

Mertsi Åkerlund

**COMPARISON OF THE TRANSLATION OF
PSALM 22 BETWEEN
THE *REVISED STANDARD VERSION* AND
THE *CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH VERSION***

ABSTRACT

Mertsii Åkerlund: Comparison of the Translation of Psalm 22 between the *Revised Standard Version* and the *Contemporary English Version*

Bachelor's thesis

Tampere University

Bachelor's Programme in Languages

April 2021

In my thesis, I looked into differences between the translations of Psalm 22. As the theoretical framework for my study, I used the theory of dynamic equivalence and formal equivalence, and the retranslation hypothesis. My research question was how the translations differ as regards the translation strategies used and the translation choices made on the lexical and syntactic level.

My material consisted of two translations of Psalm 22: the *Revised Standard Version* (1956), which employs formal equivalence and aims to preserve the tradition of the *King James Version*, and the *Contemporary English Version* (1995), which employs dynamic equivalence and aims for comprehensibility and simplicity. My method for analysing the material was qualitative comparative analysis. I analysed the material verse by verse comparing the two translations on the lexical and syntactic level.

The results of my study were that differences in word choices or expressions were the most common type of difference between the two translations. The RSV employed more formal or literary words, while the CEV clearly favoured more common or general words. Where the RSV used a particular word in multiple occasions, the CEV often had different renditions depending on the context. The CEV avoided redundancy and repetition by omitting some elements that were present in the RSV. On the other hand, the CEV had additions to aid comprehension, usually to clarify the subject of the sentence. In cases where the RSV had metaphors, the CEV often favoured non-figurative paraphrases or similes in order to convey the message in a more explicit and understandable way. The RSV retained some archaic grammatical forms, such as archaic pronouns or verb forms. The CEV employed gender-neutral language, whereas the RSV did not. The CEV preferred a neutral word order, but the RSV used fronting for emphasis on some occasions, usually fronting the object. The CEV had a natural and simple style that was easy to read, and it also paid more attention to receptor response, in line with the principles of dynamic equivalence. The RSV had a more elevated literary style that was significantly more complex, with some passages being awkwardly formulated likely due to literal renderings.

Keywords: Bible translation, dynamic equivalence, formal equivalence, retranslation

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Mertsii Åkerlund: Vertailu psalmin 22 käännöksistä: *Revised Standard Version* ja *Contemporary English Version*

Kandidaatintutkielma

Tampereen yliopisto

Kielten kandidaattiohjelma

Huhtikuu 2021

Tutkin kandidaatintutkielmassani eroja psalmin 22 käännösten välillä. Käytin teoreettisena viitekehyksenä teoriaa dynaamisesta ja formaalista ekvivalenssista, sekä uudelleenäänöshypoteesia. Tutkimuskysymykseni oli, kuinka käännökset eroavat käännösstrategioiden ja käännösvalintojen kannalta sana- ja lausetasolla.

Tutkimusmateriaalini koostui kahdesta psalmin 22 käännöksestä. Ensimmäinen käyttämäni raamatunkäännös oli *Revised Standard Version* (1956), jossa käytetään formaalia ekvivalenssia, ja joka pyrki säilyttämään *King James Versionin* raamatunkäännösperinteen. Toinen käyttämäni raamatunkäännös oli *Contemporary English Version* (1995), jossa käytetään dynaamista ekvivalenssia, ja joka pyrkii ymmärrettävyyteen ja yksinkertaisuuteen. Metodini materiaalin analysointiin oli kvalitatiivinen vertaileva analyysi. Analysoin materiaalin jae jakeelta vertaillen molempia käännöksiä sana- ja lausetasolla.

