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Journal of Translation
ISSN 1558-7282 (online)
https://siljot.org

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Journal of Translation 16 (1), 2020: 33–49.
https://doi.org/10.54395/JOT-KCMVX

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The Literary Use of Names in Hebrew Narrative and Opportunities for Sign Language Translation

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Abstract

Names of characters in literature are frequently used as dense signifiers, conveying messages from author to reader beyond identifying an individual, and offering clues about the character's destiny or how storylines may develop. This paper explores how the potential semantic connections evoked by names in Old Testament literature are exploited by Hebrew narrators as they craft their stories, contributing to characterization, plot structure, *leitworter* and dramatic irony. For example, *Laban* ('white') is caught up in trickery with white goats and white sticks, whereas *Micah* ('who is like Yahweh') has an idol in his house.

Bible translators working with spoken languages tend to transliterate (rather than translate) these names, relegating any semantic connections to a footnote. Sign languages, however, are more iconic and often naturally use name signs that evoke something about the referent, rather than just an arbitrary collection of sounds. This opens up the possibility of maintaining some of the semantic connections and literary features of Hebrew narratives when creating Scripture-based products in sign languages. This paper investigates the opportunities and limitations of such a strategy for translating biblical names.

1. Introduction

Each Old Testament translation project has to consider how to translate Hebrew names, bearing in mind issues such as their audience's familiarity with existing translations and the options for transcribing unfamiliar sounds. A further challenge, where translators have the freedom to rethink existing conventions, is that several Hebrew names have a somewhat transparent meaning, and translators need to decide whether to represent these meanings to any degree.

By transparency, I mean that certain elements of the name's form can evoke connections to other words with which the audience is familiar, but in a different semantic domain. As Anderson explains, "in many names… common word components remain transparent, synchronically-accessible, and presumably, therefore, potentially… not merely an etymology" (2008:83).

The degree of transparency may vary. At one end of the scale, the form of a name may be identical to another familiar word. For example, the Hebrew name *Jonah* has an identical form to the word for 'dove/pigeon', and the name *Elimelek* is nearly identical to 'My God (is) King'. Further along the scale, semantic links may be evoked by combinations of letters, even if their order is different or the overall form of the name has no grammatical parallel. For example, the name *Jabez* (1 Chronicles 4.9) contains the same consonants as the word for 'pain' that his mother uses to explain her name choice, but in a different order; and, although the name *Simeon* contains the same root letters as the verb for 'hearing', there is no clear grammatical explanation for the final *-on*.

Such transparency, and the corresponding possibility of semantic translation, are particularly relevant in cultures where names are expected to mean something beyond just referring to an individual. Deaf cultures are an example, with name signs often being expected to provide either an iconic link to a characteristic of the name bearer or transparent connections to other signs.

This paper focuses on biblical names, exploring the potential relevance of their meanings for the ways that authors crafted their narratives. It begins by considering how names communicate generally in conversation

and in literature; then, how names are used to communicate in Hebrew narrative; and finally, how this interacts with the challenge of Old Testament translation, with a particular focus on sign languages. I am approaching this based on several years supporting Bible translation in spoken languages in Papua New Guinea, alongside more recent tentative footsteps learning British Sign Language.

2. How do names communicate?

2.1. Cultural-cognitive Schemas for Names in Everyday Discourse

In order to explore how names are used in everyday discourse, I want to first reflect on my own experience. As my wife and I prepared for the birth of our first child, we thought hard about names, as is typical in my culture. We wanted one that sounded nice, had a positive meaning reflecting our Christian faith, and that was associated with worthy role models. So, we chose *Simeon*, linked to the Hebrew verb for 'hearing', with one biblical role model who sacrificed himself for his brother and another who spent a lifetime persevering in hope. Despite all this planning, when I call him for dinner, none of these aspects are prominent in my mind.

This supports the hypothesis that the primary way that personal names communicate in conversation is by referring to, or identifying, a specific individual. As Daams argues, "When we use a name we no longer think of the original *literal* meaning of that name, but we simply use it in order to *identify* someone or something" (2019:4). In my experience, this is also true for English names with more transparent meanings. When I play sports with *Ruby*, I rarely think of precious stones. However, I need to realize that my thought processes may be conditioned by the cognitive-cultural schemas of naming in my culture, where the general evolution has been toward "de-semanticization" of names (Anderson 2008:84), so that transparent names are the exception rather than the rule.

By contrast, in some Central Asian cultures where semantically-transparent names are expected, a girl may be called 'Stop-it!' or 'A-boy-is-needed' after several sisters have already been born, hoping for divine attention as the name is used (David Gray, personal communication). In such cultures, the semantic component of the name may be considerably more active, even in conversational use. Even in my English culture, links to other semantic domains remain cognitively accessible for transparent names, and are readily activated in appropriate contexts: I remember singing "You shall go out with Joy" to the annoyance of my teenage friend, and my son has been teased with monkey impressions because his name sounds the same as "simian." The desire to protect children from such mockery has contributed to parents in my British culture generally choosing "safe," well-known, non-transparent names for their children.

These examples show the importance of recognizing cultural influences when thinking about how names communicate. They suggest that although the primary function of personal names is referential, they have the potential to communicate more than that. People make inferences from names based on their own cultural grid. For example, in my culture, the expectation that parents think about their child's wellbeing when choosing a name means that I may think badly of the parents of a child with an unusual name. However, this conclusion only comes from the expectations in my cognitive-cultural schema for naming. These schemas are relevant for translation as they will influence the conclusions that could be drawn from translated names in the receptor culture.

Such schemas include the following elements (including factors identified by Bailey 2007:2–3):

- Name givers: Who is expected to give names? Is it one or both parents, other family members, or even the individual themselves? For sign languages, it may often be a teacher or others in the deaf community (Kourbetis and Hoffmeister 2002).
- Timing of naming: Is it appropriate to name a child before or at birth? Or a short while afterwards? Or, as in many deaf cultures, once at school? The timing impacts whether the name might communicate aspects of the parents' lives or characteristics of the referent themselves.
- Attitudes towards name-changing: Under what circumstances may a name be changed and who has the authority to do so? This includes changing my name from "Philip" to "Phil" as I left my parental home; international students taking a new, easier to pronounce, name in a new context; spouses

changing their names to reflect new affiliations; or taking on a new name to mark a significant life transition.

