

## 摘 要

《圣经》在人类文明史上无疑是最具影响力的著作之一，距今已有数千年的历史。它不仅涵盖丰富的内容，也承载着大量的文化和历史元素。

圣经翻译早在数千年前便开展起来，在近几个世纪进行得尤为突出。今天，《圣经》已经被翻译成超过两千种语言，各种版本更是数不胜数。而这些版本的翻译方法可大致分为形式对等翻译和动态对等翻译两种。

如今，随着语言的发展和社会的变革，越来越多的《圣经》读者希望有更加接近当今时代的翻译版本出现。美国语言学家、翻译理论家尤金·奈达对此做出了较大的贡献。二十世纪六十年代，奈达提出了动态对等翻译理论，并在美国圣经协会的圣经翻译工作中，以此理论原则为指导，翻译出了更适合现代读者的圣经版本，其中现代英文版本（*Good News Bible/Today's English Version*）以其“清晰、简单、自然的”语言自 1976 年出版以来在美国、英国，乃至全世界大受欢迎。他的翻译理论也对翻译界产生了不小的影响，为翻译理论的研究注入了新鲜血液，开辟了新的研究视野。

本文基于奈达的动态对等翻译理论，对在其指导下进行的圣经翻译进行研究，通过对不同版本（这里采用 *King James Version* 和 *Good News Bible*）进行对比和分析，考察奈达的翻译理论在圣经翻译中的应用，并进而证明这种应用是可行且有效的。

此外，作者还针对所研究圣经版本之间的差异设计了调查问卷，从读者那里获得其对不同圣经版本的反应的第一手资料。通过对问卷结果进行研究和总结，找出不同版本特征，了解圣经读者的需求。

最后，本文作者也提出了该理论在圣经翻译中的不足之处，并尝试给出改进的方法。希望随着翻译理论的不完善，有更多更好的译文版本出现。

**关键字：**尤金·奈达、动态对等、《圣经》翻译、现代英文版本圣经

## Abstract

It is no doubt that the Bible is one of the most influential works in the world. It is a great literature with a long history. As early as thousands of years ago did translators begin to translate the Bible. The work of Bible translation prevailed particularly in the recent centuries. Today, the Bible has been translated into over 2000 languages in the world with numerous versions. All of these versions were translated guided by two major approaches: formal equivalence translation and dynamic equivalence translation.

At present, with the development of languages as well and the social changes, more and more Bible readers hope that a kind of modern Bible translation can be published. American linguist, translation theorist Eugene Albert Nida made a great contribution to the Bible translation. In the 1960's, he proposed a translation principle called "Dynamic Equivalence" and guided his Bible translation work in the American Bible Society. A new version — *Good News Bible/Todays English Version* was published in 1976. This version soon became popular with a lot of people in the world by its "clear, simple and natural languages". Nida's translation theory also exerted a tremendous influence on translation study, which opened a new dimension to Bible translation.

This paper is to study the application of Nida's dynamic equivalence principle in the Bible translation through the comparison and analyses of two Bible versions — *King James Version* and *Good news Bible*, then prove this application is valid and effective.

In addition, the author, in order to get the first-hand data of the reader's evaluation of and responses to different Bible versions, composes a questionnaire, through the results of which finds out the features of each version, and knows the actual needs of the Bible readers.

Finally, the author also proposes some limitations of the application, and tries to provide some possible suggestions of improvement. With the maturity of the translation theories, we have every reason to believe that more powerful Bible versions will appear in the future.

**Key Words:** Eugene A. Nida, dynamic equivalence, Bible translation

Good News Bible

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## 0. Introduction

The Bible is no doubt the most influential collection of books in the world. It is not only the Scripture for its believers who believe the stories in it are the Words of God, revealing the history of God's interaction with his people, but also considered as a great literature which is of great historical and cultural value for the people around the world.

Compared with the long history of the Bible itself, Bible translation also has been long undertaken by scholars for thousands of years. The Bible has been translated in over 2000 languages in the world, which makes the Bible the most translated and popular work. The translators have made tremendous contribution to the popularity of the Bible in the world.

In the history of Bible translation, many approaches and principles of translation have been adopted to guide the translation work, but it was not until last century that scientific translation theories were applied in the Bible translation, among which Eugene Albert Nida's "dynamic equivalence" principle played a very significant role, bringing considerable changes into the process of Bible translation.

Nida, an influential linguist as well as one of the leading theorists of translation in the US, proposed his principle of "dynamic equivalence" in the 1960's and put it into the practice of his Bible translation. The version called *Good News Bible* rendered under the guidance of Nida's theory, had its publication in 1976, and soon won great popularity in the US, even all over the world by its "clear, simple and natural" language. People found the GNB a modern version which is easy to understand and appreciate, which evidently proved Nida's successful application of his theory to Bible translation.

The principle of "dynamic equivalence", based on information theory, communication theory, semiotics and so on, was defined as equivalence "in terms of the degree to which the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same manner as the receptors in the source language,"<sup>1</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup>Nida, Eugene A. & Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2004), p24.

demands “complete naturalness of expression” and it does not require the reader to understand the cultural patterns of the source-language context in order to comprehend the message. The application of “dynamic equivalence” in Bible translation exerted a wide influence to Bible translators and to the theorists of translation as well.

### **0.1 Purposes of This Thesis**

This paper is to elaborate the application of Nida’s principle of “dynamic equivalence” in Bible translation, and to prove that it is valid and acceptable. Besides, the author also tries to figure out limitations of this application, and further provides possible improvements.

### **0.2 Research Methods**

An inductive methodology is adopted to conduct the whole procedure of the research.

- Theories like dynamic equivalence translation, information theory, communication theory, etc will be applied in this paper as the basis of the study;
- Many examples picked out from certain versions of Bible will be illustrated in this paper;
- The differences among various versions will be showed through comparison and analyses about their linguistic features and ways of rendering;
- A questionnaire is composed and distributed to get the first-hand data from various people, including the general public as well as the believers.
- The statistics and results of the questionnaire is used to facilitate the proof of the successful application of the theory in Bible translation;
- Some practical suggestions are provided according to the experience and needs of the readers.

### **0.3 Structure of This Thesis**

In this paper, the author first briefly introduces Bible and its translation to the readers. Secondly, the author presents Nida and his contributions, expounds his principle of dynamic equivalence in detail. Then comes the main part of this paper, which is to prove through comparison and analyses of many examples that the application of Nida's dynamic equivalence in Bible translation is valid and successful. At last, the author proposes some limitations of the application in Bible translation and raises some possible ways of improvement. In Conclusion part, the author also presents an idea that there will never be a single translation theory universal to all, neither a Bible version is considered the perfect one. Therefore, to produce a satisfactory translation, the translators should not only be skillful, but also bear the need of the readers in mind, and adopt proper principles in their translation process.

## **1. About the Bible**

### **1.1 What is the Bible?**

According to *Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary*, BIBLE is defined as follows<sup>1</sup>:

Bible, the English form of the Greek name "Biblia," meaning "books," the name which in the fifth century began to be given to the entire collection of sacred books, the "Library of Divine Revelation." The name Bible was adopted by Wickliffe, and came gradually into use in our English language. The Bible consists of sixty-six different books, composed by many different writers, in three different languages, under different circumstances; writers of almost every social rank, most of them unknown to each other, and writing at various periods during the space of about 1600 years: and yet, after all, it is only one book dealing with only one subject in its numberless aspects and relations, the subject of man's redemption.

Bible is divided into the Old Testament, containing thirty-nine books, and the New Testament, containing twenty-seven books. There is a break of 400 years between the Old Testament and the New.

### **1.2 What is the Bible for?**

The Bible tells how God relates to the world and his creations, especially mankind; it also details mankind's relationship and obligations to God. It includes a great deal of the history of the Jews. Many Christians use the Bible as a source of religious beliefs and doctrines. Most Protestant Christians advocate that it is the incomparably authoritative guide in all matters of faith and practice, a principle called sola scriptura.<sup>2</sup>

### **1.3 Influence of the Bible**

The Bible is arguably the most influential collection of books in human history. More copies of the Bible have been distributed than of any other book. The Bible has

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<sup>1</sup> <http://dict.die.net/bible/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.brainyencyclopedia.com/encyclopedia/b/bi/bible.html>

also been translated more times and into more languages than any other book. It is estimated that approximately 60 million copies of the complete Bible or significant portions thereof are distributed annually.

The Bible has had a tremendous influence not just on religion, but on language, law and culture as well, particularly in Europe and North America. Nowadays, many people around the world, whether they are believers or not, all know about the Bible. Apart from those devotees, there are also a lot of people who would like to read the Bible on account of their own interests, for the Bible is not only a collection of books which “reveals the history of how God interacted with his people,” but also a great literature appreciated by people who learn history, culture, even language from it.

#### **1.4 Bible Translation**

Translation is the process of communicating a message into a language that is different from the one in which the message was originally written. But if a person is not able to understand that message because it is written or told in an unfamiliar language, the message must be translated in order to make that person understand it. Without the process of translation that message will never be effectively communicated to a new audience. The message may be heard, but it will not be understood. This is especially important when the Bible is the message to be communicated.

