

Ni a wnawn, ac a wɔndawn:
William Morgan's Choices in His 1588 Welsh Translation of the
Pentateuch — the Case of the Hebrew Verb *šm*^c ('hear')

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An 14ú Comhdháil Idirnáisiúnta sa Léann Ceilteach
Maigh Nuad, 2011/8/4

In 1588 William Morgan published his monumental Welsh translation of the Bible. This impressive work is quite atypical of the contemporary Bible translations, as the Old Testament was translated directly from the original Hebrew. This fact invites contrastive study of the Welsh and Hebrew texts, which may shed light on the Welsh text and language, the translation process, and (the translator's reading of) the original text.

In this paper I will attempt a close examination of the semantic field of HEARING in the Welsh translation of the Pentateuch in comparison with the Hebrew text. A special attention will be given to the means by which Morgan translated the Hebrew verb *šm*^c ('hear'), using the Welsh lexemes *clywed* and *gwzando*. Apart from some neutralising environments, there seems to be a meaning-bearing lexical opposition between *clywed* and *gwzando*: a meaningful choice the translator had to make every time he encountered this Hebrew verb. I hope the proposed description, which is based on formal-structural grounds and aims at understanding (Bible) translations through the lens of structural linguistic analysis, will contribute to our understanding of the 1588 Bible and its language.

Ac efe a gymmerth lyfr y cyfammod, ac ai
darllenodd lle y clywe y bobl, a dywedafant ni
a wnawn, ac a wɔndawn yz hyn oll a lefarodd
yz Arglwydd.

וַיִּקְרָא חִבְרִית וַיִּקְרָא
בְּאֵזְנֵה עַם וַיִּאמְרוּ לֵלֵךְ
אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע

Left: Exodus 24:7, William Morgan's Bible, 1588

Right: Exodus 24:7, Leningrad Codex, 1008/9

Structure

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1 HEARING

1.1 Neutralising environments

1.1.1 *šâma'* + PREPOSITION

1
[Ex. 4:1]

Yna Mofes a attebodd, ac a ddywedodd, etto wele ni chzedant i mi ac ni wzandawant ar fy llais: onid dywedant nid ymgdangofodd yz Arglwydd i ti.

And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

way-ya'an mōše way-yōmer
wə-hēn lō-ya'āmīnū l-ī wə-lō
yīšmā'ū bə-qōlī kī yōmrū lō-nir'ā
'ēlēkâ YHWH

וַיַּעַן מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר וְהִן לֹא־יֵאֱמִינוּ לִי וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ
בְקוֹלִי כִּי יֹאמְרוּ לֹא־נִרְאָה אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה:

2
[Ex. 6:9]

A Mofes a lefarodd felly w2th feibion Ifrael: ond ni wzandawfânt ar Mofes, gan gyfyngd2a yf2zyd, a chan y gaethiwed galed.

And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.

way-dabbēr mōše kēn 'el-banē
yīsrā'ēl wə-lō šām'ū 'el-mōše
miq-qōšer rūah ū-mē-'ābōdâ qāšâ

וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה בֶּן אֶלְבִּינִי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ
אֶל־מֹשֶׁה מִקְּצֶר רוּחַ וּמִעֲבֹדָה קָשָׁה:

Hefyd wrth Adda y dywedodd, am wzando o honot ar lais dy wzaig, a bwytta o’r pzenh am yz hwn y gozchymynnafwn i ti gan ddywedyd, na fwytta o honaw: mellidigedic [fydd] y ddaiar o’th achos di, a thzwy lafur y bwyttei o honi holl ddyddiau dy enioes.

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

ū-l-’āḏām ’āmar kī-šāma’tā lə-qōl
ištēkā wat-tōkal min-hā-’eš
’āšer šiwwītikā lē-mōr lō tōkal
mimm-ennū ’ārūrā hā-’āḏāmā
ba-’ābūrēkā bə-iššāḇōn tōkalennā
kōl yāmē ḥayyekā

3
[Gen.]
[3:17]

וְלֵאמֹר אָמַר כִּי־שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתְּךָ וְתָאֵכַל
מִן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ
אֲרוּרָה הָאֲדָמָה בְּעִבּוּרְךָ בְּעֵצָבוֹן תֹּאבְלֶנָּה כָּל
יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ:

1.1.2 šāma’ + CONTENT

Dywedodd hefyd, wele clywais fod ŷd yn yz Aipht, ewch i wared yno, a phzynnwch i ni oddi yno, fel y bōm fyw, ac na byddom feirw.