- Symbolic associations: To what degree is a transparent meaning expected for names? Are there values based on other holders of similar names within the cultural repertoire?
- Perceptions of community property: Names are part of a community's shared culture, evoking connections to insiders or outsiders if they are seen as "ours" or "foreign." For example, the options *Jesus*, *Yeshua* and *Isa* each communicate belonging within different communities.
- Expectations of familiarity, intimacy, status, power or authority: Some names may be appropriate in certain contexts but not others, or their use may convey a particular relationship between the speaker and the referent. Some relationships may be taboo, in which names cannot be used.
- Phonological associations: Phonological aspects of names may communicate something about the referent, such as *-a* endings evoking feminine referents for Spanish and Italian names.

Looking at the cognitive-cultural schemas that shape the Hebrew Bible, the biblical birth narratives reveal a world in which names are typically given by parents shortly after the child is born, with several stories of mothers naming their children (Eve, Rachel, Leah, Manoah's wife, Hannah), while others show more involvement of the father (Abraham named Ishmael, Joseph named his children, Jacob changed Rachel's choice for Benjamin, and Hosea is commanded by God to name his children). In the case of Perez and Zerah, even the midwife seems to be involved in naming. In these stories, the names may reflect the mother or father's assessment of their experience (*Cain*, *Samuel*, *Issachar*, *Ben-oni*, *Ephraim*), the circumstances or appearance at birth (*Esau*, *Perez*, *Zerah*), or be a response to divine guidance (*Isaac*, *Lo-Ammi*).

Divine intervention to change adult names is described for Abraham, Sarah and Jacob, marking key transitions in their life, whereas Gideon's name is changed to *Jerub-Baal* by his father after he tears down Baal's altar. This name is quoted as *Jerub-Besheth* (*Jerub* 'shame') in 2 Samuel 11.21, giving an example of cultural sensitivity to the use of Baal's name, also seen in the way Saul's descendants are referenced: *Eshbaal* / *Ishbosheth* 'man of shame' and *Merib-baal* / *Mephibosheth* 'from the mouth of shame'. The most pervasive taboo reflected in the Hebrew texts is the replacement of the divine name YHWH with *'adonai* (King 2014).

Names are also changed by authorities within new cultures, with Joseph being renamed *Zaphenath-Paneah* by Pharaoh, and Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who are all renamed by a court official, wiping out each of their names' connections to Israel's God (*-el*, *-iah* 'YAH'), and asserting their "belonging" to Babylonian culture.

This is a necessarily brief exploration of naming schemas in the Hebrew Bible. Translators could carry out a similar exploration of host culture cognitive-cultural schemas for naming, as there may be potential contextual mismatches between the Hebrew schema and host schema that could lead to miscommunication.

Investigating these cultural expectations related to names in everyday discourse is thus an important starting point, to clarify what may be communicated in translation. In literature, however, the communicative potential of names is further expanded, as authors carefully craft their narratives, shape their characters and reveal their plots.

2.2. Names in Literature

In literature, there is an added level of communication. As well as communication between the participants in the narrative itself, there is communication between the author and the reader. Fernandes (2006:45) claims it is at this "above-text" level that names function particularly as "dense signifiers," which "may contain in themselves clues about the destiny of a character or indications of the way the storyline might develop." Names can thus participate in wider literary features, such as characterization, repetition, plot structuring and irony.

Fernandes identifies certain names as being particularly "loaded," names from which the original audience would be able to derive historical and cultural significance (2006:49). When such loaded names are simply transliterated, they may be difficult to process (thus reducing readability and memorability) and fail to

achieve the relevance desired by the author. For example, when the LORD tells Isaiah to name a child *Mahershalalhashbaz* in Isaiah 8.3, translations that just copy this string of letters may cause readers to stumble, but without access to the meaning (something like 'quickly to the plunder') they gain no insight as to why the author has recorded this here, just before talking about wealth being carried off to Assyria.

Some examples of loaded literary names are highlighted by the following contemporary examples, where authors are communicating to their readers at the above-text level. In each case creative approaches to translation are also given:

- The Asterix comics were originally written in French, with highly transparent names for the characters. The names appear to have been chosen primarily to be relevant for their humorous value, and rarely to signal anything about the character. In the English translations, highly transparent names were chosen once again, but often did have connections to the character or their occupation, as seen in the following table (Source: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_translations_of_Asterix).

French name	Role	UK translation	US album translation
Panoramix	Druid	Getafix	Magigimmix
Ordralfabétix	Fishmonger	Unhygienix	Fishtix
Agecanonix	Village elder	Geriatrix	Arthritix
Iélosubmarine	Wife of fishmonger	Bacteria	

- In *The Hobbit*, Tolkien does not seem to have loaded the first names of his characters with English significance, and so the French translation by Daniel Lauzon simply copies most of these (Tolkien and Lauzon 2012). However, the main character, *Bilbo Baggins*, is introduced in the first chapter along with his destiny as a burglar. His surname, *Baggins*, strengthens this connection. To maintain similar allusions, Lauzon renames him *Bilbo Bessac* (related to French *sac* 'bag').
- In the Harry Potter novels by J. K Rowling, it is again typically through the surnames that the author seeks to communicate something about a character. In the French translation, *Argus Filch* (the caretaker) becomes *Argus Rusard* (from a French word for 'stealing'); *Madame Pomfrey* becomes *Madame Pomfresh*, perhaps trying to signal, as in the English, that she has a different ethnic origin to other teaching staff; and *Tom Marvolo Riddle* becomes *Tom Elvis Jedusor*, to allow the anagram "Je suis Voldemort" (in parallel to the English "I am Lord Voldemort") and creating a pun on *jeu du sort* 'game of chance'.

Having seen these contemporary European examples, Section 3 will look specifically at Hebrew narrative and the literary features in which names participate there. However, since biblical texts are a very different genre to contemporary children's fiction, I first want to clarify three assumptions about the analysis of how names communicate in biblical texts. Two are based on cognitive linguistics, and one on literary approaches to the Bible.

2.3. Cognitive Assumption 1 (CA1):

Allusions that are (more or less) transparent to the authors' original audiences are more relevant for literary communication than actual etymologies.

