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4 RECEPTION THEORY AND THE BIBLE

4.1 The ancient vs the modern

The primary issue to be dealt with in chapter 4 is the feasibility of a reception-theoretical approach in the translation of Biblical metaphors. It is felt that the following three facts merit the investigation of a modern (contemporary) literary theory that is **reader-oriented**:

- 1 Although inextricably part of Biblical canon (and as such respected as Holy Scripture), **Song of Songs** - as love poetry - unequivocally belongs to the realm of **literature** too.
- 2 The recipients of the translated metaphors of **Song of Songs** are explicitly demarcated in the aim of this study (adolescents).
- 3 According to Lategan (1987:116) Biblical texts are, in essence, of a **persuasive** nature. As such they anticipate an explicit response from the **reader**. Consequently readers of different Biblical books have always played a vital role in the process of interpretation.
- 4 McKnight (1985:1) argues that a growing number of Biblical scholars view the establishment of a literary approach to the Bible positively because of the opportunity for creating interpretations to match the **needs of the contemporary readers**. In this regard Wright issues this urgent plea for literary critics and literary theories to be involved in the interpretation of Biblical texts:

It [the Bible] is an extremely complex text, the end product of centuries of oral tradition, editing and often anonymous authorship. It is the corner-stone of Western civilization, feeding in countless ways into our "secular" literature. And yet those who continue to read the Bible often misread it, paying no attention to the critical problems it raises, to questions of genre and literary convention, while those who have been professionally trained in literary competence rarely open its pages (1988:41).

Boadt (1984:75) too, supports this proposition by arguing that because authors in every age and every culture express themselves differently, modern (contemporary) literary theory must offer ways of understanding ancient authors although their methods of writing might differ from modern authors.

The following comparison between the methods of recording historical events done by Boadt (1984:75-76) gives an indication as to what differences are possible in the area of writing between ancient times and modern times:

Ancient Israelite Historian	Modern scientific historian
Records the traditions of the tribe or nation as they interpret them.	Attempts to reconstruct past events objectively and accurately.
Uses oral sources with a few written records or lists.	Relies on documents and written records almost exclusively.
Often includes several parallel versions of the same story.	Sorts out the conflicting accounts in order to find the single original one.
Does not have much exact information of dates and places and so gives rough approximations.	Carefully searches out the correct chronology of events.
Relies strongly on fixed types of literary descriptions or motifs that can be applied to all similar situations.	Seeks to get behind literary genre and narrative modes to find out what really happened.
Uses a common-sense approach to describe human behaviour and does not guarantee every fact.	Uses all the critical tools and means of information to check sources and their claims.
Uses past history to explain convictions for the present time or for a particular point of view.	Writes history without ostensible bias or undue emphasis towards only one side of the picture.

- 1 The fundamentalist belief, that the Bible is God's inspired message (canon) to mankind, sets it apart from all other books. To apply ordinary literary concepts to the Bible may result in lowering it to the same level as the rest of secular literature and such an idea is an anathema.
2. Classifying the Bible (or a part of the Bible) as literature may imply for some that it can be read as literature only. This means that the inspirational nature and religious value of the Bible is negated. Eliot (1975:22) warns against such an approach in this way:

The person who enjoys these writings [Biblical texts] solely because of their literary merit are essentially parasites; and we know that parasites when they become too numerous, are pests. I could easily fulminate for a whole hour against men of letters who have gone into ecstasies over "the Bible as literature", the Bible as a "monument of English prose" (emphasis mine).

It is important to note that while Eliot (1975:22) "fulminates" against reading the Bible as art for art's sake, he admits that "the Bible has had a literary influence upon literature". This influence, however, was not because the Bible has been considered as literature but because it has been considered "as the report of the Word of God" (Eliot, 1975:22). While Eliot acknowledges the legitimacy of the enjoyment of reading the Bible as literature, he is acutely aware of its abuse. This means that he does not deny the literary passages in the Bible but he does stress the primacy of the canon as God speaking to man who has to respond. Failure to take this vital difference between the Bible and other literature into account adequately, is, according to Rabinowitz (1966:315), "the chief defect of modern literary study of the Bible". The Bible must thus be acknowledged in its own right as the classic, canonical volume of books on which the Christian faith is founded before a literary approach is attempted.

There is a third reason too, why a literary approach to the Bible may be disapproved of. The objection comes from a completely different source than the two previously mentioned ones. Alter (1985:4) alludes to the fact that deconstructionist critics, such as Culler, express outrage over the fact that the

literature of the Hebrew Bible is deemed worthy of a literary approach. It is rather ironic that it is either fundamentalists or liberalists (radically-oriented readers from opposing sides of the literary-philosophical spectrum) that should object to a literary approach to the Bible. The radical conservatives fear that the canonicity of the Bible will be contaminated by such an approach while the radical liberalists fear the sacredness of secular literature to be blighted by the normative strain in the Bible.

Therefore I cannot agree more with Alter (1985:45) in his assessment that the introduction of the Bible into "the literary precincts of the academy" is bound to be an anathema to radical deconstructionists as a result of the monster of **authority** that the Bible embodies. The Bible represents the very source of the concept of a binding canon. To smuggle in this concept into the realm where progressive deconstructionist spirits are fighting the good fight to break down the barriers of canon, is an appalling notion for any radical liberal at best!

Although the whole problematic dilemma locked into the concept of "the Bible as literature", tends to pit the **sacred** against the **literary**, the one need not exclude the other. It will be shown under 4.2.1 that the Bible as canon can be significant as literature too. This implies that no matter how sacred the text is, it does not exclude the possibility of an aesthetic approach. Finally the true relationship between Theology and Literature can probably be best described as being **distinct** yet **inseparable** (Battenhouse, 1975:93). These two fields should not be confused or divided as the result can be erroneous in two ways:

- 1 Literary critics may be tempted to treat the Bible (and even God) as fiction only, totally disregarding all the theological (canonical) aspects of the text.
- 2 Theologians (Christians and Jews in this instance) may consider any due attention to literary issues as an anathema and so cling to the fallacy that to read the Bible as literature is to refuse taking it seriously as a revelation of God's action in history.

Consequently it is vital to fuse Theology and Literature in an approach to the Bible despite Wright's (1988:1) warning that these two fields are not always friendly, since Theology is considered as attempting to impose limits on the

meanings of words, while Literature tries to do the opposite by exploring the **creative possibilities** of language.

4.2.1 A controversial concept

To discuss the Bible as literature certainly appears to be introducing a concept that is objectionable to many. It offends fundamentalist believers because they regard the texts of the Bible as sacred and it offends liberal lovers of pure literature who look down upon Biblical texts as primitive phenomena (Wright, 1988:41). Stendahl (1984:6) confirms this whole idea by writing that the idea of the "Bible as literature" can be "artificial and contrary to the perception of both most believers and most unbelievers".

One must always keep in mind that what makes the Bible, the Bible (Holy Writ), is the canon. Never can the normative nature of the Bible be ignored. While Biblical criticism may be enriched by the methods and insights of literary criticism the normative dimension of the Bible must not be overlooked or dismissed. This may be tempting as literature and contemporary literary theory are usually non-normative. One is reminded of the fact that to ask a poet or an artist what he actually means or intends with a piece of work is an insult. He will be apt to say that it is up to the reader to determine what the piece of work has to say or as Stendahl (1984:9) puts it so succinctly: "The more meanings the merrier".

Clines (1980:117) conversely argues that since the Bible can be read as literature while ignoring the canonical aspect, the distinction between the "Bible as Scripture" and the "Bible as literature" is not artificial at all. He explains how the diverse contexts in which the Bible is read may tend to dictate the particular way in which the Bible is approached. For example, in the church the Bible will be heard as **Scripture** and in the university it will be heard as **literature**. Such a separation (dichotomy and contradiction) of objectives is exactly what this study proposes to avoid. Biblical literature (of which there is much in all the Biblical texts) functions as both Scripture and literature. This is why a literary approach to the Bible has not come to abolish the historical approach to the Bible, but to complement it. Wright emphatically states that "just as historical criticism should not ignore the semantic significance of literary form, so literary criticism needs to accept that the Bible makes historical statements which need to be tested" (1988:58).

One of the great advantages of literary criticism is that it can help to prevent one from misreading the text by identifying the nature of the text and explaining how it achieves multiple meanings.

It is important to realise that although the Bible has been depicted as arguably the greatest and certainly the most influential literary work of world civilization, "it is by no means determined in advance that when the Bible is studied in the context of comparative literature, it must emerge as the apogee of humanistic or even religious texts" (Clines, 1980:116). The contrary is also true. Alter (1985:46) attests to the fact that a literary approach to the Bible does not automatically contradict belief in the inspired character of the text. So although a literary approach to the Bible in no way implies that it has a uniquely privileged status in the literary realm, the reader will scarcely experience the forceful effect with which the text addresses him if he disregards a literary approach altogether. Clines (1980:127) confirms this fact by arguing that a literary approach to the Bible heightens the reader's sensitivities to being moved, amused, elated, angered and even persuaded. It is illuminating to note that Alter (1985:45) argues that the adoption of literary perspectives to the Bible will have the following paradoxical effect on its authority:

- 1 To read the Bible as literature would on the one hand complete the process of secularising Scripture and so undercut any claim that it has authority.
- 2 On another level, however, a literary reading of the Bible provides a means of getting in touch again with the religious power of Scripture and so confirms the authority of the Bible.

Despite this paradoxical effect caused by a literary approach to the Bible the fact remains unequivocal that Holy Scripture carries after it "a wake of canonicity, not only for the believer but for the half-believer and the non-believer as well" (Alter, 1985:45). Consequently, the growing interest in a literary approach to the Bible may be a reflection of how readers are now impelled to discover how they might close the gap caused by modernity between themselves and the Biblical texts which have been a central force of coherence and continuity in Western culture.

Finally then, it must be recognized that the Bible is both the Word of God (canon) and literary art. To do justice to the Bible (and the Old Testament specifically) the reader cannot deal with it as literature only, and neither can he totally disregard the literary strain so central to the Scriptures. Bekker (1982:31) adequately sums up the issue of the Bible as literature with the words "die Skrif is nie net God se Woord nie, maar ook God se kuns".

4.2.2 *Delineating the concept*

There is a vital question about this whole issue that still needs to be answered: what precisely is a literary approach to reading the Bible? What does it mean exactly to read the Bible as literature? In this regard Gabel and Wheeler (1986:4) point out that the term "literature" can be used in both a "broad" and a "narrow" sense. The latter term encompasses only what is traditionally known as *belles lettres* (poetry, novels, plays, short stories and essays). In the broad sense literature is basically everything that is written. Along with Gabel and Wheeler (1986:4), both Ferguson (1986:27) and Lindblom (1973:20-55) furnish a plethora of Biblical literary types in the broad sense. These types range from the conventional poetry, narrative and prophecy to history, prayer, geneology, law and royal decree. Consequently the reader's concept of literature (whether broad or narrow) will determine whether he adopts a literary approach to the **literature of the Bible** or whether he adopts a literary approach to the **Bible as literature**. Gabel and Wheeler (1986:15) argue that the former approach robs the reader of considering the Bible as a whole because he is then confined to the *belles lettres* of the Bible only. Although it is felt that the one approach need not exclude the other, the issue of literature in the broad sense falls outside the scope of this study. To conclude this issue it will suffice to say that whatever approach is taken, one fact remains uncontested: the pure literary compositions (*belles lettres*) of the Bible are included in the canon not for their literary qualities in the first place, but for their spiritual significance to those readers who adhere to the belief that the Bible is God's Word to mankind.

Many answers can be given as to what a literary approach to the Bible constitutes but Longman's (1985:386) account adequately captures all aspects of the issue:

Prior to an explication of Reception Theory, the issue of whether the Bible can be read and interpreted as literature (or whether a literary approach to the Bible is possible) needs to receive attention. Such a discussion should of necessity include the demarcation of the contours of Biblical and literary criticism.

4.2 A literary approach to the Bible

Although many scholars claim that critics of the Bible are undergoing a paradigm shift in interpretive methodology today (Longman, 1985:385), the issue of whether such a shift is at all acceptable must be addressed. Although the current interest in the Bible as literature is not at all new, "the last decade has seen a burgeoning of interest in such study which far exceeds anything traceable earlier" (Coggins, 1985:10), it is worthwhile to take note of the comments made by Gunn on this change of perspective:

Plainly things have changed. The study of narrative in the Hebrew Bible has altered dramatically in the past ten years, at least as far as professional Biblical studies is concerned. That is now a truism. Nor has there been any lack of commentators charting that change ... I believe it is true to say that criticism of Biblical texts using the reading methods of contemporary critics of other bodies of literature has, in a relatively short time, become entrenched among the disciplines of the professional guild of Biblical critics and will not go away in a hurry (1987:65).

This shift in perspective constitutes a different emphasis than that of the historical paradigm and reflects the introduction of a literary approach to the Bible that is gradually gaining ground among a variety of critics, scholars and theologians (Alter & Kermode, 1987:1-2). So it appears to be an irrevocable fact that today Biblical readers and critics are faced with new possibilities in the challenge to make sense in the light of contemporary literary criticism. Bekker (1983:19), however, poses a vital question in this regard: "Kan God se woord **net** vanuit 'n teologiese oogpunt beskou word?" (Italics mine). The legitimacy of this question is amplified by the reluctance revealed by many fundamentalists (Jews and Christians alike) to adopt a literary approach to the Bible or read the Bible as literature. Bekker (1983:10) proposes two reasons for this phenomenon and I agree with him:

The literary approach as I use the term means to recognise that the Bible displays literary characteristics and thus not to treat the Bible as if it were a piece of literature. At this point I am not identifying the Bible as a work of literature.

