslave themselves to word-for-word translation. Lefever (1992:15) explains that Horace tried to explain his method in a very clear way: "Do not worry about rendering word-for-word, faithful translator, but render sense-for-sense".

When St. Jerome turned the Chronicle of Eusebius of Caesarea into Latin, he urged in his preface:" If I translate word-for-word, it sounds absurd". He also added: "If any one doesn't think that translation alter the charm of a language, let him force Homer word-for-word into Latin" (Venuti, 2000:24). In this respect, the distinction between word-for-word translation and sense-for-sense translation became a very important issue to influence future debates on translation and future translators in their work.

However, a number of translators prefer to be very literal to the original for they were afraid that in translating sense-for-sense they may alter the text according to their own subjective interpretation. It is true that word-for-word translation can be done more easily than sense-for-sense because in doing the latter, the translator had to convey the same sense to that of the author. It is not always that the translator knows with certainty what the author's intended meaning was. Schwarz, as cited in Nida (1964:14), mentioned a translator from Latin found word-for-word translation admirable, but for different reasons from those mentioned above. It was the fifteenth century German translator Nicolas von Wyle who justified literalism as a method of subjecting the German language to the civilizing rhetorical rules of Latin, a practice that would result in a classicized, elegant German style. He was also willing to use paraphrase when German expressions did not correspond exactly to the Latin original.

Newmark (1988:45) stresses the historical inherent argument which dates back to the first century BC whether the method of

translating has to be literally or freely-based. He (ibid: 69) makes a distinction between word-for-word and literal translation as follows:

- In word-for-word translation, every particle of the SL has to be relayed into its counterpart in the TL irrespective of the context, i.e., it transfers SL grammar, word order and the primary meanings of all the SL words,

- In literal translation, the grammatical structures of the SL have to be substituted by "their nearest TL equivalents". Again, in this method, context remains out of sight.

To make it clear, in word-for-word translation, each word in the SL is translated by a word in the TL. The result would be out of sense especially when it deals with idioms and metaphors. In literal translation, the linguistic structure of the source language is followed but is normalized according to the TL rules.

4. St. Jerome's Letters

Wright (1933: xiii) refers to four considerable collections of letters in Latin literature, those of Cicero, Seneca, Pliny and St. Jerome. The letters of Cicero and St. Jerome are the most important in substance. There are over one hundred and fifty letters[4] from St. Jerome's pen, written between the years 370 and 419 AD, and varying in length from a few lines to several thousand words. These letters, as Scheck (2008:6) points out, are exceptionally instructive and interesting, and in easy flow and elegance of diction that are not inferior to the letters of Cicero. St. Jerome's letters, written in a pure and vigorous Latin, rank alongside the epistolary collections of Cicero, Seneca, and Pliny the Younger as the most celebrated in Latin literature.

Rebenich (2002:79) states that the letters of St. Jerome are the weapons of his armory in his warfare against ignorance, error,

paganism, schism, and heresy. They are sharp and hard-hitting weapons, because a letter can be aimed at some special erroneous opinion. His letters comprise a wide range of subjects: ascetic exhortation, theological polemics, defense of orthodoxy, consolation, monastic advice, pedagogical discourse, scriptural exegesis, historical digressions, ecclesiastical politics, moral edification, and personal invective. St. Jerome's Letters reflect his sarcastic wit and serious moral sense. Krstovic (1999:50) explains that St. Jerome's letters were written to a wide range of correspondents, including friends, church leaders, and counsel-seekers. In these letters, St. Jerome was outspoken and critic particularly of the corrupted morality of Rome.

5. St. Jerome's Letter to Pammachius "On the Best Method of Translation"

This letter was written to Pammachius in 395 AD. A year before, St. Jerome had translated a certain letter[5] from Greek to Latin. In his translation, he used sense for sense to give a clear meaning to the original. When the translation reached St. Jerome's enemies, they accused him of falsification and careless for not giving word for word translation. St. Jerome was charged of having falsified the original letter. So, St. Jerome sent a letter to Pammachius in 395 AD entitled "On the Best Method of Translation" to repudiate the charge and defend his method of translation (which is to give sense-for-sense and not word-for-word) by an appeal to the practice of classical, ecclesiastical, and New Testament writers.