Biblical scholars are often interested in the original etymologies of Hebrew names, as the names themselves may be cultural artefacts that predate our biblical text, allowing inferences about an otherwise elusive ancient cultural setting (Herrick 1983:271–272, cited in Revilla 2009:4). On the other hand, biblical authors frequently use the similarities of names to other Hebrew roots to provide "folk" etymologies, whether or not these are the similarities that originally gave rise to the name. For example, the name *Moses* likely has an original Egyptian etymology (Griffiths 1953), perhaps related to the word 'child' or being 'born'. However, the words of Pharaoh's daughter in Exodus 2.10 link it to the Hebrew verb *mashah* 'to draw out', which both coheres with the preceding narrative and prophetically hints at Moses' future role, 'drawing' Israel out of Egypt.

The first audiences were also (presumably) able to connect names with similar sounding roots they recognized, with these connections being more salient than putative etymologies based on historic roots or other languages. A similar phenomenon occurs when contemporary English speakers connect an *ear* of corn and an *ear* on the body, or *arm* (body part) and *arm* (weapon), even though in each case both words have separate etymologies from distinct roots. The most salient links in the lexical networks in our minds are to synchronically-accessible words (those we are familiar with from experience), rather than etymological histories, so these are the links most accessible to literary exploitation.

For example, the meaning of the name *Orpah* is debated. Perhaps the origin is to be found in an Ugaritic cognate for 'clouds', or in Arabic cognates for a 'mane' or a 'handful of water' (Hubbard 2007:94). However, what is surely more significant for any literary use of the name is the root overlap with the consonants of *ʿoref* 'back of the neck', which would have been familiar to the original audience and might have seemed particularly appropriate for the one who turned away.

This assumption means that the analysis in Section 3 will prioritize connections from names to other words that would have been synchronically-accessible to the original audiences over etymological links.

2.4. Cognitive Assumption 2 (CA2):

Literary exploitation of a name does not require an explicit verbal wordplay.

Sometimes, biblical authors explicitly pick up on root consonants in a person's name and echo them in another form (see section 3.3 for examples). Such marked wordplays give very clear evidence that the author is using the name for literary purposes. However, literary exploitation of names extends beyond this. The absence of such direct wordplay does not preclude the author from expecting their audience to recognize the significance of a name within a story, especially where it is highly transparent.

As a result of this assumption, Section 3 will consider the literary features related to a wide variety of names in biblical narrative (including, for example, *Elimelek* and *Jehoshaphat*), not just those where there is an explicit wordplay.

2.5. Literary assumption:

Literary use of names does not entail a fictional account.

Much discussion of meaningful translation of names focuses on fiction, where writers can choose the names of their characters to communicate particular messages at the above-text level. This freedom could have been severely curtailed for biblical authors if they felt compelled to remain faithful to the names and events of their tradition.

However, they did have freedom in how they narrated those events, being able to choose when to give names to characters rather than generic epithets or pronouns, and how to select and frame significant events. For example, the author of Ruth may have chosen to use the names of Naomi's sons because they allowed interesting allusions, rather than inventing them just to be able to make those allusions. It is also possible the biblical authors felt free to invent new names for characters without implying any lack of faithfulness to their tradition, based on their cognitive-cultural schemas for naming.

In either case, Section 3 proceeds from the assumption that the authors' narrative artistry does not diminish the truth claims of the Bible.

3. Literary uses of names in Hebrew narrative

When looking at names in the Hebrew Bible, it is immediately striking how many unique names there are for a corpus this size (Sternberg 1985:329), with very few referents bearing the same name. This suggests a fantastic resource for literary investigation. Many names do have some transparent connection to other Hebrew roots (although sometimes rather incoherent), but there are also a very large number that resist any etymologizing or semantic elucidation (Sternberg 1985:330). This is a helpful reminder that a translation policy based exclusively on name meanings would run into enormous difficulties.

Further, many names only occur once within lists or genealogies, suggesting any semantic connections they evoke likely has limited relevance to the wider narrative. The following analysis thus focuses on names that occur in more marked literary positions.

Hebrew authors use these names in various ways as they structure their stories, with the names participating alongside other literary devices to create the characters and plots that enliven the Old Testament. The following sections consider names in relation to characterization (3.1), plot structuring (3.2), word motifs (*leitworter,* 3.3), and irony (3.4).

3.1. Characterization

Hebrew narratives are typically very reticent with respect to details we might expect for character development, creating deep, complex characters despite very little discussion of motives, thoughts, appearance, dress or gesture. This leaves us making inferences about character and motive from very fragmentary data (Alter 2011:143,158).

In terms of character complexity, Berlin (1994:24–42) describes three levels of characterization: agents, who are only mentioned because they are necessary for the plot; types, who have a very limited range of traits; and fully-fledged characters, where we experience a character with complexity and nuance beyond that necessary for the plot. Names may contribute to characterization for any of these types of characters, but in slightly different ways.

Names are not essential for characterization, with even some fully-fledged biblical characters never being named (such as the man of God and the prophet in 1 Kings 13). However, where names are given they can contribute to characterization, providing some of the fragmentary data that hint at an agent's character traits, or setting expectations for a fully-fledged character and tensions as to whether or not they will fulfil these expectations. Examples can be seen in the characters of Nabal, Jonah, Deborah, Jabez and Abraham.

3.1.1 Nabal

Nabal is a prime example of a "type" in Berlin's typology of characters. When used as an adjective, *nabal* is used of the 'foolish', and "especially of persons who have no perception of ethical or religious claims" (NET Bible notes 2006), although it is unlikely his parents named him with this in mind. More likely it could be based on a homonym meaning 'wineskin' (Firth 2009:267).

Nabal is introduced in 1 Samuel 25 in this way:

> And (there was) a man in Maon… and the man was very great, and he had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats, and the name of the man: Nabal... and the man was hard and his deeds bad

Here his greatness and wealth (measured in terms of his flocks) is introduced before his name. There is a gradual build-up of hints at character. The Old Testament frequently reminds of the danger of wealth, so introducing his wealth first already prompts a question about character. Then, a name is given that is cognate to *nebelah* 'foolishness', and finally the author explicitly confirms the character he has suggested at: he is hard and his deeds are bad (Firth 2009:267).

