

湖南师范大学

硕士学位论文

圣经新约新国际版本的阐释学研究

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20081001

摘 要

圣经的翻译是非常多样的，圣经是历史上被阅读得最多的文本，同时也是被翻译得最多的文本。圣经已经被翻译成 2,462 种文字，发行量早已过数十亿，而且这个数字每年还在以千万计增加。在诸多翻译中，圣经的英文翻译是最活跃的，版本数量也最多。

圣经研究一般可分为三大种类：把圣经当宗教经典，当文学经典，当纯文学。不可避免地，圣经具有深刻的宗教烙印，这种性质也必然传承到圣经的译本中。本文选择把圣经当宗教经典研究，并且限于篇幅，只研究新约部分。传统上而言，圣经翻译者会坚持直译策略，避免加入自己的解释。但是，在部分新出的圣经翻译中，主观性的特点渐浓，表证一种多元翻译原则已经比以往更多地被使用。

本文将跳出传统的直译意译之争，使用阐释翻译理论四步骤——信赖、侵入、吸收、补偿来进行各版本的评价。

阐释翻译四步骤理论是乔治·斯坦纳于 1975 在《通天塔之后——语言和文化面面观》提出来的。这个理论从新的角度来看翻译。他将哲学阐释学运用到翻译中，将翻译看成是具有历史性的理解。在这个过程中，翻译者被赋予了独特的角色，那就是通过对翻译的把持，实现文本视阈和读者视阈的融合，实现历史性的理解。这个翻译理论把翻译推到了哲学上一个更高的层次，拓宽了翻译的前景。

本文主体分六大部分：

第一章 介绍传统翻译理论发展到现代翻译理论的过程，指出翻译的阐释性根源于两种语言互换过程的矛盾，即语言在词汇、语法及语意中心、语言对应项缺失三层面的差异。翻译的阐释性也决定了翻译从广义上而言是两个文本谈判的过程，也是译者发挥能动性，在客观文本约束下的阐释的过程。

第二章 介绍阐释理论的源与流，指出阐释学的发展与翻译的发展内部的融合-分离-再融合的动态过程。随后阐述乔治·斯坦纳的翻译阐释四步骤理论（信赖、侵入、吸收、补偿）以及四步骤的深层意

义。

第三章 使用翻译阐释理论对比分析 KJV 与 NIV，指出与 NIV 比，KJV 在补偿层上具有特色。

第四章 使用翻译阐释理论对比分析 NW 与 NIV，指出 NW 在信赖层面具有特色。

第五章 使用翻译阐释理论对比分析 NRSV 与 NIV，指出 NRSV 在侵入和吸收层面具有特色。

第六章 使用翻译阐释理论重点分析 NIV 与其他三个版本的阐释上的不同。通过更大范围内的译本比较，阐明各个译本在翻译风格上其实具有内在的连贯性，而这连贯的翻译习惯使得不同的译本各具风貌。

文章最后得出结论，指出译本的多样性来自于译者在翻译过程中，在阐释的四个阶段方面的不同理解不同及差异化的处理方式。译者在翻译过程中总会或多或少地把自己的主观理解带入翻译过程中，使得译文呈现迥异的风格特征。译本各有高下，应具体分析，不应独尊一本，贬抑其他。NIV 译本作为一个相对比较优秀的译本，在侵入阶段对原文意义把持清晰，在吸收阶段注重当前读者的语言使用习惯，在补偿阶段不避讳使用多样的手法，使得译本整体清晰而真确。

要补充说明的是，由于作者不通希伯来语和希腊语，需要依赖其他资源来说明所举例子的原意。虽然如此，但作者把各个译本的意思相互参考，一定程度上弥补了本文的客观性和说服力。

关键词：圣经翻译；新国际版本；阐释学；对比研究

Abstract

Translations of the Bible are extremely varied. The Bible is the most read book in history, and most translated one. Numerous copies have been distributed with the number still growing by tens of millions each year. It has been translated into 2,462 languages, including languages on the verge of extinct or spoken by only a few people. Compared with translations in other languages, English translations are most active and productive. In this thesis, the author will review the history of translation and hermeneutics in the West, analyze the characteristics and rules of four New Testament translations, and explain the reasons behind these variations, so as to help the understanding of translation practice.

The Bible can be viewed and studied from different angles—a religious classic, classical literature, or pure literature. As a religious book written for Christians, the Bible is inherent with strong religion influence and so do the Bible translations. This thesis chooses to treat the Bible as a religious classic, and only New Testament will be discussed due to limitations of length.

Traditionally, translators of the Bible would adhere to a literal translation strategy and avoid paraphrasing. However, the growing subjectivity is practiced far more frequently than before. Here, the thesis will not be involved in the literal-free-argument, but focus on the fourfold hermeneutic translation motion theory, namely the four-steps of trust, aggression, incorporation and compensation.

George Steiner introduced fourfold hermeneutic translation motion theory in 1975, with the publishing of *After Babel, Aspects of Language and Translation*. This theory takes a fresh look at translation in itself by considering translating as a process of historical understanding rather than exploring on the polar ends of “literal” or “free”. In this process, translator is granted a unique role of merging both horizons of text and readers together, making understanding at a higher level possible by maneuvering the translating direction. This theory thus greatly pushed the study of translating higher in the ladder of philosophy and created an

unprecedented prospect.

This thesis contains an introduction, six chapters and a conclusion:

Chapter One introduces translation theory's development. Translation in essence is a communication process of language. The existence of language differences in three layers makes "faultless" transfer on lexical level impossible. On the other hand, translated text has an intuitive bond with original text, thus a "totally free" translation is also impossible. Taking these two facts into consideration, it becomes clear that a trend toward a translator-centered practice is inevitable, and translation should be a negotiation between two texts.

Chapter Two introduces hermeneutics theory, especially fourfold hermeneutic translation motion theory. George Steiner introduces four new concepts---trust, aggression, incorporation and compensation into the field.

Chapter Three compares King James Version(KJV) with New International Version(NIV). Features of KJV are explored and discussed.

Chapter Four makes a comparison between the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures (NW) and NIV. Though being seen as a biased translation, the version is still read widely among specific readers. The thesis checks the soundness of this translation.

Chapter Five compares New Revised Standard Version(NRSV) with NIV. NRSV claims to be the best literal translation, and the thesis reviews its credibility by taking some samples.

Chapter Six makes a thorough comparative study between NIV and the other three translations. As the comparison comes to cover a wider range of translations, each translation shows a comparatively stable "translation style".

At the end of this thesis, it draws the conclusion that translators of each translation have all exercised great efforts in their translating and demonstrated verified translation strategies. It is unfair to advocate one translation while denying others. Consciously or not, translators exercise subjectivity that is actually the outcome of their differed hermeneutic approach in translation. By exercising differed practice in the four stages of translation, translators make the original text come to

life in the target language showing distinctive features. NIV excels among these translations in its strong aggression in the meaning of the original text, close corporation with current usage of English and diversified and brave compensation to restore the meaning in the target text.

It has to be stated that because of the author's lack of knowledge in Hebrew and Greek, the thesis relies on the reference of other resources to exemplify meaning of some verses; hence it may lack strong proof from the original text. However, examples are critically studied and cross-referenced for an objective point of view.

Key Words: Bible Translation; NIV; Hermeneutics; Comparison

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2008年12月6日

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Introduction

In this thesis, the author attempts to make a study of New International Version (NIV) of New Testament from the perspective of Fourfold Hermeneutics Translation Motion Theory suggested by George Steiner.

0.1 Objective of the Research

The Bible has long been the subject of translation practice and study, while its English translations are the most active ones.

The word “Bible” has its origin in Greek word “biblia”, which means “outstanding books”. Basically, it includes Old Testament (39 books) and New Testament (27 books). Old Testament is written mostly in classical Hebrew and partly in Aramaic while New Testament is written in less classical Greek.

The necessity of translation of the Bible stems from ‘tension’ existing between Bible’s forever adaptability and historical feature. While reading the Bible, we have two tasks to finish, one is to find about the meaning of the scripture, which is called Jiejing (exegesis); the other is to learn about the same significance under current new and different circumstances, which is called Shijing (hermeneutics).

Similarly, when reading the Bible, two basic questions ought to be asked for a better understanding. One is about content and the other one is relevant with context (including historical context and literary context). (Gorden Fee, Douglas Stuart 2005: 9)

New International Version (NIV) of New Testament was first published in 1973 and was revised in 1978. Since 1987, it has become the most popular translation and has the biggest readership.

The thesis studies this translation with reference to other three popular translations——King James Version (KJV), New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) and New World Translation (NW).

0.2 Significance of the Research

In the Middle Ages, Church kept the supreme right of explaining the Bible to itself and did not permit translation of the Bible at all. Although Jerome's Vulgate was a translation of Latin from Greek, it was decreed to be the only permitted Bible whereas anyone who translated the Bible would be sentenced to death penalty.

However, determined to make the Bible reachable and understood by common people, translators risked their lives and secretly translated the Bible into secular European languages. Among them, John Wycliffe was a star at dawn, with the fact that he translated the first full English version of the Bible in 1382. William Tyndale translated the first printed English Bible in 1534 and was arrested and hanged two years later. Tyndale thus gained his fame as "the Father of English Bible".

From these, it was apparent that the Bible translators shared a proud tradition of sacrifice for the Bible. By choosing the Bible as their translation target, they revealed their position of utmost trust in the text, believing that this is a cause worthy of their translating. These fearless martyrs were determined to make the meaning be available to more people, whatever the price was.

Like opening a window so as to let air in, breaking a shell so as to eat kernel, and removing the cover of a well so as to fetch water, the translating also removed hazards on the path of understanding the Bible. Translation played an essential role in the rise and development of Christianity and it can be said that had it not been translation, there would have been no full fusing of Greek and Hebrew cultures, let alone popularization of the Bible and Christianity. As a source of both information and inspiration, the Bible translations have to be accurate and inspiring simultaneously.

Translations of the Bible have long acted as stimulations for the development of translation theory. From St. Jerome to Eugene Nida, numerous prestigious translation theorists have derived part of their theories from Bible translating practices. In addition, the persistent efforts made by generations of translators in translating the Bible are great examples for us to explore factors in translating process, thus to guide

translating practice and to optimize translation system.

Furthermore, globalization has put us in frequent contact with people with Christianity belief. Mass media from western world put one under exposure of religious influence. How to understand the world better and improve the quality of communication with westerners make it necessary for one to learn about the Bible.

NIV is both welcomed and heavily debated ever since its debut in 1973. This thesis gives NIV a new appraisal from the angle of Fourfold Hermeneutics Translation Motion Theory.

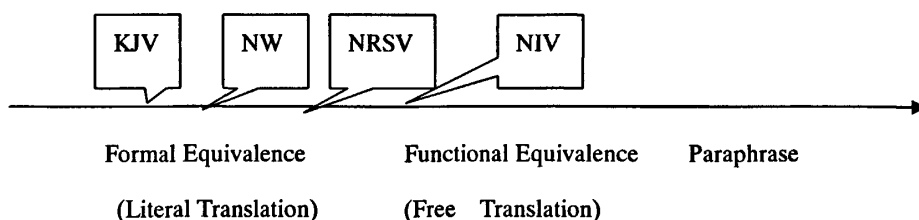
0.3 The Research Methodology

The thesis mainly takes up a comparative methodology.

Firstly, translation and hermeneutics are compared for a better understanding of both terms. By doing so, a common trend in both fields is denoted, which is the gradual visibility of subjectivity.

Secondly, four versions are compared followed with author's explanation of possible reasons behind the differences.

For an easier comparison, the versions are listed according to their level of literary. The rank is not an absolute one, but more of a basic scale.



(Chart 0.1)

KJV: King James Version (1611)

NW: New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1961)

NRSV: New Revised Standard Version(1989)

NIV: New International Version (1973)

From the chart above, we can see that King James Version(KJV) is the most literal of all. New World Translation (NW) could be placed beside KJV, as it is a literal translation as well.

NRSV belongs to the camp of literal translation, yet it ranks quite low in the ladder. NIV, although is usually labeled “free translation”, actually does not stay far away from NRSV. NIV is called by some scholars “the most literal” free translation. In this sense, NRSV and NIV are quite close in their translation strategy. Even so, they still have apparent differences in other aspects.

Lacking the knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, which the Bible was written in, the author has to rely on the translation of other resources for literal meaning of certain verses. This will weaken the persuading strength of this thesis of course, and a cross-reference of translations is applied to weigh down the negative impact. In fact, to refer to at least two translations when reading the Bible is the safest way to avoid misunderstanding; and this method is usually recommended for a novice of the Bible.