In his letter to Pammachius, St. Jerome justified his method of translating sense-for-sense by listing some examples taken from his previous translation introductions, Cicero, Horace, Hilary the Confessor and other Classical authors, as well as the Evangelists and the Seventy Translator when translating from the sacred texts. St.

Jerome affirmed that in his translating of Pope Epiphanius' Greek letter into Latin no changes and no doctrine had been added to its sense that may fabricate its substance. St. Jerome described his strategy in translation by his famous statement on the translation process:

> Indeed, I not only admit, but freely proclaim that in translation from the Greek – except in the case of Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery – I render not word-for-word,   but   sense-for-sense (St.Jerome's letter to Pammachius, section V, line 85 in Venuti, 2000:23)

Many scholars touch upon the issue of word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation in conjunction with St. Jerome's view on these two poles. Chilton and Flesher (2011:375) assert that at the time of St. Jerome word-for-word translation had long been known, but St. Jerome coined a phrase 'sense-for-sense' which comes to be seen as the natural opposite of word-for-word. Munday (2001:20) states that St. Jerome's statement is now usually taken to refer to what is known as 'literal' (word-for-word) and 'free' (sense-for-sense) translation.

According to Wills (1999:7), in comparison with Cicero who subscribed absolutely to the principle of the orator, St. Jerome argued for a more sophisticated concept of the activity of translation. In his letter to Pammachius, St. Jerome distinguished between two fundamental principles in translation method, word-for-word and sense-for-sense. Unlike Cicero, St. Jerome practiced both principles since he assumed that translation is influenced by text type specific factors.

In general, sense-for-sense translation refers to the meanings of SL words translated within their context and within TL requirements. It is opposed to word-for-word translation, which

renders SL words by their closest TL forms. St. Jerome was the first who conceived the term sense-for-sense translation in an attempt to find an approach between Cicero's extremely free translation and the totally literal and faithful translation criticized by Cicero and Horace (Munday, 2009:224).

According to Robinson (1998:87), St. Jerome emphasized that translators should stay as close as possible to the source text. However, as he did not prefer a word-for-word approach, St. Jerome acknowledged, in this letter, that certain formal changes were inevitable. It was St. Jerome who coined the phrase sense-for-sense translation paving the way for the three-term taxonomy that has influenced translation studies ever since:

- Word-for-word translation;
- Sense-for-sense translation; and
- Free translation.

St. Jerome himself was a proponent of sense-for-sense translation by rendering one sentence rather than one word at a time.

St. Jerome's dictum of 'where the very order of the words is a mystery' is understood that word order has a deep and sacred meaning that should be precisely preserved in translation. St. Jerome noticed the importance attached to the order of the words in the sacred texts that expressed the mysterious nature of scripture, which was beyond human reasoning.

In his translation of non-sacred works, as Harrison (1986:161) states, St. Jerome treated the text relatively freely, frequently changing the word orders and strictures to enhance and accommodate the style of Latin translation. But, he followed the literal style of translation with the sacred works "where the very order of the words is a mystery''.

Word-for-word translation is considered as an ideological haven for those afraid of heresy charges. For Newmark (2009:21), St. Jerome, throughout his letter, wanted to instruct readers to render sense-for-sense with an exception of Biblical texts which have to be translated textually – word-for-word. St. Jerome did this not only to protect himself from attacks from religious quarters, but to be the suitable translation method for such texts. Sharing the same view with Newmark, Robinson (2006:541) states that St. Jerome's insistence on his method of rendering the Bible word-for-word was an attempt to protect himself against charges of heresy.

This means that St. Jerome suggests different theories to different texts: word-for-word and sense-for-sense. The former was used with sacred texts and the latter with non sacred texts. In doing so, he put the basis for next generations to use a specific theory of translation depending on the text itself, be it a sacred, scientific, literary, etc. For instance, a well known theorist Katharina Reiss in 1971 proposed that different text types require different translation strategies.