Tutkimustulosteni mukaan erot sanavalinnoissa ja ilmaisuissa olivat yleisimpiä käännösten välillä. RSV:ssä käytettiin enemmän muodollisia tai kirjakielisiä sanoja, kun taas CEV suosi selvästi yleisempiä sanoja. Silloin kun RSV:ssä käytettiin yhtä termiä monessa kohdassa, CEV:ssä käytettiin usein eri käännösvariantteja kontekstista riippuen. RSV:ssä vältettiin toistoa tai redundanssia poistamalla joitain RSV:ssä olevia elementtejä. CEV:ssä oli toisaalta selventäviä lisäyksiä, jotka yleensä selvensivät, mikä lauseen subjekti on. Kohdissa, joissa RSV:ssä käytettiin metaforia, CEV suosi parafraseja, jotka ilmaisivat kyseisen metaforan kirjaimellisen merkityksen, tai vertauksia ilmaistakseen viestin eksplisiittisemmin ja selkeämmin. RSV säilytti vanhahtavia kielioppimuotoja, kuten vanhahtavia pronomineja ja verbimuotoja. CEV:ssä käytettiin sukupuolineutraalia kieltä, kun taas RSV:ssä sitä ei käytetty. CEV suosi neutraalia sanajärjestystä, kun taas RSV:ssä joissain tapauksissa lauseenjäsen, usein objekti, oli siirretty lauseen eteen korostuskeinona. CEV:n tyyli oli luonteva ja yksinkertainen, jota oli helppo lukea, ja siinä kiinnitettiin enemmän huomiota vastaanottajan reaktioon dynaamisen ekvivalenssin periaatteiden mukaisesti. RSV:n tyyli oli ylätyylisempi ja huomattavasti monimutkaisempi, ja jotkut kohdat oli muotoiltu kömpelästi luultavasti kirjaimellisten käännösten vuoksi.

Avainsanat: Raamatun kääntäminen, dynaaminen ekvivalenssi, formaali ekvivalenssi, uudelleenäänäminen

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I will be looking into differences between the translation of Psalm 22 in two different English Bible translations, namely the *Revised Standard Version* and the *Contemporary English Version*.

Many works of literature, especially literary classics and religious texts have been translated more than once, motivated by various reasons, such as language change over time, perceived errors in previous translations, changing ideas of translation or wanting to reach a particular target group, for example children or adolescents (Gürçağlar 2009, 233–235). New translations of literary works and new Bible translations are published constantly, and studying these translations in comparison to earlier ones can show us how they are different from each other and why.

The research question of this study is how the *Revised Standard Version* and the *Contemporary English Version* differ as regards the translation strategies used and the translation choices made on the lexical and syntactic level. My academic reasons for conducting this study are trying to understand how different kind of motivations guide the process of retranslating a particular work and how those motivations manifest in the translation strategies used and individual translation choices made.

This study consists of three main sections: the theory section, the material and method section, and the findings section. In the theory section, I will first give a brief history of Bible translation, and then introduce the theory of formal and dynamic equivalence, as well as the retranslation hypothesis. In the material and method section, I will introduce the two Bible translations examined in this study and explain my method for analysing the material. Finally, I will present and discuss my findings in the findings section.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 History of Bible translation

The Bible is the sacred text of Jews and Christians (Zogbo 2009, 21). Rather than a single book, the Bible is a collection of books (ibid.). The Hebrew Bible (also known as Tanakh) refers to the collection of books that are considered canonical, or authoritative, in the Jewish tradition (ibid.). It is composed of the Old Testament, which is a collection of 39 books written mostly

in Hebrew, with some passages in Aramaic (ibid.). The Christian Bible is composed of the Old Testament, the New Testament, and in some traditions, the Deuterocanon (ibid.). The New Testament consists of 27 books written in koiné Greek (ibid.). The Deuterocanon, or Apocrypha, are books which are in considered to be part of the Old Testament canon in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions, but not by the Protestant denominations (ibid.).

Bible translation has a long history spanning over two millennia (Zogbo 2009, 21). In terms of written translations, the earliest written translation of the Bible we know of is the Septuagint, which dates back to the third or second century BC (ibid.). The Septuagint is a translation of the Old Testament books from Hebrew to Greek that served the needs of Greek-speaking Jews of the time (ibid.). After the New Testament canon was established in AD 367 by Athanasius, the Bishop of Alexandria, the New Testament was translated into various languages to serve different Christian communities, including Latin, Coptic, and Syriac (ibid., 22). In AD 383, pope Damasus I commissioned Jerome to translate the whole Bible into Latin (ibid.). The resulting translation, known as the Vulgate, was finished in AD 406 (ibid.). By the 8th century, the Vulgate had become the common version of the Bible throughout the Western Christendom and remained so unchallenged until the Reformation (*Britannica Academic*, s.v. ‘Biblical literature’). Around the time of the Reformation, the invention of the printing press and a growing interest in the vernacular languages, such as German, English, French and Spanish led to various Bible translations being published in the vernacular, despite severe opposition (Zogbo 2009, 22). Translating sacred texts from languages held sacred (Hebrew, Greek, and Latin) into vernacular languages was seen as heretical (ibid.). Martin Luther, John Wycliffe, and William Tyndale were among the first to translate the Bible into vernacular languages (ibid.). From then on, Bible translation activity in Europe progressed steadily in the following centuries, continuing into the twenty-first century (ibid.). In the early nineteenth century, missionary efforts to different parts of the world prompted translations into hundreds of languages, including Thai, Quechua, and Swahili (ibid.). The 1950s and 1960s marked a new focus on the theory and procedures of Bible translation, thanks to new developments in linguistic and anthropological studies (ibid., 22–23). Around this time, new ideas to Bible translation emerged, aiming for natural expression and comprehensibility (ibid., 23). In the twenty-first century, Bible translation activity has remained high, with many new translations being produced and old translations revised (ibid.).

