Some Stylistic Features of the German Translation of the Standard Works

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Some Stylistic Features of the German Translation
of the Standard Works

Marvin H. Folsom
Brigham Young University

The 1980 translation of the standard works into German differs markedly from earlier translations. In this paper, I will examine a few of the more prominent distinguishing syntactic features and their stylistic component. An examination of the reasons for such radical changes and some general guidelines for future translations will be given at the end.

I will be relying primarily on data from a (Wordcruncher) text file containing the following: 1) the 1980 German translation of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price, 2) the 1984 revision of the Luther translation of the bible (with apocrypha), 3) the 1981 Uniform Translation of the bible (with apocrypha) Einheitsübersetzung, and 4) the 1982 German "Good News" bible Die Bibel im heutigen Deutsch. I will also make occasional reference to the paraphrases of the Old Testament by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig (1955-1968) and the revidierte Elberfelder translation (1985).

1. Fronting

Because of its inflectional endings, word order in German is considerably freer than in English. Elements may be placed at the front of the sentence for emphasis (Duden, Grammatik der deutschen Gegenwartssprache p. 719). Example: Gelogen hat er. This emphatic feature is more common in dialect, and spoken and modern journalistic style.

The first example is from 2 Nephi where we have the corresponding passages in Isaiah for comparison. I have underlined the word fronted in both the German and the English.

2 Nephi 13:14: denn abgeweidet habt ihr den Weingarten und das, was ihr den Armen geraubt habt, in euren Häusern.

'for ye have eaten up the vineyard and the spoil of the poor in your houses'

Now let us look at the corresponding passages in Isaiah 3:14 in some other bibles:

Luther 84: ihr habt den Weinberg abgeweidet
EÜ: ihr, ihr habt den Weinberg geplündert
Elb Rev: ihr, ihr habt den Weinberg abgeweidet
BihD: ihr habt meinen Weinberg geplündert
JPSA: It is you who have ravaged the vineyard
Buber: abgeweidet habt ihr den Weinberg

The only ones with fronting of the past participle for emphasis are the German Book of Mormon and Buber. Three translations (EÜ, Elb Rev and JPSA) have emphasized the actor (you, ihr and not the verb (eaten up, abgeweidet, geplündert). The German Book of Mormon leans more heavily on the Hebrewizing paraphrases of Buber/Rosenzweig than it does on the linear order of the English original. Stylistically we must say that it is emphatic and Hebrewizing. Note also the use of Weingarten 'vineyard' in the
Book of Mormon for Weinberg in the other translations, likely chosen for a closer etymological correspondence to English vine = Wein, yard = garten.

2 Nephi 13:5: erdreisten wird sich der Knabe gegen den Alten und der Geringe gegen den Vornehmen. 'the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honorable'


In this example, EÜ, BihD, Luther 84 and Buber/Rosenzweig all have linear/left-to-right word order without fronting. Since this fronted word order appears neither in the English original, nor in other German bible translations, nor in earlier translations of the Book of Mormon, we are forced to conclude that it is a conscious decision on the part of the translator to employ this emphatic and Hebrewizing word order. (Note the choice of verb erdreisten is the same in the Book of Mormon and Buber.)

This emphatic fronting extends beyond the verb forms in the preceding examples (see also 2 Nephi 4:35, 8:3, 8:17, 13:10, 13:18, 18:17, 20:6; 23:17, 24:5 and many others, especially but be no means limited to the passages from Isaiah, which seem to imitate Buber/Rosenzweig). In the following example, the reciprocal pronoun is fronted:

Mos 26:31: Und einander sollt ihr euch eure Verfehlungen auch vergeben 'And ye shall also forgive one another your trespasses'

Earlier: Und auch ihr sollt einander eure Übertretungen vergeben

The German translation of the Book of Mormon employs fronting where it is not in the English original, nor in traditional German translations, nor in earlier translations of the Book of Mormon. In some instances, it shares fronting with Buber/Rosenzweig, which I believe to be the inspiration for this practice. These idiosyncratic innovations give an increased emphatic, Hebrewizing flavor to the text that is not justified on the basis of the original.

2. Extraposition (Ausklammerung)

Typically, German employs one or more parts of the predicate to mark the end of a sentence or clause and any element beyond that is outside the verbal frame, called extraposition or Ausklammerung. In the following example the underlined prepositional phrase is in extraposition.