This confirms the view that the Bible is unique in spite of its many examples of literature in the narrow sense. In this regard Frye (1982:62) says that the Bible "is as literary as it can well be without actually being literature". The final outcome of these views remains that the Bible demands more in the way of response than any other ordinary literature. The Bible ultimately provides an answer to man's quest for truth and meaning in history. But it is an answer that is couched in the form of myths, poetry, prophecy and a variety of literary forms (of which metaphor and simile are central) which all require literary interpretation or a literary approach. Wright (1988:6) is thus correct with the following assessment on this whole matter:

The Bible itself, then assumes literary form, employing narrative, metaphor, symbol and paradox in order to explore the truth. Christian poetics can therefore feel confident that it is not a peripheral part of theology.

4.2.3 Problematic issues

There are certain limits (difficulties and dangers) involved in a literary approach to the Bible especially where modern literary theory is involved. Longman (1985:387-396) discusses five potential pitfalls of a literary approach which I want to reduce to four problematic issues. It is felt that his last two pitfalls, constitute only one problem.

- 1 The first problematic issue with a literary approach to the Bible is that contemporary literary theory is divided in itself. McKnight (1985:1) puts it mildly by saying that "... contemporary literary criticism lacks one set of principles and methods that commands universal assent ...". There is a continual infighting about the basic questions of literature and criticism. The reader of the Bible faces a dilemma at this point. He has to toil relentlessly to remain abreast in both the fields of Biblical and literary study. The usual result is that Biblical scholars tend to adopt the most recent theory. Longman (1985:387) ascribes this

phenomenon to the scholar's desire to be current or avant-garde. Schaeffer (1976:182-204) describes this as the result of a chain reaction which is based on the tenet, "as man thinketh, so is he". It works like this. A new philosophical school of thought originates and then spreads geographically, socially and culturally. Culturally it spreads through the various disciplines commencing with Philosophy. Then it influences first art, then music, then creative arts, then cinema and finally Biblical interpretation. Schaeffer (1976:19) explains this whole cycle as follows:

There is a flow to history and culture. This flow is rooted in the thoughts of people ... what they are in their thought world determines how they act... This is true of their value systems and it is true of their creativity ... The results of their thought world flow through their fingers or from their tongues into the external world. This is true of Michelangelo's chisel, and it is true of a dictator's sword.

Consequently it is the essential task of the Biblical scholar to analyse the deep philosophical roots of each school of literary thought that is afoot today. In view of the fact that not one theory or method can claim "correctness", all must be scrutinized for possible advantages which should then be put to use in Biblical criticism. Biblical scholars can, for example, learn from Structuralism to appreciate the constraints of literary convention. Since Structuralists are more concerned with explaining the processes by which meaning is produced rather than settle on any single interpretation, it is not to be embraced unequivocally by the Biblical critic. In this regard Wright (1988:52) aptly contends that "the Bible could be called God's gift to Structuralists because it provides them with ... many examples of multiple meaning developed from an initial germ of narrative". Therefore I cannot agree more with Longman's summation on this issue:

My response to this [plethora of available contemporary literary theories] is to be eclectic and to "plunder the Egyptians". My basic theoretical beliefs are Christian, and any methodological insights that fundamentally conflict with those convictions must be rejected. But, due to common grace, helpful insights may be gleaned from all fields of scholarships (1985:388).

It is worthwhile to take note that Belsey (1985:37) too argues that New Criticism, Structuralism and Reader-oriented theories permit eclecticism. In an attempt to produce such a new eclectic theory which both defines and delimits its critical practice, she brings together specific elements of Althusserianism, Marxism and Lacanian psychoanalysis despite the fact that according to herself these elements are not fully consistent and compatible with one another (Belsey, 1955:55).

- 2 The second problematic issue is related to the first. Literary theory is often obscure and esoteric as each school of thought develops its own jargon. Longman (1985:388-389) points out how some critical results tend to resemble a complicated algebraic formula rather than a clear and concise interpretive statement. It is obvious that there is nothing wrong with technical terminology *per se*. But to glory in such terms at the expense of lucidity is to court disaster. Consequently there is a great need for both clarity of expression and careful definition of any newly employed terminology. In this regard Longman (1985:389) explains how the two books¹ which had the greatest impact on Biblical scholarship in the area of a literary approach are low on technical jargon and high in terms of help in the explication of texts.

- 3 A third problem in the area of contemporary literary theory is the danger of imposing modern western concepts on ancient Hebrew literature. It must be remembered that modern literary theorists develop their concepts from their encounter with modern literature. Kugel (1981:69), who strongly opposes the application of modern literary terms to ancient literature, goes as far as to say that "there is no word for poetry in 'Biblical Hebrew' which implies that to speak of 'poetry' at all in the Bible will be to impose a concept foreign to the Biblical world". He also shows how there are no characteristics in the Old Testament Hebrew that differentiate prose from poetry. This is correct in the sense that parallelism in particular, which is regarded as the distinguishing mark of Hebrew poetry (Bekker, 1983:61), occurs in prose as well. Yet Longman (1985:390) wisely argues that the

1 *The art of Biblical Narrative* - Robert Alter and *The Idea of Biblical Poetry* - James Kugel.

differences between a Psalm and a chapter in Leviticus can obviously be seen and felt. He contends that the difference may be attributed to the short, tense lines of a Psalm that are in contrast to lengthy lines of Leviticus. There is also a heightening of certain rhetorical devices in a Psalm that are only intermittently present in Leviticus.

Because there is the real danger of distorting the understanding of a text by imposing foreign standards on it Longman (1985:390-391) suggests that the scholar should distinguish the **etic** and the **emic** approaches to literature. The **etic** approach imposes a universal, non-native grid on texts in order to categorise them. The **emic** approach seeks a native or localised classification of literature. This issue is also referred to under 2.4.2. Finally, it must be pointed out that the ancient Hebrew scribes were not concerned with a precise and self-conscious generic classification of their literature as is the tendency today. They rather identified different forms of speech (song - *šîr* and proverb - *mašal*) in a non-rigorous system (Longman, 1985:391). Consequently, the prudent application of modern literary terms is possible. One must only guard against an indiscriminate application of contemporary literary theoretical concerns on the texts of the Bible.

- 4 Longman (1985:387-396) actually furnishes a fourth and a fifth potential pitfall in a literary approach to the Bible but I personally think his last two dangers constitute the same issue. The penultimate danger that is listed concerns the movement away from any concept of authorial intent and determinate meaning in the text, while the final danger to be guarded against is the tendency to deny the referential function of literature by considering it as not affirming anything or giving any insight into the world. It is felt that to deny the referential function in literature is also to deny the determinate meaning of a literary text. Wright (1988:4) warns that the "whole point of reading literature ... beyond that of giving pleasure ... is that it says something in life which cannot be said in any other way". Literature has something worthwhile to say referentially. This means that to read the Bible as literature is not - and indeed one must not allow it - to reduce its referential dimension or to enter a non-existent world. It is rather to see the world anew. It is true that since the inception of "the intentional fallacy" in *The Verbal Icon* (Wimsatt & Beardsley, 1970) (and further

worshipped by New Critics) it has become the vogue to concentrate on the text alone. The writer is to be disregarded. This was followed by reader-response theories and ideological (Marxist and Feminist) theories that emphasised the importance of the reader. Consequently it is obvious that the author may be forgotten in the world of contemporary literary theory with its emphasis on the text and on the reader. To bring perspective to this issue, the reader of the Bible should realise that literature is an act of communication between the author, the text and the reader. The author cannot be denied and neither can the text or the reader. Longman (1985:392) feels that his phenomenon of moving away from authorial intent, is the reason why a sea of relativity exists in contemporary Literary Theory. The real danger, then, is that contemporary literary theorists may simply equate the Bible to literature. This means that, for example, the book of Genesis will be viewed as fiction or imagination only, totally removed from the realm of authentic history and canon. This is totally unacceptable. Frye (1982:xiv) too, is unequivocal on this issue: "The Bible possesses literary qualities but is not itself reducible to a work of literature". Although Genesis is not reducible to a work of fiction readers are both justified and required to apply a literary approach because it possesses literary qualities. Longman (1985:396) gives the following sound advice with regard to avoiding this last pitfall:

While not to be reduced to literature pure and simple, the Bible is amenable to literary analysis. Indeed, some of the most illuminating work on the Hebrew Bible in the past decade has been from a literary point of view, often done by literary scholars. Biblical scholars do not always make the most sensitive readers, particularly traditional critics.

4.2.4 Potential achievements

The ways in which a literary approach to the Bible can be of significance (beneficial and advantageous) are numerous and various. This is why Wright (1988:43) warns that "historical research [although necessary] into the background of the text ... should not be allowed to eclipse what literary power it possesses". A little later in the same work Wright (1988:48) also argues how important it is to challenge the notion that the Bible is either too crude or too sacred to be considered as literature. A concern for literary form is not a

fanciful activity for "parasites" as Eliot calls them, but it is rather an essential element in understanding the radical nature of Biblical narrative. What follows is a brief discussion of five areas in which a literary approach to the Bible is fruitful, yielding more meaning than might otherwise be unlocked. These areas are listed by Bekker (1983:34-35). This, in turn is followed by an explanation as to **why** and in **what way** a literary approach can be beneficial.

- 1 In the first place a literary approach to the Bible facilitates Biblical exegesis as it is complementary to both source criticism and historical criticism. Coggins (1985:13) eloquently laments the dilemma of considering literary criticism and historical criticism as opposing issues. The extreme of the former view is to regard any quest for detailed historicity in Biblical texts as inherently useless whilst the extreme of the latter view holds that the veracity of every historical detail is integral to an understanding of the Bible. The reader of the Bible should, however bear in mind that it is very difficult for a historical inquiry to be opposed to a literary approach since "it is going somewhere else" (Gunn, 1987:73). It is obvious then that because a literary approach does not contradict historical criticism, it can be considered as a necessary supplement. Ryken (1975:370) also explains how a literary approach can bring a balance to the various forms of Biblical criticism developed thus far:

... a genuinely literary approach to the Bible can counteract the tendency to reduce the Biblical text to a series of fragments, the obsession with sources (real or imagined), the speculation about how many redactors worked on a text, an overemphasis on historical and linguistic background, and a disparagement of the supernatural element in Biblical literature.

- 2 Secondly - and this is the essential purpose of this chapter on Reception Theory and the Bible - a literary approach facilitates Bible translation. By recognising the unique literary structure and style of a Biblical text, the translator may be less tempted to demetaphorise the translated text as is the case with the TEV in particular. Longman (1985:396) adds another perspective to this issue by explaining how a literary approach aids the reader (or translator) to understand the message of a Biblical

text more comprehensively since the conventions of Biblical literature is usually thoroughly explored and made explicit in such an approach. By adopting a literary approach to the Bible many contemporary critics have helped to restore the perception that the Bible uses poetry and narrative (stories) especially, to realise meanings. Literary form is integral to meaning and the sacred status of the Bible should not discourage a literary approach in which the full meaning of the text may be dislodged in order to render a more successful translation. Alter (1983:115) affirms the existence of the conventions of Biblical literature in this way:

Every culture, even every era in a particular culture, develops distinctive and sometimes intricate codes for telling its stories, involving everything from narrative point of view, procedures of description and characterisation, the management of dialogue, to the ordering of time and the organisation of plot.

- 3 In the third place a literary approach has great value for Bible study. As is the case with formal exegesis, a literary approach serves as a supplement to a historical approach when the Bible is read devotionally. Ryken (1975:30) explains the advantage of a literary approach to Bible study in this way:

A person who reads the Bible regularly needs variety. Many readers have discovered that reading the Bible as literature is a revitalising practice. What is true of these readers can be true of ministers, Sunday-school teachers, and discussion leaders as well.

A literary approach may thus benefit a wide variety of people in this respect. This is why Bekker (1983:34) too, is of the opinion that "deur die Skrif ook literêr te bekyk kan aan Bybelstudie opnuut diepgang en nuwe stimulus geskenk word". The greatest merit of this advantage is probably the fact that not only the clergy (by means of Scriptural exegesis), but also the laity (by means of devotional Bible study) may benefit from a literary approach to the Bible.

- 4 The fourth advantage to a literary approach is that it reaffirms the aesthetic qualities of the Bible which has (until as recently as the

1960's) been neglected by Biblical scholars in particular. I wish to suggest that it is possible for even literary critics to have something worthwhile to say for Biblical scholars. Coggins (1985:13) explains the whole issue of aesthetic value in the Bible and the importance of recognising it as follows:

It is always, though sometimes disconcerting, for us to know how others see us. There are valuable truths for Biblical scholars to perceive in the insights of literary critics; too often they have failed to recognize the sheer artistry of the material with which they work.

Ryken (1975:70) affirms this view by arguing that any artistic work of literature has an aesthetic dimension that needs to be acknowledged and yet "it is the beauty that gets shortchanged in the usual treatments of the Bible". While the Bible is important for its canonicity and sacredness, it is also literature. As literature it also needs to be appreciated as such. Too often Biblical criticism has been a dull and one-sided business which has needed to be awakened to the beauty of the text, the narrative and poetic skills of its authors, and the richness of literary devices and figurative language (particularly metaphors).

- 5 Finally, a literary approach assists the prevention of misconceptions. By taking into account the figurative strain in Biblical texts the reader may avoid interpreting literally that which has figurative meaning. In this regard Ryken (1975:370) warns that "belief in the authority of the Bible will not by itself be sufficient for understanding if the reader ignores the principles that underlie the Bible and determine much of its meaning". The principles of literary convention must be taken into account otherwise the reader may, for example, allegorise **Song of Songs** because he is not aware of the nature and the essence of love poetry.