Considering its long history, the main issues regarding Bible translation have not changed throughout millennia (Zogbo 2009, 24). These issues include questions about how literal the translation is, meaning how closely the forms and structures of the source language are reproduced in the translation, how consistently words are rendered in the translation, especially terms that have special theological significance, how much adaptation is appropriate to allow for a natural expression in the target language, and finally, how much foreignization is allowed in the translation (ibid.).

In the beginning of the twentieth century, most commonly accepted translations were those that closely followed the grammatical structures of the source languages (Zogbo 2009, 24). Some translations aimed for translating the source text in a way that any particular word in the source language would have one equivalent in the target language (ibid.). This method of translating resulted often in unnatural translations, which were sometimes even unintelligible (ibid.).

2.2 Formal and dynamic equivalence

In *Towards a Science of Translation*, Nida (1964, 156) argues that absolute correspondence between languages does not exist because no two languages are identical. As a result, no translation can be fully exact in all of its aspects, even though it may be reasonably close to the original in terms of overall effect (ibid.). Nida (ibid., 159) states that in translating we are tasked with seeking to find the ‘closest possible equivalent’. According to Nida, there are two types of equivalence which are fundamentally different: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence (ibid.). Formal equivalence focuses on the form and content of the source message (ibid.). On the other hand, dynamic equivalence focuses primarily on receptor response rather than the source message (ibid., 166).

According to Nida (1964, 164), there are four basic requirements to a translation: (1) it should make sense, (2) it should convey the spirit and manner of the source text, (3) it should have a natural and easy form of expression, and (4) it should produce a similar response as the original did. Nida (ibid.) states that following these requirements it is inevitable that at certain point a conflict will occur between content and form, where one of the two must be compromised. Nida (ibid.) argues that form can be changed more radically than content without compromising the equivalent effect, which is why content should have priority over form. Nevertheless, Nida (ibid.) states that in any given message its meaning and form are inseparable from each other, and the translator should attempt to reconcile the two.

2.2.1 Formal equivalence

As mentioned before, formal equivalence is focused primarily on the form and content of the source message (Nida 1964, 159). Nida (*ibid.*, 165) characterizes it as a source-oriented approach. According to Nida (*ibid.*, 159), formal equivalence is concerned with matching the message in the target language as closely as possible with the elements of the source language. Therefore, a formal-equivalence translation is designed to reveal as much as possible of the form and content of the source message (*ibid.*, 165). The quality of the translation is measured by comparing it to the source text to determine accuracy and correctness (*ibid.*, 159). In a formal-equivalence translation, several formal elements of the source message are reproduced, including grammatical units, consistent word usage, and meaning in the source context (*ibid.*, 165). Reproducing grammatical units means, for example, that word classes of the source language are preserved, that is, nouns are translated by nouns, verbs by verbs, and so on, and that the syntactic structure is preserved, so that phrases and sentences are not split up and reordered (*ibid.*). Furthermore, certain formal elements of the text, such as punctuation marks and paragraph breaks may be preserved (*ibid.*). Reproducing consistent word usage usually means that the formal-equivalence translation aims to achieve ‘concordance of terminology’, meaning that, in principle, a given term in the source text is always rendered by the corresponding term in the target text (*ibid.*). Finally, reproducing meaning in source context generally means that the formal-equivalence translation attempts to reproduce idioms more or less literally, revealing to the reader how the original text employed local cultural elements to convey meaning (*ibid.*).

Nida describes two major problems with the formal equivalence approach. Firstly, Nida (1964, 156, 165) says that it is inevitable that particular formal elements of the source text cannot be reproduced because, as established before, no two languages are identical. For example, when faced with puns, instances of assonance, or acrostic features, it may be impossible to find an equivalent in the target language (*ibid.*, 165). Secondly, Nida (*ibid.*, 166) says that a translation that employs formal equivalence consistently will contain many instances where the text is unintelligible to the average reader due to the formal equivalent employed. This is because the expressions may only make sense in the source language or culture (*ibid.*). In order to account for these two problems, a formal-equivalence translation is usually supplemented with marginal notes that explain the formal features which could not be reproduced, and help the reader understand the formal equivalents used that might not be readily understandable for the average reader (*ibid.*).