St. Jerome put Scripture in a special category that required more literal translation principles than other literature. His Vulgate was, therefore, quite literal. For Schwarz (1955:34), St. Jerome asserted that a literary work must be translated according to sense, as the lack of equivalents in the two languages and the preservation of word order would make the word-for-word translation sounds incoherent and ridiculous and it destroys all literary qualities as well. In the case of Bible, the meaning of the sacred text cannot be exhausted in that it is like the ocean, inexhaustible and mysterious. This mystery must be preserved in the translation because changing the order of words would not only destroy this mystery, but it would also endanger the unfathomable profundity of the sacred text.

St. Jerome, as Ackerley and Hale (2007:265) point out, depends on some major procedures in translation which are designed to preserve the shape, size, and the sequence from the source language:

1. He copies Hebrew syntax.
2. He keeps Hebrew word order.
3. He introduces Hebrew words.
4. He copies Greek syntax (where the original is Greek).

However, St. Jerome, through his letter to Pammachius, went on to quote sense-for-sense passages from Cicero's *On the Best Kind of Orator,* Horace's *Ars Poetica,* and his translation of Eusebius' *Chronicle* into Latin. In the case of Cicero, St. Jerome called his authority in translating Plato's *Protagorus*, Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, and the two orations that the orators Aeschines and Demosthenes delivered against each other. St. Jerome remarked that Cicero had left out, changed, added, to express and display the idioms of the SL through the idioms of TL, i.e., his own language.

In his prologue to the Latin version of the above orations, Cicero expressed that he had translated them not as a translator, but as an orator. In doing this, he wanted to keep the same meaning though he altered the form by adapting Greek metaphors and idioms to suit the manner of the Latin ones. He found it unnecessary to translate one word by another just to reproduce the same style, but he tried to make the translation equivalent in value of the original.

Venuti (pdf via email)[6] states that Cicero emphasized meaning. This emphasis is capable of preserving the force of and the character of the language. It seems that he meant the source and translating languages, both the Greek texts and his Latin versions. Venuti (ibid) also explains the meaning of 'orator' in St. Jerome's quoting of Cicero's prologue. The orator refers to expressing speeches by retaining all their virtues, i.e. their meanings, their figures and the

order of topics, following their wording only so long as it does not conflict with idiom of the target language.

Munday (2001:19) asserts that 'interpreter' (translator in Davis' translation) is the literal translator (word-for-word), while 'orator' tried to produce a speech that moved the listeners. Because the Romans used to read the target texts side by side with the Greek source texts, word-for-word translation was exactly what it said by replacing each word in the source text with its closest grammatical equivalent in Latin. Copeland (1991:2) has her point of view regarding the 'opposition' between these two ways of translating 'interpreter' and 'orator':

> from Cicero's position, to translate like an "interpreter" is to practice within the restricted competence of the textual critic whose duty is to gloss word-for-word; and this is a restriction that the profession of rhetoric (Cicero's profession) historically imposed on the profession of grammar. To translate as an "orator" is to exercise the productive power of rhetoric, a power which rhetoric asserted and maintained by purposefully distinguishing itself from grammar (Copeland, 1991:2)

Venuti (2000:14) states that the 'interpreter' or 'grammarian' used translation as a means to serve academic functions: linguistic analysis and textual exposition. They favored interpreting the source text much more closely, rendering it word-for-word. This was because Roman education was bilingual, students were taught both languages: Greek and Latin, and translation exercises were routinely implemented in language learning and literary study.

St. Jerome then used Horace, seeing him 'a wise and learned man', as another example in defending his sense-for-sense method

of translating by quoting from his *Ars Poetica*: "Do not strive to render word-for-word like a faithful translator". Horace also discouraged the literal approach. In his *Ars Poetica*, as Wheatley (2007:1300) claims, Horace encouraged poets to negotiate between imitation of Greek models on the one hand and exploration of Latin and subjects closer to Rome on the other hand arguing that poets should allow themselves some creative liberty and not to enslave themselves to word-for-word translation.

Horace is clearly warning against word-for-word translation. However, his expression 'faithful translator' was loosely understood. According to Robinson (2001:172), Horace's Faithful translator was, for him, purely negative, a cautionary exemplar, something not to emulate: "do not strive to render word-for-word like a faithful translator". His advice was directed at writers working with familiar literary materials not at translators: do not be faithful to the received materials like those slavish literalist translator.