To conclude: Longman (1985:395-398) suggests three reasons why a literary approach to the Bible is beneficial. These reasons also explain how a literary approach can essentially be advantageous with regards to the five above-mentioned issues: Scriptural exegesis, Bible translation, Bible study, aesthetic appreciation and rectification of misconceptions.

- 1 Adopting a literary approach assists the reader of the Bible to understand and consequently to make explicit the literary conventions of the texts he is reading. What makes it so important to understand the conventions of Biblical poetry and Biblical narrative is the fact that the Bible is an ancient text of which the conventions are often not the ones contemporary readers are familiar with. Most of the Bible is written in the form of a story or a poem. Why is this so? Longman (1985:396) suggests the same reason that is suggested for the use of metaphor in chapter 3. This is an excellent example of defamiliarisation (*ostranenie*). This concept has its origin in Russian Formalism. It signifies the ability of language to draw the attention to itself in order that the world may be seen in a new light. To cast truth in the oblique form of a story or a poem is to urge the reader to pay closer attention. The question can rightly be asked, namely which communicates more powerfully and more vividly: "Speak righteously" or "The mouth of the righteous flows with wisdom, but the perverted tongue will be cut out" (Proverbs 10:31 - NAS), and "care for your fellow man" or the story of the Good Samaritan? Literature appeals to man's whole being - intellect, will and emotions. Adopting a literary approach is to understand that this type of appeal is central to the Bible.

- 2 A literary approach draws the reader's attention to the text as a whole. Longman (1985:397) points out how traditional Biblical scholars tend to focus on a word or a few verses and so atomise the text. Conversely a literary approach addresses the complete text. This is true even in the case of Deconstruction that delights in inconsistencies and contradictions (Wright, 1988:54). Consequently many Biblical scholars have also used the literary approach to serve as an apologetic function. Where historical criticism and source criticism fail to prove the authenticity of texts, literary criticism is employed. I agree with Coggins (1985:13) in this regard that it is perfectly proper to study the book of Genesis, for example, and to indicate specific literary characteristics within the book that renders it a unity and as such underscores its authenticity.

- 3 A literary approach makes the reader of the Bible sensitive to the major aspects of the reading process. It makes explicit the three actors: author, text and reader. New criticism and Deconstruction emphasise the importance of the **text** while reader-response theories and ideological theories underline the predisposition of the **reader** as he approaches the text. The Romantic critic favours the background and intention of the **author**. All three issues are important and one should not be stressed at the exclusion of the other. The major focus should be on the text, however, as it imposes restrictions on possible interpretations. This does not mean that a reader's background, interests and world view will not prompt him to pay attention to some parts of the Biblical message more than other parts. In this regard Longman (1985:397) argues that although Feminists and Marxists read the Bible with focussed glasses that often lead to distortion, they do identify important issues that are sometimes missed by other readers. The main point is this: reading involves a balanced interaction of the author with the reader through the text. (A more thorough discussion is given under 4.3.) This implies that any approach or theory that concentrates on one of these issues to the exclusion of the other two, can be considered to be distorted. Much more can probably be said about the potential achievements of a literary approach to the Bible but Longman (1985:398) captures the crux of the matter with this summation:

But in the final analysis the proof of the pudding is in the eating thereof. Does the approach [a literary one] lead to [more] illuminating exegesis? The answer is "yes", and it is demonstrated in such insightful analyses as those of R. Alter, D.J.A. Clines, C. Conroy, A. Berlin, R.A. Culpepper, D. Gunn and others.

4.3 Reception Theory

The primary issue to be dealt with in this section is whether Reception Theory as a Modern Literary Theory can in any way contribute towards a more successful translation of the metaphors of **Song of Songs**. Is Reception Theory relevant for the translation of Biblical Literary texts and text elements? Does it make sense to investigate the role of the reader in the interpretation and translation of Biblical literary texts and, more specifically, Biblical metaphors? Another essential point to keep in mind is that there are two types of readers to account for in this study, namely, the translator (who also serves as informed critic) and the adolescent (who is not an informed professional). Schematically the process can be illustrated as follows:

Author	Text (metaphor)	Translator (reader)
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Translator (author)	Translated text	Adolescent reader
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4.3.1 Novelty, popularity and diversity

Although much of its novelty might have worn off since its origin in the late sixties Reception Theory can probably still be classified as "a fairly novel development" (Eagleton, 1983:74) in the sense that it belongs to the era of post-modernism. Despite the shadow of doubt that can be cast on the novelty of Reception theory, more can be said of its popularity. Suleiman (1980:3) pointed out more than a decade ago that there were a vast number of journals on both sides of the Atlantic that rarely devoted space to anything else but the reader. Ryan (1983:49), only three years later, made the following jocund statement which reflects the growing popularity of Reception Theory at the time:

But if the concept of the encoder remains a minor threat to literary studies, the concept of the decoder threatens to topple the search for the holy grail of literariness in the 1980s. American reader-oriented theories and the predominantly German equivalent, "reception aesthetics", can boast of a dramatic increase in the

popularity of reader theories remains constant, by 1990 there will be more reader theorists than people in the world.

Although reader theorists are still very much a minority group today (considering a world population of over 5 billion) interest in the role of the reader has indeed been increasing steadily over the years. Its influence currently extends beyond the borders of traditional literature to the field of Biblical literature. Lategan (1987:12) puts it this way: "In eksegetiese vakliteratuur van die jongste tyd kom daar in toenemende mate verwysings voor na die leesproses en meer spesifiek na die rol van die leser". It is clear then that although the reader has once been "relegated to the status of the unproblematic and obvious" it still tenaciously clings to its "starring role" to which it has acceded (Suleiman, 1980:3).

The relative popularity of Reception Theory gives rise to not only a multiplicity but also a diversity of critics in this field. Consequently there are a myriad of opinions on most aspects in this field. There is no generally accepted model and neither is there any methodological consensus. Freund (1987:6) warns that to characterise Reception Theory as "a monolith of any sort would be a flagrant distortion of the plurality of voices and approaches, of the theoretical and methodological heterogeneity, and of the ideological divergences which shelter under the umbrella of this appellation". Suleiman (1980:6) uses this apt figure to describe the labyrinth of converging and sometimes contradictory approaches in this field which - in the domain of literary theory - resemble the tumult of Babel:

[Reception Theory] is not one field but many, not a single widely-trodden path but a multiplicity of crisscrossing, often divergent tracks that cover a vast area of the critical landscape in a pattern whose complexity dismays the brave and confounds the faint of heart.

The novelty and the popularity of Reception Theory as well as the large number and diversity of critics dealing with its issues, largely answer for the differences in opinion on many aspects. The diversity is of such a nature that one encounters a major difficulty in classifying the various

trends and in citing names within appropriate contexts and yet it is felt that successful attempts at classifications had been made in the past.

Both Segers (1978:11) and Cameron (1989:9) broadly distinguish between a *Wirkungsästhetik* (aesthetics of effect, impact, or response - also translated as: aesthetics of reception activity) and a *Rezeptionsästhetik* (aesthetics of reception - or commonly referred to as: reception aesthetics). The latter discipline concerns itself with the way in which the reader receives the text (is reader-oriented), whilst the former concentrates on the interaction between the reader and the text, specifically emphasising the effect of the text on the reader (is text-oriented). This twofold classification is fairly complete as long as it is realised that it only covers the European context. Whereas the term "Reception Theory" can be used as an umbrella term that encompasses both *Wirkungsästhetik* and *Rezeptionsästhetik*, within the European context, the American context proposes a different umbrella term, namely "Reader-Response Criticism".

According to Suleiman (1980:6) Reader-Response Criticism contains six varieties or approaches:

- 1 Rhetorical.
- 2 Semiotic and Structuralist.
- 3 Hermeneutic.
- 4 Phenomological.
- 5 Subjective and Psychoanalytic.
- 6 Sociological and Historical.

It is therefore important to ultimately distinguish between the European and American contexts, between Reception Theory and Reader-Response Criticism, before any other sub-classifications are made. Holub (1984:xii-xiii) explains how the following two features separate the European context from the American context:

- 1 Whereas Reader-Response Criticism is not a banner under which any critic campaigns, Reception Theory must be viewed as a more cohesive and collective undertaking.

- 2 Reader-Response Criticism and Reception Theory are mutually independent. There has been little contact or mutual influence between these two groups.

The emphasis of this study will be on the European context and more specifically the *Wirkungsästhetik* developed by Iser. Yet all ideas and concepts that can facilitate the successful translation of metaphors within a Biblical literary text will be gleaned from both Reader-Response Criticism and Reception Theory since I agree with Cameron's (1989:217) approach which is to utilise a selected number of reception theoretical concepts and ideas which are appropriate in the analysis of a literary text or its elements. Combrink (1983:125) confirms this idea by warning that "by its very novelty the validity and the application of this approach [Reception Theory] will still be open to many weaknesses and problems, but ... it does offer very valuable critical tools and insights". Lategan (1989:115-116) identifies these two divergent avenues of criticism directed at Reception Theory:

- 1 Reception Theory destabilises the text and opens the door to various forms of subjectivism.
- 2 Reception Theory is an approach that does not want to face the full consequences of its own philosophy. (Although it admits the creative role of the reader it appears to limit the freedom of the reader by insisting that the text imposes some definite restrictions on the reader.)

Although both these weaknesses can be answered for, as indeed they are², the point to be made is this: within a field where a variety of approaches exist, each with a different emphasis, the logical thing to do appears to apply only those concepts conducive to facilitating the specific task of critic (or translator).

2 The first avenue of criticism is adequately refuted by Hambidge (1983:85) and the second one is answered for by Lategan (1989:116).

4.3.2 Importance of communication

Although Reception theorists and particularly Reader-Response critics disagree - at times - on a plethora of issues, they are in the words of Tompkins (1980:201) united on one issue, namely "their opposition to the belief that meaning inheres completely and exclusively in the literary text". The obvious reason for this fact is that Reception Theory has shifted the interest in the text to an interest in the reader and the interaction between the text and the reader.

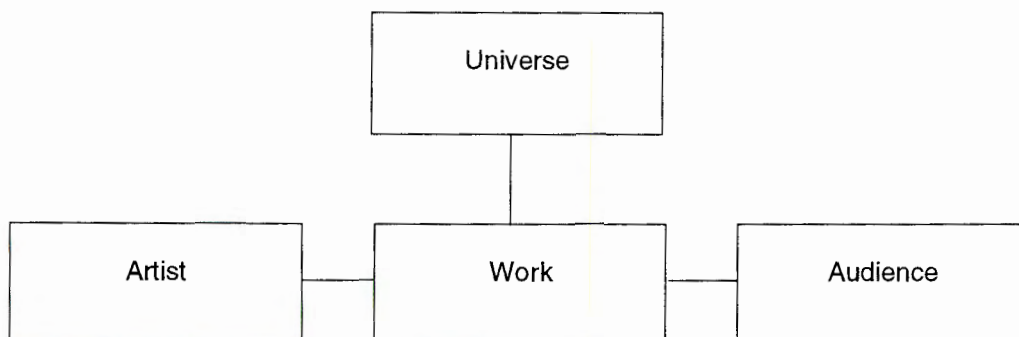
Although Selden (1985:106) chooses to view Reader-oriented theories as part of "a steady assault upon the objective certainties of nineteenth-century science" it would probably be more accurate and fair to say that it forms part of an evolutionary process in the history of literary theory.

Eagleton (1983:74) periodises the history of modern literary theory into three stages which illustrates the preceding ideas to Reception Theory:

- 1 A preoccupation with the author (Romanticism).
- 2 A preoccupation with the text (New Criticism).
- 3 A concern with the reader (Reader-oriented theories).

Rimmon-Kenan (1983:117) reiterates the fact that the new orientation does not stress the role of the reader to the exclusion of the text but focuses on the "reciprocal relations between text and reader". What really happens with the discovery of the role of the reader is that the text is seen to exist within the triad of author, text and reader.

This involuntarily reminds one of Abrams (1953:6) who draws the following diagram to depict four basic elements in the total situation of a work of art:



These four elements each plays a part in the account of a work of art and commonly a critic takes one to these elements as the most important. These varied orientations constitute the preliminary bases for labelling the different approaches. Thus a focus on the text itself will yield an **objective** approach, a focus on the universe (external world) a **mimetic** approach, a focus on the artist an **expressive** approach and a focus on the reader (recipient) a **pragmatic** approach. Consequently each shift of emphasis from one element to the other will yield a different critical orientation. The whole issue about the communicative situation and the fact that up to eight different elements can be distinguished in this situation is discussed fully under 2.2.5.

What is important to recognise, is that as a theory that examines the reader's role in the interpretation of literary texts, Reception Theory rates the whole process of communication very highly. Segers (1978:20) goes as far as to say that Reception Aesthetics (hereby implying the *Wirkungsästhetik* developed by Iser) is extremely communication-oriented. It places the literary text in the middle ground between the author and its readers. The object of study then, is the web of relationships between the text, the reader and the author. De Rover (1978:169) too, views the literary text as the "schakel in het communicatie proces auteur-lezer". This confirms the belief supported by Van Gorp (1981:20) that a literary text should not be interpreted and evaluated in a vacuum, since literature functions as a system within the context of historical, cultural and psychological systems. Consequently Reception Theory not only places a literary work within its context but it is also illustrative of the complex nature of such a work in that it forces the critic to take into account not only the various readers but also the author as well as the text (Steenberg, 1983:55). A very important aspect to be kept in mind in the literary communicative situation is put forward by Ibsch (1981:33):

De feed-back ontbreekt en ten gevolge hiervan komen de vooronderstellingen en voorkennis van de ontvanger bij de decodering van de boodskap in de plaats van de presupposities en voorkennis van de zender. De ontvanger wordt de medeverantwoordelijke, zo niet de verantwoordelijke instantie bij de constituerende van betekenis.