Despite the problems mentioned, Nida (1964, 166) does not categorically rule out formal-equivalence translations. He states that they can be perfectly valid depending on the message and audience (ibid.). For example, translations intended for linguists normally adhere to formal equivalence and are usually worded quite literally (ibid.).

2.2.2 Dynamic equivalence

According to Nida (1964, 166), dynamic equivalence focuses primarily on the relationship between the receptor and the message, and the impact of the message on the recipient. The ultimate aim is for the target text to produce the same effect on the recipient as the original text did on its recipients (ibid., 160). Nida (ibid., 166) describes a dynamic-equivalence translation as one of which a bilingual and bicultural person could say, ‘That is just the way we would say it’. A dynamic-equivalence translation seeks to interact with the reader within his own cultural context and utilize a manner of expression that is natural to the target language (ibid., 159–160). Thus, we can say that a dynamic-equivalence translation attempts to bridge the linguistic and cultural gap between the original text and the recipients.

Nida (1964, 166) defines a dynamic-equivalence translation as ‘the closest natural equivalent to the source language message’. He goes on then to explore in more depth the three essential terms of this definition: *equivalent*, *natural*, and *closest*. According to Nida (ibid.), the term *equivalent* points toward the source text, and refers to equivalence of response instead of equivalence of form. This means that the translation should produce a similar effect or impact on the recipients as the original text did on the original recipients rather than simply reproduce formal elements of the source text (ibid., 160). Furthermore, the term *natural* points toward the target language and means that the target text must fit the target language and culture, the context of the particular message, and the receptor-language audience (ibid., 166–167). Finally, the term *closest* ‘binds the other two orientations together on the basis of the highest degree of approximation’, meaning that the translation should balance equivalence of response and naturalness with the highest degree of correspondence possible (ibid., 166).

Further discussing the matter of naturalness, Nida (1964, 167) states that a natural translation should fit the target language and culture. In practice, there are two areas to which the message should be adapted: grammar and lexicon (ibid.). Grammatical changes are generally made more readily since they are often prescribed by the obligatory grammatical structures of the target language (ibid.). For example, when translating from a language in which the usual word order

is SOV to a language in which the word order is SVO, it is necessary to adjust the word-order to conform to target language grammar (ibid.). On the other hand, lexical changes are more difficult, because they are not dictated by an obvious set of rules (ibid.). Instead, the translator must choose from numerous alternatives (ibid.). The translator must consider the three following lexical levels: (1) terms that have readily available parallels, such as *river*, *tree*, or *stone*; (2) terms that refer to objects which are culturally different, but have similar functions, such as the term *book*, which in English refers to an object that has pages bound together between covers, but in New Testament times would have meant a long scroll made from papyrus or parchment; and (3) terms which refer to culture-specific objects and concepts, such as *synagogue* and *cherubim* (ibid.). According to Nida (ibid.), the first set of terms does not usually cause problems. In the second set the translator might need to decide whether to choose a term that reflects the form of the referent or its function (ibid.). On the other hand, when translating the terms in the third set, it is often impossible to avoid foreign elements (ibid.). For example, culture-specific elements such as *Pharisees*, *Sadducees*, *Solomon's temple*, *anointing*, or *Lamb of God* cannot be removed, because they are 'deeply imbedded in the very thought structure of the message', meaning that they form an integral part of the message and cannot be removed without significantly altering the message (ibid.).

A natural translation should also be appropriate as regards the context of the target message (Nida 1964, 168). Therefore, the naturalness of a translation does not only involve grammatical and lexical features but may also involve more subtle and detailed matters such as intonation and sentence rhythm (ibid.). According to Nida (ibid.), it might be easier to define a natural translation in terms of what it avoids rather than what it does, because the presence of unnatural features is what stands out to the reader as being out of context. These features involve such things as vulgarisms and slang, or anachronisms, which create a false impression of a particular historical context (ibid., 168–169). Another problem occurs when the translator attempts to make a relatively straightforward message in the source language completely unambiguous by producing long and technical definitions, resulting in a translation that is unnatural (ibid.). According to Nida (ibid., 169), the appropriateness of the message also extends to the style and arrangement of the contents. Also, important as regards the naturalness of the text, but also linked with the equivalence of response is setting the proper emotional tone for the discourse, reflecting that of the original (ibid., 170). This means that if the source message has, for example, sarcasm or irony, it should be reflected in the target message (ibid.).