Alma 31:15: daß du ein Geist sein wirst immerdar 'and that thou wilt be a spirit forever'

Except for the placement of the auxiliary verb wirst 'wilt' in the dependent clause, the order in German matches the English word for word. There are some 65 examples of immerdar 'forever' in the Book of Mormon, and 31 of them occur in extraposition. The word immerdar occurs 37 times in the Luther 84 translation but does not occur at all in either in the EÜ or the BihD. The frequent use of extraposed immerdar appears to be a stylistic preference used in imitation of the archaic, much freer "Luther" phrasing of the following type:

    daß ich König über Israel sein sollte immerdar. (1CHRONIK 28:4)
    so bleibst du wohnen immerdar. (LPSALM 37:27)

It is indeed an elegant archaic flourish at the end of a phrase but it is without justification in the English original. Of course, EÜ and Bihd have other, perfectly good, less archaic ways of expressing the meaning 'forever.' Both EÜ and BihD use für immer in Psalm 37.

Historically, the occurrence of extraposition in biblical German has decreased from the time of Luther to the present (see "Die Stellung des Verbs in der deutschen Bibelsprache von Luther bis heute," Zeitschrift für Linguistik 2 (1985):144-154). Consequently, extraposition in sacred texts conveys an archaic flavor.
It is very common in the German Book of Mormon, perhaps in part because of a desire to emulate English word order.

"the gates of hell"

The phrase "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them" in 3 Nephi 11:39 (and 8 additional times in the D&C) is rendered und die Pforten der Hölle werden nicht obsiegen gegen ihn (= den Felsen). It follows the English word exactly, even to the point of placing the prepositional phrase after the verb in extraposition. By examining this verse in Matthew 16:18, we can compare vocabulary and word order in current German bible translations.

Luther: und die Pforten der Hölle sollen sie nicht überwältigen
EU: und die Mächte der Unterwelt werden sie nicht überwältigen
BhD: Kein Feind wird sie vernichten können, nicht einmal der Tod

None of these translations uses the obsolescent obsiegen for 'prevail against' and all of them have the verb in last position without any extrapoosed elements. We might say that this formulation follows English much too slavishly. However, the average German reader will likely not know anything about the English original, but merely feel that it is archaic in both vocabulary and word order. The better course would have been to follow the verse in its traditional German form coming through the Greek New Testament instead of through a circuitous English filter of retranslation back into German. Earlier translations of the BM have the word order and vocabulary of Luther 84 with the exception that they have ihn in place of sie. If the current Book of Mormon had followed either the previously or the currently approved translation of the bible, it would not have used obsiegen nor extrapoosed the prepositional phrase. We must conclude that the choices were motivated from the English but for some other reason, perhaps to conform to the English or to introduce an archaic element.

"prosper in the land"

The new translation regularly (14 times) has wohl ergehen im Land with the extraposed phrase im Land. Earlier editions often have im Land wohlergehen. Whether or not it should be written together or apart seems to be unclear. The Einheitsübersetzung has them together in 3 Joh 1:2 (wohlergeht) but apart in 1 Makk 8:23 (wohl ergehen). The matter of word order is of greater concern here. The current translation chooses the phrase with extraposition, perhaps for its closeness to English as well as for its archaic word order. It is more understandable and less archaic in modern German without extraposition.

3. Encapsulation

Subordinate clauses (in square brackets in the example below) in German may either be incorporated within the main clause (A) or follow the main clause in extraposition (B):

A: Sie hat das Brot, [das sie in der Schublade gefunden hatte,] gegessen
B: Sie hat das Brot gegessen, [das sie in der Schublade gefunden hatte.]

The longer the subordinate element is, the more desirable it is to bring the elements of the main clause closer together and to move the long, subordinate element into extraposition (Duden, Grammatik der deutschen Gegenwartssprache p. 720). This avoids what is called nachklappen, which means something like 'come trailing along after' or 'be included almost as an afterthought.'

Historically, encapsulated subordinate clauses in biblical German have been steadily declining (see "Die Stellung des Verbs in der deutschen Bibelsprache von Luther bis heute," Zeitschrift für Linguistik 2 (1985):144-154). Their use is a hallmark of archaic, humanistic, bureaucratic, administrative style. English frequently places subordinate clauses within the main clause: He said/ that if he had time/ he'd do it or He said/ he'd do it/ if he had time.
Mos 8:11: es gibt niemanden im Land, der imstande ist, die Sprache oder die Gravierungen, [die auf den Platten sind,] zu übersetzen
'and there is no one in the land that is able to interpret the language or the engravings [that are on the plates]'

The order of the clauses in German does not follow the English ('that are on the plates' is last in English). There is nothing in German grammar that requires this word order. It could have been placed in linear order as in the 1924 translation (und es ist niemand im Lande, der in der Lage wäre, die Sprache oder die Gravierungen zu übersetzen, die auf den Platten stehen). We must conclude that this order was consciously chosen, that is the encapsulation is as a matter of stylistic choice, one which is archaic, administrative, yet somehow seems to have its supporters (see Reiners, Stilkunst, p. 109). This is a very prevalent feature of the 1980 translation as opposed to earlier ones.