This statement reiterates the importance of the reader, his frame of reference, knowledge of literature, and prejudices. Yet the text still remains the guiding factor. Therefore, I agree with Cameron (1989:217) that "teksimmanente studie 'n voorwaarde is vir die ondersoek na kommunikasie tussen teks en leser omdat die teks meer bepalend is in die proses as die leser".

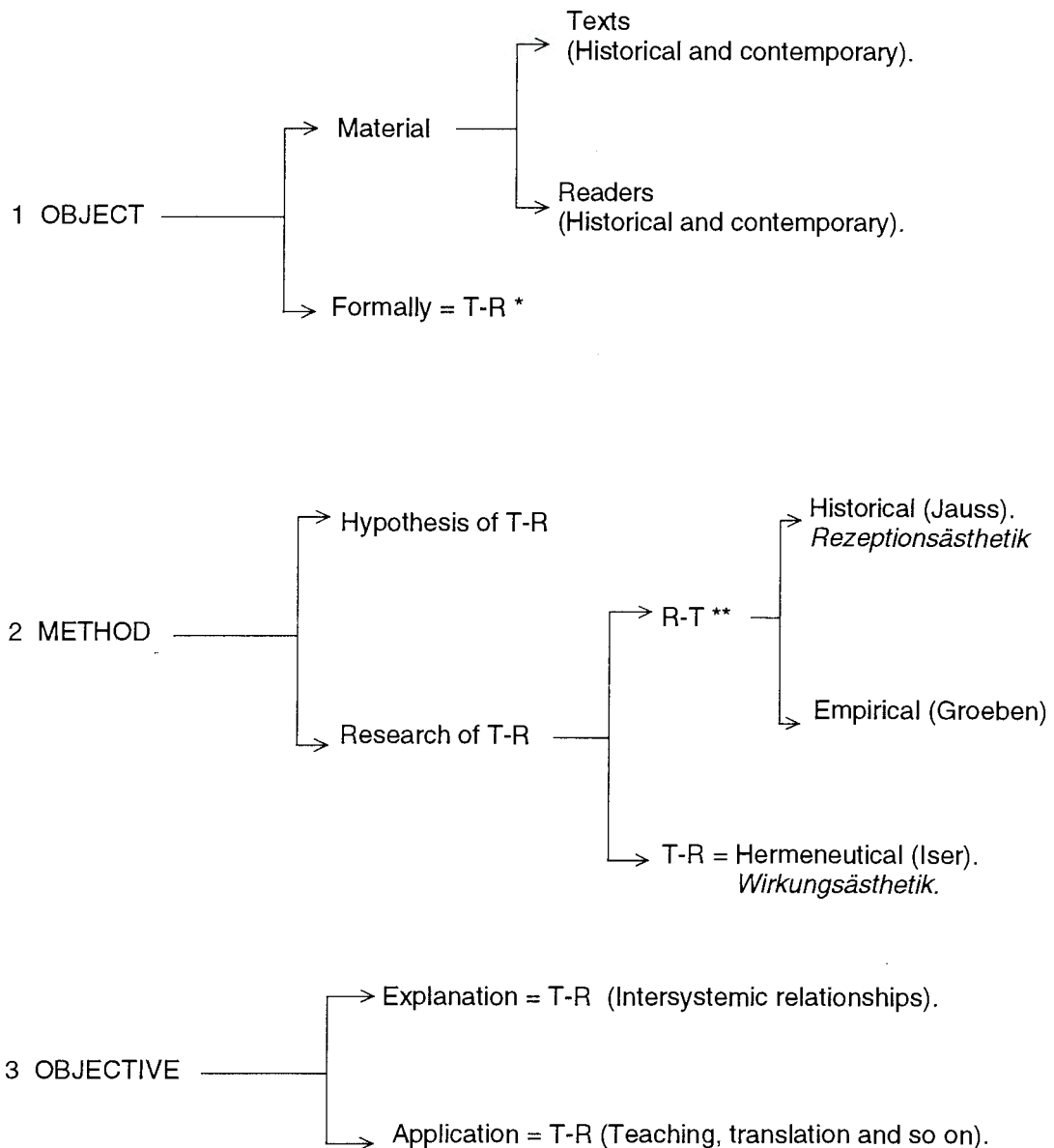
Finally, because the translation of metaphors in this study is intended for adolescents, cognisance must be taken of the warning issued by Ghesquire (1981:81) when she argues that the communication process in children's literature is much more complex than in adult literature. The reason being that such books are usually written and evaluated for publication by people for whom it is not intended: adults. Ghesquire (1981:82) elaborates on the issue in this way: "De volwassen professionele go-between beoordeel het kinderboek vanuit zijn eigen sfeer [for example] pedagogische bekommernis, literaire belangstelling".

This implies that a study of the adolescent reader is also vital in this communication process. Such a study would enable the translator or writer to create a literary work that has been conceptualised from the adolescent's point of view. In this regard Van Gorp (1981:27) not only acknowledges the advantageous role of Reception Theory by explaining how teachers are, enabled to "rekening ... te houden met de aspiraties, de tolerantiegrenzen en het bevattings- en ervaringsvermogen van leerlingen", but he also laments the lack of applying these advantages presented by Reception Theoretical concepts by arguing that "in de praktijk kwam er vaak niet veel van terecht, precies omdat de schoolhandboeken ... niet of onvoldoende vanuit de jonge lezers werden geconcipieerd". Discovering the adolescent's frame of reference will also facilitate the translator (writer) in his task to avoid this problem identified by Ghesquire (1981:97):

Bovendien krijgen we de indruk dat de auteurs zich niet richten tot het echte kind maar wel tot het pedagogisch ideale kind, het vlijtige, gehoorzame kind dat tijdens zijn nuttige en leerzame uitspanningsuren mijmert over levensgeschiedenissen of ouderlievende gesprekken voert (emphasis mine).

4.3.3 European Context

A brief synopsis and overview of research done in the field of Reception Theory in Europe can be seen in this diagram below, which is adapted from Van Gorp (1981:21).



*T-R = Relationship between text and reader (text - oriented).

**R-T = Relationship between reader and text (reader - oriented).

The diagram illustrates how the object of Reception Theory is formally the interaction between the text and the reader which obviously implies that the material with which the critic has to work is the reader and the text. There are two methodological approaches in this field and this diagram clearly indicates the two fields of study in Europe, namely, the **reader-oriented** approach (which accommodates both the historical approach or *Rezeptionsästhetik* of Jauss and the Empirical research done by Groeben) as well as the **text-oriented** approach of Iser, also known as the Hermeneutical approach or *Wirkungsästhetik*. Finally the critic's objective may vary when he studies Reception Theory. In the case of this present study the objective is to apply the insights gained from Reception Theory within the field of Translation. It is clear, moreover, that the major Reception theorists within the European context are Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser of the Constance school in Germany who may be credited with making the reader a central factor in the study of literature (Holub, 1984:53; McKnight, 1985:75). This is also why the inaugural speeches of Jauss and Iser *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft* (1970)³ and *Die Appellstruktur der Texte* (1972)⁴ respectively, are an important premise of Reception Theory.

4.3.3.1 *Rezeptionsästhetik*

Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft is the revised title of Jauss's inaugural address at the University of Constance in 1967 which originally was entitled: "What is and why does one study Literary History?". He addresses this question in seven theses. According to McKnight (1985:76) the success of Jauss's challenge to generate an interest in reception studies was "due in part to the historical circumstances in which it was issued". The gist of his address is how literary history can be grounded and written anew from a different perspective - the perspective of the reader. Instead of using the traditional classification according to authors, genres and movements, a history of reception is proposed. For instance, in his fifth thesis Jauss argues that a work of literature needs to be recognised in "its historical position and significance in the **context of the experience** of literature" (1989:225) (emphasis mine). The major premise of this idea is that there is more than

3 Translated into English as "Literary History as a challenge to Literary Theory".

4 Translated into English as "Indeterminacy and the Reader's Response in Prose texts".

one legitimate interpretation for a literary work. Consequently the Aesthetics of Reception (*Rezeptionsästhetik*) as Jauss's theory is called, maintains that a literary work should be treated as a communicative process of production **and** reception. McKnight (1985:78) reiterates the importance of the communicative aspect in Reception Aesthetics in this way:

Jauss ... expanded the horizon of [his] studies from a theory of the reception and effect of literature based on a science of the text to a theory of literary communication that must be developed in cooperation with Linguistics, Semiotics, Sociology ... Reception Aesthetics, then, is not seen as an autonomous methodological paradigm, but as a partial methodological reflection that can serve to subject art to the historicity of understanding and to gain for aesthetic experience the lost social and communicative function (emphasis mine).

A major influence in Jauss's life and work is the German philosopher Hans Georg Gadamer whose central study on Hermeneutics *Truth and Method* appeared in 1960. The influence of Hermeneutics on the Aesthetics of Reception as propounded by Jauss is so central that Eagleton (1983:74) chooses to view Reception Theory as "the most recent development of Hermeneutics in Germany". One of the major ideas held by Gadamer and one of his great predecessors Martin Heidegger, is that language is a social matter and that the meaning of a literary work is never exhausted by the intentions of its author. This implies that as a work passes from one cultural or historical context to another, new meanings may be derived from it whilst many of those meanings were perhaps never anticipated by the author or his contemporary readers. It is in this freedom of interpretation allocated to the reader where the link between the Hermeneutics of Gadamer and the Aesthetics of Reception of Jauss lies. Both movements stress the importance of the reader in "co-creating" meaning with the author.

1 *Erwartungshorizont* (Horizon of Expectations)

Erwartungshorizont (horizon of Expectations) is a concept that plays a central role in Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik* (Aesthetics of Reception). Holub

(1984:59) warns that Jauss's use of the term "horizon" is vague and could include or exclude any previous meaning of the word. The term is quite familiar in the German philosophical circles prior to Jauss. Thus, Jauss's predecessors, Heidegger and Gadamer were familiar with the term. According to Gadamer (1975:269) "horizon" refers to "the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point". This view is expanded in Suleiman's (1980:35) definition: "The horizon of expectations is the set of cultural, ethical, and literary (generic, stylistic, thematic) expectations of a work's readers". Holub (1984:59) is more vague when he defines the "horizon of expectations" as "an intersubjective system or structure of expectations ... or a mind-set that a hypothetical individual might bring to any text". Suleiman (1980:35) is careful to point out that the reader's expectations lie on three levels, namely cultural, ethical and literary. She does not merely relegate the horizon of expectations to a general "intersubjective" system. In this regard Cameron (1989:20) is also more specific in stating that the reader's horizon of expectations is made up of his knowledge of genres as well as his philosophy in life ("werklikheidsopvatting") and Rabinowitz (1989:91) describes it as "a set of expectations, both literary and cultural, with which a reader approaches a text". The point is this: horizon of expectations includes more than literary issues and in this regard Rabinowitz (1989:94) expresses the importance of the role of the reader's total frame of reference in this way:

For once you take seriously the notion that readers "construct" (even partially) the texts that they read, then the canon (any canon) is not (or not only) the product of the inherent qualities in the text; it is also (at least partly) the product of particular choices by the arbiter of taste who creates it - choices always grounded in ideological and cultural values, always enmeshed in class, race and gender.

Segers (1978:11) elaborates on the issue by explaining that the reader's horizon of expectations depends on three factors:

- 1 His knowledge of the genre or text element.
- 2 The relationship between the text and reality and his knowledge of reality, for example, the author.

3 The relationship between the text and other texts and the reader's knowledge of different texts.

Consequently Cameron (1989:11) is accurate in her assumption that the term horizon of expectations includes literary as well as socio-cultural codes. These literary and socio-cultural codes play a vital role in literary communication.

Segers (1978:32) explains how as a result of these two types of codes the reader's horizon of expectations is twofold. The reader has both a **literary** and a **socio-cultural** horizon of expectations. The literary horizon of expectation is the result of the reader's contact with and knowledge of literary texts and stylistic and rhetorical devices (as for example, metaphors). The socio-cultural horizon of expectation is the result of the reader's communicative competence (parole) and his emotional, ethical, social, psychological and cultural experiences. These experiences basically constitute what the reader is or how he acts. And we know from Schaeffer (1976:19) that man is what he thinks. The whole issue of how one's thought world determines how one acts is discussed under 4.2.3. Ultimately then, man's thought world constitutes his horizon of expectations which will determine how he reads and how he receives a literary work. Segers (1978:33) does warn, however, that there is no clearcut distinction between these two types of horizons of expectations and neither is it completely possible to exhaustively delineate any of these horizons of expectations. For the translator of a literary text or text elements one vital truth remains. It must be recognised that the reader (adolescents in the case of this study) will approach and receive the text or text elements (metaphors) by using both the literary and the socio-cultural codes. Consequently both horizons of expectations need to be taken into account and examined by the critic or translator. Finally the following communication model which is adapted from Segers (1978:32) illustrates the relation between the reader (as well as his horizon of expectations) and a literary text (or text elements) and the role played by codes:

Literary text	Reader's code	Reader
Secondary model-forming system	Literary code	Literary horizon of expectations
Natural language	Socio-cultural code	Socio-cultural horizon of expectations

Communication model

It is important to realise that a horizon of expectations can exist in the individual reader as well as in a group of readers. A horizon of expectations also exists within a specific historical timespan. The importance of recognising this fact should be clear. The interest of this study is to determine the horizon of expectations of a specific group (South African adolescents) at a specific time (the 90's). Jauss has been criticised for failing to recognise that diverse horizons of expectations might exist in a homogeneous group at a specific time in history (Ohlhoff, 1985:52). A translator who intends to translate for a particular group, however, has to concentrate on the similarities of the individuals and not on their differences.