The Bible is made up of several individual books that were written and told long ago in various languages quite unfamiliar to us today. None of these books were originally written in English. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and Aramaic. The New Testament is widely agreed to have originally been written in Greek, although some scholars hypothesize that certain books may have been written in Aramaic before being translated for widespread dissemination. These books came together over a period of more than a thousand years to form what we know as the Bible. Therefore, without Bible translation, people today would have to learn these three languages in order to read and understand the words of the Bible.



The Bible continues to be the most translated book in the world. It has been translated into many languages. Its entirety or in part has been translated into 2,355 of the approximately 6,500 languages that exist. The Bible is now available in 665 languages in Africa, followed by 585 in Asia, 414 in Oceania, 404 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 209 in Europe, and 75 in North America. The Bible is available in whole or in part to some 98 percent of the world's population.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the influence of the Bible is not only spread among the believers, there are also a lot of people who are interested in the Bible. Although the original purpose is to convey the message from God and to reveal the interaction between God and his people, but today, some people without religious background are also willing to read the Bible in order to appreciate its historical and literary value, to learn culture and language from it. Therefore, we may see that the Bible is such an influential book that its translation should be dealt with seriously and faithfully.

A variety of approaches to translation have been used, including formal equivalence, dynamic equivalence, meaning-based and idiomatic translation, etc. A great deal of debate occurs over which approach most accurately communicates the message of the biblical languages source texts into target languages. However, many versions still have their loyal readers throughout the world.

A Timeline of Bible Translation History provided by [www.greatsite.com](http://www.greatsite.com) is attached in the Appendix, which will help researchers know more about the background knowledge, and better understand the Bible.

## **1.5 Popular English Bible Versions**

Since the publication of the King James Version, there have been dozens of English Bible translations. Many of them are based on the formal equivalence approach to Bible translation (like the *New Revised Standard Version* and the *Tanakh*), and others use the dynamic equivalence approach (like *Good News Bible*, the

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<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible\\_translation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible_translation)

*Contemporary English Version* and the *New Living Translation*). So many different English Bible translations have been done over the past several hundred years, including quite a number of new ones published in the recent past, the reasons are — First, languages continually change over time. New words are always being added and others take on different or added meanings. Second, Bible scholars are continually learning things about ancient Israel and the Near East that can help people better understand the historical and cultural context of the Bible. Such discoveries sometimes affect how we understand the words and stories of the Bible. In addition, archaeologists continue to find documents and libraries that help translators understand the ancient Hebrew and Greek languages better, and so help them translate the Bible more accurately.

Below are the brief introductions to some most popular versions which have been widely spread and used since their publication, and they also represent two primary approaches to translation (formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence).

#### **King James Version (KJV)**

*The King James Version* (or *Authorized Version*) was originally published in 1611 at the request of King James I of England. The translators mostly aimed at making a clear and accurate translation from the original languages and used the best available editions of the Hebrew and Greek texts, and consulted the principal French, Spanish, German and Italian versions. Fourteen editions of the King James Bible were published before the end of 1614. After that, it was frequently reprinted and its spelling updated. So many people have used the KJV over the centuries that it has become the single most important book in shaping the modern English language. In a slightly modernized form, this Bible of 1611 became the most widely used version of the English language.

#### **Good News Bible (GNB)**

*Good News Bible* (also known as *Today's English Version* or later as *Good News Translation*) was one of the first meaning-based (or functional equivalent) translations of the Bible into English which presents the message of the Bible in a level of English that is common to most of the English-speaking world. It was originally published in

1976, and was revised in 1992. Good News Bible was renamed in North America as the *Good News Translation (GNT)* in 2001 and is still used widely in Bible study groups and in many worship services.

### **New International Version (NIV)**

The *New International Version* was a completely new translation, but it was strongly influenced by the King James tradition. The full Bible was published in 1978 and revised in 1984. A blend of form-based and meaning-based translation types, the NIV is one of the popular English Bibles in use today. It is equally useful for individual study and public worship, especially among more traditional and conservative denominations.

### **New Living Translation (NLT)**

The *New Living Translation* is a well-known Bible translation made with dynamic equivalence as its goal. The NLT is a meaning-based revision of the *Living Bible (LB)* that tries to keep its sound and feel. The NLT revision involved comparing the LB to the original-language texts, and then making changes. The NLT is a translation to use with youth and adults who have difficulty with the traditional language of a formal equivalent translation.

### **New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

The *New Revised Standard Version* is a 1989 revision of the *Revised Standard Version* (1952). The NRSV is now the latest authorized translation in the King James tradition. It aims at being readable, but it also tries to keep the words and phrases from the KJV. It is a blend of meaning-based and form-based translation types. The NRSV has become a standard translation for serious Bible study, especially in seminaries and colleges.

Nida's translation theory did play a very significant role in Bible translation. We may even say that it was his dynamic equivalence principle that brought so many new versions to people in the past decades. In next two chapters, a brief introduction to Nida will be provided, and his translation theory will also be elaborated in detail.

## 2. About Nida

### 2.1 Introduction to Nida

Eugene Albert Nida was born in Oklahoma City, the United States. As a little boy, he hoped to become a missionary when he grew up. He was interested in languages, so he chose Greek as his major in the University of California in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, he found himself interested in the Bible. Several years later, he pursued his Master's degree in Greek *New Testament* and then went to the University of Michigan to study linguistics and received his Ph.D.<sup>1</sup> With the knowledge background of language, the Bible and linguistics, he was employed by the American Bible Society (ABS) and later appointed in the United Bible Society (UBS). During his work for the ABS and the UBS, Nida organized several major new translations and revisions of Bibles with the guidance of his principle of "dynamic equivalence" among which *Good News Bible* (also *Today's English Version*, TEV) won great popularity — forty-two million copies were sold in less than ten years.<sup>2</sup>

His efforts contributed not only to the renaissance of Bible translation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also to modern linguistics and translation theory.

### 2.2 Nida and Bible Translation

Nida began his career with the American Bible Society in 1944 and assumed principal responsibility for the Translations Department in 1946. Bible translators of the ABS hoped to produce versions in a "common language," which Nida defined as the language common to people of all ranks. They worked toward defining the level of language which is literary discourse and ordinary, day-to-day usage.

The concept of a "common language" English version received an enthusiastic reception from the ABS administrators, but the translating work could not begin until a skilled translator agreed to undertake responsibility for the project. At that time, Nida turned to a colleague in the Translations Office of the ABS — Robert Galveston

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<sup>1</sup> 谭载喜,《新编奈达论翻译》(北京:中国对外翻译出版公司,1999), p. XI

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. XIII

Bratcher to accomplish this task. Adhering to Nida's principle of "dynamic equivalence," Bratcher rejected a translation tradition in which verbal consistency and formal equivalence often take precedence over natural and idiomatic usage of the English language. The style of the new Bible translation version carefully avoided slang, regional dialects, provincial phrases, and terms which restricted the version utility for general English language users. Most important, translators wished to avoid being vague and ambiguous; they searched the Scripture for contextual information before making final decisions on specific words and phrases and did not shy away from making choices.

In 1976, with the efforts of Nida and the translators, the *Good News Bible* was completed and published. By the time the Good News Bible celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1986, that name had become synonymous with Bible study for many dedicated readers in the United States and abroad.

### 2.3 Nida's Contribution

Just as mentioned above, Nida is considered as one of the leading translation theorists in the US today, who has exerted a great influence on the translators in the western countries, even in the whole world. His contributions to the translation theory study, especially to the Bible translation are regarded as a significant part in the contemporary translation studies and mostly have been accepted. He is also a productive writer. From 1945 to 2004, he has authored or co-authored more than 200 articles and 40 books among which over 20 books are about linguistics and translation theory.<sup>1</sup> From his works, we can see the contribution he has made to the translation theory study. His famous works include:

*Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) — In this book, he made full use of the new contemporary knowledge of semantics, transformational grammar, information theory, communication theory and psychology, etc. It was also in this book Nida first advanced the proposition of "dynamic equivalence", and three-stage

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<sup>1</sup> 谭载喜,《西方翻译简史》(北京:商务印书馆,2004)。

model of the translation process: analysis, transfer and restructuring.

*The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969) with Charles Taber — Nida amended the translation theory that he postulated in *Toward a Science of Translating* and further clarified it with abundant examples drawn from his rich experience in Bible translation. In this book, Nida placed a great emphasis on the role of the reader in translating.

*Componential Analysis of Meaning* (1975) — This book dealt with various aspects of meanings of language. Because translating for Nida, means translating meaning.

*From One Language to Another* (1986) with Jan de Waard — In this book, Nida substituted “functional equivalence” for “dynamic equivalence” just to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings. He also modified his attitude towards “formal correspondence” which had been regarded as the opposite of “dynamic equivalence” in his works of the 1960's.