0.4 The Structure of the Thesis

Besides introduction and conclusion, this thesis contains seven chapters:

Chapter One introduces Translation Theory and its development, in the hope to manifest a clear steer of direction toward culture.

Chapter Two introduces the Development of Hermeneutics Theory, especially the Fourfold Hermeneutics Translation Motion Theory. George Steiner breaks the translation into four solid stages: trust, penetration (aggression), embodiment (incorporation) and restitution (compensation). And these steps will be used in analyzing the translations in the following chapters.

Chapter Three compares New International Version(NIV) with King James Version(KJV). Though there are minor differences in **Compensation** stage, KJV is still a vivid translation, worthy of readers' trust and admiration.

Chapter Four compares NIV with the New World Translation(NW). NW is seen

as a biased translation by many Christians, but that does not mean NW is worthless. It differs from NIV in some key concepts, and this reflects difference in the **Trust** stage. In all, it is still a literal and mostly sound translation.

Chapter Five compares NIV with New Revised Standard Version(NRSV). The thesis discovers the almost prevalent vagueness in NRSV that makes it a poor choice for first learners. However, these differences mainly cluster in the **Aggression** and **Incorporation** stage.

Chapter Six gives NIV a thorough appraisal and subjectivity is evaluated case by case. In comparing the different approach to some verses, each translation demonstrates a comparatively stable style. And these examples show that translators actually are coherent and consistent in their translation practice.

Fourfold Hermeneutics Translation Motion Theory is used as a tool for a thorough and in-depth case study of New International Version(NIV). The thesis comes to the conclusion that as translation has entered into a new era of emphasizing the role of translator and admitting the gradual visibility of translator's subjectivity, a conscious Hermeneutical approach is helpful in analyzing soundness and correctness of translation.

Chapter One

Development of Translation Theory

1.1 Traditional Polar Terminologies in Translation Field

Translators and researchers have strived to give “translation” a definition from different viewpoints that can be widely accepted. Unfortunately, like the case in other terms such as “language” or “culture”, a universally accepted definition for “translation” has not been found yet. Nevertheless, in the very process of finding a definition, with widespread and persistent translating practice, certain features of translation are being discovered.

In the realm of translation, polar terminologies mushroomed as answers to the question “What is translation?” Besides “literal vs. free translation”, we have “word-for-word translation vs. sense-for-sense translation”(Jerome), “Dynamic Equivalence vs. Formal Equivalence”(Nida 1964); “overt translation vs. covert translation”(House 1977) “direct translation vs. indirect translation”, “adequacy vs. acceptability”(Toury 1980, 1995), “semantic translation vs. communicative translation”(Newmark 1981/1988), “foreignizing translation vs. domesticating translation”(Venuti 1995), and the list continues till today.

All these different opinions stem from the existence of tension between “What does the text say?” and “What does the text mean?” The coexistence of “text” and “meaning” forges translation into a dilemma seemingly unsolvable.

“The traditional focus on normative structures of equivalence has stifled translators’ creativity. This does not mean that translators laboring under normative theoretical regimes have never been creative; but the systematic restriction of translators’ expressive freedom of movement has had a negative impact on translators.”(Doug Robinson, 1998:93)

Besides linguistic factors such as words, syntax, texts, there are far more factors influencing the translating process---culture, historical background, political influence, religion, target text readers, author and translator, so on and so forth. Actually there are so many factors involved that make translating a “Mission Impossible”. No wonder there is the acclaim about the in-translatability of translation, with the famous saying “Translator, traitor” and the whine “Beauty but not faithful”.

Translation on the language level is like the tip of an iceberg. It is the most visible part of an activity sometimes described as cultural translation. That is to say, the road of exploring translation only from linguistic aspect has come to an end. Indeed, translation is closely related to languages, but it also has other aspects that have nothing to do with languages. So, translation needs theoretical tools from other realms to explain the phenomena and guide translation practices.

1.2 Translation, not “Transfer” on lexical level

A very bad convention has been developed in the translation field, that is, to rigidify the translating practice and to simply seek for the “equivalent” project of the original text. Some even define translation as a process of transferring corresponding words from source language to the target language. In fact, this conception is far too limited. Had this been the case, it would be possible to ask any person to be a translator, as long as this person is able to check a dictionary.

Fredric M. Renner deemed that, in the traditional western translation theories hermeneutics actually works as a common thread linking Cicero to Tytlor. Translating can be better called a process of hermeneutics than a transfer of languages codes. The “transfer of language” is not sound as languages differ from each other in three levels.

1.2.1 Differences in Characters Between Languages

The dramatic differences between characters made translation hermeneutics

necessary. Take Chinese and English as examples.

Different from English, Chinese characters **depict** meaning. “The unique feature of Chinese characters that bear the three functions of shape, sound and meaning together makes this language more flexible and convenient for the formation, linearity and aggregation of structured meaning”. (彭秋荣 1996: 42)(translated by the author) For example, the Chinese “火” both have the meaning of “fire” and the image of a fire burning.

On the other hand, “English and many other western languages differ from Chinese in that words manifest sounds. The character’s shape, sound and meaning conjures in an arbitrary way; the connection between words and ideas indirect. And people pay more attention on how it sounds when using this language.” (ibid, 42)

For example, the word “hush” means “be quiet”, the short but rotund [ʌ] connote demand while the [j] accompanies the word has a settling effect on one’s nerve.

1.2.2 Differences in Syntax and Meaning Focus

Different languages have respective featured syntax and meaning focus. Without in-depth knowledge of both languages, it would be hard to grasp the accurate meaning and thus would fault in the first step of translating.

English texts are strictly organized centering around one predicate verb; while Chinese texts are less organized, loosely organized under one topic, with deep layer meaning fluent and smooth.

The focus on the meaning for Chinese and the focus on the form for English made Chinese poetry almost a taboo area for translators. For instance, “葡萄美酒夜光杯”, is rendered into “They are about to drink/the finest wine from Evening Radiance cups”. (ibid , 42) The addition of “They” “are about to” “the” “from” has cast away the sudden montage of the original text, instead, a tedious plain picture is drawn.

1.2.3 Phenomena of Non-correspondence in Meaning

Even if one has ample knowledge of both languages, he would still feel at loss when faced with the non-correspondence of meaning. More often than not, he might find that he is short of words, not because he can't find it, but because there isn't any at all to correspond the exact meaning that the word project.

This is especially the case when cultural vocabulary is involved. For example, when translating the word “阿弥陀佛！” Here, we can translate it as “Amitabha”, or “Buddha bless you”, or “God bless you”.

The transliterate “Amitabha” retains the sound, but does not convey anything meaningful to target text readers who do not know about Buddhism.

“Buddha bless you” sounds unnatural to native speaker; while “God bless you” is natural English, it changes the religious realm.

Actually there exist so much alien concepts and practices that “equivalents” cannot be assumed to exist. “British writer Salman Rushdie once suggested in his novel *Shame*, that to understand a culture, one should focus on its untranslatable words.” (Peter Burke, 2005:5)

1.3 Translation, not “Transform” Into a Totally Free “Afterlife”

Jacques Derrida from Deconstruction camp declares that translator is a creator in that translating is a process of creating new expression and that the meaning of text is created not by the original text, but by the target text. Furthermore, Derrida suggests that translation can be defined as “controlled transform”, in that original text regains a life after each translating.

Actually that is not true. Varied as the meaning of a text may be, the significance of the text exists undeniably. The “existence of significance” is based on the assumption that “there should be something waiting for us to explore”. If that “something” does not exist, the whole translation becomes trees without root and spring without source. The uncertainty can be wiped off with the common nature of

human practice, as “there is nothing new under the Sun”. Meanwhile, the “something” of a text is not a physical existence, but an “understanding” based on the original text, bonded with the understanding efforts of translators and readers.

That is to say, on the one hand, the translator does not have to be a servant and laboriously transfer words after words; on the other hand, the translator is neither granted a supreme right to rule over the original text and put it at his disposal.

In other words, translation involves understanding, which is distinctively subjective, hence unavoidably gains a tint of arbitrariness. But this process should start from and end at a common point——original text. No translation could get rid of the restraints set forth by the original text and live on its own, even though some translations are more successful in the target culture than the original text does in its own culture.

The original text acts as the frame of reference system and should be relied on for accuracy and closeness in style. Translator should curb his urge to surpass it even if he is able to. Target readers might be overwhelmed by the master skills demonstrated in the translation, but in the evaluation system of translation, to compete with the original text is only a vulgar display.

1.4 A Third Way for Translation: Negotiating Between Two Texts

Now that the translator is in this awkward situation: he is stuck between the original text and the target text. He is neither allowed to follow too closely the original text, nor is he able to throw away the original text and recreate one on his own. In fact, he is left with only one choice----to negotiate between two texts and gain the maximum profit from negotiation.

Translator, as a special reader who understands both languages and has special authority to go between, needs to mediate between two texts and finalize the proposal into an agreement.

As translation in itself has evolved into a new stage, so does the role of the

translator. In the before, translator is seen as a mechanic submissive servant, timidly weighing choice of words, correctness of syntax and coherence of text. But, as translation comes to be more cultural and historical oriented, translator is more active in the process, and he is more confident in showing his opinions, whereas still keep in mind the rule of fidelity. The emergence of more divergent Bible translations is a proof of the confidence inherent in respective translators.

Chapter Two

Fourfold Hermeneutic Translation Motion Theory

2.1 Development of Hermeneutics Theory

Firstly, translation practice of the Bible directly led to the question of how to explore meaning of text; thus came Biblical Hermeneutics.

Secondly, Schleiermacher from Classical Hermeneutics took the view that “final meaning” existed and that an author possessed absolute authority. In this light, translator ought to understand both the meaning of the text and that of the author.

Classical Hermeneutics was no longer merely a text study tool; instead, it became a philosophy method. A separation of study objects was clear as both Translation and Hermeneutics developed on their own.

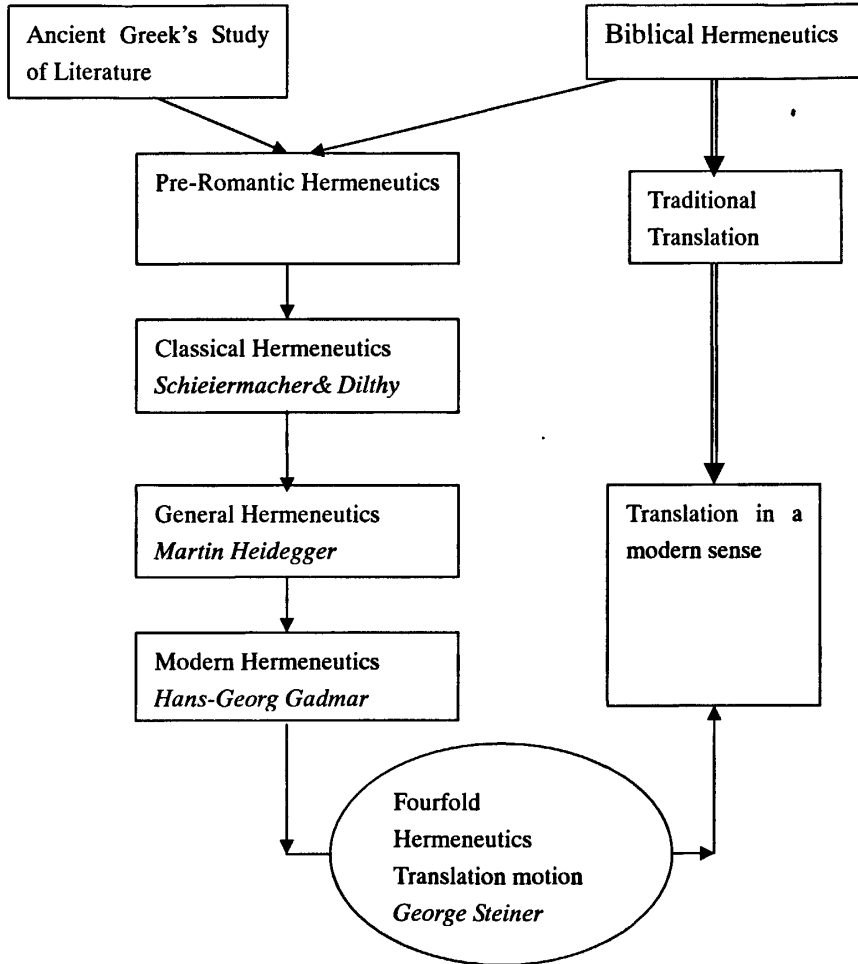
Thirdly came Heidegger and his student Gadamer, two representatives of Philosophical Hermeneutics. Different from the first and second stage, they denied the “final meaning” of a text. To them, every reading was a new translation. Together they switched the direction of searching from a “pure objective meaning” to an “understanding is translating” attitude, thus signifies the subjectivity of translator by switching translator from a spectator to a major player. Notice that here “understanding” became the most fundamental goal and task of Hermeneutics.