And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.

way-yōmer hinnē šāma’tī
kī yeš-šeber bə-mišrāyim
raḏū-šāmm-ā wə-šibrū-l-ānū
miš-šām wə-niḥye wə-lō nāmūt

4
[Gen.]
[42:2]

וְאִמַּר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי כִּי יֵשֶׁבֶר בְּמִצְרַיִם
רֹדוּ־שָׁמָּה וּשְׁבְרוּ־לָנוּ מִשֶּׁם וּנְחִיָּה וְלֹא נָמוּת:

A Pharao a ddywedodd wrth Jofeph, bzeuddwydiais freuddwyd, ac nid [oes] ai deonglo ef: ond myfi a glywais ddywedyd am danat ti, y gwzandewi freuddwyd iw ddeonglu.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and *there is* none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, *that* thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.

way-yōmer par’ō ’el-yōsēp ḥālōm
ḥālamtī ū-ḡōtēr ’en ’ōt-ō wa-’ānī
šāma’tī ’ālekā lē-mōr tišma’ ḥālōm
li-ḡtōr ’ōt-ō

5
[Gen.]
[41:15]

וְאִמַּר פַּרְעֹה אֶל־יוֹסֵף הֲלֹא־אֵין חֹלֵם הִלְמַתִּי וּפְתָר אֵין
אֲתוֹ וְאֵין שֹׁמֵעַ עֲלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר תִּשְׁמַע חֹלֵם
לְפָתַר אֹתוֹ:

1.1.3 šāma' + OBJECT+PARTICIPLE

6
[Num.
11:10]

A chlybu Mofes y bobl yn wylu trwy eu tylwythau, pob vn yn nrws ei babell: ac enynnodd dig y2 Arglwydd yn fawr, a d2wg oedd gan Mofes.

Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent: and the anger of the LORD was kindled greatly; Moses also was displeased.

way-yišma' mōše 'et-hā-'ām
bōkē lə-mišpəḥōtāw īš lə-pētaḥ
'āhālō way-yiḥar-'aḇ yHWH mə'ōḏ
ū-b-'ēnē mōše rā'

וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה אֶת־הַקּוֹל בְּכָל לְמִשְׁפַּחַתוֹ אִישׁ
לְפֶתַח אֹהֶלוֹ וַיַּחַר אַף יְהוָה מְאֹד וּבְעֵינָי מֹשֶׁה
:עַר

1.2 clywed:gwzando

	sensory	(non-sensory) additional meaning
<i>clywed</i>	+	–
<i>gwzando</i>	±	+

1.2.1 Lists of senses and abilities

7
[Deu.
4:28]

Ac yno y gwafanaethwch dduwiau [o] waith dwylo dŷn, [fēf] pzen, a maen, y rhai ni welant, ac ni chlywant, ac ni fwytânt, ac ni aroglant.

And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

wa-'ābadtem-šām 'ēlōhīm ma'āšē
yādē 'ādām 'eš wā-'eḇen 'āšer
lō-yir'ūn wə-lō yišmā'ūn wə-lō
yōklūn wə-lō yərīḥun

וַעֲבַדְתֶּם־שָׂם אֱלֹהִים מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם עֵץ וָאֶבֶן
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִרְאוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ וְלֹא יֵאָכְלוּ וְלֹא
:יִרְיַח

8
[Ps.
115:4-7]

⁴ Eu delwau hwy [ydynt] o aur, ac arian, [fef] o waith dynnion. ⁵ Genau [fydd] iddynt, ac ni lefarant, llygaid [fydd] ganddynt, ac ni welant. ⁶ [Y mae] clustiau iddynt, ac ni chlywiant, ffroenau [fydd] ganddynt, ac ni aroglant. ⁷ Dwylo [fydd] iddynt, ac ni theimlant: traed [fy] iddynt, ac ni cherddant: ni leifiant [ychwaith] ai gwddf.