Finally, the term **aesthetic distance** needs some explanation. Jauss (1982:25) uses this term to determine the artistic value of a literary work. The shorter the distance between the reader's expectations and the work, "the closer the work comes to the sphere of the 'culinary' or entertainment (*Unterhaltungskunst*)" (Jauss, 1982:25). This concept is not without its problems however. For example, while the original readers might have experienced the work removed from their horizon of expectations, later readers might experience the work as ordinary (close to their horizon of expectations). Moreover, a work might be totally contrary to the reader's horizon of expectation which implies that the **aesthetic distance** is very great and yet such a case will not bring about any aesthetic experience - only a dismissal.

Holub (1984:63) uses the following example:

If a random typing of a chimpanzee was published as a novel, for example, it would certainly distance itself from the expectations of the reading public. But for a contemporary audience or any critic even to deal with this piece of "literature" as a serious endeavour, it would have to conform more closely to some recognisable literary norms.

Consequently the distance between the horizon of expectations and a literary work is an inadequate and unacceptable criterion for determining artistic value. Notwithstanding the invalidity of aesthetic distance, one thing remains clear: Suleiman (1980:37) is correct in her assessment that the notion of a horizon of expectations still remains valid.

4.3.3.2 *Wirkungsästhetik*

Whereas Jauss's theory was informed by the Hermeneutics of the German philosopher Martin Heidegger and his celebrated successor, the modern German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, Iser relies considerably on the Phenomenology of the German philosopher Edmund Husserl and his student, the Polish Philosopher, Roman Ingarden. While Jauss's focus is on the history of the reception of text and an "aesthetics of reception", Iser is more concerned with an "aesthetic of response" which has its roots in the text. Jauss emphasises the role of the real reader while Iser focuses more on the structure of the text and how it directs the reader. Holub (1984:83) summarizes the shift in approach between Jauss and Iser in this way: "If one thinks of Jauss as dealing with the **macrocosm of reception**, then Iser occupies himself with the **microcosm of response** ..." (italics mine).

For Iser (1989:227) a text can only come to life when it is read, and if it is to be examined, it must therefore be studied through the eyes of the reader. To understand Iser's theory of interaction between the structure of a text and its recipient one has to understand the action of "realisation" or "concretisation" (*Konkretisierung*) and the difference between the **artistic** pole and the **aesthetic** pole of a text. These terms derive from the Phenomenology of Ingarden. According to Iser (1974:123) a literary work has these two poles, namely the **artistic** and the **aesthetic**. The

artistic refers to the text created by the author and the **aesthetic** refers to the realisation accomplished by the reader.

Because the literary work lies between these two poles it is neither completely text nor completely the subjectivity of the reader, but a combination or a merger of the two. Iser (1980:110) is explicit about the fact that "if communication between the text and reader is to be successful ... the reader's activity must also be controlled ... by the text". It is at this point where American Reader-Response critics like Stanley Fish, David Bleich and Norman Holland differ from Iser. These Reader Response critics deny that the work embodies any constraints on the reader and consequently the meaning derived of a text is totally the product of the mind of the individual reader. Rabinowitz (1989:83) explains how on the one hand the *Wirkungsästhetik* of Iser offers the reader, "to use a James Bondian phrase, license to fill - but that license is ultimately granted by the authority of the text", while Reader-Response critics constitute the opposite pole as they argue that readers construct the meaning of the text autonomously. Conversely, although Iser views the meaning of a text as constituted by the reader under the guidance of textual instructions, he does not say that there is only one correct determinate meaning of a literary work of art.

It is not difficult to recognise the work of the Prague or Czech Structuralist Jan Mukarovsky in the concepts of **artistic creation** and **aesthetic concretisation** as they are used by Ingarden and Iser. In fact, Hambidge (1983:81) goes as far as to say that Mukarovsky "kan gesien word as dié hoeksteenlegger van die Resepsie-Estetika". Mukarovsky developed the concepts **artefact** (the physical external letters, words and sentences of a text) and **aesthetic object** (the work of art as it is received in the consciousness of the reader). These terms are reminiscent of the terms *signifiant* (indicator signifying aspects, or physical sign) and *signifié* (indicated signified aspect or inherent meaning), coined by the father of Structuralism, Ferdinand De Saussure. A literary work can then not be reduced to its signifying aspect (artefact, *signifiant*, artistic creation, physical sign) only, since it acquires significance through the act of reading (perception and interpretation) by which it is appropriated (realised and concretised) into an aesthetic object (*signifié*). The concept of concretization is derived from an idea central to Iser's theory, namely

the fact that a text consists of *Leerstellen* (gaps, blanks, empty spaces) which assigns to the text the quality of *Unbestimmtheit* (Indeterminacy).

1 *Leerstellen* (Gaps) and *Unbestimmtheit* (Indeterminacy):

Underlying the whole process of literary communication is the interaction between text and reader. For this communication to succeed the reader is controlled by the text. Central to this regulatory function is the concept of *Leerstellen* (gaps). Iser (1980:111) explains the process in this way:

What is concealed spurs the reader into action, but this action is also controlled by what is revealed; the explicit in its turn is transformed when the implicit has been brought to light. Whenever the reader bridges the gaps, communication begins. The gaps function as a kind of pivot on which the whole text-reader relationship revolves.

Although gaps are central to Iser's theory in that they are the basic elements of aesthetic response, Holub (1984:92) points out that no clear definition of this concept exists. Iser (1980:118) appears to recognise the vagueness of his own concept as he admits that "we have described the structure of the gap in an abstract, somewhat idealized way in order to explain the pivot on which the interaction between text and reader turns". It is derived from Ingarden's view that points of indeterminacy (*Unbestimmtheitsstellen*) exist in each literary work. According to Ingarden (1973:30) a literary work is a structure (skeleton) to be completed by the reader and this structure consists of four strata. (The objects in each of these strata represent points of indeterminacy *Unbestimmtheitsstellen* as each object has - according to Phenomenological theory - an infinite number of determinants):

- 1 *Wortlaute* - Word sounds. (The raw material of literature and the phonetic formations built upon them.)
- 2 *Bedeutungseinheiten* - Meaning units. (All words, sentences or units of multiple sentences containing meaning.)
- 3 *Dargestellte Gegenstände* - Represented objects. (Everything represented, for example, persons, things, events, states and so on.)

- 4 *Schematische Anstichten* - Schematised aspects. (The appearance of the represented objects which the reader uses as a springboard to complete the text.)

Although Iser's concepts of *Unbestimmtheit* (indeterminacy) and *Leerstellen* (gaps) differ from Ingarden's idea of *Unbestimmtheitsstelle* (points of indeterminacy) in the sense that the Iser's "gap" refers to a vacuum and Ingarden's "point" refers to an **object** that might represent various possibilities), the influence of Ingarden's work on the *Wirkungsästhetik* of Iser is obvious. The important fact to grasp about Iser's gap is that it is a communicative unit that governs indeterminacy. In this regard Rimmon-Kenan (1983:128) aptly captures the value of the concept in this way:

Whatever category the gap belongs to, it always enhances interest and curiosity, prolongs the reading process, and contributes to the reader's dynamic participation in making the text signify.

A very important aspect to be kept in mind is the directional force of the text around the gaps: "The structured blanks of the text stimulate the process of ideation to be performed by the reader on **terms set by the text**" (Iser, 1980:111-112)(emphasis mine). It follows then that not all different concretisations of the text are equally acceptable or even possible. Yet this does not deny the importance of the participation of the reader and the probable existence of multiple concretisations. In fact, Iser (1989:229) recognises the fact that a second reading of a piece of literature often produces a different impression from the first when the same reader is involved. This whole issue emphasises one of the greatest points of criticism put forward against Iser's *Wirkungsästhetik* and that is that the "paradoks van die beperkinge van die teks en die vryheid van die leser ... om groter helderheid vra" (Lategan, 1987:116).

Finally, it is felt that despite the fact that Iser and Jauss as well as Reader-Response critics are concerned with the **text** as a whole, the principles laid out by them can also be applied to **metaphor** as a text element, as Verster (1975:112-121) does in his study on metaphors. The whole concept of gaps as a communicative unit is particularly applicable to

metaphor in view of its indeterminate nature, which is discussed under 3.2.2. As with texts, metaphors too, require the active participation of the reader in order to be concretised as they contain their own indeterminacies and gaps.

2 The Implied Reader

Another concept central to Iser's writing and closely related to *Leerstellen* (gaps) that is to be discussed, is that of the **implied reader**. Iser (1978:34) describes this concept as "a textual structure anticipating the presence of a recipient without necessarily defining him" and consequently the implied reader is a reader that embodies all those predispositions necessary for a literary work to exercise its effect. De Jong (1983:54) incorporates the concept of *Leerstellen* (gaps) by explaining how the text with its interpretive gaps (*Leerstellen*) creates an interpretive role for the reader and expects a certain existent knowledge - which is the equivalent of the textual repertoire - to fulfil this role. This role is then the implied reader. The implied reader and the *Leerstellen* (gaps) of a text thus fit each other like hand and glove. It is also clear that the implied reader is rooted in the structure of the text and as such constitutes an abstract concept. Ohlhoff (1985:54) aptly defines this concept as "die rol van die leser soos dit in die teks self vervat is en deur die geheel van teksaanwysings opgeroep word. Daaruit kan 'n werklike leser aflei hoe die teks gelees 'behoort te word'". Selden (1985:112) confirms this view by writing that the implied reader is the reader whom the text creates for itself and amounts to "a network of response-inviting structures", and Segers (1978:15) emphasises the text-immanent nature of the concept in this way:

Men zou kunnen zeggen dat de impliciete lezer de lezersrol in de text self besloten licht; het is het geheel van textuele aanwijzingen bestemd voor de werkelijke lezer die daarvoor te weten kan komen hoe de tekst gelezen moet worden. De impliciete lezer is dus een text-immanent gegeven dat een soort signaal-karakter heeft, waarop werkelijke lezers overigens heel verschillend kunnen reageren.

The implied reader is an abstract reconstruction in the text itself of the reader that is equipped to read the text adequately or respond to it

optimally. This implies a reader who understands the strategies of a text and can successfully interact with, and optimally respond to, the *Leerstellen* (gaps) in the text. One major problem with the concept of the implied reader is that it is text-immanent and this fact prompts Holub (1984:85) to write that if "the implied reader were purely textual, it would be synonymous with the structure of appeal (*Appelstruktur*) of a literary work, and to call it a 'reader' at all would be senseless, if not downright misleading". Although I agree with Holub that the term can be misleading I believe that Rimmon-Kenan (1983:119) furnishes a satisfactory answer to this minor dilemma when she states:

The advantage of talking of an implied reader rather than of 'textual strategies' [of which Leerstellen (gaps) is one] pure and simple ... is that it implies a view of the text as a system of reconstruction - inviting structure rather than as an autonomous object.

In a sense it is felt that one can equate the concept of *Leerstellen* (gaps) with the concept of the implied reader as long as one recognises that the latter implies a real reader that responds exactly according to the dictates of the textual strategies. This fact introduces another controversy within the field of Reception Theory, namely, the types of readers.

4.3.4 Types of Readers

The most stalwart scholar might be daunted by the myriad of readers proposed within the field of Reception Theory and Reader-Response Criticism. Who is the reader? Is he the real or actual reader (Jauss), the implied reader (Iser), the model reader (Eco), the informed reader (Fish), the ideal reader (Culler), the superreader (Riffaterre) or the encoded reader (Brooke-Rose) or should the critic perhaps recognise the fact that there is more than one reader? Seger's (1978:11) for instance, identifies these three:

- 1 Real reader.
- 2 Implicit reader.
- 3 Explicit reader.

A complete analysis of the similarities and differences among these various concepts of the reader is beyond the scope of this study. It is sufficient to point out that all the types of readers generated so far fall within two categories, although each category carries its own emphases and nuances. Rimmon-Kenan (1983:119) describes the one group as containing

the concept of the real reader, whether a specific individual or the collective readership of a period [and the other group is] a theoretical construct, implied or encoded in the text, representing the integration of data and the interpretative process 'invited' by the text.

Selden (1985:112) makes a similar division by writing "the term 'reader' can be sub-divided into 'implied reader' and 'actual reader'". Cameron (1989:16) prefers to see the two categories as "Text-internal readers" and "text-external readers". These two rubrics aptly capture the nature of the two varieties of readers in existence within the field of Reception Theory. A major problem in this area is voiced by Lategan (1987:115) who writes that, "'n duideliker begrip van die wisselwerking tussen die werklike en geïmpliseerde leser bly een van die aspekte wat nog verder deur die resepsieteorie uitgeklaar sal moet word".

Combrink (1983:172) too, issues a warning in this regard by writing that the reader is a "very contingent and tenuous concept", and needs to be "carefully evaluated and given shape" in order for it to be acceptable, particularly in terms of "critical respectability".

This, however, is an issue that I believe is satisfactorily resolved and illustrated by Cameron (1989:16) in this table below which is adapted and expanded to include the focus of this study:

Text-internal readers	Text-external readers
1 The implied reader (he has no real existence).	1 The actual (real) reader who completes questionnaires (this implies experimental research).
2 The super, ideal and model reader (their readings greatly correspond with the role of the implied reader).	2 Actual reader who writes resumés and letters in newspapers and so on (this implies empirical research).
3 The informed reader (he responds optimally to the text and is the con- cretization of the im- plied reader).	3 The horizon of expecta- tions of a probable read- er (this is later ex- panded to an informed reader and is the actual reader described in 2 above).