“...The discovery of Walter Benjamin’s paper ‘Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers’, originally published in 1923, together with the influence of Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadmaer, has caused a reversion to hermeneutic, almost metaphysical inquiries into translation and interpretation.” (Steiner, 2001:250)

George Steiner borrowed Philosophical Hermeneutics theory and used it to explain various phenomena of translation for both inter and intra languages. Thus, Translation and Hermeneutics re-cooperate for a better understanding of Translation

theory and practice.

The evolvement of Hermeneutics together with its relationship with translation can be illustrated in the chart below.



(Chart 2.1)

2.1.1 Biblical Hermeneutics

Biblical Hermeneutics, together with Ancient Greek's Study of Literature, made up the two sources for the forming of Hermeneutics in the Western world.

By definition, Biblical Hermeneutics was the science of knowing how to

properly interpret various types of literature found in the Bible. When reading the Bible, it was not recommended to read between lines and paraphrase freely. However, sticking to special verses and ignoring what they meant was also wrong.

The task for Biblical Hermeneutics is never easy. Besides language barriers, historical differences also drive us further from understanding the Bible. It was interesting to note that, although the Bible was called the words of God, He did not write in commands, but told what he meant through various types of literature, such as psalm, prophecy, proverb or law. Although the Bible had only one sole role, the God, He made his meaning explicit by involving the lives of people directly. In this sense, the Bible did not exist in a vacuum, but in certain cultural and historical background.

Therefore, Biblical Hermeneutics kept us faithful to the intended meaning of Scripture and away from allegorizing and symbolizing Bible verses and passages. Taking a historically, grammatically, and contextually relevant attitude when studying the Bible was recommended.

However, the theory was still in its early stage of embryo in the evolvement of Hermeneutics, and translator did not hold important position in the practice of Biblical Hermeneutics.

2.1.2 Classical Hermeneutics

Biblical Hermeneutics contributed greatly to the forming of Hermeneutics, yet it owed to Schleiermacher and Dilthey to transit it from partial to general. Schleiermacher's theory included interpretation at grammatical and psychological level. The former required the comprehension of words and sentences; the latter required recognition of the intentions behind words and sentences. A translation process was vividly described as a dialogue between the interpreter and the text. And the interpreter could adopt either a "reader-centered" or "author-centered" approach. For the first time, the role of translator was assigned more importance in the translating process.

Dilthey furthered Schleimacher's theory to history and human sciences. He emphasized that the texts were products of certain times and their meanings were constrained by two things, one was the orientation to values of their period, the other was the web of the author's plan and experience. Both historical period and social context were reflected in the meaning. Thus a circle was to be traced from text to the author's biography and immediate historical backgrounds; then came back to the text. As each interpretation would constrain its subsequent refinements, the circle would eventually come to cease.

In this stage, Hermeneutics evolves from a technique of interpretation to a science of interpretation.

2.1.3 General Hermeneutics

Martin Heidegger shifted Hermeneutics from epistemology to ontology. He declared that to "be" is to understand, to interpret the world in terms of one's own possibilities.

He claimed that a "fore-structure" existed that would influence the interpretation. Awareness for the existence of "fore-structure" was necessary. He deemed consciousness as a formation of historically lived experience. Understanding in his eyes was not the way we know the world, but the way we were.

His theory made Hermeneutics jump from a theory of interpretation to an existential understanding. In this sense, interpretation was no longer a general logical method, but a conscious recognition of one's own world.

"Understanding gained its unprecedented position of ontology in the theory of philosophical hermeneutics, and translating, as it shares some core characteristics of "trans-pass" and "communicate", hence gained some streak of ontology as well."(耿强,2006:39) (translated by the author)

2.1.4 Modern Hermeneutics

Hans-Georg Gadamer set understanding as the core of Hermeneutics and pointed out the universality of hermeneutics. He claimed that there were three principles of hermeneutics——historicity of understanding, fusion of horizons and effected history.

Firstly, people were equipped with an ability to understand so that they could live together. However, the historicity, being a basic fact of human existence, determined that we were not immune to the limitation of particularity and limitation of our time. Therefore, our understanding was partial, governed by prejudices and preconception.

“No semantic form is timeless. When using a word we wake into resonance, as it were, its entire previous history. A text is embedded in specific historical time; it has what linguists call a diachronic structure. To read fully is to restore all that one can of the immediacies of value and intent in which speech actually occurs.” (Steiner, 2001: 24)

Secondly, influenced by the historicity of understanding, there comes effected history. Here, history is called “effected history”, which means that history is not an objective existence independent from interpreter. In fact, it is a combination of self and others, a relationship in essence.

Thirdly, a fusion of horizons is needed for real communication. Horizon means a common framework of perception——the starting point, angles and possible prospects. By “fusion of horizons”, a dialectical interaction was set up between the expectation of the interpreter and the meaning of the text. Translator, by transcending his own horizon and pulling the text beyond its original horizon, made the final fusion of horizons possible.

Traditional Hermeneutics stuck to the opinion that the meaning of a text was only and fixed, that the translator had to follow closely what the text meant. However, Gadamer pointed out that the purpose of Hermeneutics was to understand and explain what the text means **to us**.

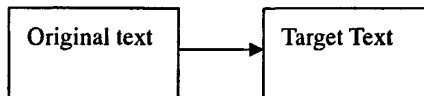
“Yet the task is never an easy one. Transparent translation between languages and cultures is almost impossible, obscured by the fact that the project of one word in the other language is historical and arbitral. Far away from being neutral, translation becomes a battlefield where conflicts of all kinds wrestle bitterly.” (刘禾, 1999:36) (translated by the author)

2.2 New Ideas of Hermeneutics Applied to Translation

After the introduction of Hermeneutics in Translation field, three close-connected ideas are also apparent. First is the change of starting point of translation; then the role of translator; at last the “communication as understanding” judgement.

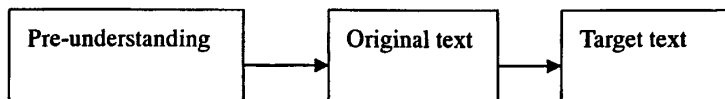
2.2.1 Starting Point: From Original Text to Pre-Understanding

In the before, people consciously or not, would seek for the best translation. The process of translating can be illustrated as follows:



(Chart 2.2)

Now that the introduction to hermeneutics changed the above chart to:



(Chart 2.3)

With pre-understanding involved, the translating process bear a hint of subjectivity of the translator.

2.2.2 Role of Translator

The Hermeneutics approach of translation changes the role of translator all and

over. To put in other words, it frees the translator from a never-ending search for a perfect target text impossible to find, instead, it grants the translator considerate power so that he can reach for a better target text.

“Translating is a process that does not exclude multi-dimensional exploration. To some extent, it is subjective and relative, which coincide with the viewpoint of modern hermeneutics.” (朱桂成, 2000: 24)

So, with “multi-dimensional exploration” possible, translator is given more freedom and options to translate a version different from prior ones, thus making re-translation a practical and meaningful practice.

Of course, translator has to control subjectivity so that his translations do not exceed reasonable scope. Before the introduction of pre-understanding, the process of translating is mostly objective, even though the subjective aspect may hidden in the single action between Source and Target Text, “the original text” still take the lead. Now that with the apparent element of “pre-understanding”, the translator take the role of leading the whole process and thus the possibility for better translation and mistranslation have both increased.

2.2.3 Communication as Understanding

“Any model of communication is at the same time a model of translation, of a vertical or horizontal transfer of significance. No two historical epochs, no two social classes, no two localities use words and syntax to signify exactly the same things, to send identical signals of valuation and inference.”(Steiner, 2001:47)

The ever-changing nature of communication makes it impossible to reach a full communication. The same applies both to inter and intra language translations. The process is even more so when communication happens between languages.

This invisible “motions of spirit” is the core of communication, or translation. Handled properly, a correct communication or translation is possible, or misunderstanding may occur.

Steiner agrees with Humboldt in his saying that “language is a ‘third universe’

midway between the phenomenal reality of the 'empirical world' and the internalized structures of consciousness."(ibid, 85)

The fact that language is both subjective and objective makes people have to be aware of the subjective factors and conscious factors that are involved in all the activities that language play a major part, including translation. Hence the process of translating and the translation in itself all bear a mixture nature of certain percentage of subjective and objective. Translation, from a philosophical viewpoint, is neither pure art nor pure science.

In addition, understanding changes as people evolve into differed language stages. A historical and cultural point of view is necessary when analyzing different translations of a certain text.

2.3 Fourfold Hermeneutic Translation Motion Theory

In 1975, George Steiner published "*After Babel, the Aspects of Language and Translation*". In the first chapter, he boldly declared that "Understanding as Translation". In the fifth chapter, he introduced the philosophical hermeneutics into translation theory and thus changed the outlook of translation field.

According to Steiner, the hermeneutic translation motion, the act of elicitation and appropriative transfer of meaning, is fourfold.

2.3.1 Stage One: Trust

First there comes "initiative trust, an investment of belief, underwritten by previous experience but epistemologically exposed and psychologically hazardous, in the meaningfulness, in the seriousness of the facing or, strictly speaking, adverse text" (Steiner, 2001:312)

"As he sets out, the translator must gamble on the coherence, on the symbolic plentitude of the world." (ibid, 312)

The danger, namely the gamble, refers to the first step a translator has to undertake when he set out to translate. But this has a complex base, which is

believing “the similarities between men are finally much greater than the differences. All members of the species share primal attributes of perception and response which are manifest in speech utterances and which can therefore be grasped and translated.”(ibid 372)

The act of translation is strong enough to show trust between the translator and the text. That is to say, the motion of starting a translation process is self-evident of the translator’s trust. Without trust, sensible translation is impossible.

However, translator may demonstrate different levels of trust in this stage. For a translator of a novel, his trust in this novel will be far less than that in the Bible. But even to the translators of the Bible, they surely will differ from each other in their trust of the text.

Some worship the words of the origin and deem any change as bizarre and odd; some even trust the verses to extreme and come to strange conclusions. The different dealings in trust stage may result in different viewpoints on several critical issues.

Of course, translator’s experience and knowledge will guide him through. It is common to see translator with more experience in certain field usually is more apt at understanding and can translate with ease. But when the translator’s trust faces resistance and test of literary text, aggression is unavoidable.

2.3.2 Stage Two: Aggression

The second step that follows the first “trust” is called “aggression”. It is “...the means of penetration are a complex aggregate of knowledge, familiarity, and re-creative intuition.” (Steiner, 2001:29)

Similar to the first step, a successful translator should accumulate ample resources of knowledge, familiarity in related fields and cultivate an intuition that is creative and reliable.

“It is Heidegger’s contribution to have shown that understanding, recognition, interpretation are “a compacted, unavoidable mode of attack.”(ibid, 313)

This also explains that a successful translator would not miss out any single fact

of the original text. Three layers of meaning are to be exploited, one is the literal meaning of the source language, then the connotative meaning of the source language, at last the connotative understanding of the source text in light of knowledge beyond language. In this way, the translator enters into source language text, actively takes something away, and walks off with them.

The aggression is exercised not noticeable to the target readers. It is natural for certain verses to have several explanations. Translator's aggression is crucial in his decision of choosing among these options. It happens sometimes that a wrong aggression result in mistranslation, while a non-aggression results in vagueness of meaning. So, in this stage, translator has to exercise all his reserve of knowledge, and make quick decisions in seconds.

2.3.3 Stage Three: Incorporation

After the translator invades, extracts, and brings home, he is faced with not a vacuum, but an extant and crowded semantic field. He has two parameters to deal with his aggression. One end is "a complete domestication, an at-homeness at the core of the kind which cultural history ascribes to, say, Luther's Bible."(Steiner, 2001:314-315), the other being "permanent strangeness and marginality of an artifact."(ibid, 315)

Usually, the incorporation will fall somewhere between these two parameters. "But whatever the degree of 'naturalization', the act of importation can potentially dislocate or relocate the whole of the native structure."(ibid, 315) Hence there comes the conclusion that "No language, no traditional symbolic set or cultural ensemble imports without risk of being transformed."(ibid, 315)"

Here we are faced with a dilemma. Although we need acts of translation "to add to our means, to incarnate alternative energies and resources of feeling, yet we also face the danger of being mastered and made lame by the import. For societies with eroded epistemologies, they can be knocked off balance and lost their identity under the influence of indigestible assimilation." (ibid, 316)

The same applies to translator. For a translator, the incorporative with target language would not only change his vocabulary or tone, but also his way of expression and angle of perceiving. His translation and even himself may gradually adopt a different “touch”, he may be conquered by the conqueror and face the danger that “vein of personal, original creation goes dry” (ibid, 315).

