



The AGNT Project Report—Q1 2009

As a licensee or friend of AGNT or ANLEX, we would like to update you once a quarter about our continuing work to enhance and perfect these databases and about our plans for the future.



The Project. The Analytical Greek New Testament Project is now in its thirty-third year. Its purpose is to provide aids to translators, students, and scholars of the Greek New Testament.

The initial product was the *Analytical Greek New Testament* (AGNT), which was published by Baker Book House in 1981 and now offered by [Trafford Publishing](#). The second product was the *Analytical Concordance of the Greek New Testament*, published in two volumes (lexical focus; grammatical focus) by Baker Book House in 1991. These two volumes are out of print and are not to be reprinted. Due to advances in computing between 1980 and 1990—to say nothing of those through the present time, there was no need to represent electronically the exact form of the concordances, since their content and more were available through user-initiated interactive searches in the Greek text enabled through several good software packages. The third output of the project was the *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (ANLEX), published in 2000 by Baker Book House and reissued by [Trafford](#) in 2005.

The AGNT Project Report—Q3 2008 introduced the team, outlined ongoing tasks, and discussed potential tasks.



Meaning and Transformation. In this issue, Jan Hoogland, MSc, presents a synopsis of determining GNT word meaning by means of transformation.

We are pleased to present an overview of the "Transformational Greek New Testament" (TGNT), the fruit of Jan Hoogland's many years of careful work. In the not-too-distant future, we hope to make this database available to our vendors as an AGNT-component upgrade. Why pair TGNT with AGNT? First, because, according to Hoogland's definition of transformation, AGNT tagging is itself a transformational statement. Second, because Hoogland chose to make AGNT an integral part of TGNT. Third, because it fits our overall focus of providing meaningful New Testament Greek helps to students, pastors, translators, and scholars.

We expect the appearance of TGNT may cause some controversy, just as AGNT did more than twenty-five years ago. Our evaluation process for TGNT has taken five years. Just as AGNT has changed over the years, so we expect TGNT also to change over time. We expect some of Hoogland's generalizations (e.g., that intrinsic meanings in the GNT lexicon are invariably monosemic) to be modified, but even should "invariable" be relaxed to 97.3%, we still would be impressed.

The concepts behind intrinsic meaning and other technical terms Hoogland uses seem to have respectable backing in linguistics. Whatever the theoretical criticisms, the practicality of his approach seems impressive. Finally, even as AGNT itself is nothing more than a dedicated tool for getting into the riches of God's Word, so TGNT looks likely to become a familiar instrument in the toolbox of students of the Greek New Testament.

The Determination of GNT Word Meaning by Means of Transformation

Translation is in principle an inaccurate way to represent the text of the GNT. This is due to a lack of one-to-one correspondence of word meaning between Greek and English, to the considerable difference between the two grammars, and to human shortcomings. Learning Greek is a major hardship because the language is no longer spoken, its study usually is undertaken at an age at which effortless natural language acquisition has radically diminished, and the approach to representing word meaning and grammar is based on English.

Another approach to access the GNT is thus desirable, one that bypasses translation and current learning methods. The current situation obscures the fact that Greek is actually an uncomplicated and precise language of great clarity. The only way to accurately access the GNT is to read it as Greek, that is, to process the text via a Greek channel to the mind. Fortunately, this approach is far less difficult than translation. Transformation is the approach to make reading the GNT as Greek possible.

Essential to the concept of transformation is recognizing that the *local meaning* of a word in context consists of two parts: an *intrinsic meaning*, which is the meaning of the word understood apart from context, and a *contributed meaning*, which is determined by the context. The local meaning amounts to the *use* of a word, while the aggregate of the various local meanings of a given word is called its *usage*. *The Merriam Webster's Dictionary* suggests that the word *run* has thirty different meanings, including *I run a business* and *I run late*. All thirty meanings, however, have in common the idea of *moving at some elevated pace*, which amounts to the single intrinsic meaning of *run*. In all cases, local meanings are modifications of the intrinsic meaning as effected by the context and amount to the usage of *run*. The intrinsic meaning of a word is the single and current meaning that all uses have in common, understood apart from the context, and restricted in time and linguistic domain. It is independent of "original meaning," "root meaning," and etymology.

In order to obtain the local meaning of a word in context, the mind only needs prior knowledge of the intrinsic meaning of that word and then it can subsequently determine the local meaning by combining its intrinsic meaning with the contributed meaning as supplied by the context. The mind would be altogether overwhelmed if instead it needed to find the intended meaning of an entire sentence in which each word had a sizeable number of different meanings. Note that the intrinsic meaning of a word cannot be determined from the context, as in *I xxx a business* (sell, own, start?) or *I xxx late* (come, sleep, read?). The local meaning becomes clear only if the intrinsic meaning is known.

The situation becomes complicated and misleading when translation is involved. *Κατά*, for example, has been translated in the KJV in thirty-four (often wildly different) ways, including *among*, *against*, *toward*, *apart*, *before*, *after*, *into*, *from*, *upon*, and *every*.

These translations are by no means meanings or even uses of *κατά*. Like *run*, *κατά* has only one single intrinsic meaning, like any word in the GNT. The translation problem is caused by the vast difference in the uses of *κατά* and its English equivalents. The intrinsic meaning of *κατά*, not to be confused with translation, can be determined by inspection of the listing of *κατά* in the *New Englishman's Greek Concordance*. *Down*, and only *down*, fits all occurrences and is thus the English equivalent of *κατά*. The reason that *κατά* means *down* exactly is that we share this concept with the Greeks.