Malan (1983:10) too, makes a similar connection between the implied reader and what he considers to be a "sophisticated reader". As the result of empirical research, he makes the following assumption: "Gevolgtrekkings in die verslag ... wat hier van belang is, is die feit dat ervare, gesofistikeerde lesers ooreenkomstig die implisiete leserrol geles het en die spel met die leser herken het ..." (Malan, 1983:10). The informed reader is consequently the reader who is competent to interact successfully with a text. This is the type of reader that is anticipated by Iser's concept of an "implied reader". Roodt (1983:129) alludes to this same fact by writing the following: "Dit is in elk geval 'n feit dat die moderne skrywer in toenemende mate staatmaak op 'n **gesofistikeerde** leser wat met sy kennis en ervaring die teks 'laat' werk" (*italics mine*).

This is then the gist of Iser's *Wirkungsästhetik*, namely, for the text and the real reader to interact successfully and for optimal reception to occur, certain constraints and requirements are placed on the reader. The reader has to "qualify" as a worthy participant or as Cameron (1989:21) puts it, "hoeveel van die teks ontsluit en gedekodeer sal word, hang van die

kwaliteit van die leser af ...". Verster (1975:115) emphasises this issue with regards to metaphors when he argues that if a metaphor were not understood its whole impact would be lost and it would never come to life. Consequently he stresses the importance of a "good" reader in this way:

Die kwessie van 'n goeie leser is dus van die uiterste belang om die geskape kunswerk in al sy fasette tot reg te laat kom. Waar die metaforiek in die besonder 'n beroep maak op die intelligente leser se goeie insig en begrip, is die goeie leser hier eers 'n belangrike faktor (Verster, 1975:116).

Consequently a plethora of labels have already been produced to describe this "good" reader - **informed, sophisticated, intellectual, ideal, super, perfect, good, experienced, sensitive** and many more can probably be conjured up. The main point is that this reader is usually professionally trained and knowledgeable. In the field of Literature it is the critic or theorist. In the field of Translation it is the linguist. In the field of Theology it is the theologian. It is felt, however, that the term **informed reader** - which is employed by Cameron (1989:21) - is both satisfactory and adequate.

Before analysing the real readers at stake within the context of this study it is necessary to take note of a very important dimension added to the real (actual) reader by Fowler (1985:5-21) in a thought-provoking article in which he poses the question: who is "the reader" in Reader Response criticism? This added dimension also helps to clarify the term **informed reader** within the context of reading the Bible. Fowler (1985:21) labels his ideal reader as the "critical reader". But to understand his concept of a **critical reader** one has to recognise that it is derived from the thesis that all readers lie on a critic/reader continuum. Fowler (1985:5) makes a clearcut distinction between what he calls "the critic" on the one hand, and "the reader" on the other hand and he argues that a "critic" should not be seen as a "reader". His description of a "critic" - albeit robed in ecclesiastical terminology - resembles that of an **informed reader**:

Being a critic means being part of a guild, or an "interpretive community", as Stanley Fish (1980) likes to say. Such a guild has a history, it has a language, and it has rules and rituals for entrance

into its ranks, and for subsequent advancement, demotion, or excommunication (Fowler, 1985:5).

While the knowledgeable reader or the experienced reader constitutes this concept of **critic**, he seems to be saying that the uninformed receptor - he refers to the students he encounters in his introductory courses as an example - constitutes the **reader** (Fowler, 1985:8-9). On closer examination one realises that his **reader** - which he has taken from Steiner (1979)⁵ - is not necessarily uninformed, but this **reader** definitely has a different attitude and a different approach to the text than the **critic**. The **reader** says of a text "thou shall not judge", while the **critic** says of a text "if it is so worthy of respect, it will emerge from judgement triumphant and with added glory" (Fowler, 1985:9). But both critic and reader can be informed. This fact is stressed by Fowler (1985:7) himself when he points out that it is significant to recognise that Reader-Response critics can be positioned somewhere along a continuum running from being predominantly **critic-oriented** to being predominantly **reader-oriented**. The **informed** reader should find the balance between critical distance and readerly passion. The result of this balance is being a "critical reader", and the significance of this concept is twofold (Fowler, 1985:10):

- 1 It supposes a reader that affirms the enduring power of the Bible in his own life.
- 2 Yet the reader remains open enough to ask any question and to risk any judgement about the Bible.

Within the context of this study care must be taken to distinguish between the two different types of readers that are at stake and to describe their relationship with each other:

1 Translator

He is the actual (text-external) reader. He is also an **informed** reader and yet within the context of Biblical interpretation it implies more than what is suggested for a literary context by Cameron (1989:16), Malan (1983:10),

5 Steiner, George. 1979. Critic reader. *New Literary History*. 10:423-52.

Verster, (1975:116) and Roodt (1983:129). This issue is dealt with more comprehensively under 4.4.

He is also the author (creator) of the translated text (text elements) with its new **implied reader** and *Leerstellen* (gaps) and therefore has to fulfil two communicational roles (Wincler & Van der Merwe, 1993:9).

In the same way the profile or horizon of expectations of the translator enables him to optimally respond to the original text or text elements, so a knowledge of the profile or horizon of expectations of his readership, facilitates his task of creating a translated text or text elements, with which they can successfully interact and which they can optimally receive or concretise.

2 Adolescents

They are actual (text-external) readers. They belong to a specific social group whose reading habits are investigated by taking into account research done in this area (experimental, empirical and otherwise). Their profile or horizon of expectations as a collective readership, is reconstructed from this information.

To summarize: This study is concerned with two contemporary readers. The first reader (translator) is an **informed** reader and the concretisation of the **implied** reader. The second reader (adolescent) is what Lategan (1978:114) describes as a "saamgestelde of gemeenskaplike leser wat die versamelde leeservaring van 'n spesifieke gemeenskap ... verteenwoordig". To determine the horizons of expectations shared by adolescents collectively as a social group, information will have to be gleaned from the Sociology of literature. According to Ohlhoff (1985:59) and Holub (1984:146) a study of the reading habits of different readerships (social groups) can supply information to clarify the reading process. It is felt that a knowledge of the profile of the specific readership which is to be the target receptors is vital to the translator in his task of creating a translated text or text element with the appropriate repertoire (a text or text element with which they can successfully interact).

4.3.5 Relevance of Reception Theory

Probably the greatest significance of both Reception Theoretical Studies as well as Reader-Response Criticism is its endorsement of the fact that the reader makes sense. Although I agree with Cameron (1989:21) when she writes that "die teks vorm die **swaartepunt** in die kommunikasieproses: outeur-teks-leser" (emphasis mine), it is also recognised that the reader assumes a prominent position in the process of communication. De Jong (1983:47) explains the position of the text *vis-a-vis* that of the reader in this way:

Die vryheid van die leser hef nie alleen die outonomie van literatuur op nie, maar bring ook die status van die teks as norm van interpretasie in gedrang. Die teks is preskriptief, maar die teks alleen kan nie uitsluitel gee oor die juistheid van interpretasie of oor die geldigheid van evaluasie nie (emphasis mine).

This does not mean that "anything goes" (McKnight, 1985:133) or that the reader "has unlimited freedom" (Hambidge, 1983:80). Such a position would argue that the reader supplies **all** the meaning, which implies that we "write the texts we read" (Freund, 1987:153). This is of course the extreme opposite of the view that holds that the process of interpretation must stress a reconstruction of the author's aims and attitudes. The ideal is to synthesise these two extremes and strike a balance as Iser (1980:110) attempts to establish by insisting that "if communication between text and reader is to be successful, ... the reader's activity must also be controlled ... by the text". Therefore the major concepts discussed by Jauss (horizon of expectations) and Iser (implied reader and gaps) need to be applied in a more general theory of communication (Holub, 1984:108). It is therefore felt that Kraayeveld (1983:237) is correct in ascribing a supportive role to Reception Theory in the practice of interpretation since the **text** remains the major determinant factor in the process of communication.

One of Reception Theory's major contributions is its confirmation of the fact that there are different levels and kinds of meaning. This is why McKnight (1985:133) can write the following, specifically with regards to the Bible:

Readers have made sense of the Bible as word and the Word, as human action and divine event, as an object of critical scrutiny and as the subject of human salvation and freedom. The sort of meaning sought has constrained the method used and the meaning found ... the readers is the touchstone for the sort of meaning desired ... (emphasis mine).

What, in effect, is being proposed, is that a variety of meanings are possible and the one can be just as legitimate as the other depending on the intention of the reader. The literary text must not be seen as an entity "to reach some ultimate signified", but rather as an entity to "multiply the signifiers" (Barthes, 1974:165). The literary text as artefact contains more than one single aesthetic object. While earlier literary theories argues for a determinate meaning in the text which authorises interpretation, Reception Theory - as all the other Post-modern theories - argues for an indeterminacy in which more than a single interpretation is possible. This fact is confirmed by Miall (1988:157) who writes that a "study of actual readers shows that the meanings given to a particular sentence may differ significantly in ways that don't involve simple incapacity or ignorance of conventions on the part of the ... readers". It is important to realise, however, that Reception Theory's insistence on the multiplicity of interpretations is intended to challenge the reader to view the fact that his own evaluations are relative, as a symptom not of the text, but of himself (De Jong, 1983:55). The whole concept of multifaceted meaning is discussed under 2.2.5.

Another very important contribution of Reception Theory is also its focus on the interaction between the text and the reader. Some writers like Freund (1987:156) refers to this process of interaction as a **dialogue** between the text and the reader: "Dialogue I here take to be a trope for reading that stands in opposition to the authority of monological discourse, whether the text's or the reader's". Two vitally important issues addressed in this regard are the following:

- 1 The **determinacy** of the text.
- 2 The **freedom** of the reader.

The answer is not a simple one, and perhaps to many, not a satisfactory one either.

The Gordian knot tied by text-determinacy and readerly freedom is best resolved by focussing on the interaction between the text and the reader as well as the major Reception Theoretical concepts discussed under 4.3.3. For example, the freedom of the reader is limited by his own horizon of expectations. The more informed the reader is, the more successful will his interaction with the text be. As the informed reader is the concretisation of the implied reader, he responds optimally to the implied author and the repertoire of the text. The determinacy of the text on the other hand, is greatly determined by its number of *Leerstellen* (open spaces). The more *Leerstellen* there are, the more indeterminate will the text be and the more freedom will be allocated to the reader. In this regard one is reminded of Eco who distinguishes between **open** texts (usually a literary work with many open spaces) and **closed** texts (usually a straightforward text that does not require such an active participation on the part of the reader) similarly Barthes distinguishes between *lisible* (readerly) texts and *scriptible* (writerly) texts (Hambidge, 1983:83). The former type of text (Eco's **closed** and Barthes' *lisible* text) which requires very little participation from the reader and the latter type of text (Eco's **open** and Barthes' *scriptible* text) in turn requires a significant participation from the reader.

Finally, the most important insights to be gleaned from Reception Theory within the context of this study can be summarised as follows:

- 1 The translator as the first reader should be an **informed reader** (concretisation of the implied reader) for successful interaction to occur between the text and the reader.
- 2 The **reading habits** of adolescents should be investigated in the process of reconstructing their collective horizon of expectations in order to ascertain how informed they are as a socio-intellectual group. (the translation with its new repertoire should optimally compensate for the adolescent's lack of being an informed reader.)
- 3 Metaphors are excellent examples of text elements that contain *Leerstellen*.

- 4 Major Reception Theoretical concepts (*Leerstellen*, **implied reader** and **horizon of expectations**) can successfully be applied to facilitate the translator's task of achieving a translation for a specific readership to which the can optimally respond.

4.4 The Translator as Reader

Not only De Beaugrande (1978:25), but also De Bruyn (1989:145-146) distinguish between the two separate acts of "reading" and "writing" that are executed by the translator during the process of translating. De Bruyn (1989:145) agrees with the fact that the translator should be an **informed** reader specifically in the sense that he should be able to render a critical and "close reading" of a text. Although the major concern in this section is not so much that the translator should be an informed reader with regard to types of texts (Chapter 2), or types of metaphors (Chapter 3), or even reading the literature of the Bible (Chapter 4), it is important to recognize a few extra characteristics of an informed Bible translator, as they are suggested by Wincler and Van der Merwe (1993:9-14):

- 1 The Bible translator has to make the right assumptions about the readers' cognitive environment. (This implies that adolescents' cognitive ability and experience in receiving metaphors has to be correctly assessed and assumed.) It is, however, felt that Gutt (1991:112) places too much emphasis on "assumptions" when he writes that the translator "does not actually know what it [cognitive environment of his audience] is like". It is felt that the cognitive environment of the readers can be researched well enough for a translator to increasingly deal with certainties rather than getting caught up in assumptions that might be fallacious.
- 2 Bible translators should have a thorough knowledge of as much as possible of both the Greek text of the NT and the Hebrew/Aramaic text of the OT as well as of the world, the authors and the readers of these texts.

The major issue is that being an informed reader within the context of Biblical interpretation requires more than what is generally expected of an informed reader within the context of literary interpretation and by

Reception Theorists in particular. This added dimension necessary to be an informed reader within the context of Biblical interpretation is explained by Van Rensburg (1980:15-16) in this way:

Die Heilige Gees is die einlike Skrywer en dus ook eintlike Verklaarder van die NT [naturally this applies to the Bible as a whole]. As dié Bybelskrywer en dié Bybelverklaarder [the Holy Spirit] nie die hart van die verklaarder [translator] verlig nie, bly die Bybel ondanks al die geleerdheid en die slimheid van die eksegeet vir hom 'n geslote boek terwyl klein kindertjies dit wel verstaan (emphasis mine).