Hence, the act of incorporation might gulp down the original text as well as the translator’s genuine creative gift, and for the second time, the translator is off-balance (the first being Trust). And he needs the fourth step to restore balance.

Incorporation actually means a process of embodiment of the translation in the target language context, with an eye for localization. It requires the translator to actively organize materials in the target language. He needs to weigh about his choice of words, his grammar and style all the time for a coherent and idiomatic expression in target language. A thorough understanding of both languages is needed, with more focus on the target language. Incorporation with target language is usually preferred by the target readers, so for a translator, even he may choose between “foreignize ” or “domesticize”, the latter is usually a safer choice.

2.3.4 Stage Four: Compensation

Compensation acts as a restoration of the anterior unbalance and it complete the hermeneutics motion circle. “The enactment of reciprocity in order to restore balance is the crux of the morals of translation.” (Steiner, 2001:316)

For the original text, it was left with a dialectically enigmatic residue; but this residue is positive, for it is enhanced by the act of translation. After a methodical, penetrative, analytic, enumerative process of translation, the original text is detailed, illuminated, and body forthed. “The motion of transfer and paraphrase enlarges the stature of the original.” (ibid, 317). Translation makes the original text available to larger audience and richer in cultural context.

“About the relations of a text to its translations, imitations, thematic variants, even parodies, they are too diverse to be limited to a single theoretic, definitional

scheme.” (ibid, 317) In this way, the off-balance between the original and target texts, caused by incorporation (the third step) is offset by the act of compensation. “Genuine translation will, therefore, seek to equalize, though the meditating steps may be lengthy and oblique. Where it falls short of the original, the authentic translation makes the autonomous virtues of the original more precisely visible.”(ibid, 318)

This step is the one when the subjectivity of the translator is most apparent to the readers. There are several forms of compensation, the translator may add some words or phrases in the target text for better understanding; he may also change the whole sentence into a different but clearer one; he may add some footnotes to explain about other optional explanations; he may even compensate by stating the opinions in preface or other articles.

2.3.5 Significance of Hermeneutic Motion of Translation

“This view of translation as ...hermeneutic ...will allow us to overcome the sterile triadic model which has dominated the history and theory of the subject. The perennial distinction between literalism, paraphrase and free imitation, turns out to be wholly contingent.” (Steiner, 2001:319)

The fourfold motion can be compared to rebuilding a house. Imagine this scene, the translator tears down a house, reprocesses its material, say, clay, and burns the clay into bricks, then rebuilds the house in a different locale with reference to the old house.

Firstly, the old house is admired and trusted in that there is meaning in rebuilding it. This trust is based on prior experience and belief that it is meaningful to do so.

Secondly, the house is torn down by aggressive action. Old materials are transferred to new location, and the structure of the house is closely studied, even the procedure of rebuilding a house is figured out. Knowledge beyond building is analyzed and absorbed.

Thirdly comes the incorporation stage. The act of rebuilding the house with new materials is like that of incorporation. The builder tries to mimic the original house while accommodate the new house with local residents' tastes. Of course he cannot meet the two ends, he can only choose somewhere between these two parameters. In addition, the new house also changes the outlook of the locales by its simple existence.

At last, the new house is built. There is an off-balance for the question pops out——does the new house “correspond” to, or is “equivalent” to the old one? The reference to the old house and adjustments accordingly all belong to the last step of compensation.

After these four steps, the old clay house is “translated” into a new brick house, using a different material, entertaining different guests, but still resembles the old house.

Chapter Three

Comparison of New International Version (NIV) with King James Version(KJV)

3.1 Background of King James Version

From Tyndale's translation of New Testament in 1525 till the publishing of King James Version in 1611, translations of the Bible mushroomed.

Being born to an era when Humanists Movement, Religion Transformation and Renaissance broadened people's horizon and changed people's views on life, English came to a most expressive stage when masterful pieces were bred. One was Shakespeare's and the other was King James Version Bible(KJV).

When King James came to the throne in 1603, he felt an urge to unite people's mind and action, but was unsatisfied with the unfavorable footnotes in prevalent Bible version——Geneva Bible and so he decreed a retranslation of the Bible in 1604. Seven years of arduous work by a group of 54 translators made King James Version came into being. KJV is also called Authorized Version(AV).

3.2 Examples of Differences between KJV and NIV

After KJV's publishing in 1611, it soon prevailed and attracted the largest audience. However, as English undergone huge changes after that, many verses and phrases have become obsolete for current readers. The readership of NIV surpassed that of KJV in 1987, but KJV still boasted faithful followers insisting on its canon position.

KJV has its trademark of dignity and cadence. Although it gradually become old-fashioned by the lapse of time, it still can withstand test of many kinds. The fact that it differs with other modern translations is apparent, however, these differences

are basically minor ones and does not affect text meaning in general.

The differences between KJV and NIV mainly lie in the **Compensation Stage** of the Fourfold Hermeneutics Translation Motion Theory. Yet we compare these two translations from Trust to Compensation. And this style would repeat in the comparison of other translations with NIV.

3.2.1 Differences in Trust between KJV and NIV

In KJV, there are certain verses and phrases that are deleted in NIV, NRSV and NW while kept in KJV. These differences stem from the fact that translators of KJV and NIV hold different opinions about the importance of these verses.

Example 1 (Matthew 18:11)

KJV: 'For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.'

NIV: deleted

Example 2 (Acts 8:37)

KJV: 'And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.

And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'

NIV: deleted (Footnote: 37, Philip Said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.")

Example 3 (Ephesians 3:9)

KJV: 'and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:'

NIV: 'and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things'

Example 4 (Romans 1.16)

KJV: 'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ;'

NIV: 'I am not ashamed of the gospel;'

The above four examples all share the common point that, some verses or phrases emphasizing Jesus Christ is reserved in KJV while deleted in NIV. Jesus Christ's name, his special virgin birth, his sacrifice and strong connection with readers are more apparent in KJV.

The function of Jesus is defined as a go-between. That probably means God is too high to reach and too magnificent for direct communicate with ordinary people, hence Jesus Christ being there for us. Also, God created all things via Jesus. Without the "by Jesus Christ" in Ephesians 3:9, the meaning of the verse changed dramatically and Jesus will be put into a much less important position.

From these examples, we see that translators of KJV and NIV hold different views of point as to the position of Jesus Christ. This differences make them hold different trust to the text and choose to keep or omit the verses or phrases that stress the importance of Jesus Christ.

3.2.2 Differences in Aggression between KJV and NIV

Translators of KJV and NIV differ from each other in their aggression to certain words. As we have stated before, aggression of meaning take place in three levels, that is, literal meaning, connotative meaning and understanding of the source text in light of knowledge other than language. Translators usually differ most in the third level, for they may hold different knowledge and understanding to specific words.

Example 5 (Luke 2.33)

KJV: 'And Joseph and his mother marveled at those things which were spoken of him.'

NIV: 'The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.'

The KJV translated Jesus's father as "Joseph", while NIV translate it as "the child's father".

According to the Bible, Jesus comes from God through his virgin mother Mary. Though Joseph is the husband of Mary, he is not the father of Jesus in a higher sense.

This fact is clearly stated and emphasized in KJV by using “Joseph”, not “his father”. This usage denotes KJV’s clear pre-understanding of the translator and his avoidance from getting Joseph too involved in the identity of Jesus.

On the contrary, NIV weakens this passage that teaches the deity of Christ. Both doctrine of the person of Christ and Christ's virgin birth are weakened.

Here the translator of KJV hold on the belief that Josef is not the father of Jesus, while NIV, cater to choose a more relaxed attitude on the relationship between a stepfather and adopted son. NIV’s aggression includes Joseph in a wider definition of “father”, which also meets anticipation of modern readers.

3.2.3 Differences in Incorporation between KJV and NIV

KJV is the product of more than 300 years ago, and NIV is the modern product of 1973. The incorporation difference between these two versions is beyond any explanation. Like modern Chinese may have difficulty in reading classics such as “Taoism” or “Confucian”, time has also mercilessly drive modern readers away from archaic expressions in KJV.

The person problem is handled perfectly in KJV. Actually, in Greek and Chinese, singulars and plurals of second person never confused since their endings are different. The evolvment of English makes it become a language with smeared boundary in this aspect, and modern English no longer distinguish between singular and plural second person. It is a pity that with incorporation of target language in a certain historical period, we not only discard old, weird usages, but also some concise and laconic ones sometimes.

With this defect, vagueness of meaning with reference to person is almost inevitable in NIV.

Example 6 (Romans 11:13-14)

KJV: For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

NIV: I am talking to you(plural) Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them.

Example 7 (Romans 11:22)

KJV: Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

NIV: Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you(singular), provided that you (singular) continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you(singular) also will be cut off.

In Romans 11:13-42, the Gentiles as a group are in apostle's mind(Example 6), but he also thinks of the individual Gentile and the importance of his individual response(Example 7). Only by observing the change in personal pronoun, can a translator grasp the real meaning tied to the grammatical facts.

In Example 6, the text meaning is the same in NIV and KJV, but the meaning is quite different in Example 7, as KJV is clear by incorporation of difference in "thee/thou" from "you", whereas NIV does not signify any difference in person for it still use "you" as in Example 6.

Language changing for good or for bad is beyond translators' control. Translators have to be aware of these nuances in meaning first. In order to incorporate closely to the current target language, they have to bear these changes in mind and compensate in other ways.

3.2.4 Differences in Compensation between KJV and NIV

KJV has a unique way of compensation compared to that of NIV. It inclines to compensate the hidden meaning by expressing it in a phrase rightly following it. If that compensation part is taken away, one may find that clearness of meaning is also

gone. KJV is laudable by choosing compensation in the text for clearer meaning over words worship.

Example 8 (Matthew 27.35)

KJV: 'And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.'

NIV: 'When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots' (*Footnote: A few late manuscripts lots that the word spoken by the prophet might be fulfilled: "They divided my garments among themselves and cast lots for my clothing" (Psalm 22.18)*).

Old Testament quotations used in the New Testament function as ties that hold the two Testaments together. To put the quotation in footnote will only weaken the echo relationship and damage the connection between Testaments. In addition, the fact that God's prophecy in the Old Testament falls into an unnoticeable place is inappropriate, devaluing the heritage that Christians should gain.

KJV manifests a strong tie between New Testament and Old Testament here while NIV seems still doubting the trueness of this tie. And this doubting attitude will consequently hamper the establishment of belief among readers. Translators of KJV opt for a stronger demonstration of the credibility of the Bible, which was compiled over a thousand years, and this attitude is shown in their translation choice. KJV chooses to depict the prophecy directly in the text, while NIV chooses to compensate the meaning by putting it into a footnote.

Example 9 (1 Corinthians 6:20)

KJV: 'therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's'

NIV: 'therefore honor God with your bodies'

It is very possible that the Greek scholars, influenced by the ancient Greek philosophy of neglect one's body, added the phrase "and in your spirit". This

addition lead the sentence away from the apparent focus Paul puts on body.

Example 10 (Mark 2:17)

KJV: ‘When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.’

NIV: ‘On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”’

The purpose of Jesus call is not to call us to dance or party, but to repentance. The purpose of His deeds has to be clarified, and KJV is clear in specifying that Jesus came to ask us to repentance. No misunderstanding is possible when “to repentance” is added in KJV.

Example 11 (Matthew 25:13)

KJV: ‘Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.’

NIV: ‘Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.’

The meaning of the verse in KJV is rather clear while that is not so in NIV. When we say: “ We don’t know the day nor the hour”, it usually refers to the actual numeric time shown on the clock. Doubt might arise for there is no logic connection between “keep watch” and “not knowing the day or the hour.”

Then keep watch for what? Vagueness in meaning is apparent without denoting what the “day or the hour” means. By adding “wherein the Son of man cometh”, that vagueness is erased and the expectation of the target readers meet that of the author.

Example 12 (Colossians 1.14)

KJV: ‘In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.’

NIV: ‘in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.’

The phrase “though his blood” in KJV is omitted in NIV.

In fact, Christ’s blood stands for the Covenant between He and the people. Also, it stands for eternal redemption he provided for His people. KJV makes this redemption more overt while NIV reserves the guess part for the readers. Through this incorporation, KJV is clearer in meaning.

Example 13 (Peter 4:1)

KJV: ‘Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;’

NIV: ‘Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin.’