⁴ Their idols *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands. ⁵ They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: ⁶ They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: ⁷ They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

⁴ ʿāšabbēhem keṣēp̄ wə-zāhāb maʿāšē yəḏē ʾādām̄ ⁵ p̄e-l-āhem wə-lō yəḏabbērū ʿenayim l-āhem wə-lō yirʾū ⁶ ʾāznayim l-āhem wə-lō yišmāʾū ʾap̄ l-āhem wə-lō yərīhūn̄ ⁷ yəḏēhem wə-lō yəmišūn̄ raḡlēhem wə-lō yəhallēkū lō-yehgū bi-ḡrōnām̄

⁴ עֲצָבֵיהֶם כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם: ⁵ פִּה־לָהֶם וְלֹא יִדְבְּרוּ עֵינַיִם לָהֶם וְלֹא יֵרְאוּ: ⁶ אָזְנוֹת לָהֶם וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ אָף לָהֶם וְלֹא יֵרִיחוּן: ⁷ יְדֵיהֶם | וְלֹא יִמִּישּׁוּן רַגְלֵיהֶם וְלֹא יֵהַלְכוּ לֹא־יֵהָגוּ בִגְרוֹנָם:

1.2.2 Judgement

A'r amfer hwnnw y gorchymynnais i'ch barnwŷl chwi gan ddywedyd: gwzandewch [ddadleuon] rhwng eich bzodyz, a bernwch gyfiawnder rhwng gwŷ ai frawd, ac ai elfron hefyd.

And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between *every* man and his brother, and the stranger *that is* with him.

wā-ʾāšawwe ʿet-šōp̄tēkem b-ā-ʿēt̄ ha-hi lē-mōr šāmōaʿ bēn-ʾāhēkem ū-špaṭtem ṣeḏeq bēn-īš ū-bēn-ʾāhīw ū-bēn ḡerō

וְאָצַוְהָ אֶת־שׁוֹפְטֵיכֶם בְּעַת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר שְׁמַע בֵּין־אֶחְיֶיכֶם וּשְׁפֹטֵתֶם צְדָקָה בֵּין־אִישׁ וּבֵין־אָחִיו וּבֵין־גֵּר:

9
[Deu.]
[1:16]

1.2.3 Vows

10
[Num. 30:13*]

Ond os ei gŵz gan ddiddymmu ai diddymma hwynt y dydd y clywo, ni faif dim a ddaeth allan oi gwefufau, oi haddunedau, ac o rwymedigaeth ei henaid, ei gŵz ai diddymmodd hwynt, ar Arglwydd a fadde iddi.

But if her husband hath utterly made them void on the day he heard them; then whatsoever proceeded out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her soul, shall not stand: her husband hath made them void; and the LORD shall forgive her.

wə-’im-hāpēr yāpēr ’ōt-ām ṯšāh bə-yōm šām’ō kāl-mōšā šəpātehā li-ndārehā ū-l-’issar napšāh lō yāqūm ṯšāh hāpērām wa-YHWH yislah-l-āh

וְאִם-הָפֵר יָפֵר אֶתָם | אִישָׁהּ בְּיוֹם שָׁמְעוּ
כְּלִמּוֹצָא שְׂפִתֶיהָ לְנִדְרֶיהָ וּלְאִסָּר נַפְשָׁהּ לֹא
יִקּוּם אִישָׁהּ הַפְּרִים וַיהוָה יִסְלַח-לָהּ:

1.2.4 Interpretation of dreams

11
[Gen. 41:15]

A Pharao a ddywedodd wŷth Jofeph, bzeuddwydiais freuddwyd, ac nid [oes] ai deonglo ef: ond myfi a glywais ddywedyd am danat ti, y gwzandewi freuddwyd iw ddeonglu.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and *there is* none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, *that* thou canst understand [lit. in Heb. *hear*] a dream to interpret it.

way-yōmer par’ō ’el-yōsēp ḥālōm ḥālamtī ū-pōtēr ’en ’ōt-ō wa-’ānī šāma tī ’ālekā lē-mōr tišma ḥālōm li-ptōr ’ōt-ō

וַיֹּאמֶר פַּרְעֹה אֶל-יֹסֵף הֲלֹם הֲלַמְתִּי וּפְתַר אִין
אֲתוֹ וְאֲנִי שָׁמַעְתִּי עֲלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר תִּשְׁמַע הֲלֹם
לְפַתֵּר אֹתוֹ:

12
[Gen. 37:6]

O blegit dywedafe wŷthynt, gwzandewch atolwg y bzeuddwyd hwn, yz hwn a frenddwydiais.