*Language, Culture and Translating* (1993) — In this book, Nida mainly emphasized the need to understand thoroughly the source text, the close relation between language and culture, the necessity to focus attention on style and discourse, and the relevance of insights coming from several different disciplines.

*Language and Culture: Contexts in Translating* (2001)— Nida pointed out the crucial role of contexts in understanding and translating texts, and summarized several significant treatments of translation. He also presented three major types of theories of translation in terms of philological, sociolinguistic, and sociosemiotic principles.

In addition, he also write some important books on Bible translation, such as *Bible Translating* (1947), *Message and mission* (1960), and the books aiming to provide assistance to Bible translators, like *Lexical Semantics of the Greek New Testament* (1992).

Nida's articles and works on translation set off the study of modern translation as an academic field and have been influential throughout the world.

### 3. Nida's Principle of Dynamic Equivalence

#### 3.1 Seeing Dynamic Equivalence by Viewing Decoder's Channel

When Nida developed the principle of "dynamic equivalence," he based his study on information theory, communication theory, semiotics and so on, which laid a scientific foundation for his translation theory.

Nida sees translation as a communication event which moves from "source" to "receptor". In both original communication and translation, message must be received by the intended receptor. Nida borrows the concept of the decoder's channel capacity from information theory to explain the acceptability of message by readers. Here, Let us have a look at the following figures to see the situation of original communication, literal translation, and adjusted translation.

When an original message is prepared specifically for a group of receptors, the form of the message would be constructed so as to fit the decoder's channel, as in Figure 1.

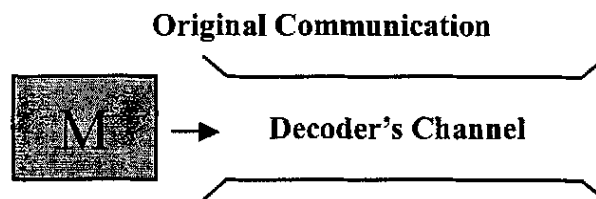


Figure 1

While a literal translation attempts to pack the same amount of information into substantially the same length of message (that is the length of the horizontal side of the rectangle), it is inevitable that the linguistic awkwardness of the forms will increase the "communication load" or "information" in such a message. At the same time, the decoder's channel is inevitably narrower, since he is not a part of the original communicative event and lacks the cultural background which the decoder in the source language has. Therefore, we can see that the message is "wider" and the channel narrower, that is to say, the decoder cannot understand the message with ease and efficiency, as showed in the following figure.

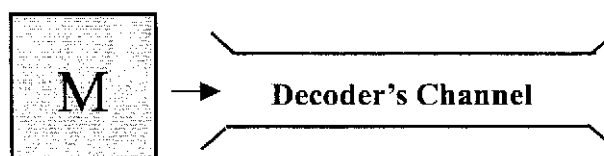
**Literal Translation into Receptor Language**

Figure 2

When we are to provide a dynamically equivalent translation, the decoder's channel needs to be fit, though there is not adequate cultural awareness of the circumstances of the original communication. Therefore, it is necessary to "draw out" the message by adding up necessary redundancy to it, so as to make it equivalently meaningful. If we do not make proper adjustments to the form of the receptor's language, an overloading of the message is almost inevitable, just like showed in Figure 2.<sup>1</sup>

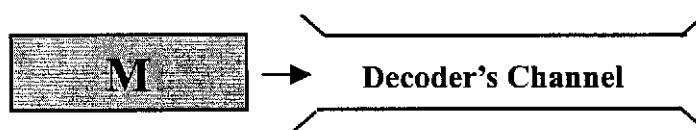
**Adjusted Translation/Dynamic Equivalence Translation into Receptor Language**

Figure 3

From above Figures we can clearly see that through proper formal adjustments, and through adding up necessary cultural and linguistic elements to the receptors, the message can be conveyed relatively completed and naturally. The receptor will not have to bare the overloaded burden of unfamiliar and unnatural information, and he can also better understand the message. That is the essence of Dynamic Equivalence translation.

**3.2 Explanations to Some Major Terms**

When talking about Nida's Dynamic Equivalence principle, it is inevitable to see many relevant terms, such as "formal equivalence", "formal correspondence" "functional equivalence," and so on. These terms are important parts of Nida's

<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Towards a Science of Translating* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), pp.130-132.



translation theory, and are proposed with the progress and improvement of Nida's translation theory study. It is necessary to explain these terms here, for proper understanding of these terms will help significantly grasp his translation theory.

### 3.2.1 Formal Equivalence and Dynamic Equivalence

One of Nida's major contributions to translation studies is his "dynamic equivalence" translation principle. He first mentioned this idea in the article "*Principles of Translation as Exemplified by Bible Translating*" (1959) which goes:

*Translating consists in producing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language, first in meaning and secondly in style.*<sup>1</sup>

Later, he proposed in his book *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) that there were fundamentally two different types of equivalence: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. When he spoke of formal equivalence, he thought it "focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content..." Translators are "concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language." Whereas a dynamic equivalent translation is mainly concerned with "the dynamic relationship, and the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message."<sup>2</sup>

However, it was not until 1969 that Nida provided a clear definition of "dynamic equivalence" in his book *The Theory and Practice of Translation*:

*Dynamic equivalence is therefore to be defined in terms of the degree to which the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same manner as the receptors in the source language.*<sup>3</sup>

In his opinion, translating was not to get something completely identical, but to

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Structure and Translation : Essays by Eugene A. Nida* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), p.33.

<sup>2</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Towards a Science of Translating* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), p.159.

<sup>3</sup> Nida, Eugene A. & Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, p24.

reproduce “the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message” rather than “the conservation of the form of the utterance” in the receptor language.<sup>1</sup>

We may say a dynamic equivalent translation demands “complete naturalness of expression” and it does not require the reader to understand the cultural patterns of the source-language context in order to comprehend the message. However, in a formal equivalent translation, the translator attempts to “reproduce as literally and meaningfully as possible the form and content of the original”, and the reader is permitted to “identify himself as fully as possible with a person in the source-language context, and to understand as much as he can of the customs, manner of thought, and means of express”.<sup>2</sup> That is to say, if the translator wants to make the text fully comprehensible, he should add some footnotes to give further explanations.

It should be mentioned that as we all know, it is impossible to achieve absolute “equivalence” in translating, so obviously, the term “equivalence” in Nida’s theory is used in a relative sense. Just like what Nida emphasized later in his *Language, Culture and Translating*, “Equivalence cannot be understood in its mathematical meaning of identity, but only in terms of proximity, i.e. on the basis of degrees of closeness to functional identity.”<sup>3</sup>

### 3.2.2 Formal Equivalence and Formal Correspondence

As mentioned above, Nida in his 1964 book gave a loose definition of “formal equivalence” vs “dynamic equivalence”, but after reading his 1969 book, we may notice that the definition of “dynamic equivalence” was further amended and clarified, but the term “formal equivalence” just totally did not appear in this book. Instead, the concept of “formal correspondence” was put forward which was opposed to “dynamic equivalence”.

However, “formal equivalence” and “formal correspondence” are not the same. According to Nida and Taber, the latter could be explained that — it is the formal

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>2</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Towards a Science of Translating*, p.159.

<sup>3</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Culture and Translating* (Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Languages Education Press, 1993), p.117.

features, such as the formal consistency of word, phrase, and clause order, length of sentences and classes of words combine to produce "formal correspondence". If so, a formal correspondence translation is considered a word-for-word translation, but a formal equivalent translation is not unless it goes to the extreme. That is why Nida suggested in this book that "dynamic equivalence" should be given priority over "formal correspondence" which tends to distort the meaning of the original when he talked about what a good translation is.<sup>1</sup>

What is more, Nida's attitude towards "formal equivalence" and "formal correspondence" was not always consistent. In his 1964 book, he thought a formal equivalence translation might be acceptable, but in the 1969 book, he rejected formal correspondence. However, in his *From One Language to Another* (1986), he admitted that a formal correspondence translation may "involve a number of different degrees of intelligibility," although it usually sounds strange and awkward. In his later book *Language, Culture and Translating* (1993), he gave a clearer idea that "If a more or less literal correspondence is functionally equivalent in both designative and associative meaning, then obviously no adjustments in form are necessary."<sup>2</sup> This reflects that Nida has realized that in some cases even a close, formal translation can achieve the aim of "functional equivalence", as it occurs in actual translating. That is to say, he regards "functional equivalence" as the only valid standard of whether a formal translation is acceptable or not.

### 3.2.3 Dynamic Equivalence and Functional Equivalence

When people mention Eugene Nida, the term "dynamic equivalence" will at once appear in their mind, but in *From One Language to Another* (1986), he replaced it with "functional equivalence", since the expression "dynamic equivalence" often caused misunderstandings of some translators. There is not much difference between the two concepts. The substitution of "functional equivalence" was just to stress the

<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A. & Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, p.173.

<sup>2</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Culture and Translating*, p.125.

concept of function and to avoid misunderstandings of the word “dynamic” which was often mistaken for something that has certain impact.