In KJV, with the “for us” phrase, the reader and Jesus will be connected and thus a greater touching feeling can be cultivated. The readers will resonate with the Bible and would be deeply moved. By depicting the purpose of Jesus’ sacrifice, using a phrase “for us”, KJV successfully build a connection between Jesus and readers.

NIV, via its compensation of adding a “in his body”, emphasizes “how” Jesus Christ suffer, not “why”. This shift of meaning, though slight, is clear enough to show translators different strategy in compensation .

Example 14 (Matthew 5.44)

KJV: ‘But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you,’

NIV: ‘But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ’

Facing the foregoing sentence “Love your enemies”, very naturally one would wonder “Why should I LOVE my enemies? It’s not natural!” Maybe in a while he would convince himself: “OK, it is written in the Bible, so I’ll just follow it.”

However, a second question would persist---“What shall I do to love my enemies?” Hence readers of other translations may claim that “I love my enemies” and only pay lip service. In KJV, a strong and clear guide of action is provided while it remains blank in the other three translations. Here, by embodying the love into appealing for activities, Christians are called on to demonstrate actual deeds of love, love that draws even enemies to the Savior.

This verse in KJV is not only more fluent and memorable, but more touching in feeling. The translator captures the essence of God’s words and indeed gives it a full play in reader’s imagination.

KJV has its trademark of dignity and cadence. Although it gradually become old-fashioned by the lapse of time, it still withstands tests of many kinds.

In the **Trust** stage, KJV has some special verses that are preserved while deleted in NIV, about the position of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, in the **Compensation** stage, KJV is inclined to compensate directly in the target text, it may even add some phrases for a better understanding of the meaning. The deletion in **Trust** stage and addition **Compensation** stage is not supported in NW, NRSV and NIV.

Chapter Four

Comparison of New International Version (NIV) with New World Translation (NW)

4.1 Background of New World Translation

According to the “Foreword” of NW (1984), during the past 34 years (from 1950 to 1984), the New World Translation has been translated in part or entirely into ten other languages, with a total printing and distribution surpassing 39 million.

New World Translation, together with the organization who translated it, Jehovah’s Witnesses, are considered as biased by other sections of Christians. Some would look down upon them, treating them as heresy.

But this makes this translation a perfect one for us to study, say, how religious opinions hold by the translators lead the common original text to evolve into differing translation.

Though seen as being biased, in fact New World Translation is literal and faithful in most parts. Generally, it is still precise and concise, readable, and true to the original text. The text in itself is only different from other translation only in some specific religious terms.

4.2 Examples of Differences between NW and NIV

New World Translation is translated literally, using a “word for word strategy”. In the foreword of NW, it reads: “Translating the Holy Scripture means rendering into another language the thoughts and sayings of Jehovah God,...The translators of this work, we fear and love the Divine Author of the Holy Scriptures, feel toward Him a special responsibility to transmit his thoughts and declarations as accurately as possible.”

Here the translators hold a “fear and love” attitude toward God, thus placing God in a far above position. This tune is quite different from that of NIV, which put translator and readers on a less humble, more equal position.

Besides, one prime difference lies in the title for God. The “Jehovah God” is actually “Lord” in other versions. This is because JW hold the opinion that God has a name “Jehovah”. They worship Jehovah only, not the three-in-one God(God, Word and Jesus Christ) in other groups and they do not accept the idea of incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. By declaring that Jesus Christ is only the eldest son of God, they claim Jesus does not deserve the most divine respect. We have to be alert on these “names and titles” that set JW apart from major Christian camps.

4.2.1 Differences in Trust between NW and NIV

The differences in religious terms, even though come in small portion, actually build up a huge mountain that bars smooth communication and understanding from both sides. The difference in trust between NW and NIV is the most apparent part in the four stages of hermeneutic translation motion.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses, with their own trust to specific verses, seem to cut themselves from other divisions. And this huge difference is rightly reflected in their choice of words to certain concepts.

Example 15 (Luke 20:42)

NW: For David himself says in the book of Psalms, “Jehovah said to my Lord,
Sit at my right hand

NIV: David himself declares in the Book of Psalms:

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand,

Jehovah's Witnesses, different from any other sections, insists on using Jehovah, God’s name. Here in NW, this usage avoids mixing Jehovah with Lord together.

However, in KJV, NIV and NRSV, confusion might arise from the not clear distinction between Lord and my Lord. This exactly reflects the fact that in traditional Christianity, trinity is a principle that excludes distinction among the God, the Word and Jesus.

Example 16 (John 1.1)

NW: In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.

NIV: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

From “God” to “a god”, the minor difference is enough to ignite a World War. Being only “a god” in NW, Jesus Christ is only a common god that does not have any position of “Lord”. This bigotry attitude of JW stops them from communicable in the very beginning.

With this difference of trust, NW is the only version that use “god” here, while all the other three versions use “God” in the end part of this verse.

Example 17 (Matt 16.18)

NW: Also, I say to you, you are Peter, and on this rock-mass I will build my congregation, and the gates of Ha'des will not overpower it.

NIV: And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades* will never overcome it. (or *hell*)

First comes the appropriateness of using “church”. To modern ears, the word “church” can only mean a Christian church. By contrast, the word Ekklesia, was commonly used in ancient Greek to refer to assemblies, specifically the (political) assembly of voting citizens in a city-state, or *polis*.

Actually, no dedicated Christian buildings existed in New Testament times, nor for some time thereafter. Thus the translation ‘church’ implies and reinforces modern

presuppositions about the “should-be-there church” and separation of religion and politics. NW is the only version that uses “congregation”, which makes it stand out in closeness to the historical context.

Secondly, there is the differed perception to the word “Hades”. NIV uses “Hades” with a footnote “hell” but NW uses “Hades” directly.

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of current English, “Hades” means “(Greek myth) the underworld, place where the spirits of the dead go.” whereas “Hell” means “(in some religions) home of evils and of damned souls after death; place, condition, of great suffering or misery.”

The usage of “Hades” excludes the possible connotation of “lasting punishment” that is associated with “hell”. Jehovah’s Witnesses believes in the existence of “Hades”, a quiet place people go to after their death, or a colligate of tombs, an abstract idea that exists mentally. And their translation clearly reflects their belief.

Jehovah’s Witnesses hold the trust that there was no “church” in the period of time when Matthew was written, and so they use “congregation” instead; they hold the opinion that there is no “Hell” afterlife, so they choose to keep “Hades” as it is in Greek, with no translation in English. Translator, as a special reader, will adjust to its readers’ trust and belief and make his choice of translation accordingly.

Example 18 (Mathew 25:46)

NW: ‘ And these will depart into everlasting cutting-off, but the righteous ones into everlasting life.’

NIV: ‘Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life’

NW, different from traditional Christianity, disclaims the existence of hell. In Jehovah’s Witnesses’ opinion, life stops as one’s life comes to an end, and there’s no spirit to go to hell. There being no “hell”, hence neither be any “punishment”, but only “cutting-off” from life.

From this translation difference, we can see the religious opinion of translator affects the translation in a way almost unnoticeable. However, this nuance of meaning is enough to separate tens of thousands of believers apart.

Example 19 (Matthew 27:35)

NW: 'When they had impaled with him, one on his right and one on his left.'

NIV: 'When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots' by casting lots'

Here we come to another important difference in choice of word.

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, to "crucify" means "to put to death by nailing or binding to a cross."

To "impale" means "to pierce through; pin down, with a sharp-pointed stake, spear, etc."

Jehovah's Witnesses stick to the opinion that Jesus was impaled, thus cross—one of the most important signatures of Christianity—loses its meaning in JW. It is a rule for Jehovah's Witnesses not to salute to the cross, and this contracting practice further proves the huge differences exist between JW and other branches of Christianity.

Example 20 (Mathew 15:3)

NW: Why is it you also overstep the commandment of God because of your tradition?

NIV: "Why do you disciples break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?"

From the verses above, we see that NW is correct in meaning and translation. It does not differ from that of NIV fundamentally. However, the verse is used in a way that despises tradition of whatever kind and to push Jehovah's Witnesses into a position of anti-tradition. This verse is actually one that they usually quote for testify

their anti-tradition-position.

Using this verse as a proof directly from the Bible, Jehovah's Witnesses place “the command of God”—the Bible in a position that surpass anything else, including other religious organizations and their religious traditions, even if those traditions have come to be socially accepted traditions. They do not take Sabbath, nor do they celebrate Christmas because they deem all these are just traditions created out of nothing by some religious group.

This belief excludes themselves from all celebrations, including birthdays, and limiting their acquaintances within themselves. As a result, many other religious organizations boycott JW whenever possible.

4.2.2 Differences in Aggression between NW and NIV

Aggression is another active step after trust. Different aggression is a major reason for the blossom of diversified translations, and it is also a major reason for mistranslation. NW, though called a biased one by some people, nevertheless is basically flawless in its aggression when faced with vagueness of meaning. Here are two examples.

Example 21 (John 1.17)

NW: Because the Law was given through Moses, the undeserved kindness and kindness and the truth came to be through Jesus Christ.

NIV: For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The ‘law’ here does not mean Roman law, nor natural law, but specifically the ‘Law of Moses’——the teaching of Moses——the books Genesis to Deuteronomy. It is a technical term and it merits at least a capital letter: ‘the Law’.

As to the capital issue of the word ‘law’, NW made the best choice in using “Law”. But NIV, together with NRSV and KJV, all uses “law”, which is not an ideal choice here.

The difference of using “Law” or “law” is a reflection of translators’ different aggression to the position of the teachings of Moses. NW put it in a position above other secular laws, whereas NIV does not specially single it out.

Example 22 (1 Peter 2:8)

NW: ‘and ‘a stone of stumbling and a rock-mass of offence.’ These are stumbling because they are disobedient to the word. To this very end they were also appointed.’

NIV: ‘and,

“a stone that causes men to stumble

and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for.’

As we have mentioned, the Bible is written in Hebrew and Greek, and these languages like to use parallels. Parallels happens verse by verse, and also verses by verses.

In the context of 1 Peter 2:8, one needs to study the context before deciding on the meaning “destined”.

“As you come to him, the living stone——rejected by man but chosen by God and precious to him——you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (NIV: 1Peter 2:4-5)

From this forerunner, by means of parallel, we can decide that NW is correct in its latter part, in appointing these disobedient stones to a happy end for they are chosen by God.

However, NIV seems to ignore the inner connection between this part and its forerunner. It reprimands the stones for they disobey the word, and that they are destined to be disobedient. This judgment goes against the forerunner in 1 Peter 2:4-5 and does not make a balanced parallel. The meaning “fragment” that does not embody each other only prevents readers from getting a satisfying reading experience, let

alone giving them spiritual strength.

NW's aggression into the Bible's style of using parallels leads to a sound translation, while NIV's aggression falls short to that depth and that leads to a fragmented piece isolated from context.

Example 23 (Matthew 5:32)

NW: 'However, I say to you that everyone divorcing his wife, except on account of fornication, makes her a subject for adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. '

NIV: 'But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery. '

Here, NIV deems a divorced woman to commit adultery for certain, while NW is only points the "subject" position of a divorced woman might suffer. In NIV, the divorced woman will "commit" adultery; in NW, the woman is only a "subject" for adultery.

Which one is correct? Common sense is helpful in correct understanding of this verse. It goes against people's common sense that, divorce causes a woman to commit adultery. There is no logic of cause and effect between these two concepts.

Consider this sentence: "One's thirst for money causes him to steal."

Is that reasonable? Is there any direct connection between the cause and the effect? The answer is "no".

Even if sexist dominates the era when New Testament was written, it still goes against common sense and it is too inhumane to declare that a divorced woman is to commit adultery for sure. A divorced woman, be it her fault or not, will be granted at least right to live quietly with certain dignity. If this being what the Bible truly means, we could only say that this arbitrary opinion in the Bible only makes God a stern-faced inhumane image, and for sure will exclude many divorced woman.

4.2.3 Differences in Incorporation between NW and NIV

NW, as a literal translation, retains the residue of original language and sometimes this cause it to be lengthy and tedious. NIV is very apt in changing expressions for a target readers' response similar to that of the original text readers. NW is formal, faithful, but not that idiomatic compared to NIV.

Example 24 (Mark 4:14-15)

NW: The sower sows the word. These, then, are the ones alongside the road where the word is sown; but as soon as they have heard [it] Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.

NIV: The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them.

NW uses “these, then”, but the text does not show any “these”, only a singular noun “the sower”. That is to say, there is no fore word for “these”. NIV is clever in using “some people”, and this eliminates the necessary for a fore word. In addition, NIV chops the long sentence into two short sentences, making the expression easier and more fluent.