And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

way-yōmer ’ālēhem šim’ū-nā ha-ḥālōm haz-ze ’āšer ḥālamtī

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שְׁמַעוּ-נָא הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר
חֲלַמְתִּי:

Pan glybu Gedeon adzoddiad y bzeuddwyd ai ddirnad, yna efe a addolodd: ac a ddychwelodd i werfyll Ifrael, ac a ddywedodd, cyfodwch, canys rhoddodd yz Arglwydd werfyll y Madianiaid yn eich llaw chwi.

And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

1.2.5 *Ni a wnawn, ac a w2andawn*

Ac efe a gymmerth lyfr y cyfammod, ac ai darllenodd lle y clywe y bobl, a dywedafant ni a wnawn, ac a w2andawn yz hyn oll a lefarodd yz Arglwydd.

And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient [lit. in Heb. *we will hear*].

Neffa di a chlyw 'r hyn oll a ddywed yz Arglwydd ein Duw, a llefara di w2thym ni yz hyn oll a lefaro 'r Arglwydd ein Duw w2thit ti: ac nyni a w2andawn, ac a wnawn [hynny.]

Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it.

way-hī kī-šmōa' gid'on 'et-mispar
ha-hālōm wə-'et-šibrō way-yištāhū
way-yāšāb 'el-mahānē yiśrā'el
way-yōmer qūmū kī-nātan YHWH
bə-yedk'em 'et-mahānē midyān

וַיְהִי כַשְׁמַע גִּדְעוֹן אֶת־מִסְפַּר הַחַלּוֹם
וְאֶת־שִׁבְרוֹ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ וַיֵּשֶׁב אֶל־מַחֲנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל
וַיֹּאמֶר קוּמוּ כִּי־נָתַן יְהוָה בְּיַדְכֶם אֶת־מַחֲנֵה
מִדְיָן:

13
[Judges
7:15]

way-yiqqaḥ sēp̄er hab-bərīt
way-yiqrā bə-'āznē hā-'ām
way-yōmrū kōl 'āšer-dibber
YHWH na'āse wə-nišmā'

וַיִּקַּח סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנֵי הָעָם וַיֹּאמְרוּ
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע:

14
[Ex.
24:7]

qərab 'attā ū-šāmā' 'et kāl-'āšer
yōmar YHWH 'ēlōhēnū wə-'at
təḏabbēr 'elēnū 'et kāl-'āšer
yəḏabbēr YHWH 'ēlōhēnū 'ēlekā
wə-šāmā'nū wə-'āšīnū

קָרַב אִתָּהּ וְשָׁמַע אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר יְהוָה
אֵלֵהֶינּוּ וְאָתָּה תְּדַבֵּר אֵלֵינוּ אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר
יְהוָה אֵלֵהֶינּוּ אֵלֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְנוּ וְעָשִׂינוּ:

15
[Deu.
5:24*]

2 Further research

A. Expanding the scope to the rest of the senses. Especially interesting is *râ'â* ('see'), due to several reasons:

- Like *šâma'* ('to hear'), it is a very common verb: *šâma'* has 1159 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible, and *râ'â* has 1299. This allows us to draw definite conclusions, see how it was translated in diverse syntactical, semantic and textual environment environments, and carefully examine the subtleties in the translator's interpretation of the text.
- Here as well it seems there are two main lexemes in use: *gweled* and *edrych*.
- The functional opposition between *gweled* and *edrych* has to be uncovered, but if *gweled:edrych* is parallel to *clywed:gwzando*, what we'll have is a whole that is more than the sum of its parts: a common underlying semantic distinction of 'sensory' (*clywed, gweled*) versus 'more than sensory'/'metaphoric'. Note that it is *gweled*, not *edrych*, that is being used in lists of senses (§1.2.1).

We cannot know *a priori* what is considered a sense in the semantic-cognitive classification of the ancient Hebrews (or the Welsh of the 16th-17th century). Lists of senses can be used as our key.

B. Comparing, typologically, the situation here with that of other translations of the Bible: other Welsh translations (the 1620 edition and the new translation of 1988/2004), other Celtic translations and translations into other, unrelated, languages. It seems to me especially enriching not only to draw general conclusions about the systemic differences and similarities, but also to examine closely particular verses and see the ways different translators in different languages, periods and cultures choose to interpret the text.