In the book *Language, Culture and Translating* (1993), Nida further defined “functional equivalence” into two levels on the basis of both cognitive and experiential factors: the minimal level and the maximal level. A minimal, realistic definition of functional equivalence could be stated as “The readers of a translated text should be able to comprehend it to the point that they can conceive of how the original readers of the text must have understood and appreciated it.” Anything less than this degree of equivalence should be unacceptable. A maximal, ideal definition could be stated as “The readers of a translated text should be able to understand and appreciate it in essentially the same manner as the original readers did.” The maximal definition implies a high degree of language-culture correspondence between the source and target languages and an unusually effective translation so as to produce in receptors the capacity for a response very close to what the original readers experienced. This maximal level of equivalence is rarely, if ever, achieved, except for texts having little or no aesthetic value and involving only routine information.<sup>1</sup> For Nida, good translations always lie somewhere between the two levels.

Since we have a rough idea about Nida and his dynamic equivalence principle, we will study the application of his translation theory in the Bible translation in the next Chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Culture and Translating*, 1993, p.117.

## 4. Dynamic Equivalence in Bible Translation

In this part, we will use the concrete methods to examine how dynamic equivalence works in Bible translation, and whether or not at all.

### 4.1 Comparison and Analyses of Some Bible Translations

In order to have an objective and impartial evaluation of Nida's translation theory in Bible translation, we also need to examine its application to it with a scientific approach. Here we use KJV and GNB which adopted two different principles — formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence translation respectively, to disclose, through comparison and analyses, the essence of Dynamic Equivalence theory of translation and prove whether it is suitable to guide Bible translation.

As the preface of the Good News Bible says,

“The primary concern of the translators has been to provide a faithful translation of the meaning of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts. Their first task was to understand correctly the meaning of the original. At times the original meaning cannot be precisely known, not only because the meaning of some words and phrases cannot be determined with a great degree of assurance but also because the underlying cultural and historical context is sometimes beyond recovery...After ascertaining as accurately as possible the meaning of the original, the translators' next task was to express that meaning in a manner and form easily understood by the readers. Since this translation is intended for all who use English as a means of communication, the translators have tried to avoid words and forms not in current or widespread use; but no artificial limit has been set to the range of the vocabulary employed. Every effort has been made to use language that is natural, clear, simple, and unambiguous. Consequently there has been no attempt to reproduce in English the parts of speech, sentence structure, word order, and grammatical devices of the original languages. Faithfulness in translation also includes a faithful representation of the cultural and historical features of the original, without any attempt to modernize the text. Certain features, however, such as the hours of the day and the measures of weight, capacity, distance, and area, are given

their modern equivalents, since the information in those terms is of greater importance to the reader than the Biblical form of those terms. ”

The underlined parts are the major tasks of the translators when translating the *Good News Bible*. Accordingly, we will analyze in detail how the translation of the Bible was conducted with the guidance of Nida’s theory. That is to say, the comparison and analyses will be carried out according to this aim. To find out many dimensions of what makes GNB an engaging, understandable, and readable translation, it might be worthwhile to consider it from following aspects:

#### 4.1.1 Word Choice

Since the *Authorized Version(KJV)* was published in 1611, English language changes greatly. No doubt, some words or phrases in the KJV have already become old-fashioned which might create barriers for the modern readers. In the GNB translation, “...The translators have tried to avoid words and forms not in current or widespread use.” That is why today’s readers, especially the young readers and the non-English speakers find less difficulties in vocabulary when reading the Good News Bible.

At the same time, it should be emphasized here as well that a good Bible translation should be free of tongue-twisters, that is to say those words hard to pronounce should be avoided. Because on many occasions the Bible is used to be read aloud to the audience, so some words unsuitable for reading, such as the words which are seldom used in everyday speech, some words usually understood depending on spelling, or words with vulgar pronunciation, should be avoided. Clarity of the words chosen is very important to Bible translation, for it not only facilitates private reading and understanding, but also ensures that it would be excellent for public reading and make an immediate and powerful impact on the listeners. Moreover, a good translation should also pay attention to its lyrical quality which will make the readers not only enjoy silent reading, but also cannot help reading it aloud with great enjoyment.

In order to make the language in Bible translation more natural, it is inevitable to make some lexical adjustments in the old-fashioned words or the words with old forms. In addition, when the grammar in the older version looks strange or even is considered wrong by today's readers, some adjustments also need to be made on some words functioning in the grammatical structure in order to render a version with contemporary grammar, which will reduce the readers' frustrations.

Here is an example from John 2:4 in the Bible.

*KJV: Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.*

*GNB: "You must not tell me what to do," Jesus replied. "My time has not yet come."*

"Saith", "unto" "thee" "mine" in KJV are all archaic words which we say "says", "to", "you", and "my" respectively in today's English. Although Bible was written thousands of years ago, its translations are for contemporary readers. Therefore, it is not necessary to maintain those features of the old English. So in GNB, we see no words like "thee", or "saith" any more. A sentence like "what have I to do with thee" may sounds strange to the readers today. When Jesus said this, he meant that he did not need his mother tell him what to do, "have ...to do with" in modern English means "to be concerned and associated with...", but is seldom used in a question the way KJV rendered. "Mine" in old English was used instead of today's "my" before an initial vowel or the letter h. Apart from this difference, the sentence "Mine hour is not yet come" may be considered grammatically wrong according to our rules of grammar. Therefore, some words need replacing in order to come up with a correct sentence which goes "my time has not yet come" in GNB. When all these adjustments were made, the language in GNB sounds more natural and easy to understand.

Another example from Hosea 9:10:

*KJV: I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the firstripe in the fig tree at her first time: but they went to Baalpeor, and separated themselves unto that shame; and their abominations were according as they loved.*

*GNB: The LORD says, "When I first found Israel, it was like finding grapes growing in the desert. When I first saw your ancestors, it was like seeing the first ripe figs of the season. But when they came to Mount Peor, they began to worship Baal, and soon became as disgusting as the gods they loved."*

It is obvious that the GNB version sounds more natural and understandable. The first sentence, for example, means that "the finding of Israel was like finding grapes in the wilderness, the finding of your ancestors was like seeing the first ripe figs in the fig tree", just like rendered in the GNB version. However, the KJV's translation gives a weaker impression of this meaning. The latter part of KJV is even more confusing. "Baalpeor" and "separated themselves unto that shame" really causes difficulties for the readers to understand, but the GNB version provides a clearer version by telling the readers Baalpeor actually means the Mount Peor where Baal was worshiped. So we can see that using simpler words and phrases will make the version easier to understand. Moreover, we may notice from the example that the KJV version does not sound like natural English, for it is kept the original form and word order, while the GNB version provides more natural English to today's readers through making some formal adjustments and giving some necessary historical background.

#### **4.1.2 Sentence Patterns**

Before we look at the details about the sentence patterns in the different versions, it is necessary for us to know something about Nida's view on content and form. In Nida's theory, the content is what the message is about, and the form is the external shape the message takes to affect its passage from the writer's mind to the reader's mind.<sup>1</sup> The "form" does not refer to stylistic formal features. A dynamic equivalence translation is to avoid word-for-word translation, but it is also necessary to reproduce the style of the original text in order to ensure the readers' better understanding.

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A. & Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, p.105.



Nida and Taber said in *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, “Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.”<sup>1</sup> That is to say, Nida holds that meaning should take priority over form, which he makes very clear in explaining his definition of translating: “as has already been indicated in the definition of translating, meaning must be given priority, for it is the content of the message which is of prime importance for Bible translating”.<sup>2</sup> All languages differ in form so that if the translator wants to preserve the content of the message in the receptor language, he usually needs to reconstruct the form of the source language. We often need to make some formal adjustments under the condition when there are great differences between source and target languages, cultures, readers, etc. Sometimes, if the source text has distinctive features in its style which make it hard for the target readers to understand, or make it strange for the readers, we also need some adjustments when we render the translation.<sup>3</sup>

Translating is a communication event rather than as a system for matching the features of source and target languages. Therefore, if we want to realize a dynamic equivalence of a source text, we have to know whenever there are the possibilities of misunderstanding of the meaning, or there are difficulties to understand the meaning of the target text. Certain changes or adjustments must be made, and some footnotes are also necessary to be provided to give explanations. That is to say, we should never maintain the formal equivalence at the cost of losing the meaning of the source text.

Here, we just examine the adjustments in the Bible translating in a narrower perspective—mainly focusing on level of the sentence patterns. An example is provided below:

The example is a simple one from Rev. 1:16,

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp.12-13.

<sup>3</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Culture and Translating*, 1993, pp.125-130.

*KJV: And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.*

*GNB: He held seven stars in his right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword came out of his mouth. His face was as bright as the midday sun.*

From the KJV, we can see that the word order is not like that of an English sentence, which actually maintained the original order of the source language. For example, the preposition phrase “in his right hand” was put before “seven stars”, the object of this sentence, but, we usually follow a S+V+O+A structure as what was rendered in GNB— He (subject) +held (Verb)+seven stars (Object) + in his right hand (Adverbial). Obviously, the GNB translation sounds more natural and comfortable. Similarly, the second part of the sentence also follows the S+V+O+A structure in GNB rather than put it inversed as what it is in KJV. The last part of the sentence of both of the two versions are normally structured, but the rendering of GNB is evidently easy to understand by replace the word “countenance” with “face”, “the sun shineth in his strength” with “the midday sun”.

