

# THE ISSUE OF METHODOLOGY



No researcher operates without methods and theories (De Villiers 1991:146). Although each reading method represents a specific scientific discipline, it must comply with certain criteria (Smit 1988:441). In this chapter I would like to respond to these statements by Smit and De Villiers by answering two questions. Firstly: how do I understand hermeneutics in relation to my methodological approach? Secondly: Where, in the whole hermeneutical development and debate, does my methodological approach fit in? My objective with this methodological discussion is neither to make any independent contribution to the hermeneutical debate, nor to treat all the issues in detail or even to refer to all the issues, but merely to state my position and to explain my hermeneutical understanding.

## **1 The hermeneutical approach**<sup>1</sup>

### **1.1 Current issues in the hermeneutical debate**

It is not the objective of this study to explore the history of hermeneutics<sup>2</sup> but since there are new trends of development it will be relevant to provide a brief summary in order to state my position. During the latter half of this century the field of research has become so vast and has branched out in so many different areas of specialization that it has become virtually impossible for the individual exegete to cover or evaluate the entire terrain.

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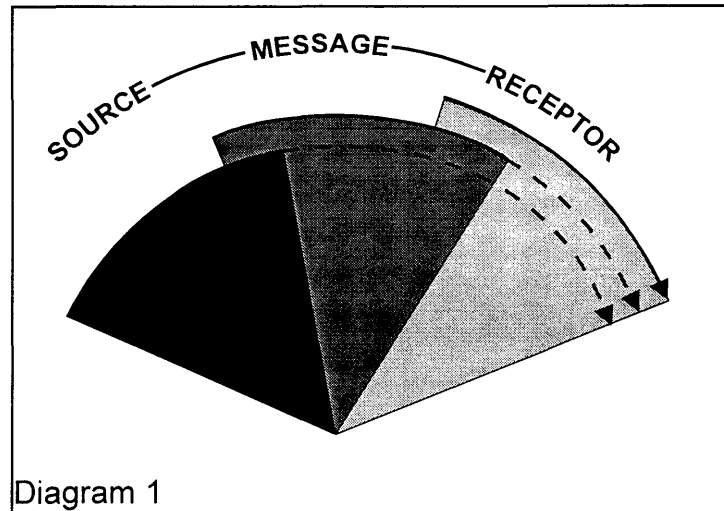
<sup>1</sup> Traditionally hermeneutics entailed the formulation of rules by which exegesis is carried out (Roberts 1979:58; Thiselton 1980:11; cf Tate 1991:xv). The exegete was urged to recognize that the text he is studying was conditioned by a given historical context. Therefore he started to examine the text, its grammar, vocabulary and style to understand the intention of the author (Thiselton 1980:11). Roberts (1979:58) defines it as the 'theory of scriptural exposition'.

But hermeneutics has undergone a fundamental change in meaning (Robinson 1964:21) since the days of Schleiermacher, Dilthey and Heidegger (Ricoeur 1975:268ff; Roussouw 1980:17ff; Latégan 1984:2; Nethersole 1992:159ff). It has undergone a definite expansion and revision of its traditional meaning (Thiselton 1980:10). A new trend has developed which guided this science along new lines and the whole of theology has been drawn into the sphere of hermeneutics. Ricoeur correctly states that hermeneutics assumes the responsibility to move beyond the scientific explication of the text's language to the search for the ultimate truth that is incarnate in the language of the text. Ricoeur (1980:15ff) moved from '*in* the language of the text' to '*through* the language of the text'. According to him this is the most important task of hermeneutics to search ultimate reality *through* the language of the text. Ferguson (1986:6) sees hermeneutics simply as the task of 'hearing what an ancient text has to say'. Virkler (1981:16) defines the technical meaning of hermeneutics as 'the science and art of biblical interpretation'. Roberts (1979:58) in his more elaborated definition says 'Hermeneutics is the discipline that seeks for methods whereby a writing will be so understood that the reader will have transmitted to him what the author intended to convey to the original circle of readers'.

The common ground shared by these definitions indicates that hermeneutics struggles with the problem of understanding, in other words it struggles with questions concerning the whole process of interpretation. Its findings must bear fruit and be reformulated in terms of the procedures an exegete must adopt in order to ensure that the communication that the author had in mind reaches him in such a way that he will understand the message (Roberts 1979:48). The question now is: What process should be followed to come to such an understanding? Where exactly is this meaning to be found? How can it be actualized? What are the mechanisms to be applied to understand the text? The point of view spelled out in this methodological approach is merely an endeavour to come to a meaningful solution to the above problems (cf Van Tilborg 1989:19; Tate 1991:xx). Also see Thiselton (1992) for an advanced textbook on hermeneutics. According to Thiselton (1992:1) it includes a description and critical evaluation of all the major theoretical models and approaches which characterize current hermeneutical theory.'

<sup>2</sup> For a review of the history of theological hermeneutics see Mickelsen (1963:20ff); Frör (1967); Kümmler (1970); Ernst (1970); Stuhlmacher (1975); Brüge (1979:21-59); Latégan (1982); Grant (1984); Longman (1987:13-46); Tate (1991); Jeanrond (1991:12-76) and Thiselton (1980 and 1992:142ff).

Lategan (1984:1ff) tries to find direction in the numerous currents and cross-currents in the field of theological hermeneutics to get an indication in which direction things are moving. In this exploration of the history and development of hermeneutics I will use and adapt the model of Lategan (1984:3) as indicated in diagram 1 below.



In an essay on hermeneutics Roussouw (1980:17-55) traces the beginnings of theological problems back to a specific *Sitz im Leben* -- that of an 'ineffective communication event'.<sup>3</sup> Four years later Lategan capitulates on Roussouw's proposal of 'an ineffective communication event'. He uses the verbal communication model to discuss the major shifts in the history of interpretation. In such a phenomenon of verbal communication there are at least three basic constituents in an interplay: Sender, message and receptor. Lategan (1984:2ff) uses this model as a point of reference to locate and relate most of the issues that dominate the hermeneutical discussion up to this point of time (also see Longman 1987:13ff; Hartin & Petzer 1991:1; Tate 1991).<sup>4</sup> The various sectors in this basic model indicate the history of the major shifts of interpretation. They represent three different groups of theories regarding the locus and actualization of meaning: author-centered, text-centered and reader-centered approaches to the text (Tate 1991:xvi; Lategan 1984:2ff; Longman 1987:19ff).

The *sender* segment concerns the 'origins and text production' (focuses relentlessly on the world behind the text, the real historical world within which the text was born, and the

<sup>3</sup> According to Roussouw (1980:17-55) hermeneutics originated from a reading situation where dealing with texts was the order of the day. Rules were necessary to guide the exegete in readings. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the issue was broadened to also include conditions to make understanding possible. A further widening of horizons was introduced by Schleiermacher, Dilthey and Heidegger (Cf Ricoeur 1975:268ff; Lategan 1984:2; Nethersole 1992:159ff).