C. Expanding the procedural working method used here to other kinds of linguistic entities: not only verbs, or even lexemic elements, but grammemic elements as well. Of special interest is, to me, the second person pronouns in languages which have, like Welsh, a *tu:vu (ti:chi(:chdi))* distinction. By examining the translator's choices in translating from a language which has no such distinction (Biblical Hebrew, Modern English, ...) into a language which does have, we can map the social hierar-

chies between the characters in the narrative: who is talking to whom with *tu/ti* in what situations, and who with *vu/chi*.¹

D. In *Beibl i Gymru*², Morgan Prys writes:

Y mae copi o Feibl Hebraeg yn perthyn i William Morgan wedi goroesi. Bu ym meddiant Arglwyddes Llanofer ac y mae heddiw yn un o drysorau Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru yn Aberystwyth. Gellir gweld ar ymylon y ddalen nodiadau manwl William Morgan ar ystyron geiriau Hebraeg.	The copy of the Hebrew Bible belonging to William Morgan has survived to this day, preserved first by Lady Llanover, and now kept as one of the treasures of the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. In the margins of the pages may be seen detailed notes on the meanings of abstruse Hebrew words.
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A single photograph from this copy is reproduced there, as Figure 19.

Being able to read these notes can be a peerless aid to a fuller understanding of the 1588 translation: being able to glance at a record of the translation process itself. As far as I know, no facsimile edition of the copy has been made. Is there any detailed record as for the content of the notes? Is there any chance to read them? If I will continue my research of the 1588 Bible, I will contact the National Library of Wales.

- E. Comparing the system emerging from Morgan's Bible with other kinds of Welsh. Is the same holds true in (native) Modern Welsh (literary or colloquial)? What about the contemporary Welsh (c. 1588)? What about older stages of Welsh?
- F. Morgan translated the Hebrew Bible from the Hebrew text. That's certain. But it is also evident that he did use existing translations in addition: the classical translations (the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate) and maybe some English translations. To what extent did they

¹Such a distinction, I believe, will not be seen in machine translation in any foreseeable future, as it involves a deep understanding of human social structures.

²MORGAN, PRYS, *Beibl i Gymru*, (Gwasg Cambria / Pwyllgor Dathlu Pedwarcanmlwyddiant Cyfieithu'r Beibl, 1988).

URL: http://www.llgc.org.uk/big/index_c.htm

affect the translation in question? When did Morgan made use of them, and for what purposes?

- G. Expanding the scope to the whole Hebrew Bible. Just as in the Pentateuch, many of the occurrences of *šāma'* in the rest of the Hebrew Bible are quite trivial with regards to the opposition *clywed:gwzando*. Nevertheless, I am sure there are many which are interesting, i.e. which required careful reading of the text in order to choose one over the other, which required interpreting the text according the translator understanding thereof.

Of special interest seems to me the cases in which *clywed* is used as an inclusive verb of perception (cf. Italian *sentire*), use (b) in the GPC:

Canfod argraffiadau synhwyrâu (ag golwg); teimlo; Gwydd. C. <i>atcluinti a boludh</i> , RC xvi. 54); blasu; <i>smell; taste.</i>	neu drwy'r eithrio'r arogleuo (cf. <i>atcluinti a boludh</i> , RC xvi. 54); <i>to feel;</i>	Perceive or impressions senses (except feel; to smell <i>atcluinti a boludh</i> , RC xvi. 54); <i>to taste: [...]</i>	receive through the (except vision); to to taste: [...]
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The GPC gives one example from the Bible, Ps. 58:9 (here I give the whole verse), in which *clywed* does not translate *šāma'* but another Hebrew verb:

Cythzbylied ef megis [mewn] llid, fel [peth] amrwd cynn i'ch crochanau <u>glywed</u> gwzêis y mieri.	bə-ṭerem <u>yābīnū</u> sīrōṭēkēm 'āṭāq kəmə-hay kəmə-hārōn yis'ārennū
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Before your pots can <u>feel</u> the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in <i>his</i> wrath.	בְּטֶרֶם יִבְיְנוּ סִירֹתֵיכֶם אֶטָּף כְּמוֹ-חַי כְּמוֹ-חַרְוֵן יִשְׁטָפוּנָו:
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