Another example is 1 Samuel 14:28:

*KJV: Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed Be the man that eateth any food this day. And the people were faint.*

*GNB: But one of the men said, “We are all weak with hunger, but your father threatened us and said, ‘A curse be on anyone who eats any food today.’”*

“Cursed Be the man” in KJV version obviously does not follow the natural English word order. The sentence on the whole of KJV does not follow the natural logic, anyway. However, the GNB makes some adjustments of the sentence order, and also gives a more logic rendering, for example, “And the people were faint” is like just a part added to the whole thing, but it is actually a sentence showing the state of the people at that time, that is why the God will tell them not to eat anything.

Therefore, the GNB version puts it in the first part of the sentence, and makes the God's word more reasonable for the readers. In that case, readers can understand it better.

To be faithful to the original text, every translator always endeavors to keep the structural form if it is possible, but in most cases it is not possible, for the attempt to preserve structural form usually results in either complete unintelligibility or in awkwardness. Therefore, from the above examples, we can see that the adjustments in sentence structures in GNB were good attempt to remove the awkwardness, and make the translation more natural.

### 4.1.3 Cultural Interpretation

The role of language within a culture and influence of the culture on the meanings of words and idioms are so pervasive that scarcely any text can be adequately understood without careful consideration of its cultural background.<sup>1</sup>

The Bible, as a book with a long history, is not only regarded as the holy book to its faithful believers, but also cherished as a treasure carrying cultural legacy. Therefore, for its translators, to deal with the cultural interpretation turns out to be a great challenge.

To present an accurate translation of the Bible, the skilled translators need consult to available ancient biblical manuscripts and qualified biblical scholars for the meaning of the original text as well.

For any language, idioms and proverbs vividly show us the rich culture which cultivated them. Sometimes an idiom is an entire phrase composed of several words, but the meaning of the idiom can never be understood by adding up the meaning of each word. Generally, if a correspondent idiom can be found in the target language, the idiom of the source language should be translated into that correspondent one with exact correspondence. If there is no such a correspondent, the translator needs to translate the idiom into an expression with the meaning of the original idiom. If an

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Culture and Translating*, 1993, p.i.

expression in the original text has a correspondent idiom in the translated text, then a proper idiom in conformity to the context should be provided in the target language. In today's English, there are a lot of idioms and proverbs are inherited from the Bible. Therefore, we choose idioms as representatives for our comparison and analyses. From different translations of idioms, we can see how dynamic equivalence translating has been applied in the Bible translation.

In fact, to make idioms more understandable in the Bible translation, some adjustments have been made in its rendering, for example:

*KJV: Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; (Acts 2:30)*

*GNB: He was a prophet, and he knew what God had promised him: God had made a vow that he would make one of David's descendants a king, just as David was. (Acts 2:30)*

This sentence was to say that David knew that God will make his son, Christ, a king in the future, because God had promised him. However, the expression "the fruit of his loins" in KJV will be a hindrance for many readers' understanding. Although this translation strictly translated each word of the original text, this phrase made no sense to the target language readers. Whereas the GNB translators gave the equivalent meaning to this idiom, which is "the descendants", thus made the meaning clearer, for reader might soon relate this descendant with David's son Christ. Obviously, to render an idiom into a non-idiom in the target language when there is no exact correspondent one is one of the ways to produce a version which is easy to understand.

Another example of cultural interpretation in Bible translation is from Ezra 3:4:

*KJV: They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required;*

*GNB: They celebrated the Festival of Shelters according to the regulations; each day they offered the sacrifices required for that day;*

In the Bible, there are many stories about festivals which also reflected a lot of cultural and historical features. “Feast of tabernacles” in KJV actually was a kind of festival, called the Festival of Shelters. When it is explicitly written as a festival, the readers will immediately know the exact importance of it. In addition, “daily burnt offerings” was also translated according to the original language, which we nowadays understand them as “the sacrifices”. All of these are crucial for understanding an ancient festival or rite, and the words GNB rendered are also widely accepted in modern English. Therefore, this kind of adjustment in GNB version is necessary and helpful.

In addition, ancient weights and measures have also been converted to modern English equivalents, since the ancient measures are not generally meaningful to today’s readers. Besides, ancient currency values have also been expressed in common terms in GNB.

For example, “the tenth part of an *ephah* of fine flour” (Leviticus 6: 20) in the *King James Version* was translated into “one kilogram of flour” (Leviticus 6: 20) in the *Good News Bible*, for people today really have no idea about how much an ephah is, but we use the “kilogram” almost everyday. Of course, now we learn that an ephah equals ten kilogram from this comparison. Stones of “ten *cubits*” (Kings 7: 9) in KJV was converted to “4 meters long” (Kings 7: 9) in GNB, which really makes sense to us.

Cultures are reflected in some aspects of language, such as vocabulary, discourse patterns, and idioms and so on. In the Bible, many words and phrases carry a great deal of cultural meaning that was obvious to the original readers but needs explanation to the target-language readers. In such cases, the GNB translation translated them dynamically for clarity with explanation and footnote.

#### 4.1.4 Clarity of Meaning

No literature will stay long in a reader's hands if it is difficult to comprehend. Even faithful Bible readers complain because traditional translations are often so hard to understand. Many of the books which make up the Bible have a profound and

complex character. Without diminishing that reality, if some of the passages in these books are not understood, the translators cannot claim to have done their work well.

To produce an accurate translation of the Bible into contemporary English, the translation team needed the skills necessary to enter into the thought patterns of the ancient authors and then to render their ideas, connotations and effects into clear, contemporary English.

If there are distinct differences between the cultural forms of functions in the Bible and the corresponding receptor-language parallels, it may be necessary to provide a certain amount of contextual conditioning. When providing the contextual conditioning, some adjustments also need to be made, but according to Nida and Taber in their *the theory and practice of translation*, alterations are not employed unless (1) the text is likely to be misunderstood by the receptors, (2) the text is likely to have no meaning to the receptors, or (3) the resulting translation is so “overloaded” that it will constitute too much of a problem for the average reader to figure it out.<sup>1</sup> However, there are the situations in which culturally strange objects must be retained because of their symbolic values, for example, “sheep or lambs,” which figure so largely in the entire sacrificial system. It is also necessary to emphasize that the translators are not free to add any explanatory additions. The definite limit as to what is proper translation in this difficult area is: one may make explicit in the text only what is linguistically implicit in the immediate context of the problematic passage.<sup>2</sup>

Here is an example from Joshua 8: 13:

*KJV: And when they had set the people, even all the host that was on the north of the city, and their liers in wait on the west of the city, Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.*

*GNB: The soldiers were arranged for battle with the main camp north of the city and the rest of the men to the west. Joshua spent the night in the valley.*

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A. & Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, p.110.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 111.

According to the story, this sentence is telling that Joshua was preparing an attack on the city of Ai, so “set the people” in KJV actually means “arrange” the “the soldiers” “for battle”, which provides the information that they were going to have a battle. “All the host” and “the liers in wait” respectively refers to the “the main camp” and “the rest of the soldiers”. Therefore, by rendering the sentence with some contextual explanations, the GNB version is obviously easy to understand. In addition, the word “liers” in KJV should also be avoided in rendering, for when it is read aloud, it might cause misunderstanding and a relevant thinking of “liars” which has the same pronunciation with “liers”.

The next example is very simple:

*KJV: The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveler. (Job 31:32)*

*GNB: I invited travelers into my home and never let them sleep in the streets. (Job 31:32)*

There are two words in KJV version— “stranger” and “traveler” which make the two parts of the sentence sound a little irrelevant. However, they do refer to the same people who are traveled from far away. That is to say, for Job, he would never let the people he even did not know to sleep on the street, instead, he would provide them with a place to rest. So the GNB version just used one word “travelers” to make this sentence clearer.

#### **4.1.5 Forceful and colorful language**

As a special book which recorded and conveys the Word of God, a good Bible translation should have a forceful and colorful language which is not only believed by its readers, but also appreciated and enjoyed by its readers. It is the "chemistry" that develops between the text and the reader, and it results from a detailed attention to all matters of literary style. Without adding anything that is not part of the original language texts, to render the original meaning in an exciting and forceful manner is also preferred.

Let us take a look at an example from Acts 8:20:

*KJV: But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.*

*GNB: But Peter answered him, "May you and your money go to hell, for thinking that you can buy God's gift with money!"*

From the contexts, we may know that this was what Peter said to Simon, when he saw Simon wanted to give money to the apostles. In fact, Peter did think Simon's words were full of envy and sin. Therefore, he must have spoken to Simon very sharply and angrily. What he meant was that Simon's greedy wish was absolutely impossible. Instead of using a word "perish", GNB expressed the meaning with "go to hell" which picturesquely shows the anger of Peter. Besides, "Thy money perish with thee" in KJV sounds more like a statement, whereas the sentence in GNB "May you and your money go to hell" gives a stronger expressive effect, which makes the language more vivid and powerful.