<sup>4</sup> Since 1984 the scene has not changed much. However the different emerging trends have been further developed. Tate (1991), who links up with Lategan (1984), seven years later added nothing more to what Lategan had said in 1984 about 'current issues in the hermeneutical debate'. What definitely changed is the emerging of a pluralistic hermeneutical approach in Biblical exegesis (in the sense that all three basic constituents in a communicational process are incorporated) in contrast with the singular approach. This phenomenon will be discussed at a later stage. See footnote 16 of this chapter.

circumstances of the author). This segment indicates the historical period dominated by the formidable historical-critical method.<sup>5</sup>

The *message* segment concerns the 'text preservation and mediation' (it focuses on the world in the text). With the advent of *inter alia* New Criticism<sup>6</sup> the pendulum swung away from the historical-critical method, but the first real paradigm shift, from diachronical to synchronical interests, occurred when structuralism<sup>7</sup> emerged (Longman 1987:25ff).<sup>8</sup> The locus of meaning shifted to the autonomous text. The text itself became the focal point and meaning now resides in the structure of the text (Du Toit 1974:56; Louw 1976:99f; Mlakuzhyil 1987:17ff; cf Combrink 1979:3; Snyman 1991:89). Only the text now legitimates an interpretation<sup>9</sup> (Lategan 1984:1ff; Longman 1987:25ff; Hartin & Petzer 1991:47ff).

In recent developments another shift has taken place in the field of hermeneutics. A move towards the *receptor* sector of the diagram. This movement consists of a variety of methods aimed at diverse objectives (Lategan 1984:4f).<sup>10</sup> The focus is on the relationship of text-reader. This shift concerns the 'reception and interpretation' of the text (it focuses on the world in front of the text) (cf Lategan 1984:3).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> All the different variations such as textual criticism, source criticism, form criticism, tradition criticism and redaction criticism are grouped under the historical-critical method.

<sup>6</sup> According to Longman (1987:25f) 'New Criticism describes a general trend in literary theory that dominated thinking in the 1940s and 1950s'. With regard to the primary principle of New Criticism he states that 'the literary work is self-sufficient; the author's intention and background are unimportant to the critic'.

<sup>7</sup> Structuralism describes a broad movement that affects many disciplines. Poythress (1978:221) maintains that 'Structuralism is more a diverse collection of methods, paradigms and personal preferences than it is a "system," a theory or a well formulated thesis.' Longman (1987:29) pointed out that the emergence of structuralism as a major school of literary criticism only began in the 1960s.

<sup>8</sup> It must be noted that (also noticed from the diagram) even though a paradigm shift has taken place, the historic-critical approach did not cease (Hartin & Petzer 1991:3; Vorster 1991:15; cf Van Zyl 1982:35), but the emphasis has shifted to the new literary-linguistic approach. The same also happened when the emphasis was transferred to the approach of the receptor.

<sup>9</sup> Longman (1987:25) indicates two major schools of thought in this period, namely New Criticism and Structuralism. Hartin & Petzer (1991:47ff) point out the following trends: semiotics, discourse analysis, narrative criticism and speech act theory (and textual criticism).

<sup>10</sup> Firstly, in this new era there is a shift towards pragmatism and contextual interpretation. This new trend is 'more interested in the effect of communication than in its mechanics'. This stems from an attitude that the result of traditional exegesis have very little relevance to the needs of the day (Lategan 1984:4). Secondly, sociolinguistics (cf Nida 1984:2 quoted by Lategan) became important for theological hermeneutics. This is a renewed interest in the setting of text and reader and arises from the problems of biblical translation in transcultural settings. According to Theissen (1979:3) the sociological approach forms part of the historical method and is in fact the logical outcome of the historical-critical exegesis of the New Testament. Thirdly, 'reception theory' became an important trend in theological hermeneutics. It arose from a reader-oriented approach and gained momentum during the last three decades. The reception theory derives from the Russian formalism, the Prague structuralists and the sociology of literature (Lategan 1984:4ff). Longman (1987:38) and Hartin & Petzer (1991:145ff; also see McKim 1986:241ff) add three types of ideological readers: liberation theologians, marxists and feminists. Other trends which form part of this section of interpretation are the Reception Theory, Rhetorical Criticism, Deconstruction, Fundamentalism, Sociological-cultural and Contextual methodological principles. Scheffler (1988:355ff) and Beirnaert (1975) attempted psychological exegesis. Cf Thiselton (1992:10ff) for additional perspectives on 'New Horizons in the Development of Hermeneutics'.

<sup>11</sup> The shift to the right hand sector of the diagram (the reader-orientated context) does not eliminate the problems related to the historical and structural contexts, but we might discover a better defined methodology to come to a better understanding of the text.

These many different approaches could easily be seen as competing methods and might consequently let the exegete rush around in the inevitable relativism that results (Hartin & Petzer 1991:2). The opposite, rather, is true -- each method has a particular function and purpose in illuminating the text.<sup>12</sup> Some approaches are more suited to particular types of texts than others (Cf Deist 1983:128).<sup>13</sup>

The crisis regarding the interpretation and understanding of the NT texts results largely from the lack of a comprehensive exegetical-hermeneutical approach (Lategan 1984:1ff). If the exegete takes any of these approaches in isolation (author-centered, text-centered, or reader-centered), excluding the other two, the exegetic-hermeneutical approach becomes an unbalanced discipline (Tate 1991:210; Longman 1987:61). The inescapable result of a one-mode approach will be the over-<sup>14</sup> or underexposure<sup>15</sup> of texts, as manifested especially during the historical and linguistic-literary periods of methodology (Rousseau 1985:93).

Since literature is an act of communication between an author and a reader through a text (Longman 1987:67f), hermeneutics calls for the integrating<sup>16</sup> of these three aspects of literature. They may not be abstracted from one another, since one presupposes the other.<sup>17</sup> No single method leads to a complete hermeneutical approach. The knowledge

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<sup>12</sup> No method comprises the whole process of interpretation. In fact each method provides useful information if it can be viewed as a partial method only, answering specific questions (Smit 1988:442).

<sup>13</sup> Hartin & Petzer (1991:2) use the image of a flashlight to explain this dilemma. According to them, just 'As a flashlight illuminates a certain segment of reality, so a stronger flashlight will illuminate a wider segment; or if the flashlight is shifted to focus attention on a different part of reality, so different aspects are revealed. The same is true of the various methods. Like the flashlight, they illuminate the text with which they are dealing in different ways. The text that is illuminated reveals different aspects of its beauty depending upon the methods that are used.' Thus each method has value, some are simply more appropriate to a particular field.

<sup>14</sup> This concerns the over-emphasizing of a certain mode which can in the end distort the communication process (Cf Barr 1973:13). Historical overexposure breaks up the New Testament text or degrades it to the status of a historical book (Rousseau 1985:93). In the case of the linguistic-literary aspect the structure of the text is over-emphasized, sometimes at the expense of its message, to claim textual autonomy.

<sup>15</sup> The underexposure of texts implies the ignoring of the 'true nature, the message and intention of the NT' (Rousseau 1985:93). To underexpose the historical approach means to ignore the historical background of the text and author. To underexpose the linguistic-literary mode means to ignore literary and stylistic features.

<sup>16</sup> The following scholars move in the direction of a more comprehensive methodological approach in the sense of communicational dynamics: Nida 1983:145ff; Lategan 1984:1ff; Rousseau 1985:92ff; Van Tilborg 1989:63ff; Tate 1991; cf Culpepper 1983:4ff; Combrink 1984:26ff; Longman 1987:19ff; Van Aarde 1988:235ff; Combrinck 1988:189-204; Du Rand 1990:8ff. Culpepper and Du Rand incorporate all the basic constituents from a narratological approach. In *Neotestamentica* 22 (1988) almost all the contributions, whether explicitly (Van Rensburg, Scheffler, Van Staden, Hartin, Botha, Van Aarde) or implicitly expressed (I J du Plessis, J G du Plessis, Schnell, Sebothoma) underscore the fact that all the methods applied here need additional information and therefore also complimentary methods (Smit 1988:451).