In addition to conforming to the target language and culture, and the context of the message, the translation should fit the audience to whom the target message is intended (Nida 1964, 170). The original message was likely to be written for an audience that had a good understanding about the context and circumstances of the message, and that were full members of the linguistic and cultural community in which the communication took place (ibid., 130). Therefore, the original message was prepared to fit the decoding ability of its audience (ibid.). The receptors of the translation cannot be expected to possess complete knowledge of the circumstances or the linguistic and cultural context of the original message (ibid.). This is why the translation must be adjusted to fit the approximate level of experience and capacity for decoding of the receptors of the translation (ibid., 170.). According to Nida (ibid., 130), a literal translation that attempts to pack the same amount of information into the same length of a message will have an increased communication load due to linguistic awkwardness. Since the decoding ability of the receptors will be lower due to the fact that they do not possess all of the linguistic and cultural information of the original communication event, the receptors' ability to comprehend the message is hindered (ibid., 130–131). On the other hand, if the translation follows dynamic equivalence and the message is adjusted to the decoding ability of the receptor by utilizing a natural form of expression and filling out the linguistic and cultural gaps to which the original receptors had access, the receptor of the translation will be able to decode the message with less difficulty, even if the resulting message will be longer (ibid.).

2.2.3 Areas of tension between formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence

A translation may employ formal equivalence or dynamic equivalence in varying degrees, ranging from strict formal equivalence to complete dynamic equivalence (Nida 1964, 160). Nida (ibid., 171) states that the more serious problems between formal-equivalence and dynamic-equivalence translations do not occur in the polar opposites on the scale, but in the middle, where the conflicting factors cause tension.

According to Nida (1964, 171), there are three main areas of tension. The first is the conflict between formal and functional equivalents (ibid.). Problems occur when no object or event exists in the target culture that corresponds to a certain referent in the source text, but another object or event fulfils its equivalent function (ibid.). For example, there may be people who have no experience of snow and their language does not have a word for it (ibid.). In this case, the expression 'white as snow' might be substituted for one that refers to something else that is white (ibid.). There are also cases where the object or event that is referred to in the source text

exists in the target culture, but it has a completely different function (ibid., 172). For example, in many Western cultures the heart is considered to be the centre of emotions, but in other cultures emotions might be associated, for example, with the liver rather than the heart (ibid.). Finally, it might be the case that in the target culture no formal or function equivalent exists for an object or event in the source text (Nida 1964, 172). Nida gives an example of certain Indian tribes in South America who do not have a concept of gambling, and as a result, their language has no words for casting lots or a process of random selection (ibid.).

The second area of tension is related to optional and obligatory equivalents. Nida (1964, 173) describes this as one of the more difficult problems translators face, because languages are often flexible as regards what they can convey, but the obligatory elements of a language may heavily restrict the degree of equivalence that can be achieved. Any translation must conform to the obligatory formal features of the target language, meaning that the translator has to use them (ibid.). The translator might need to indicate something in the target language which is not evident in the source text (ibid., 174). For example, a language that marks repetitive and non-repetitive action might require the translator to indicate whether Jesus had visited the city of Capernaum before in Mark 1:21, but the source text does not indicate this (ibid.). Furthermore, the translator might need to frequently indicate in the target language something is poorly defined in the source text (ibid.). For example, a language might have a system of honorifics that is used to classify all speakers, but when applied to the New Testament, there are many difficulties in ascertaining how different relations should be represented (ibid.). Also, sometimes something that is evident in the source text cannot be expressed in the target language (ibid.). As regards optional features, there are no specific rules to follow, but only alternatives, which in varying degrees reflect proximity to the source message (ibid., 173).

The third area of tension is the rate of decodability. If the translation does not allow for an appropriate rate for decoding the message, the reader will most likely find reading the text either tiresome or confusing in case the decoding rate is too low, or boring in case it is too high (Nida 1964, 175). Formal-equivalence translations do not generally take into account the rate at which the recipient is able to decode the message, unlike dynamic-equivalence translations, which aim at a higher degree of decodability (ibid.).