When talking about Dynamic Equivalence via "decoder's channel", we have already seen a literal translation will throw heavy burdens to the readers who do not share the common cultural and language background with the ones of the source language. That is to say, the "overloading" of message in literal translation will reduce the equivalence in reader's understanding. We can also prove this from some examples:

The first one is from Habakkuk 1:5,

*KJV: Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.*

*GNB: Then the LORD said to his people, "Keep watching the nations round you, and you will be astonished at what you see. I am going to do something that you will not believe when you hear about it."*

Frankly speaking, the KJV version, even for the English speaker, sounds unnatural. For it keeps the word order and provides a typical word-for-word translation. "Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvelously:"



really makes little sense for today's readers by just giving a collection of words translated from the original language. "Work a work in your days" is another confusing phrases which sounds strange in English. These kinds of translation without necessary adjustments both in forms and words do make the readers feel frustrated in understanding it. While the GNB version makes the translation more acceptable by rendering natural English to today's readers.

Another example:

*KJV: But if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him by laying of wait, that he die; Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote him shall surely be put to death; for he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer, when he meeteth him.*  
(Numbers 35: 20-21)

*GNB: "If anyone hates someone and kills him by pushing him down or by throwing something at him or by striking him with his fist, he is guilty of murder and is to be put to death. The dead man's nearest relative has the responsibility for putting the murderer to death. When he finds him, he is to kill him."* (Numbers 35: 20-21)

This is another example of literal translation. In KJV "him of hatred", "in enmity" mean the people being hated. So the GNB renders them as "If anyone hates someone...", and "that he die" works in the sentence as a result of all the ways of killing him. But it is really unnecessary to appear two times in this short sentence. In addition, colon is frequently used in KJV, which is also unusual in modern English. The idiom "revenger of blood" may also cause difficulties when the readers read it. In fact, the phrase means "nearest relatives" which is easier to understand. After reading the two versions, it is not hard to find out that the word-for-word translation always make the rendering sounds unnatural and over-redundant.

Here is an interesting example from 1 Chronicles 7:20-21:

*KJV: And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son, And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead,*

*whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.*

*GNB: These are the descendants of Ephraim from generation to generation: Shuthelah, Bered, Tahath, Eleadah, Tahath, Zabad, Shutyhelah. Ephraim had two other sons besides Shuthelah: Ezer and Elead, who were killed when they tried to steal the livestock belonging to the native inhabitants of Gath.*

It may be noticed that the underlined words are all names. It is always a tough task for the devotees as well as other Bible readers to read and remember the names of people in the Bible. Therefore, to explain the relation among them in a clear and simple way is very important. However, the KJV — just always attaches much importance to keep the original version in terms of both content and forms — provides such an awkward rendering with “numerous” repetitious parts, such as “his son” in the example. We can see that literal translation, although seeking to be always faithful to the original text, inevitably appeared so unnatural and funny in today’s readers’ view.

Through the above comparison and analyses, we can see that the language in GNB, compared with that of KJV, is indeed simpler and more natural. The linguistic features in it are close to modern English—you can find less awkward syntactic structure in its rendering as well as less archaic vocabulary and expressions in it. People have fewer difficulties in understanding the idioms, even those who has no relevant background knowledge can easily understand what it talks about. However, the language in KJV preserved many features from the original language. Some unnatural lexical and grammatical structures are different from the way people use today, and its direct rendering of some idioms and cultural elements really bring frustration to the readers, especially to those who have not received sound education and those who have not adequate background knowledge about the Bible.

## 4.2 Questionnaire

The objective basis of Nida's theory is the equivalence to the original text. At the same time, readers' response plays an important role in Nida's theory. When evaluating readers' response to a translation, we should also pay attention to their response when they meet difficulties in comprehending the text and know why.

Just like Nida, in his book *From One Language to Another* (1986) with Jan de Waard wrote, when we determine whether a translation is faithful to the original, we should first answer three questions:

- (1) Who are the intended receptors of this translation?
- (2) Can they really understand it?
- (3) Do they understand it in the correct manner as the original writer intended to be understood?<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, to examine whether the dynamic equivalent theory works or not in the translation objectively, we should not only conduct linguistic analyses or comparison by ourselves, but also to get some first-hand data from the receptors. In order to know the real response from the Bible readers, a questionnaire is designed which raises questions about the readers' comments when they read different versions of Bible translation, they are *King James Version* and *Good News Bible*.

The questionnaires were distributed to many Christians both at home and abroad as well as many English learners in China whose age ranges from 22 to 41 (Sample=40).

Below are some of the typical results of the questionnaire:

### 4.2.1 Results of the Comparison (King James Version Vs. Good News Bible)

For those who read English Bibles, their preference between these two versions is apparent. For example:

*Version 1: But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he*

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A. & Jan de Waard, 1986. *From One Language to Another* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) p.33.

*said. Lest peradventure mischief befall him.*

**Version 2:** *but Jacob did not send Joseph's full-brother Benjamin with them, because he was afraid that something might happen to him.*

**Questions:** *Which version is better?*

**Why?**

75% of interviewees think Version 2 is better, for they hold that the language in Version 2 is easy to understand, and the meaning of Version 1 is relatively hard to follow. Whereas 25% interviewees prefer Version 1, for they think the way of rendering in Version 1 reads more like Bible language.

Obviously, we can see from the above two versions that Version 2 provided a clearer relationship among Jacob, Joseph and Benjamin, therefore, for the readers who are not very familiar with the Bible might easily follow the meaning. What's more, the vocabulary in Version 1 also sounds unnatural for today's English readers. However, there are some Chinese Bible readers hold that if the Bible language is not very easy to understand, that will make the language sound more like Bible language.

Another example:

**Version 1:** *You certainly have not brought us into a fertile land or given us fields and vineyards as our possession, and now you are trying to deceive us. We will not come!*

**Version 2:** *Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up.*

**Questions:** *Which version do you like?*

**Why don't you like the other version?**

67.5% of interviewees like Version 1. They think Version 2 contains too many old word forms which make it hard to understand, and not good for readers of all levels to understand the Bible. However, there are 32.5% of interviews prefer the language in Version 2, because they think the language in Version 1 is too modern and simple —just like the view in last example.

In Version 2 the phrase “flowth with milk and honey”, “put out the eyes of ...” as

well as some old word forms rarely show up in modern English and made the reading not fluent.

Another example also reflects the same view:

*Version 1: And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.*

*Version 2: If anyone hits you on one cheek let him hit the other one too; if someone takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well.*

**Questions: Which version do you like better?**

**Why don't you like the other one?**

**Do you think the language of Version 1 sounds more like the Bible language?**

15% of interviews consider Version 1 better, because they do not like the Bible language expressed in a simple and modern way like what it is in Version 2. Whereas 85% like Version 2 better, for they think the language of Version 1 is not conform to today's English, which is not easy for readers to understand.

From the meaning of this sentence, we can realize that it offers two conditions that people should stand what others do onto them. Apparently, no matter "hit on the cheek" or "take away your coat", it is better to render it in a parallel structure. Therefore, Version 2, through its structure, gives a stronger expressive effect than Version 1.

However, when answering the third question, there are 67.5% of interviewees answer that they think language of Version 1 sounds more like Bible language. That is to say, although there are far more people prefer simpler language which makes their understanding easier, they still think the Bible language should be the kind that is not that simple or modern.

Generally speaking, in every example, most of the interviewees like the version with simple and natural language as well as clear meaning imbedded in modern English, for they think this version is easy to understand—this version refers to GNB version. However, there is an interesting phenomenon, just like what has been mentioned above, although most readers prefer the GNB, but a majority of the interviewees think the Bible language should be like the KJV language, for there are

some archaic words and unnatural sentence structures in it which make this version read more like the Bible.

From the above results, we can see that most of the readers like a version translated with the approach of dynamic equivalence, which is GNB or TEV. It is evident that the clear, simple, natural and unambiguous language is very important for modern readers. Nevertheless, when answering the last question on the questionnaire “In your opinion, what kind of Bible language you will like reading?”, there is a distinct voice saying that the Bible language should not be too modern or simple, if it is just like everyday English, it may lose the flavor of the sacred scripture. On the contrary, if it contains some elements of ancient language or some strange structure, that will make the version more like Bible language. This view is mostly held by those who are not believers. As for those believers, they choose a Bible version out of various reasons. They believe the essence of the Bible should be the same, no matter what kind of pattern it has been translated into, and the translation text must be faithful to the original text, and faithful to the facts. Their preference of Bible versions, sometimes, is not decided by themselves, but due to the first Bible given to them. Of course, a modern translation of Bible like GNB is also very popular with a lot of people in the world, after all, its clear and simple language adds much attraction to it. What is worth mentioning here is that, from the questionnaire we may see that, there are various readers of the Bible with different backgrounds, therefore, the translators should be fully aware of their requirements of Bible translation.