Thus, Cicero and Horace warning against rendering word-for-word they were warning against rendering like a translator 'interpreter' as Cicero put it. At that time, to 'translate or interpret' was to render one word at a time; to render as an 'orator' is to render a source text more freely into the target language in order to persuade the audience effectively (ibid:125).

After explaining that both of Cicero and Horace considered word-for-word translation as a matter of slavish adherence to each word in its original language sequence, St. Jerome pointed to the practice of Terence in translating Menander, Plautus and Caecilius who had translated ancient comic poets showing that those Greek translators took certain liberties in their translations to preserve the beauty and elegance of the original. For Cain (2013:8), Terence, during the Late Roman Empire, was the most revered and the most quoted classical Latin poet after Virgil. Among authors both pagan and Christian, none made as frequent or as creative literary use of

his comedies as St. Jerome, one of the most accomplished polymaths in all of Latin antiquity. In his estimation Terence ranked, alongside Homer, Menander and Virgil, as one of the greatest of all poets. St. Jerome had an encyclopedic knowledge of Terence's dramatic corpus.

St. Jerome's purpose by quoting from his preface to Eusebius' *Chronicle* was to point out that there are differences between languages in vocabulary, grammatical and syntactical constructions, idiom and style which mean that word-for-word translation would fail to be equivalent to the original. At the same time, he wanted to tell his controversies that from his adolescence he had always attempted to translate sense not words. This makes it clear that the theoretical basis of St. Jerome's translation theory was elaborated in this preface.

St. Jerome then asked his accusers to consider the preface of *St. Anthony's biography* if they found that his view and opinion on translation lacked the authority and seemed insufficient. So, he quoted from Evagrius of Antioch who translated the life of St. Anthony into Latin:

> a translation expressed word-for-word from one language into another conceals the sense just as an overabundant pasture strangles the crops. Since speech observes cases and figures, this method takes a long way around to cover barely the space of a few words. Therefore, I have shunned this method in translating the life of St. Anthony, so that nothing is lost from the sense when I have had to change the words. (St. Jerome's Letter to Pammachius, section VI, line 143 in Venuti,2000:24)

St. Jerome also mentioned Hilary the Confessor who had turned some homilies on Job and several commentaries on the Psalms from Greek into Latin according to the sense. Hillary, as St. Jerome explained, did not restrict himself to the soporific letter nor did he use literal translation, but he "by the right of victory carried the meaning as if captive into his own language". The purpose of St. Jerome's shifting from the agriculture to military metaphor was to make it clear that word-for-word translation should be abandoned because it would affect the meaning and the sense of the original negatively and at the same time to reinforce his sense-for-sense translation. in this sense, St. Jerome is considered as one amongst remarkable scholars to speak of violence in translation. He compared the translator to a conqueror who invaded the foreign, took captive thoughts and meaning, and brought them back to Latin. It is clear that Roman imperialism is reflected in Jerome's remarks to understand that a degree of aggression accompanies translation.

St. Jerome also quoted in his letter to Pammachius what he had previously written in the preface to one of his first translations from Greek into Latin, the *Chronicle of Eusebius*. In this preface, he mentioned the difficulties the translators face when translating from another languages:

1. It is difficult to follow sentences composed by another person without diverging somewhere, and it is hard to preserve the charm and elegance of expressions which are distinguished in the original.
2. A word with a significant meaning in the original possibly has no equivalent in the target, making the translator waste much time in seeking to satisfy the meaning to reach his goal.
3. The twist (winding) of hyperbaton is another difficulty. Hyperbaton[7] is the juxtaposition of words out of normal syntactic order which served as a device of poetic intensification since Horace.

4. The differences and dissimilarities in grammatical cases of both languages.

5. The varieties of rhetorical figures

6. The peculiar native character of the language that makes the translation sounds absurd when translating word for word, and the translator seems to abuse the function of translator when he changed -out of necessity- the order of the word.