Following the interaction with David and his men, the author returns to Nabal's character through the words of Abigail (his wife) who makes an explicit word play on the name in verse 25:

> (Abigail to David): Please let my Lord not set his heart on this worthless man, on Nabal, for he is just like his name; Nabal is his name, and *nebelah* (folly) is with him

3.1.2 Jonah

There are no explicit word plays on Jonah's name within the book that bears his name, and yet his name is highly transparent: a *yonah* is a pigeon or dove, so there is a semantic domain readily accessible to the original audience (CA2). The book begins with:

> The word of Yahweh came to Yonah ben Amittai…

The name *Amittai* is also evocative, though less transparent than *Jonah*, with correspondences to the noun *'emet*, meaning 'truth' or 'faithfulness', and since the word *ben* can be used to express a quality as well as the concept of sonship, the author is potentially communicating something to his audience, suggesting Jonah may be a faithful character. Good (1965:42) notes that this name sets up a tension regarding Jonah's character from verse 1, as to whether he will live up to this name (son of 'faithfulness') or not. Instead, as the narrative continues, we discover "He abandons his faithfulness at the first opportunity and speaks truth only under duress, even then not understanding it."

But the name *yonah* itself potentially evoked certain characteristics to the original audience. However, to perceive these we need to understand the original associations of pigeons for the ancient hearers. One clue is given in Hosea 7.11:

> Ephraim has become like a *yonah*, silly and without sense; they call upon Egypt, they go to Assyria.

If these characteristics of pigeons were widely shared, Jonah's name is apposite, reflecting his senseless movements one way and then the other.

3.1.3 Deborah

Deborah means 'bee', and it is striking that the Hebrew Bible makes rare reference to this animal (four times), despite very frequent reference to honey. In terms of cultural associations, three references highlight them as adversaries, and only the strange situation of Samson's lion links them to honey (Klein 1988:41).

Deborah is introduced in Judges 4.4 as "Deborah, prophet woman, woman of Lappidoth." *Lappidoth* is normally taken as the name of her husband, although the synchronically-accessible word *lappid* is used for a torch in Genesis 15, so perhaps she is a 'woman of torches' (CA1). Within two verses she has summoned Barak, whose name means 'lightning'. Klein sees in this structuring and the following narrative a hint at Deborah's significant role in standing against Israel's enemies, but also the narrator's desire to surround her with "male figures of fire which symbolically keep this 'queen bee' within their limits" (Klein 1988:217). In terms of characterization, this may be communicating more about the author's attitudes to this unlikely leader than about her own character.

3.1.4 Abraham and Jabez

In the narratives of Abraham and Jabez we see names interacting with features of characterization in a different way, as we see Berlin's "fully-fledged" characters interacting with and resisting the attributes inherent in the name they have been given. In Genesis 17, the first response we are shown from Abraham after God has changed his name (which God explains as being based on him becoming a father 'of many nations', *av hamon goyim*) is to fall down laughing and questioning how this can be, and the subsequent chapters unfold the complexities of this prophetic name becoming reality.

Similarly, the short story of Jabez in 1 Chronicles 4.9–10 uses plays on his name to reveal his character. Although the narrator tells us his mother called him *Ya'ebets* because she bore him in pain (*'otseb*), Jabez' character is revealed through his prayer that rather than being constrained by the 'pain' of his name, his territory will be expanded and his life free from pain (*lebiltiy 'atsbiy*).

3.2. Plot

As well as contributing to characterization, names can be used to structure a plot or signal how it will develop. A supreme example is found in the naming of Jacob's sons in Genesis 29 to 30, where the wives' choice of names for the children and reasons they give for doing so are the key structural elements driving forward a narrative of family tensions. Here the narrator skillfully portrays both Leah and Rachel, using the names and their explanations to characterize the women (and their competition for Jacob's favor) more than the children themselves. As Fokkelman (1975:133) notes, "each name-giving serves their psychological conduct of war, which is an incessant propaganda combat."

Fokkelman goes further to see the events around the naming of Issachar (which sounds something like 'hired man') as central to the structure of the wider narrative, with *Issachar* being "by far the most important name in the whole story of Jacob after that of Jacob himself" (1975:137). In Genesis 30.14–15 we read of Rachel demanding mandrakes from Leah, and Leah bargaining them in return for the opportunity to sleep with Jacob. When Jacob returns from work in verse 16, Leah demands he come to her that night as he has been 'bought' or 'hired' (using the Hebrew root *skr)* with the mandrakes, and as a result she gives birth to Issachar, alluding to the same root. Here we see Jacob as a dehumanized "man for hire," bought for sex by his wife, signaling a complete breakdown of his family.

This root echoes Laban's earlier offer in 29.15 that Jacob not work for free but for *maskoret* 'wages' and points towards Jacob's later reproach in 31.41 about how many times those wages were changed. From this perspective, the naming Issachar functions similarly to a chiastic center, drawing attention to the root *skr* and its importance for structuring the plot.

Another example of names hinting at plot features is given by the names of Naomi's sons in Ruth 1.2. They are introduced as *Mahlon* and *Kilion*, names that have the potential to evoke connections to the synchronically-accessible roots *chlh* 'to be ill' (for *Mahlon*) and *klh* 'to be at an end, complete' for *Chilion* (cf. Hubbard 2007:89), whatever their etymology (CA1). By verse 5, both have died, still within the narrated introduction (Berlin 1999:86). The fact that the narrator gives their names, and yet dispatches them so summarily, highlights the relevance of these semantic links, even though there is no explicit verbal connection in the story (CA2).

A further example of plot structuring using names is found in the Chronicler's account of *Jehoshaphat* ('Yahweh judges') in 2 Chronicles 17–20. As Gunn and Newell (1993:152) recognize, "the narrator has shaped the account so that in the center we see Jehoshaphat's behavior as the very epitome of his name." The narrative begins in chapter 17 with Jehoshaphat's religious reforms and material successes, and ends in chapter 20 with his leading the people to seek Yahweh in the face of attack from Moab and Ammon (in which he prays "God, will you not judge (*sh-ph-t)* them," v.12), followed by a final summary of the fear of God falling on the surrounding kingdoms. In between, chapter 18 focuses on the questionable alliance with Ahab.

Chapter 19.4–11 then sits at the center of these narratives, where Jehoshaphat appoints judges (*shophtim*) in the fortified cities, with the climax in verse 7 directly echoing the king's name as he reminds them that they are not judging (*sh-ph-t)* for mortals, but for the LORD (*YHWH*).

The next section brings to the fore other examples where such verbal connections are exploited.

3.3. Word Motifs (Leitworter)

Alter (2011:111–122) observes that one of the most common literary features of Hebrew narrative is the use of *leitworter*, word motifs consisting of words or roots that recur significantly through a narrative. They are used to highlight and sustain thematic developments and can create connections between episodes that might otherwise appear unrelated. Often the words used share an association with the same Hebrew root, but may be in quite different forms, in which case the difference adds to the dynamic of the text.

