by Lynell Zogbo and Ernst Wendland. 2000. Reading: UBS.

From the preface:
...in many parts of the world, much of Old Testament poetry has been translated like any other portion of Scripture. Some translators have arranged their translation into lines to give the impression of poetry, but this does not ensure that the beauty of the Hebrew forms is expressed.

This book is meant as a practical guide for the translator with limited or no background in Hebrew. Its main purpose is to convince translators that, in certain contexts, rendering biblical poetry as poetry in their own language is a worthy goal. It suggests ways translators can compare the stylistic techniques of the Hebrew text with those in their own language. In this way they can try to create the same poetic effect in their translations. It points out typical problems that Old Testament translators face and suggests ways to set out the text that will help the reader.

CONTENTS
(Presentation of authors’ outline is modified for this website posting)

1. TRANSLATING POETRY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT
1.1. What is poetry?
   1.1.1. Features of Poetry
   1.1.2. Differences between prose and poetry in Hebrew
1.2. Can poetry be translated from one language to another?
1.3. Questions for Reflection

2. LIFE SETTING AND GENRES IN HEBREW POETRY
2.1. Life setting of Hebrew poetry
2.2. Types of Hebrew poetry
   2.2.1. Genres in Hebrew
   2.2.2. Genres according to Gunkel
   2.2.3. Categorizing by the goal of speaking
2.3. Questions for Reflection

3. FEATURES OF HEBREW POETRY
3.1. Poetic devices that help define structure
   3.1.1. Parallelism
      3.1.1.1. Types of parallelism
      3.1.1.2. Word pairs in parallel lines
      3.1.1.3. Beyond Lowth's classification
      3.1.1.4. More complicated patterns
   3.1.2. Chiastic structures
   3.1.3. Refrains
   3.1.4. Envelope or Inclusio
3.2. Sound effects in Hebrew poetry
   3.2.1. Stress, meter, and rhythm
   3.2.2. Alliteration
   3.2.3. Assonance
   3.2.4. Rhyme
   3.2.5. Wordplay
3.3. Stylistic features found throughout Hebrew literature
3.3.1. Figures of Speech
   3.3.1.1. Similes and Metaphors
   3.3.1.2. Personification and anthropomorphism
   3.3.1.3. Part-whole relationships
   3.3.1.4. Standard figures
3.3.2. Rhetorical and leading questions
3.3.3. Hyperbole, irony and sarcasm
3.3.4. Key words
3.3.5. Shifting persons
3.4. Poetic units
   3.4.1. Strophes
   3.4.2. Stanzas
3.5. Divergence from an established pattern
3.6. Questions for Reflection

4. GUIDELINES FOR TRANSFERRING BIBLICAL POETRY INTO TARGET LANGUAGES
4.1. When should poetry be translated as poetry?
   4.1.1. Matching subject matter and the goal of speaking
   4.1.2. Examples of possible poetic matches
      4.1.2.1. Laments
      4.1.2.2. Love poetry
      4.1.2.3. Praise songs
      4.1.2.4. Proverbs
      4.1.2.5. Narrative and historical poetry
      4.1.2.6. Prophetic poetry
      4.1.2.7. Wisdom or didactic poetry
   4.1.3. Summary of proposed method of translating poetry
4.2. Preserving the poetic flavor of the original
4.3. Stylistic matches
   4.3.1. Matches in structure
      4.3.1.1. Parallelism
         4.3.1.1.1. Grammatical parallelism
         4.3.1.1.2. Developmental or dynamic parallelism
         4.3.1.1.3. Stairstep parallelism
      4.3.1.2. Inclusios and refrains
      4.3.1.3. Chiastic structures
   4.3.2. The use of sound effects
      4.3.2.1. Alliteration and assonance
      4.3.2.2. Rhythm
      4.3.2.3. Rhyme
      4.3.2.4. Wordplay
      4.3.2.5. Ideophones
   4.3.3. Rhetorical and leading questions
   4.3.4. Figurative language
   4.3.5. Word order
   4.3.6. Shifting persons
4.4. Questions for Reflection
5. SOME PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE TRANSLATION OF POETRY

5.1. Problems relating to parallel lines
   5.1.1. Problems relating to word pairs
      5.1.1.1. Ordering of word pairs
      5.1.1.2. Weighing the importance of word pairs
      5.1.1.3. Cultural considerations
      5.1.1.4. Final tips on word pairs
   5.1.2. Guidelines for collapsing pairs or lines
      5.1.2.1. Collapsing for style and naturalness
      5.1.2.2. Collapsing to avoid misunderstanding
   5.1.3. The misleading "and" connection
   5.1.4. Problems of temporal ordering
   5.1.5. Parallel lines with the "for" conjunction
   5.1.6. Further guidelines for collapsing parallel lines

5.2. Repetition and ellipsis
   5.2.1.1. Too much repetition in the source text
   5.2.1.2. Not enough repetition in the source text
   5.2.1.3. How to deal with ellipsis

5.3. Problems with poetic language
   5.3.1. The importance of word choice
   5.3.2. Translating exotic or unknown vocabulary
   5.3.3. Identifying and retaining key figures
   5.3.4. Creatively adapting figures of speech
   5.3.5. Eliminating figures of speech
   5.3.6. When the meaning of a figure is uncertain

5.4. Problems with shifting persons

5.5. Basic approaches to translating poetry
   5.5.1. Footnotes
   5.5.2. A more literal approach
   5.5.3. Freer approaches: "re-creation"
   5.5.4. Final suggestions

5.6. Questions for review

6. THE IMPORTANCE OF FORMAT:
   LINING UP THE POETIC TEXT ON THE PRINTED PAGE
   6.1. The shape of the translated text
   6.2. Displaying a poetic text on the printed page
   6.3. Special problems in formatting
      6.3.1. Mixed genres
      6.3.2. Formatting envelope structures
      6.3.3. Formatting for understanding
      6.3.4. Formatting the Song of Songs
   6.4. The importance of punctuation
      6.4.1. Guidelines for formatting
      6.4.2. A practical example
   6.5. Questions for Reflection

7. HOW POETIC STRUCTURES CAN HELP DETERMINE MEANING
   7.1. Poetic structure and variant meanings
   7.2. Solving more difficult texts
   7.3. Signaling varying interpretations of a poetic text
   7.4. Pushing the notion of poetic structures too far
   7.5. Questions for reflection
8. TRANSLATING OLD TESTAMENT POETRY IN A NEW TESTAMENT CONTEXT

8.1. The nature of Old Testament quotes
   8.1.1. Scriptural allusions
   8.1.2. Direct quotes from the Old Testament

8.2. Preserving key terms in quotes

8.3. Preserving the link between the quote and the text

8.4. Treating quotes as known information

8.5. Translating the text before us

8.6. Avoid "Christianizing" Old Testament quotes

8.7. Questions for reflection

9. APPENDICES


9.2. Translating Psalm in Traditional Afar Poetry, by Loren F Bliese

9.3. Philippine Poetry and Bible Translation, by Louis Dorn

9.4. Guidelines for Translating Poetry in Kinyarwanda, by Giles Williams

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

11. GLOSSARY

12. BIBLE REFERENCES