Two of the most noticable examples appear in the sacramental prayers:

Moroni 4:3: und seine Gebote[, die er ihnen gegeben hat,] zu halten []

Moroni 5:2: damit sie dir[, o Gott, ewiger Vater,] bezeugen []

Based on some personal stylistic preference, it was felt necessary to introduce these encapsulations, even though they do not follow the order of English and are not at all necessary in German, and even though their introduction into such well known settings represents a sharp break with the traditional formulations.

Alma 16:3: hatten sie die Menschen, [die in der Stadt Ammoniha waren,] vernichtet


Alma 33:19: damit jeder, [der zu ihm aufblickte,] lebe.

The verbal elements vernichtet and befreien pull the verbal elements of the main clause too far apart. According to Reiners (Stilkunst, p. 96) a small word like lebe is too weak (zu schwach) to occupy this position at the end of the sentence. They need to be brought forward for the sake of better comprehension (Reiners, Stilfbibel, p. 34), where they can be "seen with the naked eye" (Mark Twain).


Sometimes this tendency toward encapsulation results in a pile up of verb forms at the end.

Alma 59: 4

... damit er auch die übrigen Besitzungen und Städte, die ihnen von den Lamaniten weggenommen worden waren, zurückgewinnen könne.

There are several possible reasons for choosing this incorporating (tiefgeschichtet) style. It may be that there was some effort to avoid the straightforward (flachgeschichtet) style of Luther. This doesn’t seem a satisfactory explanation when we see that some other elements of Luther’s style occur frequently (extraposition, archaic verb forms, phrases, vocabulary). Perhaps a straightforward style was felt to be too prosaic and that is might appropriately be somewhat more elevated. It is indeed more esoteric, belonging to humanistic literary style and also to administrative officialese. It is out of place in the Book of Mormon.
Alma 38:14: ja, anerkenne deine Unwürdigkeit vor Gott zu allen Zeiten. 'acknowledge your unworthiness before God at all times'

Given the tendency described above to use verbal elements for encapsulation, it is surprising to find an example of anerkennen without separation of the prefix. The handbooks accept this as correct but less common and used primarily in terse style (in prägnanter Ausdrucksweise, Duden, p. 425). Earlier translations use the verb bekennen which does not have to face this problem.

4. Early placement of the negative

The 1980 version of 1 Nephi 19:20 has denn ist nicht der Herr so barmherzig gewesen ... ? ('for had not the Lord been merciful'). The revision of 1985 recognized that this was not a rhetorical question but a condition and recast the sentence, but retained nicht before der Herr: wäre nicht der Herr so barmherzig gewesen. Again it is possible to construe this word order as a slavish following of the English (had not = ist nicht, wäre nicht). A better alternative also used in earlier translations would be to place the negative in the more normal position before the predicate adjective or generally closer to the verb (Duden, Grammatik der deutschen Gegenwarts-sprache p. 642): wäre mir der Herr nicht gnädig gewesen. The current translation chose archaic word order either to imitate the order of the English original and/or because it was felt that the previous translation did not accurately reflect the English. The result is an increase in the archaic component of the language.

damit nicht

Mos 2:27: damit ich schuldlos befunden werde und damit nicht euer Blut über mich komme, 'that I might be found blameless, and that your blood should not come upon me'

The earlier translation has the same construction except that the negative is placed later: damit ... euer Blut nicht über mich komme. This feature is more common in Luther than in either EÜ or Bhd and this fact indicates to me that it is archaic. German can use the archaic conjunction and the subjunctive to give the flavor of the English without burdening the reader with an archaic word order. The placement of the negative before euer Blut seems to imply a special negation which is not there in the English nor in earlier translations.

auf daß

Mos 1:2: Und er ließ sie in der gesamten Sprache seiner Väter unterweisen, auf daß sie dadurch Männer von Verständnis würden und damit sie von den durch ihre Väter ausgesprochenen Prophezeiungen wüßten, die ihnen durch die Hand des Herrn überliefert worden waren.