<sup>17</sup> Scheffler (1988:369) investigates the relationship between psychological exegesis and other approaches. He emphasizes that 'although different models will in some respects surely be contradictory, they definitely seem to complement one another in many other.' With this point of view Scheffler indicates the complementary nature of methods. In his essay '*Reading Luke 12:35-48 as part of the travel narrative*' Du Plessis (1988:217-234) seems to make use of a combination of approaches, including form criticism, redaction criticism, structural analysis and a study of rhetorical devices. Smit (1988:459), on the other hand, is unoptimistic about a comprehensive approach in methodology. In his opinion responsible hermeneutics need not to be a comprehensive approach which includes various methods, focusing on the history of the text itself, the text itself, and the readers of the text. Smit (1988:460f) correctly states that 'reading strategies, or methods of interpretation, can never be seen as more or less legitimate in themselves, in a time and abstract way, but only

obtained by the different approaches is also needed.<sup>18</sup> Hence, the locus of meaning is to be found in the interplay between all three worlds when they converge (cf Van der Watt 1986:33).<sup>19</sup> It is clear that all three areas are mutually exclusive in the articulation of meaning.

## 1.2 Communication dynamics, a prototype for the hermeneutical approach

It became clear from the previous section (2.1.2) that communication dynamics has to be seen as the *locus* for understanding.<sup>20</sup> Since the advent of communication science in the

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way, but only in terms of a specific reader on a specific occasion', in other words from a 'specific context'. Smit's criticism of a comprehensive approach should be viewed from his systematic-theological background which is theological-philosophically oriented.

<sup>18</sup> The world of the author offers foundational information for the dialogue between the reader and the text. While background studies of the world behind the text do not constitute sufficient meaning within themselves, such studies do fulfill an important heuristic function within the field of hermeneutics. Every text thus reflects the 'culture' from which it was written; this includes biblical texts. According to Halliday (1991:39ff) language is part of the social system (Labov 1970, Fishman 1971 and Bernstein 1971 support Halliday on this point of view). This influenced the way in which the text itself speaks linguistically, conventionally and ideologically. Historical methods should be used to perpetuate the dialogue between the text and the reader (Van Aarde 1988:236f). They should inform the text/reader dialogue (Cf Tate 1991:210; Lategan 1984:4). One must therefore adopt the viewpoint that the linguistic-literary perspective is embedded in a socio-historical situation. The ability to construct the socio-historical background from a reading of the text (cf Van der Watt 1986:38; Lategan 1984:8), stems from sensitivity to the requirements and indications found in it.

<sup>19</sup> This integration of different exegetical approaches can be done on the following basis: (i) An integration of different exegetical approaches can be achieved once the text has been separately interpreted with the help of the different approaches. (ii) Another approach is to use one model as a starting point and accommodate insights gained from other models to support this chosen model. In this case the model chosen to start off with should be the one that best befits the text, and the supportive models must be exclusive, differentiated from other less relevant models. (iii) An approach in which some of these models, relevant to the objective of this study, have been integrated simultaneously. This is the approach to be followed in this study (Scheffler 1988:363f).

<sup>20</sup> Chomsky, an important exponent in linguistics, influenced biblical interpretation with his linguistic model of *transformational-generative grammar*. Generative grammar aims to specify the nature of a speaker's knowledge of his language. A transformational grammar is one that incorporates two aspects of syntactic description, a surface structure and a more abstract deep structure, together with a set of transformational rules relating to deep structures and surface structures. According to Chomsky, in any syntactic description the observable syntactic structure of sentences, the surface structure, should be related to a more abstract deep structure. Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar provides important insights into language structure. His most important contribution is that he was the first to show that natural language could be brought within the scope of formalization; that natural language could in fact be studied as a formal system. Chomsky's linguistics is a form of reductionism, highly idealized. His idealization is expressed in the distinction he draws between competence and performance. Competence refers to the natural language in its idealized form while performance refers to everything else (Halliday 1979:37f). Chomsky's grammar is related to the internal working of the linguistic system -- linguistics has to be a branch of psychology.

Halliday (1979:39) and others differ from Chomsky in that they approach language not from within, as it were, but from outside -- linguistics is a branch of sociology. Language is part of the social system (cf also Hymes 1967, Austin 1962, Searle 1976, Michael & Stubbs 1983, and Labov 1970). According to them language serves as a means of social communication (1990:73). There can be no compromise between Chomsky and Halliday's approaches and at present Halliday's approach, supported by many other linguists (already mentioned), is the more acceptable point of view.

middle of this century (Rousseau 1985:94)<sup>21</sup> a multiplicity of communication models emerged to explain this process of communication and interrelation.<sup>22</sup>

Diagram 2 proposes a conventional model of communication. Only the basic constituents<sup>23</sup> (sender, text, receptor) and dynamics (encode, decode, negotiation of meaning and interrelatedness) are indicated.

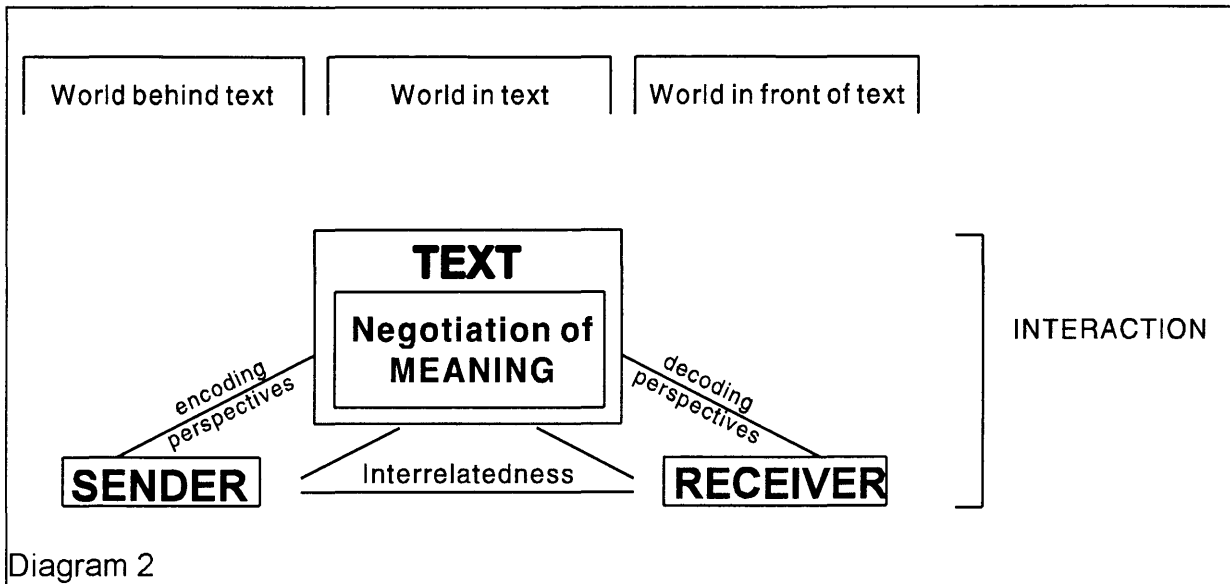


Diagram 2

New Testament hermeneutics deals with 'the theory of understanding' of the New Testament text (Ricoeur 1975:265; Roberts 1979:58; Stuhlmacher 1979:15; Rousseau 1985:95; Jeanron 1991:1). According to Roussouw (1991:95; cf also Ricoeur 1981:182) 'it is inseparably intertwined with communication as the act of "creating meaning (understanding) through our interaction with the world (New Testament writings)". With these words Roussouw summarises the diagram (Diagram 2), which will now be discussed. The discussion is based on communication interaction.