Many occurrences of *κατά* require some effort to see that each of them means *down*, but that is the way the Greeks used it. Processing Greek via the Greek channel to the mind involves experiencing a use of *κατά* as a modification of its single intrinsic meaning. Once the meaning of *κατά* becomes as clear and simple as the meaning of *down* is to the English mind, we start to see that the translations of *κατά* are frequently not very accurate and sometimes just wrong. Notwithstanding, particular translations can in general not be improved on. The translation problem is in large part caused by the difference in usage of words. Reading Greek accurately includes the adoption of the single intrinsic meaning of a word combined with its Greek use. Although the situation with *κατά* is extreme, mismatches of intrinsic meanings are frequent. The Greek verb *run* (*τρέχω*) is translated in as many as twelve different ways, while the English word *run* is used to translate ten different Greek words—a nightmarish situation.

Transformation is a process that changes the form of a word without changing its meaning. Strong's number 2596, for example, is a transformation of *κατά*. *VIPA--2S* is a transformation of the inflection of *λύεις*. Both sides represent the same meaning, in all respects, by definition. A Strong's number is of limited help, but the tag system allows us instant and accurate access to the complicated world of Greek inflections, saving us an enormous amount of time in learning and maintenance, without any compromise. In order to remind the reader of the intrinsic meaning of a Greek word, we may construct an English-type word as its transform. Because biblical Greek words are monosemic, each transform has to be unique. Noncompound Greek words can usually be transformed into standard English words because we share nearly all basic concepts with the Greeks. Thus *down* has been defined as the transform of *κατά* because the English word *down* and *κατά* have the same intrinsic meaning, the transform *down* still being a "Greek" word identical to *κατά* in all respects and not a translation of any kind.

It is not difficult to find appropriate transformations for each Greek word because the concordance lists an abundance of uses from which the intrinsic meaning may be determined. The meaning of *λόγος* is, of course, burned into our thinking as *word*. The determination of its transform, however, results in *say*, which is the product of the verb action *say*, catching a dozen derivatives at the same time and providing an illuminating view of the usage of *say*.

The transformation of a compound word is more complex because we need to maintain the one-to-one relationship between the parts and their transforms. Also, many Greek compound words differ in construction from English words. This often requires the formation of English-type words that may not exist in English but that are nevertheless sufficiently transparent to accurately show the intrinsic meaning of the corresponding Greek word. Thus, *save.mind.ize.ment*, from *σω.φρον.ισ.μός*, may be somewhat perplexing at first sight but the intrinsic meaning as the state (*μας*) of subjection (*ις*) of the mind (*φρον*) to safety (*σω*) is not difficult to grasp. Because English does not have an

equivalent word for it, translations and word studies continue to struggle with it while the meaning is quite transparent when it is read as Greek.

Intrinsic meanings and their contributed meanings resulting in local meanings for lexical items may also be applied analogously to grammatical devices. This is written up elsewhere for the TGNT, but is not fitting in this terse introduction.

Transformation is based on three observations: 1. the local meaning of a word in context consists of an intrinsic meaning and a meaning contributed by the context; 2. the intrinsic meaning of a word is monosemic; 3. many concepts are shared between Greek and English. These observations hold up exceedingly well in practice. Despite its simple approach, transformation accurately accounts for the meaning of nearly all Greek words. Transformation does not replace translation, which remains the most important way to access the GNT. What transformation does do is to clearly show what is lacking in word meaning even in the best possible translations. It also corrects a significant number of sometimes serious translation errors. Transformation provides a solid basis for the accurate understanding of biblical Greek words for all interested persons.

Sample Page of the Transform Lexicon

δίψυχος	diyucos	two.soul.ly	adj
διωγμός	diwgmōs	pursue.ment	nn
διωκτής	diwkths	pursue.er	nn
διώκω	diwkw	pursue	vb
δόγμα	dogma	think.ment	nn
δογματίζω	dogmatizw	think.ment.ize	vb
δοκέω	dokew	think	vb
δοκιμάζω	dokimazw	test.be	vb
δοκιμασία	dokimasia	test.ship	nn
δοκιμή	dokimh	test	nn
δοκίμιον	dokimion	test.thing	nn
δόκιμος	dokimos	test.ed	adj
δοκός	dokos	beam	nn
δόλιος	dolios	fake.ian	adj
δολιόω	doliow	fake.cause	vb
δόλος	dolos	fake	nn
δολόω	dolow	fake.cause	vb

Each of the about 1600 transforms uniquely represents the intrinsic meaning of the corresponding Greek component. Here is an example from John 1:1.

Ἐν	ἀρχῇ	ἦν	ὁ	λόγος,	καὶ	ὁ	λόγος	ἦν
PD	N-DF-S	VIIA--3S	DNMS	N-NM-S	CC	DNMS	N-NM-S	VIIA--3S
ἐν	ἀρχή	εἰμί	ὁ	λόγος	καί	ὁ	λόγος	εἰμί
in	prime	be	the	say	and	the	say	be
πρὸς	τὸν	θεόν,	καὶ	θεὸς	ἦν	ὁ	λόγος.	
PA	DAMS	N-AM-S	CC	N-NM-S	VIIA--3S	DNMS	N-NM-S	
πρὸς	ὁ	θεός	καὶ	θεός	εἰμί	ὁ	λόγος	
toward	the	god	and	god	be	the	say	

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As always, we remain open to developing AGNT and ANLEX in ways that are most useful to the needs of students and readers of God's Word.

Thank you for your continued support of *The AGNT Project*, for faithfully marketing the AGNT and ANLEX databases, and for making these state-of-the-art tools for studying the Greek New Testament available to students, scholars, pastors, and laypeople worldwide.

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