'And he caused that they should be taught in all the language of his fathers, that thereby they might become men of understanding; and that they might know concerning the prophecies which were spoken by they mouths of their fathers, which were delivered them by the hand of the Lord'

There are no examples of the conjunction auf daß with the subjunctive in the EÜ, the translation approved by the church, nor in Bhd. It occurs frequently in Luther 84 (68 times) and in the triple combination (33 times, 20 of them in the BM). It is archaic. Note also the variation in the rendering of that: once with auf daß and once with damit.

5. Unusual placement of the reflexive pronoun

Mos 15:27: denn er kann nicht sich selbst leugnen 'for he cannot deny himself'

It is not clear to me why it could not have been rendered er kann sich selbst nicht leugnen. An earlier translation has weil er sich nicht selbst verleugnen kann.
2 Nephi 8:3: Darin finden Freude sich und Frohsinn 'Joy and gladness shall be found therein'

None of the three current translations of the bible use this unusual word order Isa 51:3. In the German Book of Mormon, there is a tendency to draw the reflexive pronoun toward the verbal element at the end of the clause instead of placing it in the position immediately following the finite verb, where is more appropriately belongs (Reiners, Stilbibel, p. 120).

6. Late placement of the personal pronoun

Typically, pronouns precede nouns in German (see Duden, Grammatik der deutschen Gegenwarts-sprache p. 721).

Omni 1:7: Darum suchte der Herr sie mit großem Strafgericht heim
'Wherefore the Lord did visit them in great judgement'

The German appears to follow the order of the original very closely. Earlier translations have a more typical German word order, placing the smaller, unstressed personal pronoun before the larger, more important noun: Daher strafte sie der Herr mit großen Gerichten.

Alma 5:5: abermals befreite der Herr sie aus der Knechtschaft durch die Macht seines Wortes
'and again the Lord did deliver them out of bondage by the power of his word'

Earlier translations: abermals befreite sie der Herr durch die Macht seines Wortes aus der Knechtschaft

The present translation prefers the less usual, more archaic order.

7. Unnecessarily complex verbal phrases

1 Nephi 1:18: Nachdem mein Vater Lehi vom Herrn so viel Wunderbares gezeigt bekommen hatte
'after the Lord had shown so many marvelous things unto my father Lehi'

Earlier translation: daß mein Vater Lehi, nachdem ihm der Herr so viele wunderbare Dinge gezeigt hatte, ... unter das Volk ging

This phrase could have been translated with active as in English or the regular werden-passive (note earlier translation) which accurately reflect the relationships between the elements in English and avoids the awkward and still colloquial bekommen-passive. See below for a discussion of the avoidance of Dinge.

Alma 42:19

Wäre aber kein Gesetz gegeben gewesen.
'Now, if there was not law given'

Earlier: Wenn nun kein Gesetz wäre

These two past participles in this configuration constitute for me a virtually unforgivable sin of translation.

1 Nephi 19:4: wenn ich einmal nicht mehr sein würde
'after I was gone'
The German translation could be interpreted to mean that 'I would no longer exist' rather than 'I will no longer be upon the earth, be dead.' Earlier translations with nach meinem Tod for 'after I was gone' come closer to the original than the confusing and ambiguous 'when I will no longer be.' In addition, it has the awkward and inelegant phrase sein würde.

1 Nephi 10:3: Nachdem sie zerschlagen worden sein würden 'after they should be destroyed'

This monstrosity is completely unnecessary, it could simply have been rendered zerschlagen (worden) wären.

1 Nephi 11:7: Wenn du den Baum gesehen haben wirst 'after thou hast beheld the tree'
The use of the future perfect is not motivated from the English, nor is it otherwise necessary. Earlier translations have the present perfect (gesehen hast, betrachtet hat). The use of the future perfect is archaic and unnecessary in most cases, as can be seen from the following:

3 Nephi 28:2: nachdem ich zum Vater gegangen sein werde? 'after that I am gone ...'
3 Nephi 28:4: wenn ich zum Vater gegangen sein werde? 'when I am gone ...'

'that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these'

This verse from Matth 6:29 has counterparts in EÜ: war nicht gekleidet, BihD: war ... gekleidet. The traditional formulation in Luther is: gekleidet gewesen ist. Here again the 1980 translation follows a traditional archaic formulation, instead of that in the approved translation (EÜ).

1 Nephi 15:20: Und ich trug ihnen die Worte Jesajas vor, der von der Wiederherstellung der Juden, nämlich des Hauses Israel, geredet hatte und davon, daß sie nach ihrer Wieder-herstellung nicht mehr zuschanden werden würden; auch zerstreut würden sie nicht mehr werden.