#### **4.2.2 Why is Good News Bible preferable?**

Evidently, most readers tend to read the version with simple and nature language, that is Good News Bible. Why is it preferable?

As the forward of *Good News Bible* reads:

*The Good News Bible is an easy-to-read translation of the Bible which aims to give today's readers maximum understanding of the content of the original texts. It does not follow the traditional vocabulary and style found in the historic English Bible versions. Instead it attempts to*

*present the biblical content and message in standard, everyday, natural English.*

From the aim, we should notice such words, like “maximum understanding,” “not follow the traditional vocabulary and style”, and “in standard, everyday, natural English”. Due to this features of GNB, readers find it is easy to “understand and appreciate,” which meets the same standard proposed by Nida.

To sum up, through the comparison and analyses as well as the results of the questionnaire, it is evident that Nida’s dynamic equivalence is valid and effective in the Bible translating into English.

Take the KJV for example, it can truly be considered as one of the greatest pieces of literature in the English language, which has helped shape the English language itself. However, when the language evolves, words change meaning, usage is modified by changes in the culture itself, we do need to update our Bible translations.

The translators of the *Good News Bible* provided the readers with the message of the original texts of the Scripture in clear and contemporary English. As they did so, they kept the concerns of both formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence in mind. On the one hand, they translated as simply and literally as possible when that approach yielded an accurate, clear, and natural English text. Many words and phrases were rendered literally and consistently into English, preserving essential literary and rhetorical devices, ancient metaphors, and word choices that give structure to the text and provide echoes of meaning from one passage to the next.

On the other hand, the translators rendered the message more dynamically when the literal rendering was hard to understand, was misleading, or yielded archaic or foreign wording. They clarified difficult metaphors and terms to enhance the reader’s understanding. The translators first struggled with the meaning of the words and phrases in the ancient context; then they rendered the message into clear, natural and unambiguous English. Their goal was to be both faithful to the ancient texts and eminently readable. The result is translation that is both exegetically accurate and idiomatically powerful.

Though some renderings in GNB are not very satisfactory; there even might be some mistranslations, the whole work of the GNB translation is still considered an acceptable and successful version in conformity with Nida's principle of dynamic equivalence. The popularity of GNB shows that its simple and natural language is really welcomed by the people throughout the world, which proved the application of Nida's translation theory on Bible translation is valid.



## 5. LIMITATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Each version has its own virtues — the same is true of various translation theories. Here, we had better use formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence as the examples, for they have been discussed to a certain extent in this paper.

Dynamic equivalence and formal equivalence are two approaches to translation. Dynamic equivalence attempts to capture the general thoughts of the original, favors a kind of more natural language of target language, emphasizes on readability to the readers. This principle is more useful when the original language is very different from the target language, a literal translation is difficult to understand. Formal equivalence, on the other hand, tends to translate in a rather literal way, focus on the literal faithfulness to the original text, shows how meaning was expressed in the original text, preserves original idioms, rhetorical patterns and diction. Thus, for an official document, for instance, the exact original meaning and form may be both very important, so formal equivalence would be more suited. For these reasons, dynamic equivalence translations of the Bible are often used for everyday reading and the devotees, while serious Bible readers usually prefer a formal equivalence translation.

We can never say that dynamic equivalence principle is the only way to translate the Bible, since we are fully aware that each version of Bible translation has its own readers. There are always some people upholding the KJV as their only authoritative version who believe it is faithful and maintained the original flavor of the Bible. There are also some people who are tired of reading a Bible with archaic vocabulary and unnatural patterns prefer a translation presenting the Spirit of the Bible in a clear way. That's why we can always hear different voices on various Bible translations.

### 5.1 Other voices about Dynamic Equivalence in Bible translation

Apart from those people who favor the GNB version, there are still some people who believe that it is impossible to realize “equivalence” in translation. Some other people hold that if they can understand the Scriptures very easily, that means something of the mystery of religion has been lost. Some people think that the GNB

translated under the guidance of Nida's principle used "simple" and "everyday" English, the translators, in order to realize the "equivalence" in the Bible translation, which make the Scripture lose the original serious flavor as well as some cultural or historical elements it carried. There are also some people criticizing that a dynamic equivalence translation "aims at complete naturalness of expression and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture",<sup>1</sup> inevitably involved the replacement of linguistic and cultural differences between the two languages concerned.

To some extent, we have to admit that there are some problems in the Bible translation with dynamic equivalence as its guideline. Because the GNB translators paid more attention to breaking down cultural barriers, they tended to sacrifice certain cultural elements in their translations. At the same time, there are some rhetorical devices that were not faithfully reproduced, perhaps the reason is that the translators were concerned about the readers' acceptance, though Nida's dynamic equivalence theory requires the translators to reproduce faithfully the cultural and historical features of the original and reproduce the rhetorical devices as much as possible.

## **5.2 Limitations of Dynamic Equivalence in Bible Translation**

Although the application of dynamic equivalence in Bible translation is proved valid and practical through above comparison and analyses, we should see that Bible translation with Nida's principle as its guideline does have some limitations.

For example, when GNB translators made all their efforts to avoid readers misunderstanding about the original meaning, they often translated some idioms or some metaphors with typical flavor of the original culture into some simple sentences. It is true that such sentences eliminate the barriers of understanding for the readers, and make the reading much easier. But please imagine, what will be a Bible like if it has no such colorful languages with many vivid and fresh expressions? Maybe a great number of readers will lose their interest in reading it. A good Bible translation does

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Towards a Science of Translating*, p.159.

not only depend on its readability, if its language is just plain and simple, its cultural and literary values will be spoiled. One of the possible ways to make up for the loss of elements of the original text is that when we try to avoid misunderstanding on the part of the readers, we also need to pay attention to the cultural meanings and the stylistic features of the original text. We should manage to preserve as many as possible of the message and original flavor of the original text through delicate rendering and adjustments rather than loosely translate them only for the sake of clear meaning of the translated text.

### 5.3 Improvements to Dynamic Equivalence Translation

In recent years, Nida realized some limitations of his theory, and kept amending and improving it. He focuses on not only the readability of the translated text, but holds that understandability, readability and acceptability are equally important for a translation<sup>1</sup>. In addition, his attitude toward “formal equivalence” and “formal correspondence” was also changed as mentioned in 3.2.2 of this paper. To produce a satisfactory functional equivalent of a source text, some kinds of adjustment need to be made to some degrees. But, if a more or less literal correspondence is functionally equivalent in both designative and associative meaning, then obviously no adjustments in form are necessary. Yet we also have to know that whenever there are some possibilities of misunderstanding of the meaning, or there are difficulties to understand the meaning of the target text, certain changes or adjustments must be made, and some footnotes are also necessary to be provided to give explanations.<sup>2</sup>

Each theory has its merits and defects, through Nida's and other people's dedicated researches, the limitations will be amended and improved through more practice and further studies.

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<sup>1</sup> 李文革,《西方反以理论流派研究》(北京:中国社会科学出版社,2004),p.131.

<sup>2</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Culture and Translating*, 1993, p.125.

## 6. Conclusion

Until today, Bible translations have been mainly governed by one of two general translation theories. The first theory has been called “formal equivalence” translation. According to this theory, the translator attempts to render each word of the original language into English and seeks to preserve the original syntax and sentence structure as much as possible in translation. The second theory has been called “dynamic equivalence” translation. The goal of this translation theory is to produce in English the closest natural equivalent of the message expressed by the original language text, both in meaning and in style.

Since the Bible not only is the Scripture with great religious meaning in it, but also carries vast historical and cultural messages itself. The Bible exerts tremendous influences on today’s world. Many Bible translations in various languages appear one after another over the centuries, it was not until last century that a kind of fresh Bible translation emerged. Especially after the principle of dynamic equivalence proposed by Eugene A. Nida was widely spread in the world, the Bible translators throughout the world found a new dimension in their translation work which enabled them render some new versions of Bible quite different from the previous ones with archaic and unnatural languages. To some extent, we can say that Nida’s translation theory has changed the course of contemporary Bible translating.

Nida’s principle of “dynamic equivalence” is based on a scientific foundation of information theory, communication theory, semiotics and so on. Besides, Nida also gave special attention to the cultural context in determining meanings, since he held that “Before translating a text, a translator must often unpack the condensed academic language, and this cannot be done without a knowledge of language structures and of the culture.”<sup>1</sup>—the basic relation among language, culture and translation has been simply showed in this sentence. Therefore, we can say that Nida’s translation theory is not only linguistics-oriented, but sociolinguistics-oriented.

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<sup>1</sup> Nida, Eugene A., *Language, Culture and Translating* (Inner Mongolia: Inner Mongolia University Press, 1998), p.166.

Nida borrowed the concept from information theory to explain the acceptability of message by readers in both original communication and translation. When the message in the source language is translated, if the necessary linguistic and cultural elements are built into the translated text, the receptor can decode (understand) the translated text with ease and efficiency in his own cultural context.