### 1.2.1 Communicators: sender and receiver (socio-historical)

In the New Testament era biblical *documents* were written (texts) to communicate a *message* from the author (*sender*) to his readers (*receptors*).<sup>24</sup> Both the sender and

<sup>21</sup> The principles of communication science (from which we can only benefit) should be called in to help us further to understand and interpret the biblical texts. This means that the Bible should not be explained differently from other books (Barr 1962:296; Nida 1969:7; Kümmel 1973L22f,58; Culpepper 1983:10; Roussouw 1985:93; Kaiser 1986:113; Longman 1987:7; Van Rensburg 1988:337). The interpretation of the Bible can only benefit from the insights of other sciences such as general semantics, linguistics, communication science, historical science and sociological science (Barr 1962:296; Roussouw 1991:93f).

<sup>22</sup> When referring to the process and interrelation of communication, three historical situations have to be distinguished. Firstly, the communication events between the events in the text, secondly, the real author and real reader in historic-biblical times and thirdly, the communication event between the text and the exegete himself.

<sup>23</sup> Cook (1989:25) identifies the following elements of communication: the addresser, the addressee, the channel, the message form, the topic, the code, and the setting.

<sup>24</sup> To complicate the communication process it has been argued that there are at least six people involved in the intercommunication process (Culpepper 1983:6; Du Rand 1990:12), namely the real author, the implied author, the narrator, the narratee, the implied reader and the real reader. For the purpose of this study it is

receptor stand in socio-historical situations<sup>25</sup> (their own worlds) which are at stake here. These communicators are part of their historical situation and are therefore influenced by for instance historical, cultural, religious and sociological<sup>26</sup> factors.<sup>27</sup> This is reflected in the message they created in the text (Cf Jordaan 1971:3-7).

From the previous paragraph we can derive that the text is accompanied by another text, the 'con-text'.<sup>28</sup> This notion of 'extra-text' goes beyond what is said and written: it includes other non-verbal events -- the total environment in which a text unfolds. The socio-cultural situation is the context in which texts unfold and in which they are to be interpreted (Halliday 1989:14; 1990:5).<sup>29</sup> Therefore the text has a specific function in the context.<sup>30</sup> It also has a rhetorical mode, achieved by the text in terms of expository, didactics or persuasion (Halliday 1990:12).

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not necessary to examine this argument.

<sup>25</sup> Vorster (1991:15ff) argues that two fields of interest concern historical criticism above all: firstly, it does not only give a historical interpretation of the various writings of the NT; and secondly, it also looks at the historical context of Jesus and the early Christians who form the focus of attention of these writings.

<sup>26</sup> Deist & Burden (1980:48,54) provide a detailed profile. Theissen (1979:3f) is correct in his point of view that the sociological approach forms part of the historical method if we consider Vorster's point of view in the previous footnote. He regards it as the logical outcome of the historical-critical exegesis of the NT. For him '... die Frage nach dem historischen Kontext ist wie die Frage nach dem sozialen "Sitz im Leben"'. He understands history not merely as a chain of events, but rather as a constellation of conditions, customs, norms and institutions. History is painted on a broader canvas, examined at a deeper level, that is, as the underlying structural forces that shape society.

<sup>27</sup> They were also influenced by personal factors such as psychological, ideological and physiological factors.

<sup>28</sup> We must distinguish between the existence of different contexts: (i) the *context of situation*, which concerns the configuration of the situation, characters, and genre features that specify the register of the text; (ii) the *context of culture*, which is the institutional and ideological background that gives value to the text and constrains its interpretation; (iii) the *'intertextual' context*, i.e. the relations with other texts, and assumptions that are carried over from it; and lastly (iv) the *'intratextual' context*, which concerns the coherence within the text, including the linguistic cohesion (cf Halliday 1990:48f).

<sup>29</sup> Halliday (1990:46f), correctly, distinguishes between 'a context of situation', which is the immediate environment, and a 'context of culture', a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted. The context of culture constitutes the way in which the text is interpreted in its context of situation. The 'context of situation' and 'the context of culture' jointly constitute the socio-cultural background.

<sup>30</sup> Many linguists emphasize the fact that the use of language serves different functions. These functions are interpreted as something that is basic to the evolution of the semantic system (Halliday 1990:29). Jakobson (1960) and Hymes (1962) propose about half a dozen of functions: directive, referential, contextual, etc. Austin (1962) postulates hundreds of speech acts, while Searle (1976) groups them into half a dozen basic categories. Halliday (1990:29; cf also Michael & Stubbs 1983:148f; Nida 1983:147; Bachman 1990:89ff) maintains that the notion of *functions of language* 'may be identified as the functional components of the semantic system of a language: (a) ideational, subdivided into logical and experiential; (b) interpersonal; and (c) textual. *Experiential*: this concerns the text as we have it in front of us as a representation of some recognizable phenomenon (Halliday 1990:19); *Interpersonal*: concerns the function of the text in the process of social interaction (reflects the interaction between the writer/speaker and reader/listener); *Textual*: this meaning concerns that which causes it to be a text, as distinct from an artificial or fossilised specimen of wording (knitting together). Every sentence in a text is multifunctional. Meanings are woven together and to understand them is not to look separately at the different parts; rather to look at the whole from different angles, where each perspective contributes towards the total interpretation (Halliday 1990:23).



### **1.2.2 Goal: meaning negotiated (theological-philosophical)**

In the diagram we have seen that every author has a theme/message in mind which he communicates with his audience (receivers) with the aid of structured language (Deist & Burden 1983:49; cf Louw 1976:122; Du Toit 1974:55f). Every written document (language) is embedded in a specific context, which will enable us, once we know the context, to understand the text. Therefore it is important to analyse the contextual constituents that constitute the background of the communicators and the medium (text) in order to determine the meaning of the text. But what we must bear in mind is that 'these constituents of the communication process (i.e. the linguistic-literary and the socio-historical) find their intention from the author's theological-philosophical perspective' (Rousseau 1985:97).

The historical author (sender) wrote from a specific theological-philosophical perspective (Cf Deist & Burden 1983:30; Tate 1991:xx). This implies that the socio-historical and linguistic-literary constituents help us to determine this perspective of the author (Cf Louw 1976:118; Rousseau 1985:97). This indicates that the author certainly had something in mind, the theme or message, and used a written document to formulate it (Louw 1976:122). The exegete has to find out what the author had in mind, for this will dominate his entire message and is therefore the key to understanding him (Rousseau 1985:97). It is only through negotiation with the text that the reader can determine meaning.

Owing to the numerous hypotheses and the uncertainty that exists about many things in the text, the exegete must be flexible, allowing his frame of reference to be changed by new insights from the text. I believe that my whole methodological approach will enable this hermeneutical circle and that a new frame of reference will be created in which the development of investigation can be embedded.

Efficient communication realizes only when the readers share the author's perspective and respond accordingly (Nida 1969:1; Mcguire 1973:244; cf Combrink 1984:27; Rousseau 1985:97). The problem today is that we are so far removed from the worlds of the real author, text and readers. Therefore, in an analysis of the New Testament text, both the text-historical and socio-historical facets (Rousseau 1985:96) of the worlds of the text and communicators should be examined with bias.

If the exegete is to accomplish interpretation and understanding, 'a fusion of horizons' (a *Horizontverschmelzung* as Gadamer puts it) should take place between the past and the present, or between the text and the exegete.<sup>31</sup> The exegete must be able to relate his own horizon of understanding to that of the text. Gadamer rightly insists that to achieve this kind of understanding the exegete must, firstly, remain *open* to the meaning of the text, i.e. he must be willing to revise and correct pre-understanding. Secondly, the exegete must endeavour to become *aware* of the nature of his pre-judgments or pre-understanding which he brings to the text (Thiselton 1980:307ff).