'And I did rehearse unto them the words of Isaiah, who spake concerning the restoration of the Jews, or of the house of Israel; and after they were restored they should no more be confounded, neither should they be scattered again.'

This verse has the unusual construction of two phonetically very similar forms of werden, the infinitive and the subjunctive form. In the file of three current bibles, there was only one such combination (Luther 1 Könige 16:18). There are some 16 examples in the German Book of Mormon (and an additional 5 in the D&C and 2 in the PGP). These unusual phrases are not necessary. The phrase is the rendition of English should be + past participle which is the subjunctive of the passive. Since in German the auxiliary for the passive and the conditional are the same (werden), there is seldom any need to concatenate both forms, since the one morpheme is capable of filling both functions. Earlier translations eliminated one of the forms (zuschanden würde) or used a different auxiliary (sollten ... zu Schanden werden).

Alma 30:3: bis es erfüllt sein würde 'until it should be fulfilled'
   Earlier translation: bis es erfüllt sei
   RLDS translation: bis es erfüllt würde

In this example from Alma (but repeated many times throughout the Book of Mormon), the German follows the English phrase slavishly, even to the point of using the auxiliary sein for the passive when it is unclear whether sein or werden should be used. Both earlier translations avoid the more complex phrase, one by using sein and the other by using werden.
In some instances, it seems that this has been recognized, for example in Alma 58:9, where *werden* is used only once where there is no English model to imitate: so daß wir zerschlagen und völlig vernichtet *würden* 'to our overthrow and utter destruction'.

The same problem exists in the indicative where the auxiliary for the future and the auxiliary for the passive are the same in German (*werden*). If one follows the English closely, then one feels the need for both auxiliaries. The Book of Mormon has 25 examples in dependent word order with the two verb forms at the end: *(zerstört) werden wird*. There are also 83 others where the two auxiliaries are separated: *wird ... (zerstört) werden*. German can get along quite well with a single auxiliary performing both functions *(zerstört wird 'shall/will be destroyed')* without compromising the meaning.

8. extended adjective constructions

In German, a verbal adjective and its modifiers may be placed in front of the noun they modify (called as extended adjective construction) as well as after (either a relative clause or a participial construction): *die in diesem Haus wohnende Familie* literally 'the living in this house family' or *die Familie, die in diesem Haus wohnt* 'the family that lives in this house/the family living in this house'. Such constructions are most common in written, scientific, administrative German and are not considered part of elegant style. Most grammarians and stylists prefer the use of the relative clause. Reiners (Stilfibel, p. 36) recommends not using these Klemmkonstruktionen.

Alma 56:7: *das von ihnen getane Gelübde zu brechen* 'to break the covenant which they had made'

Earlier translations have a relative clause which corresponds to the English and which allows the reader to proceed from left to right without any "left-branching": *den Bund zu brechen, den sie gemacht hatten*. This is the only example in the Book of Mormon, but for some unknown reason there are six others with *gegeben* and *gewesen* in the D&C.

D&C 8:11 A: *aus allen diesen alten, verborgen gewesenen Aufzeichnungen empfangen mögest, die heilig sind* 'from all those ancient records which have been hid up, which are sacred'

B: *aus allen jenen alten heiligen Berichten erlangen zu können, die verborgen wurden* (18th ed)

C: *von allen jenen alten alten Urkunden, die verborgen wurden und die heilig sind, erlangen mögest* (8th ed)

Example A preposed the more complex of the two following relative clauses, example B preposed the simple one and example C placed both clauses after the noun as in English. BM80 is the least like the original and the most complicated stylistically.

9. 'thing(s)'

Und vieles mehr schrieb König Mosiah ihnen, (MOSIA 29:33) 'and many more things did King Mosiah write unto them'

This verse follows the fronting of the English original and also delays the pronoun, possibly to follow English word order more closely.

Let us look at the frequencies of the ubiquitous word *thing(s)* in some of the scriptural texts:
In both the King James version of the bible and the Book of Mormon, these words are very common. German bible translations have somewhere between 8% and 14% as many examples. Particularly noteworthy is the use of the plural in the "Good News" translation (160 times). This can be interpreted as evidence that the word Dinge(n) is part of modern biblical German. Even more striking is the almost complete absence of Dinge(n) in the German translation of the Book of Mormon. It has only slightly more than 1% of the plural forms in the original English text of the Book of Mormon. The singular from does not appear at all in German (English has 545 examples).