As has already been seen with Issachar and Jehoshaphat (and Jabez to a lesser extent), names are one way of reiterating a *leitwort*, and thus help to make connections between different parts of a narrative. Further examples can be seen in narratives about Isaac, Adam, Edom and Laban.

3.3.1 Isaac

The name Isaac in Hebrew is *Yitschaq*, the third person *yiqtol* form of the root *ts-ch-q*, typically glossed in English as 'he laughs'. This verb root recurs throughout the stories of Isaac, from his promised birth to adult life. First, after Abraham is told that Sarah will bear a son in Genesis 17, the narrator makes an explicit wordplay on the name, telling us:

> Abraham fell on his face *vayyitschaq* (and laughed)... "Sarah will bear a son and you will call him *Yitschaq*" (vv. 17–19)

In chapter 18, when the birth is again foretold, it is this time Sarah who laughs while she listens from the tent, and is then challenged for it, again playing on this root:

> *vattitschaq* (and she laughed) Sarah in her heart… "Why did Sarah *tschaqah* (laugh)?" ... "I didn't *tsachaqti* (laugh)!" … "You did *tsachaqt* (laugh)!" (vv. 12–15)

In chapter 21, Isaac is born and Sarah talks now in a positive way about the laughter he has brought:

> Abraham called his son *Yitschaq…* Sarah said "God has made *tsechoq* (laughter) for me, and everyone who hears will *yitschaq* (laugh) over me" (vv. 3–6)

However, this laughter quickly turns sour as Sarah is displeased with the kind of laughter being enjoyed by Ishmael in 21.9, "Sarah saw the son of Hagar... *metsacheq."* The form of the verb (a *piel* rather than *qal* form) and the sparseness of the narrative leave it unclear whether this is mocking, jeering, or simply laughing in innocent enjoyment, perhaps as an equal with his brother. However, the recurring *leitwort* links this passage to the preceding one and the wider narrative.

Finally, in Genesis 26, Isaac is recognized by Abimelech as doing something with Rebekah that convinces him she is Isaac's wife and not his sister, as previously claimed. Once again, the verb is based on the *piel* form of the root *tschq*, and once again it is unclear exactly what he is doing, though the *leitwort* connects it to the earlier episodes.

> Abimelech looked… and saw *Yitschaq metsacheq* Rebekah his wife (v. 8)

Rather than characterizing Isaac (Genesis 26 is the only possible example where he is laughing himself), this recurring *leitwort* connects the laughter of those surrounding Isaac throughout his life.

3.3.2 Adam

In the primeval narrative, the word *'adamah* 'earth, soil' occurs nine times between Genesis 1.25 and 3.23. This *leitwort* is closely connected with the word *'adam,* used both for humanity in general (with a prefixed article) and as the name of the first man (when it occurs without an article). In 2.5, the narrator tells us there was not yet any *'adam* to work the *'adamah.* In verse 7, the LORD God creates the man (*'adam*) out of the dust of the earth (*'adamah*), then in verse 19 he forms the animals and birds from the *'adamah* and brings them to the *'adam* to be named.

By chapter 3, the lack of an article shows that *'adam* is being used as a name, Adam, not just a general term. In verse 17, Adam is told that it is on his account the *'adamah* is cursed, and in verse 19 that he will return to the *'adamah,* because he was made from dust.

The interplay of these two words throughout the narrative serves to continually remind the hearer of the close relationship between humanity (and specifically the first man) and the ground from which they were made.

3.3.3 Edom and Laban

Word-motifs are also significant in the Jacob cycle. Fokkelman (1975:89) notes "the story of Jacob makes itself especially clear by highlighting stylistic means—especially keywords—which give speed and direction to the circling along the hermeneutic spiral." A couple of interesting examples that interact with the names of characters are related to the individuals who deceive or are deceived by Jacob, and the colors 'red' and white.

In Genesis 25, when Esau is born in verse 25, the narrator observes that he came out *'admoniy* 'reddish-brown' all over. A few verses later (v.30), Esau is returning famished from the field to find Jacob cooking stew, and he stammers out his request for food, referring to it as *ha'adom ha'adom hazzeh* 'the reddish-brown (stuff), this reddish brown (stuff)', and the narrator explains that this is why he is called *'Edom*. In this episode, Jacob uses the 'red' stuff to get what he wants from his 'red' brother.

However, in chapters 27–28, Jacob is sent to his uncle *Laban* (Hebrew for 'white') to find a wife. In chapter 29, 'Mr. White' deceives Jacob into marrying Leah as well as Rachel, and acquires his service for at least fourteen years. By chapter 30, Jacob is ready to leave and starts negotiating his wages with Laban, based on

the colors of sheep and goats. Once again, Mr. White tries to trick Jacob, initially removing all the male and female goats with white (*laban*) on them (v. 35). However, in verse 37, Jacob responds by taking strips of 'White-tree' (*libneh* 'poplar') and others, peeling white streaks (*petsalot lebanot*) in them, exposing the white (*hallaban*) of the branches. As Fokkelman (1975:150) notes, "Jacob exploits his perception of his uncle's nature which has been revealed by his name, in exactly the same way as in Genesis 25. Here everything we see is white, there it was red."

In this example, the use of *leitworter* associated with the names not only brings coherence to the individual episodes but highlights the connections between both examples of Jacob's shrewdness in relating to his relatives.

3.4. Irony

A final literary feature to be explored is that of irony. Good (1965:14) explains irony as criticism that "perceives in things as they are an incongruity." Within a literary context, this is frequently evidenced by a character or narrator saying one thing, but the audience with a broader context being able to perceive another. Note that irony may be present within the text level (where, for example, a parent might deliberately give a somewhat incongruous name to their child, dissociating themselves from the meaning it expresses), but more often it is present at the above-text level, where the characters within the story are unaware of the incongruities being communicated from author to reader.

Examples of irony at the start of a story can also contribute to narrative tension: will this incongruity persist throughout the episode, or will it be resolved? Names are one way that an ironic incongruity can be introduced—creating a tension between the name's meaning and the story's setting that is not perceived by the characters. Some examples of names contributing to irony and incongruity occur with Micah, Rachel, Elimelek and Naomi, and Jacob.