Example 25 (Mark 4:16-17)

NW: And likewise these are the ones sown upon the rocky places; as soon as they have heard the word, they accept it with joy. Yet they have no root in themselves, but they continue for a time; then as soon as tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, they are stumbled.

NIV: Mark 4:16 Others, like seed sown on rock places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away.

In the first sentence, NW uses “And likewise” in the beginning. Are the seeds sown upon rocky places to analogy the former “alongside the road”? The answer is “no”. NIV uses “Others”, draws a clear line between the seeds falling to different places, so that clearly states a contrast with the former one.

In the second sentence, NW “Yet they have no root in themselves, but they continue for a time”, is confusing by using “yet” and “but” at the same time. NIV, using only one “but”, which is clearer in meaning.

In the last sentence,

NW: “ tribulation or persecution arises....(they) stumble”

NIV: “trouble or persecution comes.....(they) fall away”

We see that NIV substitutes “tribulation” with “trouble”; “arise” with “come” and “stumble” with “fall away”. Common words seem to be NIV’s favorable choices whenever possible. NIV is more adoptive to the target language by adopting an “easy come, difficult go” policy.

Example 26 (Mark 4:16-17)

NW: There are still others who are sown among the thorns; these are the ones that have heard the word, but the anxieties of this system of things and the deceptive power of riches and the desires for the rest of the things make inroads and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

NIV: Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of his life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things came in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.

In this short passage, there are 52 words in NW but 35 words in NIV, which means one third of NW is omitted. There is no meaning lost, on the contrary, from “these are the ones that have heard the word,” to “hear the word”, meaning is more clearly incorporated. By using “like seed sown among thorns” instead of “who are sown among the thorns”, the simile in NRSV is replaced by a metaphor in NIV, and the role is switched from ‘corn’ to ‘personal’.

The vague “deceptive power of riches” in NW is replaced by “deceitfulness of wealth”, as the former is bewildering.

“Desire for the rest of the things” in NW is replaced with “desire for other things”, as the latter is accurate enough.

“Make inroads” in NW is seldom used in daily English and so it is substituted by more common phrase “came in” in NIV.

NIV, clever and crisp, tastes like a plate of organic salad, simple but never comes easily. NW, is formal, sometimes to a funny extent, can be a good source to enrich one’s vocabulary. Its richness in expression is a good exercise to one’s memory, as long as he likes to exercise his memory.

4.2.4 Differences in Compensation between NW and NIV

Compensation in NW is not full, maybe it is because translators of NW have exercised sound judgments in aggression, so they deem there is no vagueness left, hence there is no need for further compensation. However, as in Example 2, it for sure will make compensation when it deems necessary, especially when the function of some verse is special.

Example 27 (Mark 4:20)

NW: Finally, the ones that were sown on the fine soil are those who listen to the word and favorably receive it and bear fruit thirtyfold and sixty and a hundred.

NIV: Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop----thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown.

NW does not use compensation and leave the text as it is. However, NIV uses an effective adoption of compensation by putting a dash right after the words it wants to further explain. The usage of “thirty, sixty or even a hundred times” is clear, concise and precise. By this compensation, the text meaning is clearer and more memorable for the target readers.

Example 28 (Luke 10:5-6)

NW: Wherever you enter into a house say first, ‘May this house have peace.’ And if a friend of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if there is not, it will turn back to you.

NIV: When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you.

‘Peace’ is a difficult word, partly because it has functional and meaningful purposeful. It functions as a greeting, as the Hebrew ‘shalom’, to establish a welcoming relationship. In meaning, it embraces ideas of health and welfare and peace.

If we want to retain the word ‘Peace’ in our translation, then we need to add something that expresses its function as a word of welcome, as a word establishing relationship. NW realizes the ‘function’ politely and properly by adding a “may” in the sentence and this compensation fulfills the sentence’s function.

NW bears the most distinctive features in the **Trust** stage. As these features are awaiting further discussion in religious terms, we don’t have to judge in this thesis. In the **Aggression** stage, KJV even sometimes surpasses NIV in correctness. However, it is strictly literal in its **Incorporation** and rigid in **Compensation** Stage. And these make NIV a better version compared with NW.

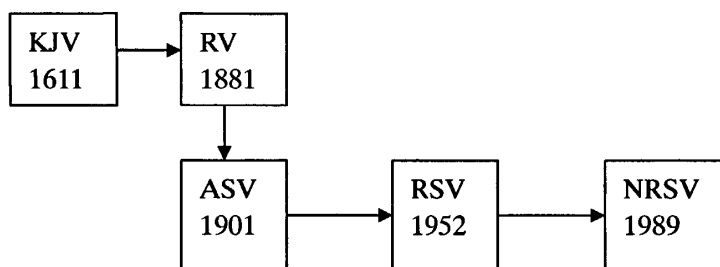
Chapter Five

Comparison of New International Version (NIV) with New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

5.1 Background of New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

NRSV has direct ancestors in Biblical translation, unlike that of NIV, in that the latter was directly changed from the original text.

NRSV has undergone a long evolution that can be shown as below:



(Chart 5.1)

5.1.1 Revised Version (1881)

Till the Revised Version(RV) in 1881, KJV had always been a “Bible of Bibles”. But time changed, so should Bible’s translation. In 1870, Canterbury Parliament undertook the task of revise KJV and organized a 65 people committee, most of who were from Anglican Church. In addition, it invited a 34-people committee from America into the board of translation too.

However, in the RV, many opinions for American side were neglected. Feeling that their efforts did not get the acknowledgement they deserve, these American scholars published their own Bible with American idioms, and so American Standard Version (1901) came into being as a byproduct of Revised Version.

5.1.2 Revised Standard Version(RSV) (1952) and New Revised Standard Version(NRSV)(1989)

In 1937, American Standard Version(1901) was improved, RSV being the outcome. It came to be widely accepted and used in Protestant church, Anglican Church, Roman Catholic church and Orthodox Church.

In the 1940s-50s, the discovering of the Dead Seas Scrolls and progress made in understanding of Aramaic Language, all made it necessary to revise RSV, and thus NRSV came into being in 1989.

For New Revised Standard Version, the ecumenical NRSV Bible Translation Committee consists of thirty men and women who are among the top scholars in America today. They come from Protestant denominations, the Roman Catholic church, and the Greek Orthodox Church. The committee also includes a Jewish scholar.

5.2 Examples of Differences between NRSV and NIV

Rooted in the past, but right for today, the *NRSV* continues the tradition of William Tyndale, the King James Version(KJV), the American Standard Version(ASV), and the Revised Standard Version(RSV). Based on newly available sources, it increases our understanding of many previously obscure biblical passages. These sources include newly found manuscripts, the Dead Sea Scrolls, other texts, inscriptions, and archaeological finds from the ancient Near East, and new understandings of Greek and Hebrew grammar.

It claims to be "as literal as possible" in adhering to the ancient texts and only "as free as necessary" to make the meaning clear in graceful, understandable English. These two translation goals can be further explained as follows.

Firstly, literal is the most apparent feature of this version. "This version is the fruit of cross-sectarian cooperation between British and American Biblical translators. Also it is the most representative literal version among Bible's English

translations. (骆维仁, 黄锡木, 1997, translated by the author)

Secondly, “as free as necessary” means, in practice, it does not exclude daily idioms from translation, thus makes it more readable than its previous versions such as KJV and RSV.

Compared with NIV, the NRSV is set with more boundaries and restrictions of former translations, hence it may fall short when it needs stronger aggression.

5.2.1 Differences in Aggression between NRSV and NIV

We have come to the aggression part when we compare NIV with KJV and NW, and now that we are faced with NRSV and NIV. Again, it has to be notified that different aggression leads to “multi-translation” and “mistranslating”. NRSV, although is praised as “the best translation” by some prestigious scholars in this field and is welcomed and embraced by different Christian institutions, it sometimes does not stand a most critical scrutiny.

NIV, seems to take a very easy language outfit, but is more precise in aggression, more fierce in taking out the essence of meaning.

Example 29 (John 1.17)

NRSV: ‘The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.’

NIV: For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The Greek has *ovti ov nomo (hoti ho nomas)* which means “for the Torah...” NRSV seems to neglect the linking ‘for’. In addition, there is nothing in the Greek text that corresponds to ‘indeed’ in NRSV.

NIV is correct in using “for” to hint a linking and avoid anything that is not expressed in the original text. Hence it shows a clear and correct understanding of the original text.

Example 30 (John 1.22)

NRSV: 'Who are you?...Let us have an answer for those who sent us.'

NIV: 'Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us.'

Here the Greek says, if translated fairly literally, 'Who are you?'...so that we may give an answer to the people who have sent us'.

Whatever we supply, the nuance is that they are under pressure to give an answer. The nuance of the NRSV translation is that they feel a need to have an answer.

The NIV correctly added a 'give us an answer' to fulfill the meaning. But KJV and NW leave it as it is. It can be fair to say that KJV and NW are really literal and faithful here. It would even sacrifice the wholeness of sentence for the purpose to keep in line with the original text.

Example 31 (John 1.48)

NRSV 'Nathaniel asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?''

NIV: 'Nathaniel asked him, 'How do you know me?''

Greek has a word for 'where'. It is pou(pou). Here the Greek text has poqen(pothen). According to its context, poqen means 'where from?' or 'how?'. When it means 'How' it has a nuance of surprise, similar to the English idiom 'how on earth?'

The verb that NRSV translate as a past tense, 'did you come to know', is in fact present tense 'do you know'. So NRSV err twice in one single sentence.

Example 32 (John 1.48)

NRSV: 'Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.'

NIV: 'I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.'

'I saw you under the fig tree...'. The Greek text has, 'Before Philip called you,

while you were under the fig tree, I saw you.’ By beginning the sentence ‘Before’ it puts the focus on time.

Here, perhaps thrown out by having translated as ‘where?’ in last example, the NRSV wrongly puts focus on place.

However, NIV is correct in focusing on time by using “while”.

Example 33 (Mark 1.17)

NRSV: ‘I will make you fish for people’

NIV: ‘and I will make you fishers of men’

In NRSV, the nuances of the Greek are neglected and a different emphasis is introduced. NRSV tells us that Jesus will make them “do something (fishing)”, but actually, the Greek text tells us that Jesus want them to “become something different”.

“Fishers of people”, that is a good prophet indeed. Readers will have a vivid image of someone doing great contribution by teaching his fellowship some useful lessons. But, “fish for people” used in NRSV would only post another image—the actual act of fishing. Of course we know that Jesus was a good carpenter, but whether he can handle the fishing role remains doubtful.

Example 34 (Luke 11: 17)

NRSV: ‘But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself becomes a desert, and house falls on house.” ’

NIV: ‘Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: “Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. ”’

Hebrew has a style full of parallelisms. There are various strategies available to avoid monotony. One is to shorten a second and parallel line by missing out a unit of meaning, where it can be supplied from the first line.

A fairly literal translation starting from the rabbi's words:

*Every kingdom against itself divided becomes desolate
And a family against a family falls.*

We can see that the missing unit is 'divided'. NRSV does not notice this missing unit and makes a quite laughable translation here because of misunderstanding. That is to say, it has a poor aggression in this verse.

5.2.2 Differences in Incorporation between NRSV and NIV

NRSV adopts a style of formal, like that of NW, but it also includes some idiomatic usages. However, the long history from KJV to NRSV unavoidably limits its incorporation with current English, while NIV is free of such restrictions.

Minor differences in incorporation occur all the way of translation. The following twelve examples are taken from Mark 1:1-16 and John 1:14-29. These examples are not chosen by random, but consecutively, showing the denseness of differences. It can be safely said that in the incorporation stage, together with aggression stage, NRSV and NIV show the most dramatic differences.

Example 35 (Mark 1.1)

NRSV: 'the voice of one crying out in the wilderness'

NIV: 'a voice of one calling in the desert'

Here in this verse, NIV excels NRSV in two places.

Firstly, the substitution of 'a voice' for 'the voice' is better because it can be referred that the identification of the person is unknown, so 'a' is less specific than 'the' here and made a better choice.

Secondly, cry (out) means "(of persons, animals, birds) make (usu loud) sounds that express feelings (eg pain, fear) but not ideas, thoughts, etc."(Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English)

It is quite apparent that ideas, thoughts are conveyed here. So, "cry out" makes

a poor choice. NIV is doing a better job than NRSV in that “calling” does not exclude the expressing of ideas and thoughts.

Example 36 (Mark 1.4)

NRSV: John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

NIV: And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

There’s nothing in the Greek to suggest that John’s being in the wilderness was some kind of appearance. The Greek verb ‘egeneto’(ejgeneto) corresponds to the Hebrew ‘wayyehiy’ and alerts us to the fact that a narrative is beginning, and tell us that John was in the wilderness or in the dessert.