In order to give an idea of the avoidance strategy, let us examine the examples from the first chapter of 1 Nephi:

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If we argue that the expressions without the word Dinge(n) are more "German" without the word Dinge, we seem to be ignoring the fact that it occurs rather frequently in modern biblical German (160 examples in BihDl). Neither can it be argued that the absence of Dinge follows the English original (hundreds of examples). Earlier editions of the Book of Mormon did not concordantly translate every instance (the three examples in verses 16 and 18 show alternatives for Dingen). It appears to be an idiosyncratic stylistic preference of the translator to systematically eliminate Dinge from the German text. However, the practice of avoiding Dinge(n) flies in the face of the stated principle of following the style of the original English: "I have neither the right nor the license to change the style of the translator (Jospeh Smith)" (in the announcement at the publication of the new translation). This stylistic preference becomes all the more unusual when we see how frequent it is in current biblical German. Its avoidance cannot really be ascribed to "better German" since it is without foundation either in the original or in modern German biblical tradition.
10. Compounds with Herzens-

<table>
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<td>*-wunsch</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals 14/62 3/10 6/8 6/10

Grand Total

* unique to German Book of Mormon

# in Duden, Universalwörterbuch

& only in the revised Elberfelder translation of the New Testament

The German Book of Mormon has as many different compounds with Herzens- as the three other bibles together and twice as many occurrences altogether. The only one of all the 29 compounds used in the Book of Mormon that is found in any of the three bibles is the word Herzenswunsch which occurs once in EÜ and once in BihD. The Duden, Universalwörterbuch has the following 10 compounds not shown in the table: -angelegenheit, -bedürfnis (geh.), -brecher, -bruder (veraltet), -ergießung (geh., veraltend), -freund (veraltend), -kind, -sache, -trost (geh.), -wärme (geh.). Duden, Das große Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache has an additional 10 compounds with Herzens- which have since been deleted from the revised one volume edition of the Universalwörterbuch: -band (geh.), -dieb (veraltend, scherzh.), -ergüß (geh. veraltend), -freundin, -junge (Kosewort), -kind (Kosewort), -neigung (geh.), -not (geh.), -qual (geh.), -verhärtung (geh.).
From the data, one would have to assume that the greater the use of compounds with Herzens-, the more archaic the language or the inverse, the more archaic the language the more such compounds will be used or the closer the compound will be to the Hebrewizing formulation. The German Book of Mormon has a penchant for compounds with Herzens- that occur nowhere else. This is just another pervasive innovative practice that gives an archaic flavor.

If we look at some translations of Psalm 112:7 we get an idea of the diversity in the translations for this type of word.

1. Phrase using the same elements and order as the Hebrew

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>German Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neue-Welt</td>
<td>in Geradheit des Herzens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elb</td>
<td>in Aufrichtigkeit des Herzens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buber (Ex 35:35)</td>
<td>mit Weisheit des Herzens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KJ</td>
<td>with uprightness of heart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Compound of the two nominal elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>German Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buber</td>
<td>in Herzensgroßsucht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of Mormon</td>
<td>in Herzensaufrichtigkeit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riessler-Storr</td>
<td>vom Herzensgrunde</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Adverbial genitive composed of an adjective and a noun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Menge aufrichtigen Herzens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Prepositional phrase with adjective and noun

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>German Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elb Rev (8 others)</td>
<td>mit/aus aufrichtigem/lauterem/reinem Herzen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIV</td>
<td>with an upright heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPSA</td>
<td>with a sincere heart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Simple adjective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aufrichtig/hartherzig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The list is in descending order: the more literal, more archaic constructions are at the beginning. The more modern ones are toward the end. The more archaic and obsolete the translation, the more the tendency is to use Types 1 and 2. The more modern the translation, the more Types 4 and 5 are used. The Elberfelder translation changed the phrase in this psalm from Type 1 in the older edition (in Aufrichtigkeit des Herzens) to Type 4 in the recent revision (mit aufrichtigem Herzen). Interestingly enough, the Hebrewizing paraphrases of Buber have a ratio of phrases (Type 1) to compounds (Type 2) of about 1:1. The translator of the BM seems to have made a conscious decision to use compounds and has created words that are neither in the German biblical tradition nor in general use in German. If English had been used as the model, Type 1 would have been the model.