3.4.1 Micah

Judges 17 begins an episode related to a man called *Micah*. In the first four verses, he is given a fuller form of the name: *Miy-ka-yhu* 'who is like Yahweh', and a mini-narrative tells his construction of a silver idol. The following translation is based on Boling's commentary (1975:254):

> There was a man of the Ephraimite hill country, and his name: Yahweh-the-Incomparable. He said to his mother "The eleven hundred of silver which was taken from you… I took it. But now I will return it to you…" He returned the money to his mother, and his mother took two hundred of silver and gave it to the smith, and he made of it a molten figure. There it was, in the house of Yahweh-the-Incomparable!

The use of the full form of his name, and the emphasis on the location in *this* man's house in verse 4, suggests that the author is deliberately highlighting the incongruity of a divine image in the house of a man whose name expresses precisely that Yahweh is not like other gods. The name itself is the only way this irony is expressed here.

3.4.2 Rachel

Returning to the Jacob cycle there are also ironies around the name Rachel. A *rachel* is a ewe, and when she is introduced in Genesis 29.9 the narrator highlights her link the sheep: "and *Rachel* came, with the flock." The importance of shepherds looking after these breeding ewes is highlighted in Genesis 31.38, where Jacob reminds Laban that none of his *rachels* have miscarried during the twenty years he worked for him. So, whilst Genesis 29.9 sets up the expectation of Rachel as a breeding ewe, as the narrative unfolds the incongruity of her name becomes all the more apparent. Although Jacob prevents all Laban's *rachels* (sheep) from miscarrying, in 30.2 he reacts in anger at the thought he should be able to take God's place and enable his own wife Rachel to have a child.

3.4.3 Elimelek and Naomi

The book of Ruth also begins by highlighting several incongruities as the scene is set, to which the names contribute:

> Ruth 1.1–2: And it was, in the days of the judging of the judges, and there was a famine in the land, and a man went from *Bethlehem* ('the House-of-Bread') in Judah to stay in the country of Moab—him and his wife and his two sons. And the name of the man: *Elimelek* ('My-God-is-King'), and the name of his wife: *Naomi* (perhaps 'My-Pleasant-One')....

We are launched into a story where someone called 'My God is King' is leaving the king's territory because of a famine, a key symptom of the divine King failing to keep his side of the covenant. His wife's name evokes 'pleasantness' or 'sweetness', and yet she too is being forced to leave her home. Not only that but they are leaving Bethlehem in Judah, which the audience would recognize as the origin of the Davidic king, alongside the incongruity in the transparent meaning of the name: 'House-of-Bread'.

These tensions force the questions from the start of the story: Is God indeed king? Will Naomi's life indeed be pleasant? And the twists of the unfolding narrative reveal that indeed both of these are true, even if we have to navigate narrative twists and turns to get there.

3.4.4 Jacob

The ironies and incongruities surrounding the name of Jacob are more complex. At his birth (Gen 25.26), the narrator tells us he was holding Esau's heel (*ʿaqeb*) and he was called "Jacob" (*Yaʿaqob)*. Fokkelman (1975:92) recognizes an ambiguity in this scene: Is Jacob desiring to be close to his brother out of affection, or is he already seeking to grasp and overtake his brother's position? The preceding description of struggle in the womb and the prophecy of verse 23 has primed the reader towards the latter interpretation. The following stories of deception as Jacob tricks Esau out of his birthright and then his blessing reaches its climax in 27.36 when Esau cries out that his brother is rightly called Jacob because he has 'supplanted' him (*ya ʿeqbeniy*) these two times, thus resolving the potential ambiguities in Jacob's name: he is following at the heel with a desire to supplant rather than out of devotion.

4. Meaningful rendering of names in translation

4.1. General considerations

Section 3 considered how authors use names in characterization, plot structuring, word-motifs and irony, highlighting connections throughout the text. Are there ways these features can be captured in translated Scripture-based products? In many cases this is fraught with difficulty.

First, recall that many names in the Hebrew Bible do not appear to be exploited for literary purposes, and many resist efforts to find meaning connections. Thus, attempting to translate all names meaningfully would not just be impractical, but actually impossible for many names. It could also suggest a literary function for names in places where none was intended. As Bailey (2007:5) notes, "Care should be taken that [meaningful renderings] do not detract from more important themes of a passage."

Further complexities come from cultural genre expectations signaled by meaningful renderings. That is, a reader coming across such a name may very quickly assign a certain genre to the text based on their familiarity with other works. For example, within typical English cognitive-cultural schemas, meaningful renderings may produce the following genre cues:

- Children's fiction (where we encounter characters such as *Mr. Happy* or *Cruella de Vil*)
- Moral tales or allegories (introducing us to characters such as *Christian* in Pilgrim's Progress)
- Stories of indigenous peoples (such as *Sitting Bull*, *Black Hawk*)
- Foreignized translation

Such genre expectations may be at odds with the original intended genre. For example, consider these English translations of Genesis 28.5:

1. Then Isaac sent Jacob on his way, and he went to Paddan Aram, to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, who was the mother of Jacob and Esau.
2. Then Laugher sent Supplanter on his way, and he went to Paddan Aram, to Mr. White son of Mr. House-of-God the Aramean, the brother of Captivating, who was the mother of Supplanter and Rough.
3. Then He-Laughs sent He-Supplants on his way, and he went to Paddan Aram, to White-One son of House-of-God the Aramean, the brother of Knotted-Cord, who was the mother of He-Supplants and Rough-One.

In my culture, option 2 might evoke a children's story or moral tale, almost certainly a fictional genre. Option 3 is potentially more acceptable (for some Scripture products), perhaps cueing a foreignized translation from an exotic culture through its use of hyphenated forms. However, both translations would sound very strange to English audiences familiar with traditional translations. Existing Bible translations do use some meaningful translations for names, such as the names 'Not My People' and 'No Mercy' in Hosea 1 (ESV), but these are perhaps more acceptable because the characters have very limited ongoing activity in the narrative.

These options highlight further challenges, if one were to try a consistent semantic-translation policy. Whilst it is relatively easy to find a meaning for *Laban*, there is no agreed meaning evoked by *Esau*, so a highly interpretive choice needs to be made. *Jacob* and *Rebekah* have a different complexity, where the translator is forced to choose which of the potential nuances of the name should be rendered, such as whether to highlight Jacob's connection with the heel or to supplanting.

These complexities suggest meaningful names are unlikely to be a suitable translation option in English. However, in other cultures, an analysis of such genre expectations could be carried out before ruling out meaningful translations. Perhaps Western translators have been influenced by their own schemas more than receptor culture expectations and have thus been "unnecessarily depriving cultures of part of the Biblical message where meaning in names has traditionally been important" (Bailey 2019, personal communication).