With these strong words the translator's dependence on the Holy Spirit and His illuminating work is left without doubt when it comes to successfully reading the Scriptures. Glassman (1982:445) confirms this view by emphasising the fact that the translator of the Word of God also has to rely upon the Holy Spirit to do what Jesus Christ promises His disciples the Spirit will do in John 16:8⁶:

If the Bible translator and distributor cannot trust the Holy spirit in his ministry then he might as well give up: for the issues here are not merely theological, nor linguistic, but "spiritual" in the sense that Paul meant when he wrote II Corinthians 10:3-5⁷ (emphasis mine).

Bekker (1983:139) is firm about the necessity of the illuminating and inspirational work of the Holy Spirit in the translator of the Bible:

Omdat Bybelvertaling 'n eiesocrtige kuns is, is dit van groot belang dat ook die vertalers wat op hierdie terrein kunsskeppend besig is, nie maar bloot net kenners van Hebreeus en Grieks moet wees nie. 'n Bybelvertaler moet ook geestelike insig in en 'n eerbied vir die

6 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement (NIV).

7 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (NIV).

Skrif hê - iets wat slegs die Gees van God deur die geloof aan hom kan verleen.

Apart from possessing the linguistic (specifically knowledge of Greek and Hebrew), literary and critical ability to respond optimally to the Biblical text (or text element), the translator of the Bible must also have the indwelling and assistance of the Holy Spirit of God. There should be a combination of human knowledge and Divine inspiration (Schwarz, 1955:204). To explain the limitation imposed upon the non-Christian or unbeliever, as translator of the Bible, Van Bruggen (1978:132) has this to say:

We do not claim that the Hebrew and Greek words are inaccessible to an unbelieving translator. A mere linguist can do much, but for the completion of the translation, he will need spiritual insight into matters such as the connection between the prophecies and narratives within Scripture.

This confirms the argument put forward by Wills (1952:38) in which he explains how translating as an act of human involvement is determined by the **value-system** and experience of the translator. The value-system of the Christian translator is different to that of the non-Christian translator because their world views differ. In this regard Wills (1982:38) distinguishes two crucial issues which determine the outcome of a translation and reflect the fact that no translator can truly be immune or neutral towards a text:

- 1 The predisposition - Lefevere (1992:1) prefers to use the term "ideology" - of the translator towards the text. The Christian who treasures the Bible as the Word of God is obviously more (or just as) amicably predisposed towards the Bible than (as) any other individual.
- 2 The problem-solving capacity of the translator. (With regards to Bible translation the Christian translator has the privilege of the auxiliary role of the Holy Spirit.)

Consequently, as a result of the unique nature of the Bible as the Word of God, it is felt that to be an informed reader in this regard requires more

than linguistic and literary knowledge or critical ability. It also requires being a Christian, filled with the Holy Spirit and dependent on His illuminating an inspirational power.

4.5 Adolescents and their reading habits

4.5.1 *The willingness to read*

Since the primary issue in this section is to find out to what extent adolescents can be regarded as informed readers all the information about them and their reading habits will be related to this fact. The importance of analysing the prospective audience of a translation is demonstrated by Loewen (1986:201) in an article entitled "Who am I translating for?". He explains how a long period of involvement in Bible translating has convinced him that the question of who the reader is, is one of the most fundamental questions every translator must ask himself Fueter (1981:143) agrees on this issue when he writes that a Biblical text will be effectively communicated when, amongst other things, the translator has created a translation "through transposing the text at levels **appropriate** to the particular situation of the receptors ...". The translator then, must know his readership because as Arichea (1987:410) puts it: "The aim of every translation of the Bible is to enable a **particular audience** to understand the Biblical message ..." (emphasis mine).

Within a Reception Theoretical context, finding out to what extent adolescents are informed readers, will be to establish their abilities and limitations as prospective readers. The knowledge of such abilities and limitations is a prerequisite to the process of translating (Sjölander, 1983:431). Nida (1979:324) feels so strongly about this aspect that he says that "no translator can afford to produce a text without considering the manner in which the prospective audience is likely to interpret it". It is felt a knowledge of how informed the adolescent is as a reader will enable the translator to recognize to what extent he will have to make concessions in his translating.

Defining what an adolescent is may prove to be difficult as adolescence constitutes a time in the life of the human being when he is neither a child nor an adult. Consequently it is felt that the definition of a teenager by the

Greek philosopher Socrates, about 500 years BC as it is mentioned by Le Roux (1987:50), captures the essential facts about this turbulent time in a person's life:

Our teenagers nowadays love luxury. They have bad manners. They show contempt for authority and disrespect for their elders. They prefer to chatter instead of taking exercise. They no longer rise when adults enter the room. They contradict their parents in company, gobble their food and tyrannize their teachers.

Every adult in every subsequent generation to the writing of this definition has probably agreed with its main thrust. Steenberg (1988:15) confirms something of this suspicious view of teenagers by writing, "daar is niemand so egosentries soos 'n tiener nie. Hy beleef intens vanuit homself, sien alles en almal in verhouding met homself". To echo these ancient words of two and half millennia are these words by Williams (1988:66) which prove that not only are teenagers a peculiar breed, but they follow pursuits that are not conducive to intellectual ardour or reading fervour:

Ah, Spring, when [teenagers'] thoughts turn toward senior proms, graduation and away from the deeper meanings of literature of critical thinking; when visions of bikini-clad Dianas and bronze-skinned Adonises displace the struggles of the Joad family; when accomplishment is measured by the darkness of a tan rather than understanding the depth of Ophelia's despair.

A close study of teenagers' reading habits reveals that the average teenager is not a diligent reader. Cooper (1986:21) quotes frequent comments made by adolescents such as, "I hate reading ... I don't have time to read ... I don't understand what I read", to emphasise the reluctance among teenagers to read. Le Roux (1987:53) confirms this fact with these words:

Recently the television programme Video 2 highlighted the lack of reading interest and reading motivation of South African teenagers. The overall consensus was: "It is boring!" That teenagers often decline to read and frequently suffer from reading problems is no

myth. Readership studies like the Whitehead survey of 1974 and the Heather report of 1980 provide conclusive proof of the reluctant and sometimes a-literate reader.

It is also true that much of the reluctance may stem from introducing them to the wrong book. Van der Westhuizen (1989:5) furnishes these two responses of children to prescribed literature which underlines the fact that adolescents must be exposed to the right type of literature:

*As dit meneer se plan was om ons lief te maak vir Afrikaans met 'n boek soos **Ons wag op die kaptein** (Elsa Joubert), het ek vir hom slegte nuus.*

*Ek is mal oor die boek **Kringe in die Bos** (Dalene Matthee). Ek dink die tannie wat die boek geskryf het, het haar huiswerk oor die Knysnabosse goed gedoen ...*

The number of adolescents that are avid readers, is difficult to establish. The figure obtained from a study of the reading interests and reading habits of English (First Language) secondary school pupils in South Africa, with particular reference to the province of Natal is pitched at a dismal 7 % (Gardner, 1991:38). The disheartening statistics of teenagers' attitude to reading can probably be summarised by this humorous illustration furnished by Carlin (1973:282):

Browsing through the volumes in an English department bookroom can be very revealing ... As always, books that were once the property of the Board of Education have been taken over by the Board/Bored of Education. As ever, an annotation offers the traditional invitation to arson: "In case of fire, throw this in". Or a suspenseful directive prompts the reader to see the sinking ship on page 61, which in turns bears the message "Too late. It's sunk".

To conclude: When one considers the following anecdote about reading as an addiction, one sad truth remains: adolescents may be guilty of every other addictive habit in the book but reading! (It also presents teachers with a glimmer of hope - that motivating pupils to read might yield abundant results.)

*Regarded as a drug used with moderation reading can be almost innocuous ... but the habit once formed grows very rapidly and the temptation to excess is very great. Immoderate readers find great enjoyment in its indulgence and declare that it opens new and strange worlds to them, that it inspires them, urges them to performance of great actions, makes them forget their sorrows and so on. Opium-eaters and those who are addicted to hashish say much the same thing, but they are not so blatant about it. Those who soak themselves in books have no shame - they will even make a boast of their weakness!*⁸

Champion (1988:43) wisely points out, however, that one way to excite adolescents about poetry in particular and lead them into literature in general, is to concentrate on familiar themes and content. Fortunately, the translator of **Song of Songs** has an advantage in this regard, since "love" and "relationships with the opposite sex", is a popular theme among adolescents. The fact that adolescents are prompted to read for content rather than aesthetics is confirmed by Emans and Patyk (1973:64) who, as a result of an empirical study, concludes that merely a "few members of either sex gave aesthetics a high ranking" (*italics mine*).

The suggestion then is clear. Adolescents can be motivated to read and learn to love the act of reading by introducing them, and concentrating on familiar and popular topics. Carlsen (1973:117) develops this same argument in that he agrees that young adults choose or reject a book on the basis of its content and not its subtlety or style. As this study is primarily concerned with the translation of metaphor, adolescents' affinity to style is also an important issue. Since Carlsen's (1973:117) conclusion is that adolescents read for content, it would suggest that the translated metaphors of a text should not be too difficult or complex.

There are quite a number of tutors who feel that adolescents generally lack critical skills. For example, Hale (1986:33) expresses the fear that "many matriculants are not discerning in their approach to what they read". Meihuizen (1984:11) laments the fact that she has found that

8 *Crux* 23:4(7) - Mrs. Desmond O' Brien. 1927. The pernicious habit of reading. *Parents' Review*. London. March, p. 152.

"students or scholars often have difficulty with Conrad because of the intricate structure of his sentences, the sophistication of his language, the subtlety with which his ideas are conveyed ...". The adolescent's initial unwillingness and inability to cope with the intricate aesthetics of literature should not, however, deter teachers to present teenagers with a stimulus and compulsion to think (Edmunds, 1985:9). In an excellent and thought-provoking article which is a plea for the retention of Shakespeare in High Schools, Edmunds (1985:9-13) suggests that much of the pupils' so-called inability to cope with the figurative intricacy of Shakespeare's language can be attributed to factors such as a lack of practice, stamina and interest. This would suggest that there is nothing wrong with the adolescent's cognitive abilities to grasp and appreciate complex figurative language such as metaphors, for instance. Edmunds (1985:11) also confirms the central place of metaphor in the language of not only adults, but also adolescents with these words:

And the boys who called a teacher "Marbles" because of his eyes were using this mode [metaphor] as naturally as a poet. The metaphorical propensity is as spontaneous as this, and it is an aspect of our normal linguistic endowment (emphasis mine).

4.5.2 Cognitive ability

Van der Westhuizen (1989:3) wisely distinguishes between the following two aspects within the adolescent's interaction with literature:

- 1 Affective aspect (love for reading and literature).
- 2 Cognitive aspect (ability to interact successfully with, for example, a text with an intricate style).

The point has been made under 4.5.1 that adolescents generally lack a love for reading. But this issue concerns the Affective aspect only. The adolescent's latent ability to appreciate and understand literature, and difficult metaphors in particular, is a separate issue, however.

Although cognitive ability, intellect and knowledge is a complex concept, Mayer (1987:10) makes the following useful classification of different kinds of knowledge:

1 Semantic knowledge

This refers to one's factual knowledge of the world, for example, knowing the capital of a country.

2 Procedural knowledge

This refers to a list of steps that can be used in a specific situation, for example, classifying different objects into categories.

3 Strategic knowledge

This refers to a general approach on how to learn or solve problems, including the self-monitoring of progress in the use of a strategy. Examples are the ability to design a plan on how to write an essay and the ability to develop a technique on how to memorise a list of definitions.

The significance of this classification is that it reflects the full extent of the knowledge required of a reader in order to understand metaphor. Metaphor comprehension is simply not possible without the full development of semantic, procedural and strategic knowledge.

Cognitively adolescents have reached the stage of **formal operations** (Le Roux, 1987:51) which implies that they possess semantic, procedural, as well as strategic knowledge. The stage of **formal operations** is a stage in Piagetian intellectual theory that follows **concrete operations** and according to Fein (1978:44) and Mayer (1987:34) this stage of intellectual development is characterised by the following three major aspects:

1 Hypothetical-deductive thought

This refers to the child's ability to logically deal with the possible (hypothetical situations) as well as with the actual (real situations). This implies that a clear distinction is made between fact and fiction and that problems in which insufficient clues for a solution are given are identified.

2 Abstract thought

This refers to the child's ability to think not only concretely but also abstractly and implies the ability to use symbols to represent other symbols. This ability to perform abstract propositions are called second-degree or second-order operations.

3 Systematic thought

This refers to the child's ability to isolate all relevant variables and all possible combinations of variables. An example is the ability to arrange the letters ABCD into the twenty-four possible arrangements they can be arranged in if asked to do so.

Fein (1978:447) argues that it is particularly the adolescent's ability to use symbols to represent other symbols (second-order operations) which enables him to begin to understand figures of speech such as metaphor, and begin to master a subject such as Algebra. This potential to grasp metaphors is a vital issue to be borne in mind by the translator.