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<sup>31</sup> The tradition of the exegete constitutes his horizon of meaning (Thiselton 1980:307). Gadamer correctly points out that this horizon is not closed or fixed, but moves as the interpreter himself moves.

### 1.2.3 Medium: text<sup>32</sup> (linguistic-literary)

In a literary communication process, because the sender wants to communicate a goal-oriented message to the receiver, he encodes his message by way of literary devices and stylistic features<sup>33</sup> to accomplish his goal through his message. This encoding consists of linguistic and literary codes.<sup>34</sup> Fokkema (1985:643ff) distinguishes three more codes: the genre code, the socio code and the idiolect code. The information that is transferred in the communication process is embedded in these codes. Therefore these codes (text)<sup>35</sup> must be considered as the conveyors of the message.

According to Rousseau (1985:95) the author is free to choose 'the medium (type of literature),<sup>36</sup> structure<sup>37</sup> and strategy<sup>38</sup> through which he wants to communicate'. Therefore

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<sup>32</sup> A rising trend in the Johannine studies is the application of 'literary criticism' (Carson 1991:35). Some of the breaks in the sequence, repetitions and stylistic differences in the FG are accounted by source critics who postulate the use of written sources by the FE. Exponents in favour of this hypothesis are Bultmann (1941), who gave the question of origins a new precision, then Becker (1969-70), Fortna (1970), Nicol (1972), Schnackenburg (1972) and Teeple (1974) who propose different norms in discovering these sources. Kysar (1975:13-37) gave an excellent evaluation of these source theories. After examining the different norms (aporias, style, form, ideological tensions) employed by these five source critics (Fortna, Nicol, Teeple, Becker and Schnackenburg), Kysar (1975:24) concludes: 'While one would not want to press these differences too far, it would seem fair to conclude that the method of source criticism of the fourth gospel is somehow in shambles'. He ends on a positive note in the next sentence: 'Still, it is a contribution of recent johannine criticism that such efforts at source analysis should be taken up with such seriousness at all'. A rather different source-criticism has been advanced by Brown. See Carson (1991:36) for a discussion on Brown and Lindars's points of view.

Culpepper (1983; cf also Segovia 1985) and Mlakuzhyil (1987) find themselves on the opposite side of literary criticism. Their aim is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the FG using the categories of rhetoric criticism (Culpepper) and Christocentric theology (Mlakuzhyil). The above-mentioned are but only an indication of the ambiguous point of views regarding the text of the FG.

<sup>33</sup> A text is a metafunctional construct: a complex of ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings (Hasan 1990:49). In the case of an ordinary conversation, literary devices and stylistic features substitute body language and voice intonation (Van Aarde 1988:237). These are paralinguistic and extralinguistic features of a spoken language, which are lost in a written document (Cook 1989:9; Nida 1983:146).

<sup>34</sup> In modern linguistics scholars prefer to speak about *code* instead of *text* for various reasons. When discussing methodology, the word *code* is preferable. In the exegesis part (ch 3) the word *text* will be used to refer to the text of Nestle Aland's (26th) edition.

<sup>35</sup> In the early stages of exegesis, it is important to ensure that the text that is used is the most correct and reliable. Such a text can be estimated through textual-criticism. Since the science of textual criticism has been developed so extensively in the editions of Nestle Aland's *Novum Testamentum* (26th edition), Metzger's *A Textual commentary on the Greek New Testament* and in most commentaries, there seems to be little concern regarding the integrity of the text that is going to be used. Despite this, other text-variants will be measured to determine possible differences in meaning.

<sup>36</sup> 'Type of literature' refers to the literary genre, defined by Collins (1979:1; cf also Barr 1974:5) as '... a group of written texts marked by distinctive recurring characteristics which constitute a recognizable and coherent type of writing'.

<sup>37</sup> Indications within the FG itself which can serve as a guide for subdividing the FG, especially the Book of Signs, are not absolutely clear. This is suggested by the many disputes between scholars about how this book of the gospel (the Book of Signs) should be divided. Thus the last word about the structure of the FG has not yet been spoken. A discussion of the macrostructure of the FG would be irrelevant here. Mlakuzhyil (1987) gives an extensive discussion of the macrostructure of the FG. After given a broad description on the structure from different perspectives (pp 17-86) he gives criteria (pp 87-136) for the structure of the FG, and then discusses its literary structure (pp137ff). Therefore, and because of the fact that it is not the objective of this study to make a contribution in this regard, I will briefly, in ch 4 (section 4.2), discuss the outline of the FG which I will use as the macrostructure of this study. The macrostructure (referring to the structure of the entire

the exegete has to respect the author's choice (semantics) as well as the effect it is intended to create amongst his readers.

In order to understand the biblical message the readers have to decode the code in which the message has been embedded (Cf Deist 1980:15ff,22ff; Rousseau 1985:95). In this decoding process it is important to consider the following methodological aspects, which are also considered in this study:

**(i) Four levels of meaning:** Louw (1976:56vv) indicates the complicatedness of the concept 'meaning'. He refers to four levels of meaning,<sup>39</sup> i.e. complimentary, hierarchical, grammatical and figurative meaning. Louw (1976:59) emphasises that meaning also figures on different levels, namely those of the word, the sentence, and the whole context. This distinction by Louw is based purely on linguistics.

**(ii) Denotative and associative meaning:** This study focuses not on the lexical meaning of the concept 'discipleship' in the FG, but rather on the meaning that entails denotative usage and associative context. *Denotation* is the term used for the relationship that exists between words and the corresponding entities in reality. In *associative*<sup>40</sup> meaning we move away from objectivity to subjectivity. According to Cotterell & Turner (1989:45ff) each person, also the FE, develops a relationship towards words, based on repeated experiences of their usage, and to the reference that lies behind the words. According to them associative meanings are sometimes determined by society. Associative meaning can also be conducted from the context in which the author uses the word. Words used together and in relation to each other indicate association. When a text is explained, the association of any particular rendering must be considered, especially with a view to the audience being addressed.

**(iii) Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of words.** Language is seen as a system of signs in which there are syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations that determine the system and each sign. A linguistic unit relates to the rest of the system within which it functions (in our case the FG). The *syntagmatic* relation (horizontal level) comprises of a linear relationship with the other words or units with which it is chained together. The *paradigmatic* relation comprises (vertical level) 'the relation between a word or linguistic

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document) is important to understand its message. The different macrostructures indicated by Mlakuzhyil (1987) do not imply different messages, but contribute to the understanding of the message that the FE had in mind, from different perspectives (a journey perspective, a dramatic perspective, a narrative perspective, etc).

<sup>38</sup> Although the reference to the 'medium' and 'structure' seems to be quite clear, it is not clear what Rousseau means with 'strategy'. My own interpretation of it and the way in which I will utilize it in this study will be to indicate the 'content, themes, motives and style used by the FE to convey his message to achieve his goal. In the FG the FE has chosen Christology to be the main component to realize his aspiration, while he masterly planned the conjunction of the other theological themes with his Christology.

<sup>39</sup> Wilkens (1976) distinguishes three levels of meaning.

<sup>40</sup> There are three principal sources for the calculation of the associative meanings of words: (i) the speaker's association with the word, (ii) the practical circumstances in which the word is used and (iii) the linguistic setting characteristic of the word (Nida 1974:92).

unit and another such unit which is not present in the actual utterance, but which might have been chosen in its place' (Thiselton 1979:83).<sup>41</sup>

**(iv) Textual structure:** It has become increasingly evident that speakers of a language do not put their sentences together haphazardly. The relationships between sentences are quite elaborately structured and are characterized by their coherence (Cotterell & Turner 1989:230). This relationship involves both grammatical structure and meaning. Even the features of such structures are important for understanding the message and for comprehending the nature of such structuring (Nida 1974:152; Mlakuzhyil 1987). Therefore Nida (1974:207) defines structure as the characteristic form of a discourse built according to sense.