St. Jerome's purpose by quoting from his preface to Eusebius' *Chronicle* was to point out that there are differences between languages in vocabulary, grammatical and syntactical constructions, idiom and style which mean that word-for-word translation would fail to be equivalent to the original. At the same time, he wanted to tell his controversies that from his adolescence he had always attempted to translate the sense not words.

St. Jerome argued that translation word-for-word would weaken and alter the charm of the original language. To reinforce his argument and to challenge those who did not think that word-for-word translation alter the charm of a language, he gave an example of Homer. He asked his accusers either to translate Homer word-for-word into Latin or translate it into prose: both would seem ridiculous and hard to be articulated.

St. Jerome, through his letter to Pammachius, aimed at reinforcing his method and principles of translation and, at the same time, reinforcing the reasons behind his new translation of the Old and New Testaments (his Vulgate) depending on the original texts because he found that the existed translations were not reliable for they had many mistakes needed to be corrected.

St. Jerome explained how a bad translation affects the sense of the original negatively, especially when dealing with Sacred Texts. He mentioned two verses examples of Evangelist Matthew:

[Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 7:14], and
[Matthew 2:5-6; Micah 5:1-2]

First Example

In considering a sentence from Matthew [1:22-23; Isaiah 7:14] with the Septuagint and Hebrew, St. Jerome found that the Evangelist gave a different sense to both of them:

Behold a virgin, *shall have* in her womb and bear a son and *they* shall call his name Emmanuel (in Matthew)

Behold a virgin *shall receive* in her womb and bear a son, and *you* shall call his name Emmanuel (in the Septuagint)

Behold a virgin *shall conceive* and bear a son, and *she* shall call his name Emmanuel (in the original Hebrew)

St. Jerome explained that *shall have*, *shall receive*, and shall *conceive* were not the same meaning. Such is the case with *they* shall call his name Emmanuel, *you* shall call his name Emmanuel, and *she* shall call his name Emmanuel because it was the virgin herself who would name him Emmanuel, not Achaz[8] nor the Jews.

Second Example

St. Jerome considered the situation mentioned in Matthew when Herod gathered the priests and scribes demanding them to inform him where the Christ was supposed to be born:

> In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it was written by the prophet: 'and you, Bethlehem, the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for from

you shall come a ruler to govern my
people Israel [Matthew 2:5-6].

The same passage in the Septuagint was rendered as:

And you, Bethlehem, house of Ephratah,
are small to be among the thousands of
Judah; from you one shall come forth to
me to be prince of Israel.

St. Jerome argued that the differences in word order and syntax
between Matthew and the Septuagint were obviously appeared when
comparing with the Hebrew, where one reads:

And you, Bethlehem Ephratah, are little
among the thousands of Judah; yet out
of you one will come forth to me, who
will be a ruler in Israel [Micah 5:1-2]

St. Jerome stated that in considering the Evangelist's phrase
word by word one found that 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah',
but in Hebrew 'Bethlehem Ephratah', and the Septuagint has 'the
house of Ephratah'. Again, when considering the next, Mathew's
phrase 'you are not the least among the leaders of Judah' it became
'you are small to be among the thousands of Judah' in the
Septuagint, and 'you are little among the thousands of Judah' in
Hebrew.

In St. Jerome's opinion, the Evangelist gave a contrary sense to
the Septuagint and to the Hebrew as well because he (the
Evangelist) said that Bethlehem is not small among the leaders of
Judah, while the original said exactly the contrary 'you are indeed
little and small; but little and small as you are, out of you will come
forth to me a leader of Israel'.

St. Jerome asserted that the passages and examples he mentioned were not to convict the Evangelists of falsification, but to convince his accusers of their unawareness and ignorance, and to seek indulgence from them.

Then, through the letter, St. Jerome talked about the Septuagint itself. He explained that there were a noticeable omissions and additions in it to the degree that the Jews laughed at the Greek version of a sentence in Isaiah like:

> Blessed is he who has seed in Sion
> and a household in Jerusalem

They (Jews) also made ridicule at the phrase in Amos following the description of luxurious living:

> They have regarded these things as
> permanent rather than fleeting

For St. Jerome, this was a very rhetorical sentence worthy of Cicero himself. But, the question was: how would the Christians deal with the original Hebrew if they found out that these sentences were omitted in the Septuagint?