The word “appear” have a connotation of “come to exist from nothingness”, while the original only state plainly the state of “being there”. Thus here, NRSV added some magical movement to the scene while it should not. Compared to the “came” used in NIV, we can see that NRSV is a step too far from the original.

Example 37 (Mark 1.6)

NRSV: ‘John was clothed with camel’s hair’

NIV: John wore clothing made of camel’s hair.

It is hard to keep all the camel’s hair from falling all the time. In fact, John need to wear clothing made of camel’s hair. NRSV sticks to the original text both in lexical and syntax level, while NIV incorporates with modern usage of English and is more flexible in the choice of words.

Example 38 (Mark 1.9)

NRSV: ‘In the course of those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee’

NIV: ‘At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee’

NRSV here is more Greek than English in structure. Put in English, it should read “Nazareth in Galilee”. This reflects the NRSV’s choice of following the original text as close as possible, unfortunately, this method does not guarantee the most closeness in total effects. NIV incorporates with modern English explanation style and thus come to be clearer for target readers.

Example 39 (Mark 1.10)

NRSV: ‘And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.

NIV: ‘As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heave being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.’

Some critics say that the phrase “descending like a dove” in NRSV evoked some image hard for readers to grasp. Truly, for those have never seen any dove, it is impossible for them to understand this.

Now look at how NIV deal with this problem. NIV cleverly changed the order of this sentence and the phrase “descend on him” is intact and thus preserved the major meaning that the author intended. “Like a dove” is only a description not that important and can be put at the end of the sentence.

Example 40 (Mark 1.13)

NRSV: ‘and the angels waited on him’

NIV: ‘and angels attended him’

It would be bewildering for readers to figure out what “wait on” means here. Usually, a servant or waiter can “wait on” someone and here surely don’t have to imply this humble attitude. In fact, the “attend one’s needs” should be a better explanation, although “one’s needs” was not explicit, the meaning is hidden there, waiting to be unveiled.

NIV stayed away from this confusing expression “wait on” by using the word

“attend”.

Example 41 (Mark 1.14)

NRSV: ‘Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God *and saying* “the time is fulfilled.”’

NIV: Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.

In normal English, ‘and’ would add on a second action. Here in NRSV, the word ‘and’ suggests that Jesus did two things separately. That is, he proclaimed the good news being the first, and he said ‘The time of fulfillment has come’ being the second.

But in Hebrew, it is normal to use two verbs with a linking word between. The linking word can usually be translated as ‘and’, but it can also be translated as ‘but’, ‘so’, ‘then’, ‘for’ etc. But the Hebrew expression does not indicate two actions but two aspects of a single action.

By using “proclaiming” or “preaching”, NIV avoids such mistake as NRSV does.

5.2.3 Differences in Compensation between NRSV and NIV

NRSV usually uses footnotes whenever it feels the needs to do so.

NIV, on the contrary, compensate directly in the target text with rarely a footnote. If a footnote is added indeed in NIV, usually it’s because NIV changes the target text totally without trace of the original text.

In addition, NRSV is famous for one important compensation—it is the first major translation that is sex inclusive. In Greek and older English, the language is sex inclusive, that is to say, the “man” stands for “woman and man”. However, this feature wear out in modern English (like the person issue, another change in the “bad” direction), and NRSV is the first one to pick up this issue and change sex exclusive phrases into inclusive ones. So, “Brothers and sisters” take the place of “brothers”, and “people” replaces “he” and so on.

Example 42 (John 16:31)

NRSV: Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?”

NIV: “You believe at last!” Jesus answered. (Footnote: or *Do you now believe?*)

Jesus’s inclination is not clear in enough when he says “Do you now believe?” Two possibilities are present---a sincere inquiry of “Do you believe?” or an attitude of “Now you see, you should have believed”.

However, in NIV, the question mark becomes an exclamatory mark, the satisfactory tone can be sensed. From here, we can see clearly the translator’s maneuver to wipe away dust that might mask the true meaning by throw away other possible explanations and keep only one option.

Indeed, subjectivity of translator enables the translator to select among many options, including switching a question to an exclamation. But, as long as the change fits in the content and context, it should be all right.

Example 43 (Mathew 5.24)

NRSV: ‘leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister,* and then come and offer your gift.(footnote: Gk *your brother*)’

NIV: ‘leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.’

NRSV boasts being the first major translation that take a serious look at sexist words and phrases into consideration and make changes and revisions accordingly. It replaces words that exclude women when the Greek and Hebrew actually include women.

It is almost certainly the case that the address ‘adelphoi’ was meant to include all members of Christian assembly, just as were ‘generic’ uses in older English of the

terms ‘men’, ‘brethren’ and so on. Given that ‘brothers’ is no longer used as a gender-inclusive form of address, the translation ‘brothers and sisters’ seems appropriate.

Another strategy is to choose alternatives such as ‘believer’, ‘neighbor’ or ‘member of the community’, but all these terms are far less kin compared with ‘brothers and sisters’, and the kinship is central to the community-definition.

NRSV boasts a long history of evolvement and a comparatively strong and unbiased assembling of translators. Yet it does not excel in the **Aggression** stage because of its hesitation to judge; in the **Incorporation** stage, it does not have the willingness to embrace current usage of English hence it is comparatively awkward and not easy for memory. At last, it is unique in **Compensation** stage in that it is sex inclusive and use footnotes a lot for possible meanings.

Compared with NIV, NRSV lacks an ounce of courage and a pound of fluency.

Chapter Six

A Close Study on New International Version(NIV)

6.1 Brief Introduction of New International Version

In 1965, Christian Reformed Church and the National Association of Evangelicals met and suggested for a new translation of the Bible in contemporary English. This conclusion was endorsed by a large number of leaders from many denominations. Later in 1967 the New York Bible Society (now the international Bible Society) undertook the financial sponsorship of the project. More than 100 participants came from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Also, as they were from many denominations---including Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and other churches, the translation from sectarian bias is safeguarded.

Besides being equipped with prestigious scholars, three Committees are set up to go through revisions. Before publish, translation would also go through test reading among differed level of audiences and readers, so that a high level of readability is achieved as well as a high level of fidelity to the original text.

For those who are layman to the Bible, NIV rebels their image of the Bible as a hard to digest classic to an easily understood book. By exercise all means to go in the direction of readers by choosing D-E translation strategy for easy understanding, and by design and package the Bible innovatively to attract people's attention and arise their purchasing desire. To put in simpler words, it makes people want to open the Bible and cannot stop.

The International Bible Society, in league with several publishers in North America and the United Kingdom, has packaged NIV in every style and imaginable, and for every group of people under the English-speaking sun.

Placed on the first page of NIV, the text begins with a somewhat funny opening paragraph listed below and this style goes through the following text as well.

“A lot of us have an idea about who Jesus was. Jesus was a vegetarian! Jesus was a communist! A republican! A pacifist! A prophet! People have a long history of pulling Jesus into their camp to claim him as their own. Unfortunately, these people make the same mistake that so many of us have. They claim that Jesus is, above and beyond anything else, on their side...”

In the passage above, the basic lexical form, informal syntax, and bombing of short sentences, all give readers strong appeal——“Please pick me up. I assure that you will not encounter any difficulty in reading.”

NIV is not afraid of change in word choice. It also takes the challenge after its publication. There is also a New International Readers Version (NIrV) which is for readers of English as a second language. In North America a gender inclusive language edition of the NIV - Today's New International Version" (TNIV) - is quite controversial among the conservative evangelical community. By fine-tuning its versions, it meets differed needs of varied audience and gradually expanding its influence.

6.2 Examples of Differences between NIV and the Other Three Translations

Based on a Dynamic Equivalence model, the text is very readable and recommended for reading large blocks of material. NIV is translated under Nida's direction, and Nida's Dynamic Equivalence theory is applied thoroughly in this translation. This is especially distinctive when translating one specific word in different contexts. Whereas other translations may choose to keep a unified front and stick to one specific target word, NIV usually would not shy away from changing

and it may even choose as many as five translations in order to translate the exact meaning.

6.2.1 Differences in Aggression between NIV and Other Three Translations

NIV takes an active aggression method and explores among possible translations. It is alert to the nuances of meaning in original text. Compared with other three versions, it usually put on a most fresh and unimaginable look, but keeps exactly the same spirit or soul of the original text.

Example 44 (Titus 1.2)

KJV: 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;'

NRSV: 'in the hope of eternal life that God, who never lies, promised before the ages began—'

NW: 'upon the basis of a hope of the everlasting life which God, who cannot lie, promised before times long lasting,'

NIV: 'a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,'

A simple exploration in the differing usage of 'can' and 'does' is enough for one to see the weakening tone in NIV. "God cannot lie", implies that it is extremely impossible for God to lie. However impossible, "can" is still based on the subjective inference.

In NIV, "god does not lie" involves a tone that is beyond any inquisition. Just like the unalterable rule "The Sun rise in the East", there is no room for inference and possibility. The penetration to the original text is fierce and the restitution of meaning and style is full.

Example 45 (1Thessalonians 4:12)

KJV: That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

NRSV: so that you may behave properly towards outsiders and be dependent on no one.

NW: so that you may be walking decently as regards people outside and not be needing anything.

NIV: so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

Firstly, KJV and NW use “walk honestly”, an expression not clear in content; NRSV uses “behave properly”, an expression seems to be clear, but covers too wide a range and still vague in what it really hints. NIV, crisply states out the “daily life win the respect of outsiders”, a narrow-downed situation ideal for pursuit.

Secondly, KJV uses “be lack of nothing” and NW uses “not be needing anything”, and these are static descriptions of a situation. Both NRSV and NIV use “be dependent”, which has a sense of activeness.

Among these two, NRSV uses “be dependent on no one” whereas NIV uses “not be dependent on anybody”, They are almost the same except that NIV is more natural as English speakers like to put the negative “not” before the verb. For instance, “He don’t like anyone” seems to be more natural than “He likes no one”.

From the four diversified expressions, we see how aggressions grant different meanings and feelings to the original text.

6.2.2 Differences in Incorporation between NIV and Other Three Translations

NIV takes a close incorporation with current usage of English and adapt to the habits of modern readers. While other three translations may hesitate to some extent and show differed approach.

Example 46 (2 Timothy 3.16)

KJV: 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.'

NRSV: 'All scripture is inspired by God and is* useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, (Footnote: '*Every scripture inspired by God is also*')'

NW: 'All scripture is inspiration of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness.'

NIV: 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,'

Here, all versions except NIV choose words with a common meaning of 'inspiration'. The word "God-breathed" in NIV is innovative and vivid. Though different from others, the translator exercises his imagination and adopts a suitable word.

Example 47 (Philippians 2.7)

KJV: 'But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:'

NRSV: but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form, '

NW: 'No, but he emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. '

NIV: 'but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, '

It takes a while for readers to figure out what it means indeed by saying “empty oneself”——to kill himself, to undress, or empty his stomach by vomiting? All these choices do not fit in here. It is so much easier to empty a glass or drawer, but not so to empty oneself.

Here, the NIV uses “make oneself nothing”, which is the same as “being modest”. The meaning is explored and structure is reset successfully.

Example 48 (Galatians 6.1)

KJV: ‘Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted

NRSV: ‘My friends*, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness. Take care that you yourselves are not tempted.’ (Footnote: Gk *brothers*)

NW: ‘Brothers, even though a man makes some false step before he is aware of it, you who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust, such a man in a spirit of mildness, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear you also may be tempted.’

NIV: ‘Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.’

First is the word of 'restoring'. In KJV, the verb 'restore' is a direct command to be obeyed. The NIV gives the idea that 'restoring' is something that ought to be done, not something that must be done. For example “Go fetch me some water” is stronger in tone than “You should go fetch me some water”. By adding a “should”, the meaning becomes clearer and the tone a little bit softer.

Secondly, the word “gently” in NIV is far closer to reader’s daily usage of words than “in a spirit of gentleness” or “in a spirit of gentleness” as used in other translations.

Example 49 (1 Corinthians 11.3)

Original Text: Kephale de gunaikos ho aner

KJV: ‘ that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man;’

NRSV: ‘and the husband* is the head of his wife*,’(footnote: the same Greek word means *man* or *husband*)(footnote: *or head of the woman*)

NW: ‘the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man’

NIV: ‘that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man’

The Greek words ‘aner and gune’ can equally well mean ‘man and woman’ or ‘husband and wife’, so context is needed to decide on which meaning fits here. Since Paul sets his argument in the context of the Genesis creation stories and seems to be concerned about the generic relation between men and women rather than the more specific nature of marital relations, it became clear that KJV, NW and NIV is correct.