**(v) Approaches:** One of the most important terminological distinctions introduced into linguistics by De Saussure was the line he drew between the synchronic and the diachronic approaches to language study. A *synchronic* study is the description of a language at some point in time; a *diachronic* study treats the historical development of a language 'over a period of time' (Allan 1975:34ff; Thiselton 1979:80). In this study, a synchronical approach will be followed.

Every text also provides its own context. A text is characterized by *coherence*; it hangs together. At any point in the text, what has gone before provides the environment for that which follows. This sets up internal expectations that the reader brings from the external sources, from the context of the situation.

An important contribution to coherence comes from *cohesion*: the linguistic resources<sup>42</sup> (it is part of textual metafunction) that exist in every language for linking one section of a text to another. Therefore we can conclude that every section of a text is at once both text and context. Each part of the discourse, whether it is a single phrase or the entire ch 17 or FG, has value (i) as text in itself and (ii) as context for the texts that follow (Halliday 1990:48).

#### **1.2.4 The dynamics of the communication act: interrelatedness**

Communication is impossible in the absence of any of the three basic constituents (sender, code and receiver). In a communication process the constituents imply one another. This interrelatedness was evident in the socio-historical, linguistic-literary and theological-philosophical modes (Lategan 1984:2 and Rousseau 1985:98):

**(i)** In the previous discussion of the different modes of the code, these modes were defined and described in a particular relationship to each other. Through the analysis of codes (**linguistic-literary**) within which interrelationships occur, we will find indications of, references to and even direct statements concerning the assumed theologic-philosophical perspective (Cf Van der Watt 1986:34) determined by a specific socio-historical situation. The code, however, is also the only firm basis for the reconstruction of the socio-historical background of the communicators and the reality referred to (Rousseau 1985:98).

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<sup>41</sup> This implies that when a word or linguistic unit also occurs in other contexts, those contexts that warrant it will be investigated to determine the relationship between units and to determine a profile.

<sup>42</sup> These resources are: (i) reference, (ii) substitution and ellipsis, (iii) conjunction, and (iv) lexical cohesion. According to Halliday (1990:48) they are the semantic relations that enable one section of the text to function as the context for another. Cook (1989:14ff) adds (v) verbal form and (vi) parallelism.

(ii) On the other hand, the **socio-historical** analysis<sup>43</sup> puts the theologic-philosophical and the literary-linguistical approaches into perspective. This assumes that the exegete must have knowledge of the ancient world, its symbols and traditions, which will help him to understand why the FE preserved the traditions concerning Jesus and gave meaning to it, why only certain signs were adopted in the FG (20:30-31) or why the LD have been included into the FG.

(iii) The FE's **theological-philosophical** frame of reference causes him to use a medium (text), motives, literary devices, linguistic features and socio-cultural facets from a certain perspective to convey his message. Since all Biblical literature possess a theological dimension (Barr 1973:33), the message of the FG is written from a specific theological perspective.

If all the constituents and dynamics of this communication phenomenon are incorporated in the exegesis, the investigation will have a circular, cross-referential and double-checking effect (Rousseau 1985:98).

## 2 The exegetical process

Exegesis expresses the exegete's understanding of the author's intended meaning with the text (Cotterell & Turner 1989:72) and therefore fulfils two functions (Deist & Burden 1980:3). Firstly, it checks or tests the exegete's initial understanding of the text. Secondly, through exegesis the exegete furnishes reasons why he understands the text in a particular way. This again indicates that one can only speak of exegesis if investigation is done on a controlled basis. These two functions will characterize this study.

In this exegetical process I shall follow the known method of ten steps spelled out by Du Toit (Theological Faculty, University of Pretoria) which closely relate to Egger's 'Methodenlehre zum Neuen Testament' (1987). Du Toit's exegetical scheme is a good representative model of the hermeneutical approach that was discussed above and is briefly outlined below:

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<sup>43</sup> Several of these methods have enjoyed a period of popularity and intensive use. Sometimes they have been played off against one another (Kaiser 1986:111f), but we must accept that each one of them in its own fashion can contribute to our understanding of the NT. According to Krentz (quoted by Froehlich McKim 1986:185) the historical-critical method was not as much a failure as that it had limitations (See also Stuhlmacher 1979:243). Vorster (1984:104) indicated that after F C Bauer, J B Lightfoot and D F Strauss, Bultmann indicated the pros and cons of the historical paradigm. He was aware of the advantages, necessity and limitations of the historical paradigm. With his introduction of existentialism into his programme of interpreting the NT for modern man he draws attention to the limits of 'the historical paradigm'.

PREPARATORY PHASE	MAIN PHASE	FINISHING PHASE
1) Text selection 2) Exploration of the text 3) Text demarcation 4) Textual criticism	5) Form and redaction analysis (where applicable) <span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">5</span> 6) Determining the place and function of the text in the macro structure 7) Structure analysis of micro-text 8) Detail analysis: + syntactic analysis + literary analysis + Situational analysis <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; margin-left: 10px;">             ] Semantic content           </div>	9) Dynamic translation (optional) 10) Formulation of the proclamational content

The following is an indication of how the exegesis will be conducted on the basis of the above ten steps although these steps will not be chronologically followed as indicated:

### 1. The socio-historical background

The fact that no explicit data are given upon which a history of Johannine Christianity can be based (Painter 1980:22; cf also Becker 1981:173), leads to a brief discussion of the views of various scholars on the socio-historical background. The purpose of the FG, which is the window (cf Du Rand 1990:9) through which the FG has to be interpreted, will also be dealt with briefly.

The socio-historical situation<sup>44</sup> within which the FG's text communicates will not be disregarded.<sup>45</sup> The socio-historical background will be discussed on the basis of the detailed exegesis. This need not to create a problem for, when working with the text, some background information will emerge through certain dominant motifs, direct explicit information given, implicit information suggested by the FE, word choice, omission and content. Background can be regained by way of construction through the text and paralinguistic and extralinguistic material. Thus the text contains sufficient information for the construction of the necessary context of situation (cf Van der Watt 1986:38).

### 2. The macro-structure of the FG

A brief discussion of the macro-structure of the FG (from the perspective of discipleship) will be given in order to determine the place and the contexts of the texts to be examined.

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<sup>44</sup> An extended frame of reference is vitally important to the comprehension of a text. Since scholars are unanimous in their opinion that there are 'insurmountable difficulties' (Käseman 1968:1; Nida 1975:23,185) when it concerns the historical background of the FG, the traditional introductory and historical background questions (authorship, destination and place of origin, date, literary form, etc.) will not be discussed here. For introductory information see the standard sources of Klijn (1967); Harrison (1974); Guthrie (1978); Thiessen (1979); Jensen (1981); Kümmel (1982) and Aune (1987), and the very recent and conservative introduction of Carson, Moo and Morris 1992. For historical background information see sources such as Tenney (1974), Duvenhage (1976), Lohse (1976), Gundry (1979), Reike (1979), Koester (1987) and Hengel (1989). Also see footnote 29 of Ch 1 for literature on the Johannine Community.

<sup>45</sup> One can agree with the following statement by Van Aarde (1988:237): 'Extratextual factors ... have exegetical relevance only in so far they manifest themselves in a specific text. The construction of the social context of a specific text never occurs without the text itself being read.' Three years later Van Aarde (1991:109) stated that the construction of the social context of the text was not in itself a methodological step in the analysis. The intertextual and extratextual posing of questions plays a methodological role in the investigation of the intermediary relations between the real author and the real reader.