In particular, sign languages (the focus of section 4.2) offer a context in which meaningful names may evoke fewer genre-specific cues, and there is greater freedom to mix a variety of naming options.

4.2. Biblical names in sign languages

4.2.1 Cognitive-cultural schemas for names in sign languages

Although the cognitive-cultural schemas (see Section 2.1) for names in sign languages differ from context to context, there are some common themes. In contrast to spoken languages, many name signs are iconic, descriptive, non-arbitrary signs representing the named individual in some way. Further, sign language names rarely function as call signs (there are other ways of attracting attention), but are used rather to talk about someone in the third person (Paales 2011:49).

Since name signs are typically given significantly after birth, it is common for names to describe the person in some way (rather than the parents). This can lead to people with anachronistic names, describing an attribute from the time of naming (such as curly hair or a childhood trait). Many deaf children acquire a name sign when they are at school (and if from peers, it may be somewhat derogatory), whereas famous people can be given name signs based on their appearance or characteristic actions as adults (such as Donald Trump's hair or hand movements). As in spoken languages, there are examples of deaf signers using an iconic name without thinking of any meaning other than the referent, until prompted to reflect on it (for example, a sign evoking the shape of the referent's nose (Mindess 1990:7)).

Research suggests deaf sign language users rarely choose their own name (eg. Meadow 1977, Kourbetis and Hoffmeister 2002). Topraksoy (2015:46) describes name signs as a "gift," which cannot be picked or invented by the referent, and which both "signal and construct a person's identity as a recognized member of a deaf

community." Receiving a name sign rather than just a fingerspelling may thus be a sign that an outsider has been accepted into the community.

Several authors note strong resistance to more than one person in the same community bearing the same name, with various strategies to adjust should such a conflict occur (Mindess 1990, Kourbetis and Hoffmeister 2002). However, in BSL, there are schools or regions in which standard name signs were used for different individuals having the same English first name or surname, such as "William / Williams," "Philip / Philips," or the common surname "Smith" (Day and Sutton-Spence 2010:30–31).

In ASL, Mindess (1990:6) found the two most common values attached to name signs were as identity symbols and as symbols of group membership, for example through signs made in the same location. According to one respondent in her survey, suitable name signs in ASL should not be "too big, too long, should not make the hands move too much, should not be put in places that are hard to see" and in general, "should not bring too much attention to the sign itself."

Significantly for this topic, loan translations are attested as a method of naming in several sign languages, in which the meaning of a spoken language name is signed. For example, both Russian Sign Language and Estonian Sign Language named Dmitri Medvedev (former Russian President) as BEAR, based on the meaning of the surname in Russian (Paales 2011:52). In BSL, Day and Sutton-Spence also found examples where names are based on loan translations of a word with similar orthographic form to the individual's legal name, such as someone with the surname *Fowler* being named FLOWER, or signing *Lorraine* as LORRY (2010:32–33).

However, loan translations or partial loan translations are typically less common than descriptive names, and may only account for a very small number in a sample. For example, loan translations only accounted for 5% in Turkish Sign Language (Topraksoy 2015:55), but as many as 19% in BSL (Day and Sutton-Spence 2010:48).

4.2.2 Options for translating biblical names

When translating biblical names into sign languages, many characters may have a sign (or more than one sign) already in use by a segment of the deaf community. Where no sign is known, there may be options in other sign languages that can be borrowed in whole or in part (cf. Revilla 2009, who encourages borrowings from Israeli Sign Language, particularly for place names), or a new sign may need to be created. Working on a Bible translation project could allow deaf translators to reflect on the existing options and consider possible alternatives to propose to the wider deaf community. Paales situates name signs within Deaf folklore, which she describes as a "type of playful language creation" (Paales 2011:47), so working on a translation project may provide opportunities for this kind of creative exploration.

Different approaches to translating biblical names into sign languages are prioritized in different contexts. For example, several biblical names in ASL use initialized signs that also give an iconic description of the character, whereas the BSL project has generally favored fingerspelling. Approaches can be classified into three general types (or a combined approach): those based on the orthographic representation of a name, those based on the referent within the world of the text, or those based on potential semantic links evoked by the name, with differing degrees of transparency:

- Focus on orthographic form: This involves fingerspelling the whole name or certain salient characters within it (such as initial letters, or repeated *O* signs for a name with several letter Os in it). These are whole or partial borrowings of form from the spoken language (Revilla 2009:54)
- Focus on the referent: This involves choosing signs that iconically represent something about the character referred to, whether their physical appearance (e.g. hairy, bearded, bald, stones on a chestplate for *Aaron* ...), their role (e.g. king, shepherd, …), characteristic actions (e.g. *Jeremiah* may be signed as CRYING), significant life events (e.g. signing *Jesus* via the nails through his hands at crucifixion), significant locations (such as their birthplace), biblical associations (such as LION for *Judah*) or other connections to the character.

- Focus on meaning: This involves choosing signs that evoke one of the semantic links from the spoken language form, such as signing Isaac as LAUGHING. This is in essence a loan translation, a borrowing from the spoken language (Paales 2010:52, Revilla 2009), rather than an iconic symbol to represent the character.
- Combination of approaches: Examples of combinations would include initialized signs using the first letter of the orthographic form with a sign for the person's role (e.g. D/KING for *David*); fingerspelling a name in an introductory section and associating it with a sign based on referent or meaning that is used thereafter; mouthing the phonological form either wholly or partially alongside a manual sign based on referent or meaning; or, in video materials, using a sign based on referent or meaning whilst an orthographic form is displayed on screen.

Each of these options has strengths and weaknesses. First, methods focusing on the orthographic form tend to be reasonably straightforward to operationalize (with questions mainly around which orthographic form to copy, and which adjustments to make) and provide close connections to spoken language forms, which can aid with integration into hearing Christian communities (if desired).

On the other hand, fingerspellings stand out very clearly as borrowings from the spoken language (Revilla 2009:58), and the strong influence of the spoken form may evoke emotional reactions. In Auslan, the educational approach has affirmed fingerspelling, so this is a positive, familiar approach to use for translating names (Adam 2008:95). Conversely, amongst Greek Sign Language users, fingerspelling is seen as a sign of oppression, and thus it is rarely used by Greek Deaf adults (Kourbetis and Hoffmeister 2002). Initialized signs may evoke similarly diverse reactions, being embraced in American Sign Language but generally avoided in British Sign Language (Gill Behenna 2018, personal communication) and, at least initially, resisted in ISL (Revilla 2009:65).