The phrase 'the pure in heart' is usually rendered with the prepositional phrase die im Herzen rein sind in all biblical translations known to me. In two verses of the D&C (122:3 and 123:11) the phrase is fused into the compound adjectival noun die Herzensreinen. The tendency to compound was apparently so strong that is has overriding the necessity to use biblical phraseology for established concepts. One is forced to ask why. There are at least the following possibilities: 1) the traditional formulation was forgotten, 2) these two constructions had some additional semantic component that was better expressed in a slightly different way but not noted in previous translations, 3) since they were "remote," that is not is well known verses, they provided an opportunity to launch as a trial balloon.
11. Other compound nouns

In addition to the compounds with Herzens-, there are other compounds that occur (unless otherwise noted) exclusively in the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, that is they do not appear in any of the three current German bibles.

Christusgegner 'antichrist'
Christusliebe 'love of Christ' Moroni 7:47
Evangeliumsausschüttung 'dispensation of the Gospel'
Evangeliumsgrundsätze 'principles of the Gospel'
Fruchtgefühl 'fruitful field'
Glücklichsein 'happiness'
Gottesanbetung 'worship'
Gottesglaube 'faith of God'
Gottesreich 'kingdom of God'
Gottesstrafen 'punishments of God'
Handeauflegen 'laying on of hands'
Hoher Priester 'High Priest' unique spelling, standard German Hoherpriester
Höllenpein 'pains of hell'
Nächstenliebe 'charity'
Plüddermantel 'stomacher' 2 Ne 13:24 = Buber Isaiah 3:24
Richterspruch 'judgement'
Ruhmesliebe 'love of glory' Alma 60:32 RLDS Ruhmbegierde
Sackleinenumgurtung 'girding of sackcloth' 2 Ne 13:23 = Buber Isaiah 3:24
Schmerzensdüsternis 'dimness of anguish' 2 Ne 18:22 = Buber Isaiah 8:22
Schuldnersprüche 'condemnation' 10x (2x G)
Sündenvergebung 'forgiveness/remission of sins' 19x in triple
Übelteil 'iniquity'
Wahrworte 'oracles' (D&C only)

An examination of Fruchtgefühl 'fruitful field' will pinpoint the problem of whether to give precedence to the English text in the Book of Mormon based on the King James version or to German biblical tradition as evidenced by the parallel passages in Isaiah. BMOO makes a compound by using the noun Frucht for 'fruitful' plus a poetic word Gefühl related to 'field'. None of the three bibles uses the alliterative, innovative compound Fruchtgefühl in Isaiah 11, 29). Luther 84 has fruchterbares Land, EÜ has Garten and Bihd has Obstgarten. Buber has Garten as well.

In addition to a preference for compound words over prepositional phrases, there is also a distinct preference for words ending in -nis, which as noted do not occur in the three current bibles.

Beschwernis 4x, Besorgnis 9x, Bitternis 5x, Düsternis 2x, Verderbnis 1x, Vorkommnis 1x.

On the surface, the choice of nouns ending in -nis appears to be an imitation of the type of compound common in Buber/Rosenzweig, who consciously chose words that were not tainted with a sacred aura of the Luther tradition.

12. Present Participles - imitation of the English construction

2 Nephi 2:18 sondern werdet wie Gott sein, Gut und Böse erkennend.
"knowing good and evil"
Buber Gen 3:5: erkennend Gut und Böse

This construction condemned by Reiners (Stilkunst, p. 131, "keine losgelöste Mittelwortfügungen") seems
to be borrowed from Buber. Additional examples: wägend (2 Nephi 24:16), wissend (Alma 11:43), verlassend (Moroni 6:4).

13. Word order after und

3 Ne 3:6: ... denn sonst werden sie euch mit dem Schwert heimsuchen und wird Vernichtung über euch kommen.

This single example of “faulty inversion” is archaic and belongs primarily to Amtssprache and Kaufmannssprache. This word order is non-standard or is used in imitation of archaic word order, neither of which is appropriate in the Book of Mormon. It should be und Vernichtung wird.

14. Regional word order

JS-GESCHICHTE 1:28: ich war ja noch so jung und wurde von denjenigen verfolgt, die eigentlich meine Freunde sein und mich wohlwollend behandeln hätten sollen

The order in the German translation occurs most frequently in the South. Standard word order has the "double" infinitive last: wohlwollend hätten behandeln sollen.

15. "And it came to pass that" = Und es begab sich: C-

Early German translations of the Book of Mormon rendered this very frequent formula very literally with a subordinating conjunction and a dependent clause: Und es geschah, daß ... Because the verb in a dependent clause comes at the end, it produced dozens and dozens of subordinate clauses and an involved, convoluted, dependent style. A later solution found in many translations was to leave out this troublesome formula and replace it with some symbol, usually brackets [ ] to show that it had been left out. This practice not only substantially reduced the involved, dependent style of the German translation but also saved space and money, in the German as well as many other foreign language translations. The current translation of the the Book of Mormon has introduced an elegant solution to the syntactical problem. It simply uses a colon at the end of the formula and then begins anew thereafter. Und es begab sich: Als er las, ...