When the translated message of the Bible is received by the reader in the receptor language substantially in the same manner as the original message is received by the original reader, we can say it is a faithful and adequate translation which conforms to the principle of “dynamic equivalence”.

Nida applied his years of experience to provide practical help for Bible translators, and the *Good News Bible*, since its publications, has become one of the most popular versions in the world. Although there are always some criticisms upon it, the application of dynamic equivalence in its translation really make the language of the Scripture more natural and easier to understand, which is appreciated by people with or without religious background. It is proved that the application of Nida’s translation theory in Bible translating is a success.

However, we have to admit that no translation theory is considered a universal principle which can be applied to any type of text. Take formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence translation for example, both of them have their strengths. A formal equivalence translation tends to preserve aspects of the original text as many as possible — including ancient idioms, term consistency, and original language syntax — that are valuable for scholars and professional study. It allows a reader to trace formal elements of the original text through the translated text. A dynamic equivalence translation, on the other hand, focuses on translating the message of the original text. It ensures that the meaning of the text is readily apparent to the contemporary reader. This allows the message to come through with immediacy, without requiring the reader to struggle with foreign idioms and awkward syntax. It also facilitates serious study of the text’s message and clarity in both devotees’ and public reading.

At the same time, we have to bear in mind that the pure application of either of

these translation theories would create translations at opposite ends of the translation spectrum. A purely formal equivalence translation would be sort of unintelligible, or awkward in syntax, but a purely dynamic equivalence translation would risk being unfaithful to the original for the sake of the readability of the translated text. Therefore, both meaning and form of the original text are very crucial to providing an effective and satisfactory translation. All translations in reality more or less contain a mixture of these two or even more translation philosophies.

We should not say that a Bible like *Good News Bible* which is simple and easy to understand is the best among all. We should not keep *King James Version* as the only acceptable version, either. Each version has its own reason to exist whether it is new or old. A lot of devotees and researchers never reject a version with a long history, such as KJV, for they believe that kind of relatively strict translation in a literal manner preserved most elements and values of the original text, which helps them thoroughly and directly know and understand the language in the Bible. However, with constant changes of live languages, many readers prefer to choose a modern version of Bible rather than those with archaic expressions, for they would like to get access to the message the Bible carries with less difficulties in understanding, which also facilitates people's acceptance of a Bible like GNB.

As what mentioned above, various readers choose different Bible version. Bible's translation should also be dominated by their needs. As long as a version conveys all the messages of the original text without losing any elements, and receives the readers' acceptance and satisfaction, it shows this translation a valid and proper one. Therefore, though there are always criticisms about every Bible translation, or about a kind of translation theory, it is not against people's zeal for belief and knowledge. People always choose the version according to their criteria and need. Bible translators also should provide different versions to meet various requirements in order to enable more people to get access to the enormous information the Bible possesses.

Finally, we may conclude that the goal of Bible translation is to convey the God's message to its believers, so it is more important to pursue a dynamic

equivalence in meaning, in order to make more people easily get access to the essence of the Bible. Besides, to apply dynamic equivalence principle in Bible translation is valid and successful. In order to realize the dynamic equivalence, certain adjustments need to be made to furnish a clear, simple, natural version of Bible translation. And last but not the least, we also have to know that it is impossible to realize absolute equivalence in translation.

Just like no translation theory is universal to all, neither a Bible translation has to be regarded as perfect forever. Just like what Eugene Nida has done for translation studies, more and more vigorous theories will be developed through intellectual research. With the advancement of translation studies, we have every reason to believe that there will be more classic translation works in the future, which will make great contributions to the civilization and progress of humanity.

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## Appendix I

### Timeline of Bible Translation History

- 1,400 BC: The first written Word of God: The Ten Commandments delivered to Moses.
- 500 BC: Completion of All Original Hebrew Manuscripts which make up The 39 Books of the Old Testament.
- 200 BC: Completion of the Septuagint Greek Manuscripts which contain The 39 Old Testament Books AND 14 Apocrypha Books.
- 1st Century AD: Completion of All Original Greek Manuscripts which make up The 27 Books of the New Testament.
- 315 AD: Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, identifies the 27 books of the New Testament which are today recognized as the canon of scripture.
- 382 AD: Jerome's Latin Vulgate Manuscripts Produced which contain All 80 Books (39 Old Test. + 14 Apocrypha + 27 New Test).
- 500 AD: Scriptures have been Translated into Over 500 Languages.
- 600 AD: LATIN was the Only Language Allowed for Scripture.
- 995 AD: Anglo-Saxon (Early Roots of English Language) Translations of The New Testament Produced.
- 1384 AD: Wycliffe is the First Person to Produce a (Hand-Written) manuscript Copy of the Complete Bible; All 80 Books.
- 1455 AD: Gutenberg Invents the Printing Press; Books May Now be mass-Produced Instead of Individually Hand-Written. The First Book Ever Printed is Gutenberg's Bible in Latin.
- 1516 AD: Erasmus Produces a Greek/Latin Parallel New Testament.
- 1522 AD: Martin Luther's German New Testament.
- 1526 AD: William Tyndale's New Testament; The First New Testament printed in the English Language.

- 1535 AD: Myles Coverdale's Bible; The First Complete Bible printed in the English Language (80 Books: O.T. & N.T. & Apocrypha).
- 1537 AD: Tyndale-Matthews Bible; The Second Complete Bible printed in English. Done by John "Thomas Matthew" Rogers (80 Books).
- 1539 AD: The "Great Bible" Printed; The First English Language Bible Authorized for Public Use (80 Books).
- 1560 AD: The Geneva Bible Printed; The First English Language Bible to add Numbered Verses to Each Chapter (80 Books).
- 1568 AD: The Bishops Bible Printed; The Bible of which the King James was a Revision (80 Books).
- 1609 AD: The Douay Old Testament is added to the Rheims New Testament (of 1582) Making the First Complete English Catholic Bible; Translated from the Latin Vulgate (80 Books).
- 1611 AD: The King James Bible Printed; Originally with All 80 Books. The Apocrypha was Officially Removed in 1885 Leaving Only 66 Books.
- 1782 AD: Robert Aitken's Bible; The First English Language Bible (KJV) Printed in America.
- 1791 AD: Isaac Collins and Isaiah Thomas Respectively Produce the First Family Bible and First Illustrated Bible Printed in America. Both were King James Versions, with All 80 Books.
- 1808 AD: Jane Aitken's Bible (Daughter of Robert Aitken); The First Bible to be Printed by a Woman.
- 1833 AD: Noah Webster's Bible; After Producing his Famous Dictionary, Webster Printed his Own Revision of the King James Bible.
- 1841 AD: English Hexapla New Testament; an Early Textual Comparison showing the Greek and 6 Famous English Translations in Parallel Columns.
- 1846 AD: The Illuminated Bible; The Most Lavishly Illustrated Bible printed in America. A King James Version, with All 80 Books.
- 1885 AD: The "English Revised Version" Bible; The First Major English Revision of the KJV.

- 1901 AD: The "American Standard Version"; The First Major American Revision of the KJV.
- 1971 AD: The "New American Standard Bible" (NASB) is Published as a "Modern and Accurate Word for Word English Translation" of the Bible.
- 1973 AD: The "New International Version" (NIV) is Published as a "Modern and Accurate Phrase for Phrase English Translation" of the Bible.
- 1982 AD: The "New King James Version" (NKJV) is Published as a "Modern English Version Maintaining the Original Style of the King James."
- 2002 AD: The English Standard Version (ESV) is Published

## Appendix II

### Questionnaire (on Bible Versions)

Your age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_\_\_ English Level \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever read Bible before? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your view on the Bible?

(Is it interesting? Is it easy or hard to understand?)

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**In this questionnaire, you will see some sentences picked out from two versions of Bible.**

**Please read them carefully, then answer the questions below, thank you!**

*Version 1:* But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said. Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

*Version 2:* but Jacob did not send Joseph's full-brother Benjamin with them, because he was afraid that something might happen to him.

**Questions: Which version is better? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Why? \_\_\_\_\_**

*Version 1:* You certainly have not brought us into a fertile land or given us fields and vineyards as our possession, and now you are trying to deceive us. We will not come!

*Version 2:* Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up.

**Questions: Which version do you like? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Why don't you like the other version? \_\_\_\_\_**

*Version 1:* And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and

the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

*Version 2:* and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on both sides.

**Questions: Do you understand the meaning of version 1? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please underline the expressions you think unnatural.**

*Version 1:* And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.

*Version 2:* If anyone hits you on one cheek let him hit the other one too; if someone takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well.

**Questions: Which version do you like better? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Why don't you like the other one? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Do you think the language of Version 1 sounds more like the Bible language?**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Version 1:* Do what I say, and you will live. Be as careful to follow my teaching as you are to protect your eyes.

*Version 2:* Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

**Questions: Do you know the meaning of "the apple of one's eye" ? \_\_\_\_\_**

**What is it? \_\_\_\_\_**

**What do you think of the language in Version 2? \_\_\_\_\_**

**In your opinion, what kind of Bible language you will like reading?**

\_\_\_\_\_

- END -