### 3. A survey of the semantic field of μαθηταὶ.

The investigation towards a comprehension of the concept of discipleship in the FG will start with a survey of the semantic field of μαθηταὶ with the purpose of determining, from a lexical perspective, an angle of incidence for this study.<sup>46</sup> The related terms that will fall in the semantic field of μαθηταὶ will help to show the exegete where to start and what to look for. This exploration of the text of the FG will also help to determine the FE's usage of the noun μαθηταὶ. The fact that μαθηταὶ occurs so frequently (78 times) in the FG, necessitates a paradigmatic survey.

### 4. The construction of a theological framework for discipleship

From a theological-philosophical perspective a work-hypothesis is formulated regarding 'discipleship in the FG'. 'Discipleship in the FG' is seen as a particular relationship that exists between Jesus and his disciples. This relationship is based on the relationship between the Son and the Father. Their relationship carries the character of, and is structured around, the 'agency' concept. Because the agency of Jesus concerns his mission from the Father and by the Father to the earthly realm, it is necessary to investigate the Descent-Ascent Schema (DAS) in the FG as well as the 'Agency' concept in order to construct a framework for 'discipleship'.<sup>47</sup>

### 5. Demarcation of texts

The previous survey will lead to an investigation into the appearances and descriptions of the disciples in the FG, which will help to determine their function and role. The work done (in 1 and 2) will help to demarcate some of the applicable texts of this study. Even the Descent-Ascent Schema and 'agency-concept' will help to demarcate the necessary texts.

### 6. The two main texts for the interpretation of discipleship

Already in the introduction to this study it was indicated that Chs 17 and 20:19-31 are the two main texts for the interpretation of discipleship: ch 17 for the theological discussion of the finishing moment of Jesus' mission, the inauguration of the disciples' mission and the appointment of the disciples as Jesus' agents (this is the transfer of Jesus' agency to his disciples); ch 20:19-31 for the discussion of the historical commissioning of Jesus' disciples.

### 7. The genre

Since Ch 17 is part of the LD (last discourse) its position in the LD will be looked at briefly. The genre of the LD and that of Ch 17 will be discussed. The genre of 20:19-31 will be discussed at a later stage.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> The historical survey has indicated how scholars thought about discipleship.

<sup>47</sup> In all the discussions of the various texts concerning the 'DAS' and 'Agency' motifs the exegetical process that is described in this chapter will be followed. However, since so many texts will be discussed in connection with these two motifs, ten basic commentaries will be used, namely: Bultmann, Schnackenburg, Brown, Carson, Morris, Barrett, Newman & Nida, Lenski, Lindars and Sanders (in some cases where it seems to be necessary, even more).

<sup>48</sup> Since Ch 17 (and ch 15:1-17) are part of the LD I shall also have to take a brief look at the structure of the LD. Even the macrocontexts of other texts which need to be examined will be considered and examined only where it seems necessary.

## 8. A structural analysis of Chapter 17

A structural analysis of Chapter 17 will be done in order to determine the syntactic and semantic relations. At a later stage the same will be done with 20:19-31.

## 9. The characters involved in discipleship

In Ch 17 various characters are involved in the events spelled out there. Because each of these characters has a particular role to play in discipleship, their interaction and interrelatedness will also be discussed.

## 10. Detailed exegesis

In the detailed exegesis, which will focus on a synchronic approach, the following aspects will be considered:

- a) The meaning of words, phrases and contexts.<sup>49</sup>
- b) The denotative and associative meaning of words.
- c) The syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of words.<sup>50</sup>

The focus will not be on the lexical meaning of various important notions, but especially on the linguistic and semantic usage and coherence. In order to accomplish this, the denotative and associative meaning in a syntagmatic and paradigmatic investigation will be conducted, from where the necessary profiles will be constructed as motifs develop.<sup>51</sup> The associative context will be those words, concepts, elements and contexts that stand in an associative relation to the specific concept, topic or theme of this study, namely, 'discipleship in the FG'. The structural analysis will be an essential link in the spiral of understanding (Van der Watt 1986:35; also see Schnackenburg 1965:115ff) in order to arrive at a theory development in this study. I shall work with the structured text in front of me<sup>52</sup>. In order to postulate a frame of reference for a specific concept (i.e. discipleship), the profile of the whole concept will be considered. The individual practices find their position and perspective from the 'entire profile' of the semantic field (Van der Watt 1986:37). The structure analysis will help to determine, by way of the semantic relations, structure, cohesion, coherence, rhetoric organisation, contextual connections, etc, possible meanings on which further interpretation will be based and *vice versa*. This means that the whole exegetical procedure will be subjected to rigid control. This approach will help to avoid the pitfall of a one-dimensional perspective.

## 11. An integration of the agency-concept

The last phase of Du Toits' exegetical concept will be dealt with in the systematic conclusion regarding the mission of Jesus in relation to the mission of the disciples (discipleship).

In the light of what has been said thus far, I believe that the contours of this study have been spelled out.

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<sup>49</sup> This involves language usage. The vocabulary and syntax, the FE uses, will be examined. These govern the choice of words to express specific significations, their forms, their arrangement to express propositions, and their physical realizations as written symbols (Bachman 1990:87).

<sup>50</sup> In view of the stylistic techniques and the theologic-pictorial structure of the FG I am compelled to work paradigmatically.

<sup>51</sup> There will also be the awareness of the illegitimate totality transfer.

<sup>52</sup> The Nestle Aland (26th) text.



### **Technical comments regarding the structural analysis**

Owing to the fact that structural analysis plays an important role in this research, it is necessary to elaborate on it briefly.

The structure analysis of the discourse is an indication of the way the author chooses to construct his narration. His choice of structuring his thoughts helps us to understand his message, for the same thought can be formulated in more than one way (Combrink 1979:3; Mlakuzhyil 1987). In the subjective structuring of the text the exegete also gives meaning to the text the way he understands it.

The structure<sup>53</sup> analysis<sup>54</sup> to be followed in this study, will be that which was developed by members of the NT Society of South Africa, based on the pioneering work of J P Louw (1967) since the late sixties.<sup>55</sup> This analysis is not heuristic, but descriptive (Snyman 1991:98).<sup>56</sup>

Basic to this approach is the conviction that semantics is important even beyond the sentence (Combrink 1979:3). This method inquires about the cohesion of a text in order to demarcate in a verifiable manner the blocks (in other words, pericopes) to describe the trend of the argument (Snyman 1991:98).<sup>57</sup> The way in which different sentences are related to one another, i.e. the structure of the pericope or even of larger sections in their entirety, is of the utmost importance to the argument of that particular section (Combrink 1973:27ff; Roberts 1973:73ff; Du Toit 1974:54ff) and gives meaning to it. Snyman (1991:88f) expresses the direction of this method very accurately when he writes:

*'The basic premiss of this method ... is that meaningful relations not only exist between the words in a sentence, but also between larger parts of a text such as sentences, groups of sentences (clusters) and pericopes. It is therefore important to analyse the way a text is structured in order to grasp its meaning. ... It can be accomplished by conjunctions and other parts of speech (such as pronouns) by which a network of references is created. Repetition is also an important technique – repetition of both words and thoughts – as well as the arrangement of words in certain patterns (commonly known examples are chiasmus*

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<sup>53</sup> In the South African context different terms are used to indicate the same method. In 1974 Du Toit uses the term 'Discourse Analysis' to indicate the 'new linguistic method' of structural analysis (Du Toit 1974:54). The syntactic analysis of Van Rensburg (1988:415-438) on Luke 12:35-48 is a modified structural analysis. Wendland (1992:59ff) also speaks of 'Discourse analysis' but more in line with modern linguistics: '...we will be focusing upon both the linguistic as well as the closely related pragmatic aspects ...'. Snyman (1991:89) refers to this analysis as 'colon' analysis. Most recently Tolmie (1993) joined Louw (1979:4) in referring to 'Discourse analysis' to indicate the 'methodological approach by which the semantic content of language segments is analysed into its constituent units in order to restate the argument in terms of its taxonomic hierarchy'. In this study the reference 'structural analysis' will be used.