16. nämlich = "(spake unto me,) saying"

Up to the current translation, this very common formula (English has 233 examples of saying) was rendered in the "Luthern" manner, with a finite verb form (und sprach): Und ich redete mit mir und sprach: The current solution is not as literal but solves the awkward problem of what to do with saying: Und es begab sich: Er sprach zu mir, nämlich. Though it eliminates the involved, dependent style of previous translations, it presents us with dozens of examples of the bookish, stilted nämlich (Reiners, Stilkunst, p. 133).

17. Misplaced modifier

Mosiah 2:17: that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.

1980 BM: Wenn ihr euren Mitmenschen dient, allein dann dient ihr eurem Gott.

Earlier: daß ihr nur im Dienste eures Gottes seid, wenn ihr im Dienste eurer Mitmenschen steht.

The faulty interpretation of English only has lead to a distortion of a very important theological difference: it now says that the only way to serve God is by serving your fellow men. Good theology but poor translation.
The following summary indicates the stylistic flavor of the items discussed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syntactic Feature</th>
<th>Stylistic Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. frequent fronting</td>
<td>dialect, spoken, journalistic, Hebrewizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. frequent extraposition</td>
<td>archaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. frequent encapsulation</td>
<td>archaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. early placement of nicht</td>
<td>archaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nicht, auf daß</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. placement of reflexive</td>
<td>unusual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. late placement of pronouns</td>
<td>unusual, archaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. many complex verbal phrases</td>
<td>involved, convoluted style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. extended adj. constructions</td>
<td>scientific, administrative style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. 'things' (replaced)</td>
<td>more &quot;German&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. compounds with Herzens-</td>
<td>archaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compounds in -nis</td>
<td>modern, bureaucratic style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. compounds (Sündenvergebung)</td>
<td>unusual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compounds in -nis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. present participles</td>
<td>archaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. inversion after und</td>
<td>archaic, non-standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. regional word order</td>
<td>non-standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Und es begab sich: (colon)</td>
<td>straightforward, less subordinate style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. 'saying' nämlich</td>
<td>stilted, more administrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. subj. forms ( erhöbe, etc)</td>
<td>archaic, stilted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. misplaced modifier</td>
<td>incorrect translation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This discussion has shown that, compared to previous translations, the 1980 German translation of the standard words shows an increase in archaic, elevated, administrative, bureaucratic and unnecessarily involved structures. An examination of the vocabulary has also shown many innovations not found in earlier translations, nor in modern bible translations, for instance: die Andern 'gentiles', ungeachtet 'notwithstanding', mitsammen 'together', greueltreich 'abominable', Abkömmling 'descendant'. The spelling of proper names also has some non-traditional, non-biblical spellings (Sseezrom, Ischmael, all names in -ihach, Zemnarihach, etc). These innovations in the areas of syntax, vocabulary and spelling of proper names have strange, elevated, regional and archaic overtones. Was there an attempt to create a new biblical language that would be a model for years to come?

We are then left with the following important questions, that should be addressed by the translation committee: 1) What should the level of language be in translations of the standard works? 2) How closely should a translation follow the English original? 3) Should it match in style and vocabulary the language of the bible translation approved for a given language? 3) Should it look beyond the English original and the approved translation for models? 4) Should a completely new term be created in a language that has a long, successful biblical tradition?

In my opinion, the 1980 translation of the standard works into German followed the English too closely, not taking into consideration the fact that it too goes back to Greek and Hebrew originals which have a longstanding and distinct tradition in German (or many other modern languages). The result is that spellings, words and constructions were used that are strange in German because they are modeled after the English instead of the German biblical tradition. In a similar fashion, the English original was followed instead of the formulation in the translation approved for German (Einheitsübersetzung). The 1980 translation also looked to the Hebrewizing paraphrases (Buber/ Rosenzweig) for models of fronting and vocabulary selection. In one matter of vocabulary, the 1980 translation introduced an interpretative rendition of the English, not found in any dictionary or German bible translation known to me (die Andern 'gentiles'). The guidelines for translators should include not only some broad outlines but also some specific prohibitions, especially with regard to the spelling of proper names, the use of innovative vocabulary and the use of a more archaic level of language than either the English or the approved translation.