He explained that the omissions were indicated by the Christian through marking them with an asterisk. These omissions could also be discovered by a careful comparison between his translation Version (Vulgate) and the original one. However, St Jerome made it clear that despite the omissions and additions, the Septuagint ranked high in Christian churches for two reasons: it is the original translation made before Christ's coming, and it was used by the Apostles.

St. Jerome affirmed that many phrases, though beautiful in Greek, if translated literally they would sound awkward in Latin; and conversely, many phrases were pleasing in Latin, but if the

word order remains unaltered, it would sound discordant in Greek and would displeased them.

6. Conclusions

In his letter to Pammachius "On the Best Method of Translation", St. Jerome discussed two methods of translation: word-for-word and sense-for-sense. However, he struggled to justify his sense-for-sense translation by listing some examples taken from his previous translation introductions, Cicero, Horace, and others who were in favor of sense-for-sense translation.

St. Jerome rejected the word-for-word approach because it focuses on the form of the ST which would produce a silly and absurd translation making the sense of the original unclear. The sense-for-sense approach, on the other hand, focuses on the sense or content of the ST. For him, the principle of sense-for-sense translation is relevant for secular texts, and the principle of word-for-word translation applies to the sacred text, since the word of God is 'a mystery'. In doing this, he aimed to preserve the fidelity to the source because the text was divine and the translator was its transmitter and humble servant; not a stylist, nor even a messenger, but a transferrer of meaning alone from source language to target language to be communicated to people.

It was St. Jerome who first investigated the intricate relationships between text-type and translation. He identified two text- types which he explained as sacred: word of God, and non sacred: texts other than the sacred texts. At the heart of St. Jerome's approach is hypothesis that it is the text- type that determines the method of translation: word-for-word or sense-for-sense.

St. Jerome was the first who conceived the term sense-for-sense translation in an attempt to find an approach between Cicero's extremely free translation and the totally literal and faithful

translation criticized by Cicero and Horace. In general, sense for sense translation refers to the meanings of ST words translated within their context and within TL requirements. It is opposed to word for word translation, which renders ST words by their closest TL forms.

St. Jerome also explained the difficulties the translators face when translation from another languages. He mentioned that it is hard for the translator to find the exact meaning, the equivalent rhetorical figures and idioms of the original, in addition to the two languages which belong to two different grammatical systems.

To justify his new translation of the Old and New Testaments (the Vulgate), St. Jerome made a comparison of the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament with that of the Hebrew texts and the Septuagint to see how they agree or disagree with the original one. He adopted different opinions depending on when the Septuagint disagreed with the Hebrew text and when the quotation disagreed with the Hebrew text. For the former, he called for a strict rendering of words. For the Latter, he considered the quotation and Hebrew text to have the same sense regardless their word order. So, he attributed more authority to the Evangelists than to the Septuagint translators because he believed that it cannot be reliable since it had many mistakes, omissions, and additions. However, many churches considered it as a divine version thinking that it was inspired by the Holy Spirit. St. Jerome believed that translation did not perform by the Holy Spirit, as they were thinking, but by the translators themselves. Because of that, he produced his Latin translation depending on the original Hebrew, not the Septuagint which had many omissions and additions.

List of Notes

[1] This paper is part of an MA thesis written by the first researcher under the supervision of the second author.

[2] Four men were called the Doctors of the Western Church: St. Ambrose, St. St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and Pope Gregory the Great (see Russell, 1945:334)

[3] The introduction to Cicero's translation of the speeches of the two Greek orators of the fourth-century BC (Domesthenes and Aeschines).

[4] For more information about the letters of St. Jerome, visit http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001.htm.

[5] This Letter (51) which Pope Epiphanius sent to Bishop John of Jerusalem under some circumstances. This version soon became public and incurred severe criticism from others and especially a person not named by St. Jerome but supposed by him to have been instigated by Rufinus, his former friend.

[6] Lawrence Venuti, personal communication, May 24, 2014.

[7] See Cook (2008:154).

[8] Achaz God gave him a sign. The sign was a promise of a child that would be born of a virgin sometime in the future [Isaiah 7:10-12].

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