

ROOT LANGUAGE:

Thinking-Feeling-Talking-Writing from THE BODY.....Elliott #1590

And cf. Melvin Konner, THE TANGLED WIND (Holt, R, & W/82) --body determination, a bio-anthropologist. *Strong's is better for root-meanings; in NT, the best for clustering Eng. words around a root idea is Darton's MOD.CONCORD. TO THE NT.

My thinksheets show me as an authority on the art of plain speech in the sense that it takes a sinner to know righteousness. More evidence: I've gotten into more trouble from being understood than from not....This think-sheet is from ruminating on my experience, in our home this summer ('81), with many children age 9 mos. up: how near they are to their bodies! How little language they have other than body language!....For decades I've been convinced that all language is, at base, at the root, body language. My course "The Roots of the Roots" tries to get at this in Bible study. Preparing a list of body-action words, the student then uses concordances--esp. Young's,* which lets you get at the Hebrew-Aramaic-Greek roots without having to know those languages. Among the values of this approach: (1) You discover for yourself how down-to-earth and ACTION-oriented the Bible is; (2) You have a new tool for (a) getting at the basic human feelings of the Bible and so getting at your own feelings face-to-face with God's illumining and healing and commissioning Spirit; (3) You learn to make your own thinking-talking-writing plainer and more energy-filled and colorful, the Bible having modeled all this for you; (4) You recapitulate the evolution of human consciousness from concrete to abstract and are thus abler at "doing theology" (critiquing ideas and moving them back earthward into home-and-street-and-church-and-state action).

DON'T look at the lists below till you've made you own list of body-action words. Then compare your list with that of Rudolf Flesch, 146f of his excellent THE ART OF READABLE WRITING (Collier/49/67 paperback). "Verb-adverb combinations are a specialty of the English language," so play around with the 20 adverbs he lists alongside his list of 50 Anglo-Saxon body-action verbs, "simple verbs that describe movements of the human body." The combinations can express "practically all abstract ideas"("about a thousand"). These verbs may be languages' "oldest"--thus what philologists call "roots" (though Flesch does not use this metaphor on these 2 pp.). "This list [i.e., these two lists] will not only make your words simpler but will force you to streamline your sentences too." As especially in Hebrew and Aramaic, I add, "You'll learn to rely on verbs rather than nouns and adjectives" [more like Greek, I add].

	VERBS		ADVERBS	
bear	go	slip	about	forth
blow	hang	split	across	in
break	hold	stand	ahead	off
bring	keep	stay	along	on
call	lay	stick	apart	out
carry	let	strike	around	over
cast	look	take	aside	through
catch	make	talk	away	together
come	pick	tear	back	under
cut	pull	throw	down	up
do	push	tie		
draw	put	touch		
drive	run	turn		
drop	set	walk		
fall	shake	wear		
get	show	work		
give	skip			

 I would add, in addition to these body-movement verbs, some body-sensation verbs--especially see
 hear
 feel, taste, smell
 sense