<sup>54</sup> This is only one of various approaches, to the analysis of discourse. See Snyman (1991:83ff) for an overview of various types of discourse analysis.

<sup>55</sup> Cf Louw, J P 1967. Dikaiosune in the Sermon on the Mount. In: *The Sermon of the Mount. Essays on Matthews 5-7*. Neotestamentica 1, 35-41.

<sup>56</sup> Louw (1979:2; cf also Deist 1978:260ff) remarked that discourse analysis (referring to structural analysis) should not be seen as an attempt at a complete exegesis of the text. According to Louw, discourse analysis constitutes an 'opening up' of the text to such an extent that a linguistic analysis can expound semantic content. As such it represents only one perspective of a text and should be seen as one of many mechanisms to accomplish interpretation.

<sup>57</sup> Very often the structuring of a text occurs not in the created product, but in the process of perception and creation (Wittig 1977:95).

and inclusio).<sup>58</sup> The result is a system of relations, which contributes in significant ways to the meaning of a text. To describe these relations and to determine the textual cohesion and coherence is the principal objective of colon analysis.'

The construction of a structure analysis<sup>59</sup> has to be carried out by an environment informed by certain criteria. Because it is a systematically ordered presentation of the proposed structure of meaning, it should fulfil two functions: Firstly, facilitate an understanding of the phenomenon of the text and, secondly, to bring to expression the exegete's interpretation. The following criteria are important in constructing a structure analysis:

#### (i) The division of the text into cola

A text can be divided into syntactical units called *cola*. According to Snyman (1991:90; cf Louw 1976:10; Du Toit 1977:1-10; Combrink 1979:4) 'A colon is a syntactic unit with clearly marked external dependencies. In terms of meaning that goes beyond a single word, it constitutes the smallest semantic unit. It always has a central matrix consisting of a nominal element (subject) and a verbal element (predicate), each having the possibility of extended features. As long as all these features can be grouped under one N + V, it forms one colon'.<sup>60</sup>

#### (ii) The structure markers

Structure markers are used to determine cohesion and can for instance be: (i) words belonging to the same semantic domain;<sup>61</sup> (ii) words within the text that mark a transition in the discourse, for example, a change in person or an alteration in the mood of the verb, etc. (Snyman 1991:90; Tolmie 1993:55). These markers are indicated in the structure analysis (in different ways: underlining, bold, italic, etc) in order to help the reader to grasp the occurrence of the various markers.

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<sup>58</sup> Even parallelisms and antitheses can be mentioned here.

<sup>59</sup> Despite its pitfalls, structure analysis has proved to be a viable method in the revealing of structure in a text and in following the trend of the argument. The advantages of such a structure analysis are that (i) it gives an indication of the exegete's interpretation of the text, no matter how objectively he has been led by the instructions of the text.

(ii) although a syntactical reading seems to be subjective, it leaves little room for completely different, or even contradictory, interpretations (Smit 1988:442) as is the case in theological readings.

(iii) although structure analysis is subjective analysis, it offers some further and more objective criteria from which basic decisions can be made.

(iv) since structure analysis contributes to our understanding of the structure of meaning in small units, it 'can also help us to distinguish the wood from the trees in larger units; and it does so by pointing to signals in the text that have all too often been overlooked' (Cotterell & Turner 1989:31).

(v) it helps the exegete to check his own understanding of how the argument of a passage is progressing (Cotterell & Turner 1989:223).

(vi) semantic structure analysis at least provides a framework within which relations within a cluster or paragraph may be discussed systematically.

(vii) it helps the exegete to make refined judgments on the basis of his literary, theological and socio-historical experience, and clearly indexed linguistic features of the text (Cotterell & Turner 1989:225).

<sup>60</sup> A colon can be broken down into smaller units if it is deemed necessary for the discussion of the relationships within the colon. The segments of each colon, *commata*, (also called *semi-cola*) will be indicated as follows: C1.1, C1.2, etc.

<sup>61</sup> The dictionary of Louw, Nida *et al* (1988) is a considerable aid here. This dictionary is based on semantic domains.

### (iii) Syntactic and Semantic relationships

To indicate syntactic relationships lines are drawn on the left-hand side of the text analysis to indicate how cola or segments of cola are related to each other in the text. To indicate semantic relationships, lines will be drawn on the right-hand side of the structure analysis.<sup>62</sup> Since, due to paradigmatic research, so many texts will be investigated, it will be impossible to discuss thoroughly in each case the syntactic and semantic relationships. This will be done in cases where there seem to be uncertainties, or difficulties, or in the case of important texts.

### (iv) Grouping of cola into clusters and blocks

The syntactic analysis is followed by the grouping of cola into clusters and blocks (pericopes) on account of (mainly) semantic considerations.<sup>63</sup> To accomplish this, logical and stylistic markers are used. They contribute in various ways, not only to demarcate a pericope or clusters, but especially to discover the theme or pivot point. In order to do so, certain words and phrases that occur repeatedly can be marked or identified. Clusters of cola can also be grouped together to form a bigger section or unit (Combrink 1979:6), identified by the use of alphabetic symbols. Together these form a language-event as these clusters are 'units of meaning' given by the exegete.

Now that we have indicated some formal aspects and spelled out the methodological approach, we can proceed with the characterization of the disciples in the FG.

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<sup>62</sup> Unfortunately no consistent approach is followed by the scholars practicing 'discourse analysis' in the description of semantic relationships. Du Toit (1981:4-6) pointed out the absence of a systematic description of the types of relationships between cola as one of the major shortcomings of 'discourse analysis'. Nida's (1983) suggestions for a systematic description of the types of relationships supports Du Toit's concern. Tolmie (1993:56) draws attention to the different ways in which the relationships between cola were described in the 'discourse analysis' of the first thirteen chapters of Matthew by ten different scholars in *Neotestamentica 11* in 1977. A comparison of some recent 'discourse analyses' prove this: Wendland, E R 1992. *Rhetoric of the word. An interactional discourse analysis of the Lord's prayer of John 17 and its communicative implications*. *Neotestamentica*, 27 (1) 59-77; Kruger, M A 1993. *ΤΟΥΤΟΙΣ in Jude :7*. *Neotestamentica* 27 (1) 119-132; Du Toit, A B 1993. *Die Kirche als Doxologische Gemeinschaft im Römerbrief*. *Neotestamentica* 27 (1) 69-77; Tolmie, D F 1993. *A Discourse analysis of John 17:1-26*. *Neotestamentica* 27 (2) 403-418. These examples are only a few abstractions. Nida (1975:50ff; 1983:99ff) offers three suggestions for a systematic description of semantic relations between nuclear structures. His approach is followed by Botha (1990:178ff); Snyman (1991:90); Gragg (1991:37ff) and Tolmie (1993:56ff).

<sup>63</sup> Linguistic, theologic-philosophical and socio-historical (Van Zyl 1982:35) considerations are also relevant and will be considered.