Peel (1979:238) reiterates adolescents' ability for symbolic, logical and higher level thinking in a description of the basic characteristics of adolescent thinking. The role of intelligence or intellectual aptitude is very important with regard to metaphor comprehension as metaphorical thinking is foundational to cognition itself and metaphors undergird much existing knowledge (Schwarz, 1988:33). In a thought-provoking essay on metaphor and aesthetic sensitivity in children, Kogan (1988:204-206) states that it is apparent that aspects of metaphoric operations are tied to general intellectual aptitude in younger adolescents but in later adolescence metaphoric operations are clearly independent of intelligence. This implies that general intelligence plays a lesser role in metaphoric operations as the child matures. This seems to suggest that by middle and late adolescence the average adolescent has the ability to grasp metaphors despite any differences in intellectual aptitude that may exist.

In a discussion on the novel for the adolescent, Burton (1973:88) supports the view that adolescents are able to appreciate style and aesthetics with these words:

The good novel for the adolescent reader has attributes no different from any good novel. It must be technically masterful, and it must present a significant synthesis of human experience. Because of the nature of adolescence itself, the good novel for the adolescent should be full in true invention and imagination (emphasis mine).

Dunning (1973:151) too, feels that the figurative language of literature for young adults should be generally "effective" rather than "pedestrian". Pettit (1973:253) confirms this view by listing **fresh** and **unhackneyed** metaphors as one of the prerequisites for a successful novel for young adolescents. This information is very valuable for the translator of metaphors. Whereas teenagers may lack the affective drive to read literature as well as appreciate intricate figurative language, their cognitive abilities appear to be a capable and ready reservoir to cope with these issues. This does not make the adolescent an **informed reader** but his potential to rise to the challenge of interacting successfully with intricate and difficult metaphors should not be underestimated by the translator.

Prior to examining metaphor comprehensibility in adolescents in detail it is perhaps wise to extend a word of caution with regard to the measuring of comprehensibility in adolescent readers in general. Layton (1978:250) argues that no truly adequate or stable methods for predicting readers' expectancy, potential or capacity levels exist and therefore flexibility and creativity ought to be applied when doing so.

4.5.2.1 Metaphoric comprehensibility

Research on metaphoric development and comprehensibility is fraught with contradictions and inconsistencies which makes it virtually impossible to make generalisations (Vosniadou *et al.*, 1984:1588; Siltanen, 1986:1; Gentner, 1988:47). While research directly investigating children's comprehension of metaphor tends to show that metaphor comprehension does not occur until early adolescence, there is other evidence that indicate that even pre-school children have some basic metaphoric competence (Vosniadou *et al.*, 1984:1588). Consequently there are studies indicating that it is not until 14 years of age that children can explain metaphors such as "the prison guard was a hard rock" which

implies that metaphorical ability develops slowly, and there are contrasting studies which reveal among other things a 2 year old boy remarking that a crescent moon is "bent like a banana" which would imply that toddlers' speech is full of creative metaphors (Gentner, 1988:47).

The reason for this paradox can largely be attributed to the fact that developmental work on metaphor comprehension often suffers from one or more of the following common problems (Vosniadou *et al.*, 1988:1389 and Gentner, 1988:47):

- 1 Failure to understand metaphors is sometimes the result of the type of background knowledge or the lack of it. For example, the failure to correctly interpret a metaphor like "the prison guard was a hard rock" might be the result of inadequate knowledge of prison guards or about the particular personality traits to which "hard" can be applied metaphorically.
- 2 Metaphorical utterances are often presented to children in the absence of any reasonable linguistic or nonlinguistic context. In real life children are not usually exposed to metaphors out of context. Lack of appropriate contexts can often lead to comprehension difficulties or errors even in an adult's comprehension of literal language, let alone in the child's understanding of metaphorical language.
- 3 Children's comprehension of metaphor is frequently measured in terms of the quality of paraphrase or explanation. Although the ability to paraphrase and explain metaphors is worth investigating, paraphrase and explanation may not be valid indices of metaphor comprehension. They require the ability to reflect on one's comprehension and therefore impose cognitive demands in addition to those required for comprehension alone.
- 4 Kinds of tasks used to assess metaphor comprehension differ. For example, children can demonstrate metaphoric ability earlier with enactment tasks (as for example moving pictures) than with verbal explanation tasks. This also highlights the difference between metaphor *comprehension* and metaphor *production* that is invariably overlooked. Young children succeed in producing metaphors but fail comprehension tests in this regard because in production they

choose only those metaphors they can master while in tests they encounter many examples they are unable to master.

Gentner (1988:48-49) argues that the metaphors young children are able to master (produce and comprehend) are "attributional" and the metaphors that can be mastered (produced and comprehended) by only teenagers and adults are "relational". This distinction between attributional and relational metaphors also explains why much research in this area has been so contradictory and inconsistent. Man's ability to comprehend *attributional* metaphors commences as early as the age of two while his ability to comprehend *relational* metaphors commences during his adolescent years. Attributional and relational metaphors are distinguished by Gentner (1988:48) in this way:

1 Attributional metaphors

An example of such a metaphor is "her arms were like twin swans" in which appearance matches are made. Common object attributes or qualities are conveyed such as "long", "thin" and "graceful" which can be applied to the woman's arms as a result of their also being descriptive of a swan.

2 Relational metaphors

An example of such a metaphor is "he's winding up the watch of his wit; by and by it will strike". In this metaphor the intended commonalities have nothing to do with the physical, outward and object attributes and qualities of the glass (a glass face, metal cogs, signal hands, and so on), but rather with a relational analogy, namely that of a person setting a mechanism that will later produce a spontaneous and noticeable effect.

It is important to recognise that metaphors can also be a combination of attributional and relational metaphors but this fact does not negate the hypothesis that young children are able to comprehend metaphors because they are attributional (for example "he has a pickle for a nose") and can only comprehend relational metaphors (for example "The sun wakes the seeds") during adolescent years. For the purpose of this study it is

important for the translator to realise that any type of metaphor can be understood by adolescents be it attributional, be it relational.

Gentner (1988:57-58) admits that there is no definite answer to what underlies this developmental shift from mastering attributional metaphors first and then later (during adolescent years) relational metaphors, but suggests the following three possibilities:

- 1 An increase in basic cognitive competence. Attributional metaphors can be understood at the concrete operational level and relational metaphors are mastered later as they require formal operational thinking of which second-order operations form a central part.
- 2 Children learn from adult pragmatic conventions what to map or relate. In other words, children learn that metaphors are about shared relations also (and not only shared physical features) as they grow up.
- 3 Children lack the knowledge of the necessary domains and the relations between them. This implies that domain-relational information is slower to be acquired than object-attribute information. Since this fact has not yet been verified it is difficult to unequivocally attribute this last aspect as explaining the relational shift in the development of metaphoric comprehensibility.

The final issue to be addressed is that of the developmental stages in metaphor comprehension. Siltanen (1986:3-5) identifies four stages in the development of metaphor comprehension.

1 Stage 1 (3-5 years)

These children are early preoperational, think concretely and focus on one dimension of objects. They understand word meanings that are concrete and their knowledge is restricted and limited. They may comprehend easy metaphors of a perceptual (attributional) nature presented within some context. They may, for example, understand the metaphor "hair is spaghetti" as a result of the fact that shape (that of "long stringy things") is highly salient to them.

2 Stage 2 (6-8 years)

These children are late preoperational, still think concretely but now focus on multiple dimensions of objects. They begin to acquire abstract senses of words and realise that words name categories, rather than specific objects and people. They may comprehend not only easy but also moderately difficult metaphors presented in some context. Children in stage 2 will for example interpret the "river is a snake" as both *brown* and *curvy* while stage 1 children may only identify it as *curvy*.

3 Stage 3 (9-11 years)

These children are concrete operational, can now think abstractly and continue to focus on multiple dimensions of objects. They can also follow objects through transitions. They now know the multiple senses of words and therefore have more elaborate meanings for words. They can now recognise and construct relational categories and can comprehend also moderately difficult metaphors presented in context. Although they may also be able to comprehend difficult metaphors their interpretations will be less elaborate than young adults in stage 4 and they cannot yet fully cope with relational metaphors.

4 Stage 4 (12 years and older)

These interpreters are formal operational, utilise second order operations and also possess symbolic categories (are able to use

symbols to represent other symbols). They can interpret any type of metaphor (attributional or relational and simple or complicated). Johnson and Pascual-Leone (1989:25) confirm the teenager's ability to fully cope with metaphors from the age of 11 to 12.

What is significant to note in this last stage is that there are quantitative differences as the result of elaborateness of word meanings. Vosniadou *et al.* (1984:1603) too, suggest that the complexity of linguistic input into a metaphor is an important variable that can influence metaphor comprehension. An empirical study done by Siltanen (1986:5-10) reveals that **late** stage 4 interpreters (19-31 years old) have more elaborate word meanings than **early** stage 4 interpreters (12-18 years old) which enable them to provide more elaborate interpretations across metaphor difficulty levels. This suggests that the issue of word meanings is probably the most important aspect that may thwart adolescents' endeavor to comprehend metaphors as successfully as adults. It implies that if any compensation needs to be made by a translator for adolescents in metaphor translation, then it is to be done in the area of terminology. Words which are optimally accessible for adolescents need to be used in the TT.

4.5.3 How informed is the adolescent reader?

Despite adolescents cognitive abilities to cope with metaphor and figurative language, they cannot be regarded as informed readers. When one closely examines Blacqui re's (1989:17-19) discussion of the reader's development from illiteracy to mature readership, one realises that perhaps only the exceptional adolescent may qualify as an informed reader. Yet, even such a possibility may be very rare and exceptional. Blacqui re's discussion is based on a study made by Chall (1983) who distinguishes these six phases in the development of an individual's reading ability:

1 Preparation: Birth to 6 years.

Children who grow up in a literate society acquire not only the ability to speak a language but also additional knowledge and skills such as turning pages, holding a book right side up and recognising letters.

2 Commencing to read: Age 6 to 7 years.

In this phase the child predominantly establishes the relationship between symbols and sounds. The child begins to learn to spell and an interesting characteristic of this phase is that the child does not stick too closely to the printed letters but rather focuses on meaning. The reason for this phenomenon is that the child invariably has to guess what is printed.

3 Affirming fluency: Age 7 to 8.

Apparently many individuals, even adults, are bogged down in this phase because mastering the skill to read fluently is sufficient for reading newspapers and books for leisure and thus many individuals are satisfied to remain at this level. The ability to recognise what is reasonably superfluous in the language and in the story is developed at this stage. The individual also learns to take clues from the context of the language and the story to fill gaps.

4 Reading to learn: Age 9 to 13.

The meaning or the contents of the reading matter becomes increasingly important. Whereas up to this stage the individual would have preferred listening to a description in order to learn, he now prefers to read up on the subject as a more effective way of learning.

5 Multiple points of view: Age 14 to 18.

This phase coincides with the type of tasks assigned to adolescents at high school. Pupils are given more than one source of information and they are expected to integrate this information and even reach their own conclusions. Those individuals who have mastered this ability fall within this fifth developmental stage in the reading process.

6 Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation: Age 18+.

Aptitude at this level is a vital prerequisite for advanced studies. Blacqui re (1989:19) feels that only a margin of the population of a literate society acquires this aptitude and reaches this phase. It is felt that this is the type of reader that can be regarded as the informed reader in Reception Theoretical terms. And if the individuals qualified for advanced studies are scarce in an adult community, it will obviously be even more so in an adolescent community. Consequently even for those adolescent readers in phase 5 with the prospect of becoming informed readers, there is the need to grow in their ability to read literature with critical appreciation (Pettit, 1973:24).

Finally, it is felt that Gardner (1991:38) touches upon a fundamental truth when he writes that "adolescent reading-interests are a complex, transient and often contradictory field of study". Yet the translator can, from a Reception Theoretical perspective, generally accept that adolescents (also those from a literate society as English and Afrikaans speaking adolescents in South Africa) are not informed readers. Conversely, although adolescents generally dislike reading they do have the cognitive ability to be able to reasonably comprehend and appreciate stylistic devices such as metaphor. Gardner (1991:36) confirms the suggestion that adolescents can be challenged on a stylistic level. He writes that "in terms of stylistic preferences within books, pupils tend with age to demand more subtlety from a writer ...". In translating the metaphors of **Song of Songs** the translator would probably have to make lenient concessions where appropriate, for the fact that adolescents as a reading community are not informed readers, but on the other hand he should also have them rise to the challenge of exploiting their cognitive abilities to the full when it comes to the understanding and appreciation of metaphor. In this regard Van der Westhuizen (1987:9) issues this warning to authors tempted to underestimate adolescents' appreciation of mature style:

Alhoewel 'n tiener nie in die eerste plek ge nteresseerd is in die taalgebruik nie maar in die storie, beteken dit nie die jeugverhaal in 'n stramme futlose taal aangebied kan word nie.

Steenberg (1983:44) too, pleads for a high standard in the translation of literature for adolescents, and warns that "niemand is to krities as 'n tiener nie".

Consequently I agree with Shavit (1981:177) when he writes that the stylistic norm of applying a high literary style, is common to both adult and children literatures. The reasons for applying this norm are different in each case, however, while in adult literature the norm is connected with the idea of literariness *per se*, it has a different value for children's literature. The reason for the high style in children's literature is connected with the didactic concept of the literature and the attempt to enrich the child's vocabulary. There is, consequently the need to present a challenging translation for the adolescent on the one hand, as well as the need to make adjustments to the level of the adolescent's comprehension and reading abilities on the other hand. In this way the translator can achieve the criteria for creating children's literature suggested by Hepker (1989:24-25) namely, creating a book (translation) that the adolescent both understands and enjoys. In view of the development of metaphoric comprehensibility discussed under 4.3.2.1 then, it is clear that the main difference between translated metaphors for adolescents and translated metaphors for adults, would be that concessions - or, to use Chernov's (1991:30) terminology - "pragmatic adaptations" will be made in the word meanings for an adolescent readership.