Example 50 (John 1.51)

KJV: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you,’

NRSV: ‘Very truly, I tell you.... ’

NW: ‘Most truly I say to you men’

NIV: ‘I tell you the truth. ’

What is the difference between ‘Truly’ and ‘Very truly’? What is the implied contrast to ‘Very truly’? Would it be ‘Partly truly’? ‘Very truly’ is a strange expression. Here it represent the Hebrew ‘Amen, amen’ function to highlight a statement. ‘Amen, amen I say to you’ is more or less equivalent to ‘Pay careful attention to what I am saying—it is very important’.

The NIV uses the noun form of truly, thus avoids the problem of judging the level of ‘truly’. But by doing so, there is a slight change of meaning.

The NW is a little more nature than NRSV in using ‘most truly’.

6.2.3 Differences in Compensation between NIV and Other Three Translations

NIV is the bravest translation among the four in that it compensates the translator's subjectivity by freely put the text in the target texts with little hint from the original.

Example 51 (1 Corinthians 12.3)

KJV: 'As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.'

NRSV: ' As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed! '

NW: 'As we have said above, I also now say again, Whoever it is that is declaring to you as good news something beyond what you accepted, let him be accursed. '

NIV: 'As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel together than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! '

The New Testament reflects customs prevalent in the ancient culture. NIV fails to alert readers to the specific conventions at work here: Paul operated in a world in which people frequently cursed those against whom they had grievances, often by placing curse tablets mentioning the target of their hostility in the ground at a religious shrine. Nowadays, this act is seen as difficult to understand and uncongenial, but that is precisely what it 'was'. So, 'accuse' is more accurate than 'condemn' but the latter is more acceptable for modern readers.

Example 52 (John 14.16)

KJV: 'And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;'

NRSV: 'And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate*, to be with you for ever. (Footnote: or *Helper*)'

NW: ‘and I will request the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever.’

NIV: ‘And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—’

It is extremely hard to find a corresponding title to match the word “comforter”. The replacing words “advocate” “helper” are OK, fitting the position, but not exact and clear enough. “Counselor” is not what the people have when New Testament is written, but it is the most used word in modern times. And NIV chooses this word over others and shows again its “the fittest is the best” principle.

Example 53 (1 Corinthians 7:36-38)

KJV: ‘But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.’

NRSV: ‘If anyone thinks that he is not behaving properly towards his fiancée,* if his passions are strong, and so it has to be, let him marry as he wishes; it is no sin. Let them marry.(footnote: Gk *virgin*)’

NW: ‘But if anyone thinks he is behaving improperly towards his virginity, if that is past the bloom of youth, and this is the way it should take place, let him do what he wants: he does not sin. Let them marry.’

NIV: ‘If anyone thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to, and if she is getting along in years and he feels he ought to marry, he should do as he wants. He is not sinning. They should get married.’

KJV uses “virgin”, which has several possible explanation, one’s daughter or one’s girlfriend. NRSV uses a French word “fiancée”, which changes the color of the sentence totally. NW uses “virginity”, also a obscured expression.

NIV, by compensation, adds “he is engaged to” following “the virgin”, enable the readers to feel satisfaction of clear distinction.

Example 54 (Luke 1:34)

KJV: Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

NRSV: Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’(Footnote: *Gk I do not know a man*)

NW: “How is this to be,” Mary asked the angel, “Since I am having no intercourse with a man?”

NIV: “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “Since I am a virgin?”

As we discussed above, like “touch”, “know” also used to have a meaning of “have intercourse with a man”. The original text means “Mary was not having relationship with a man.”

NW uses “having no intercourse with a man”, which is too direct and too vulgar, to modern ears. KJV uses “know”, a word too archaic to fit.

NRSV and NIV both use “virgin”, but NRSV reserves the option in footnote (“Footnote: *Gk I do not know a man*”)

NIV directly uses “she is a virgin”, discarding any archaic and unfit explanation and omitting any footnote.

Example 55 (1 Timothy 3:2)

KJV: ‘A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;’

NRSV: ‘Now a bishop* must be above reproach, married only once*, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, (or *an overseer*) (*Gk the husband of one wife*)’

NW: ‘The overseer should therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one wife, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach,’

NIV: 'Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.'

To meet the qualification for a bishop or overseer, the applicant should be "the husband of one wife", actually this almost does not exclude anyone and thus make a poor qualification clause. The NRSV puts it as "married only once", drives those fit ones away by this far-too-strict restriction.

NIV, by adding a "but" in the pre-conditioning sentence, makes a good compensation. It cleverly exclude those people having wives and includes those who have divorced once or twice, but still meet the requirements of a bishop or overseer.

Advocates of NIV take proud in one special word they deem that they have a masterly maneuver---the Greek word sarx, flesh. And this translation indeed has as many as five different translations to this word.

Example 56 (Romans 7:18)

KJV: For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:

NRSV: For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh.

NW: For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells nothing good;

NIV: I know that nothing good lives in me, I mean that sinful nature

NIV is the only translation to translate "sinful nature" for the Greek word "sarx", which other translations use "flesh" instead. In Galatians 5.16, NIV also has " ... live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature".

This reflects the two-nature view held by some Christian groups, that there is a constant battle between the 'white dog and black dog', as it is commonly referred to in the U.S.A., that figuratively inhabit the soul: that there is a constant battle between the Adamic nature, which they believe remains unchanged after a man is saved, and the new nature which now shares the saved man's soul.

Example 57 (Romans 1:3)

KJV: Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh

NRSV: the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

NW: concerning his Son, who sprang from the seed of David according to the flesh,

NIV: regarding his Son, who as to his human nature as a descendant of David

Here again, while the other three translations all choose “according to the flesh”, NIV chooses to use “as to his human nature”. This translation is natural, idiomatic and easy to the ear. This reflect the translator’s attitude of compensate the meaning in an explicit way.

Example 58 (2 Cor 5:16)

KJV: Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh:

NRSV: From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view*;
(Footnote: Gk *according to the flesh*)

NW: Consequently from now on we know no man according to the flesh.

NIV: So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view.

KJV and NW follows the original text closely and this make their translation direct, but not easily understood. NRSV uses a paraphrase “a human point of view”, but put the literal translation in the footnote. NIV directly put the paraphrase in the target text without any footnote. The meaning in NIV is direct and full, with an easy style pleasant to common readers.

Example 59 (1 Cor 1:26)

KJV: how that not many wise men after the flesh

NRSV: not many of you were wise by human standards,* (Footnote: Gk *according to the flesh*)

NW: that not many wise in a fleshly way were called,

NIV: not many of you were wise by human standards;

KJV and NW are still close in using “flesh” or “in a fleshly way”. NRSV habitually uses a paraphrase with a footnote, thus clear in meaning and faithful in text. No trace of “flesh” is found in NIV, however, it directly compensates the hinted meaning into target text as usual.

Example 60 (Colossians 1:22)

KJV: In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

NRSV: he has now reconciled in his fleshly body* through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him—(Footnote: Gk *in the body of his flesh*)

NW: he now has again reconciled by means of that one’s fleshly body through [his] death,

NIV: But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight,

This is exactly a repetition of what have been discussed in the former examples. From these we can also see that translator does not translate at will, once a practice is set up, it will be followed and thus cultivate a sense of habit or style in the whole text.

	Romans 7:18	Romans 1:3	2 Cor 5:16	1 Cor 1:26	Colossians 1:22
KJV	flesh	flesh	flesh	flesh	flesh
NRSV	flesh	flesh	a human point of view(with footnote)	human standards(with footnote)	his fleshly body(with footnote)
NW	flesh	flesh	flesh	in a fleshly way	one's fleshly body
NIV	sinful nature	human nature	a worldly point of view	human standards	physical body

(Chart 6.2)

From this we see that KJV is persistent in keep the principle of one target word to one source word. NW is similar, but it may make compensation by adding some supportive words with core words still the same. NRSV clines to reflect the changed meaning in the target text while compensate the loss of form in the footnote. NIV on the contrary, seems to avoid the repetition on purpose and choose a different expression fitting the context according to the translator's understanding.

NIV set itself apart from other versions by an active understanding of translator directly reflected in the translation. However, this freedom is carefully controlled so NIV does not look like a paraphrased translation. Instead, it is appropriately explained to a certain level and stops there, so as to clarify meaning and stays faithful in the mean time.

Factors such as readers' response, modern usage of certain words compared with historical ones, function of text, structure differences between languages are all taken into consideration, making NIV a trust-worthy and smooth-going translation.

Conclusion

The long and arduous arguments revolving around the nature of translation evoke us to probe into the possibility of a perfect translation. In fact, faced with this endless journey of finding a perfect translation, we are forced to probe the translating process from a totally different viewpoint. The existence of language differences on three levels makes it natural to include non-linguistic factors in translation approach. And Hermeneutics is one of such tools for us to probe the mysteries of translation.

From Biblical Hermeneutics to Modern Hermeneutics, the theory of Hermeneutics has undergone a merge-separate-remerge process with translation. From the latter part of last century, more and more translation theorists came to perceive translation from a philosophic angle, and thus understanding gains an otology position.

The thesis makes a comparative study on four English Translations of the Bible, namely KJV, NW, NRSV and NIV. By evaluating different versions, major features of each translation come to be evident.

KJV is the only one that is not modern translation. Besides the apparent different expressions that are caused by the “generation gap”, it differs most with other translations in compensation. NW adopts a different trust for certain religious terms, and this difference is shown in its preference on “Hades” over “Hell”, “Jehovah” over “Lord” and so on. This feature makes it a best choice for Jehovah’s Witnesses, but not so for readers from other camps. NRSV is basically literal, mostly correct, but sometimes it lacks clarity of meaning and does not embrace current English.

NIV is the most poplar translation and it deserves to be so after a thorough study of it. It is mostly correct, direct and concise. However, critics may find it appalling in changing some verses so dramatically for the sake of a clearer meaning.

NIV translators use subjectivity to drive vagueness away for the readers. Whenever old usages conflict with the new ones, the translators choose the latter, leaving the readers in light rather than in darkness. It has a sense of confidence, even close to arbitrary, and hence looks rather different and modern than the other translations.

By using a Hermeneutics approach to analyze NIV and other three translations, the thesis comes to the conclusion that certain subjectivity is necessary on the ground that factors of language and non-linguistic factors have to be considered at the same time when translating. Finally, it becomes apparent that NIV excels the other three translations after a thorough comparative study.

Although dozens of examples are quoted, thanks to the contribution of other scholars, the thesis is still in want of support from original texts. The deduction for the conclusion is not convincing enough as the author lack knowledge of Hebrew or Greek. In addition, with only a few examples, it is far from enough to give Bible translations a fair judgment. So the author still needs more in-depth and wider coverage of examples for support.

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Appendix

KJV: King James Version
NKJV: New King James Version
NASB: New American Standard Bible
NASU: New American Standard Bible (1995 Update)
RSV: Revised Standard Version
NRSV: New Revised Standard Version
ESV: English Standard Version
NIV: New International Version
TNIV: Today's New International Version
NAB: New American Bible
NJB: New Jerusalem Bible
GNB: Good News Bible
REB: Revised English Bible
JB: Jerusalem Bible
NLT: New Living Translation
NEB: New English Bible
LB: Living Bible

Acknowledgements

I am truly grateful to my supervisor Associate Professor Cai Ping for his invaluable instructions. His encouragement is priceless in my building of confidence in finishing this thesis, and his keen insight saves much of time in revising. He is always concise in words, but every word counts. I am very grateful for his timely help and scholarly seriousness.

In the writing of this thesis, I was also helped by Professor Yang Liu. Without her, I would dwell longer on which topic should I choose. Her kindness and patience led me out of the initial puzzlement in choosing an appropriate topic.

I also thank Professor Wang Xikui from University of Manitoba, Canada. He sent me the NIV translation of the Bible from Canada. His unselfish help has long been a motivation for my fulfillment of dreams.

I have to thank my friends Mr and Mrs. Canon from Vancouver. It was under their guidance that I came to more knowledge of the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures. Their unselfish devotion made me aware of their trust and changed my view on Jehovah's Witnesses.

I give special thanks to Professor Huang Zhen Ding. Through his lecture I came to realize the philosophical nature of translation. In his course "Introduction to Translation Theories", his sharp insight in the nature of translation was the guiding light and he gave me direct guidance in the writing of this thesis.

At last, I thank my family, especially my parents and my husband Yibin, my dear daughters Cindy and Danie. With their unselfish support, my life took up a totally different outlook.