Further, name signs based on the orthographic form are typically arbitrary (rather than descriptive), based on the phonetic strings of the spoken language, and thus at odds with most typical sign language naming schemas. Initialized signs, however, do allow for an iconic, descriptive component as well as the arbitrary initial. Many biblical names also have fairly long orthographic forms, so choosing to fully fingerspell all names may add significantly to processing effort and detract from readability, memorability and perception of the main themes of a passage.

Second, the use of names to describe aspects of a referent is typically much more natural in sign languages than spoken languages, and physical characteristics are often used. However, with very limited physical descriptions of characters in the Bible, finding unique identifiers from the text alone can be a challenge. Some names are therefore based on representations of Bible characters in other media, such as the name sign for *Moses* (seen in at least Poland, Spain and Mexico) based on the horns found on Michelangelo's statue of him in Rome and in other ancient iconography (based on Exodus 34), or a Romanian Sign Language name sign for *Samson* with a headband, based on his appearance in a popular movie (Petru Pascalau 2018, personal communication). These can easily become anachronistic or misleading, or end up with many male characters simply being named with BEARD, at odds with the strong preference across deaf cultures for name signs to be unique identifiers.

Another descriptive option is to choose names based on significant life events, for example signing *Jonah* as being eaten by a whale, *Moses* with hands held by Aaron and Hur, *Pilate* as WASH.HANDS, *Jesus* as NAILED.HANDS or *Samson* as PUSHES.PILLARS. This naming policy should aid identification and memorability, as it evokes a familiar story in which the referent participates, but it can create new forms of ironic incongruity within a story that are not present in the original narrative. For example, Bascom (2008:92) notes the inappropriateness of Jesus being signed with nail prints during the nativity story. Whilst the semantic connections of the original name Jesus do point towards 'salvation', they do not naturally lead to crucifixion. As Elwolde (2008:82) observes, "Sign names by their nature focus on just one element in the story of the person or place, which is often not the most significant one, from an exegetical or theological perspective," and this is particularly true for descriptive names. Descriptive names can also become confused with events in the narrative itself. For example, when signing the men on the road to *Emmaus* as WALKING, users of the Spanish Sign Language (LSE) translation did not realize this was a name rather than a description of an event (Steve Parkhurst 2018, personal communication).

Finally, translations of biblical names that evoke semantic connections of the word in the spoken language seem to be the least common in European sign languages. Paales (2011:65–66) lists none in her survey of Christian names in Estonian Sign Language; Elwolde (2008:81–82) lists one in Spanish Sign Language; and Sandholm (2010) lists the use of Hebrew or Greek meaning of the name below use of other characteristics for naming in Finnish Sign Language. The only example in Elwolde's overview of names in the Spanish Sign Language project is signing *Isaac* as LAUGHTER, which he describes as "obscure" (2008:81). Yet, as Paales (2010:52) notes regarding Estonian Sign Language names for hearing people, "For a Deaf person the meaning of the written form of a personal name speaks volumes – it gives a visual impulse, for which a suitable sign language translation is then searched." It is perhaps the challenges in finding sign language translators with expertise in Hebrew and Greek that has led to the relatively rare use of this strategy (cf. Åsberg's (2008:74) identification of this issue for the Swedish Sign Language translation project).

As suggested in section 3, this kind of semantic translation has the potential to allow a richer understanding of the literature of the Old Testament, if acceptable to the community. It could communicate relationships in the text that do have an exegetical significance, and improve on spoken-language translations by making visible some of the word-motifs that are hidden when names are just transcribed. Revilla's study of place names in Israeli Sign Language (2009) finds many that do maintain this connection to the semantics of the Hebrew original, in the category she calls "simple loan translations" (Revilla 2009:55), with, for example, all her consultants signing the name *Bethlehem* 'house of bread' in a way based on 'bread', and one of the three also signing 'house' (Revilla 2009:141). Across sign languages, Isaac is commonly given a semantically-motivated sign, and several sign languages also use a sign for Adam that makes visible his connection to the ground (*'adamah*), at least as one morpheme in a complex sign which may signal *Adam* as a 'man made from ground'.

However, the semantic approach again runs into challenges if a non-unique sign is borrowed for a name but is not recognized as such. For example, signing *Jonah* as DOVE or *Rachel* as EWE could perhaps be confused as signaling that these animals themselves are the characters, if exactly the same sign is used, without affixes or mouthing to disambiguate. Further, potential literary benefits of using this strategy might be limited if there are contextual mismatches for the audience, with different cultural associations for the semantically-linked elements. For example, signing *Jonah* as DOVE is more likely to evoke a symbol of peace than foolish flying from one place to another for contemporary Christian Western audiences.

Despite these challenges, the potential exegetical value of name signs based on meanings should not be dismissed, and could be worth trialing in suitable Scripture products within a deaf community keen to explore these literary connections and test the outcomes. The variety of types of name signs in Deaf culture means it is unlikely to be perceived as unusual to use some semantically-based names alongside other approaches.

Empirical investigation would be helpful to see how sign language users respond to stories (such as the Ruth or the Jacob cycle) if they are told with (at least some) semantically-transparent names. Another useful next step would be to build a catalogue of translations of biblical names across different sign language translation projects, to give ideas for translators to play with and develop creative options in their own contexts.

5. Conclusion

This paper has argued that Hebrew authors used names for literary purposes that are often hidden in spoken language translations, in part because of Western cognitive-cultural schemas for names which do not expect to see semantic transparency. Although a consistent policy of translating rather than transliterating names would be neither wise nor feasible, the observations in the paper suggest three applications that could be followed by translation projects, especially for those into sign languages.

1. Explore the meanings of biblical names. Take the time to think through the meanings of biblical names (where there is some degree of semantic transparency) and be alert to ways that authors may be structuring their narratives to exploit these meanings.
2. Explore the cognitive and cultural schemas associated with names in the culture where you are working. What are the expectations regarding the giving and changing of names? How do names

communicate in the culture, and what are the expectations of semantic transparency? Do semantically transparent (or non-transparent) names in texts give rise to certain genre expectations?

3. Depending on your context and the kind of project you are working on, consider adding meaningful translation to your name-translation toolkit.

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