According to Nida and Taber (1982, 173) a good translation follows dynamic equivalence, focusing on the meaning or content of the source text and striving to preserve them intact. On the other hand, a bad translation distorts the meaning and the message of the translation,

something that can happen on both sides on the spectrum of formal and dynamic equivalence (ibid.). Nida and Taber (ibid.) give two examples: a formal-equivalence translation that preserves the form (syntax and word classes) of the source text but loses or distorts the original message is not good, since it is not faithful to the intended message of the source text. Furthermore, a loose paraphrase translation that departs from the original message by adding to, deleting, or skewing the message, for example, introducing cultural ideas foreign to the culture of the source text (Nida and Taber 1982, 173, 134). Nida and Taber (ibid., 134) give an example of this from the translations of Luke 13:11 in the *Today's English Version* (TEV) and *The New Testament in Modern English* by J. B. Phillips:

<i>Today's English Version</i>	<i>The New Testament in Modern English</i>
'a woman... who had an evil spirit in her that had kept her sick for eighteen years'	'a woman who for eighteen years had been ill from some psychological cause'

Phillips' translation renders the concept of being *possessed by an evil spirit* as *having a psychological illness*, which introduces a concept that is foreign to the source text culture (ibid.). This kind of rendition is also anachronistic, since it gives a false impression of the historical context in question (Nida 1964, 169).

2.3 Retranslation hypothesis

The retranslation hypothesis is based on the ideas of Paul Bensimon and Antoine Berman presented in an issue of the journal *Palimpsestes*. Bensimon (1990, quoted in Paloposki and Koskinen 2004, 27) argues that first translations are 'naturalizations of the foreign works'. They introduce the work and integrate it into the target culture (ibid.). With later translations, there is already a degree of familiarity with the work, and the cultural distance can be maintained (ibid.). Berman (1990, quoted in Gürçağlar 2009, 233) claims that a translation can achieve perfection only through retranslations. For Berman, this means bringing the translation as close as possible to the source text and being able to represent the encounter between the translator and the source text (ibid.). According to Gambier (1994, quoted in Paloposki and Koskinen 2004, 27–28), first translations are often more assimilating because the otherness of the text is reduced due to cultural or editorial considerations. The reasoning is grounded in the idea that in the case of a first translation, if a text seems very foreign to the target culture, the translator may want to produce a text that is more comprehensible and accessible to the recipients (Paloposki and Koskinen 2004, 28). This hypothesis has been challenged after it has been

demonstrated that not all first translations are domesticating, not are all later translations more foreignizing (Koskinen and Paloposki 2003, quoted in Gürçağlar 2009, 233–234).

3 MATERIAL AND METHOD

The material used in the analysis consisted of the translations of Psalm 22 taken from the *Revised Standard Version* and the *Contemporary English Version*.

The *Revised Standard Version* was published in 1956, and it is a revision of the *American Standard Version* published in 1901. The *American Standard Version* itself was a revision of the *King James Version*, also known as the *Authorized Version*, which was published in 1611. The *American Standard Version* is described as a literal translation that pays great attention to verbal accuracy, which is why it and the *Revised Standard Version* may be characterized as essentially following formal equivalence (Naudé 2009, 71). According to its preface, the *Revised Standard Version* sought ‘to preserve all that is best in the English Bible as it has been known and used through the years’ (‘Preface to the Revised Standard Version’, 6). The conservative stance adopted by the translators is also described in the preface: ‘We have resisted the temptation to use phrases that are merely current usage, and have sought to put the message of the Bible in simple, enduring words that are worthy to stand in the great Tyndale-King James tradition.’ (‘Preface to the Revised Standard Version’, 6). As such, it was not a new translation into contemporary language but a revision, which sought to modernize the text in terms of obsolete words and expressions as well as words and expressions whose meaning had changed over time, for example *let* in the sense of *hinder* (ibid., 5).

The *Contemporary English Version* was published in 1995 and, unlike the *Revised Standard Version*, it was a new translation to contemporary English as spoken and written at the time (American Bible Society, n.d.). The publishers described the translation as being marked by ‘uncompromising simplicity’ (ibid.). The CEV has been described as clearly following the principles of dynamic equivalence as described by Nida (Porter 2005, 20). The translation was intended for ‘grade schoolers, second language readers, and those who prefer the more contemporized form’ (American Bible Society, n.d.). The translation was based on studies of speech patterns conducted by the biblical scholar Dr. Barclay M. Newman in 1984 (ibid.). The studies analysed language used in books, magazines, newspapers and television, focusing on how English was read and heard, especially by children (ibid.).

The translation of the *Contemporary English Version* was based on three main principles, which emphasized comprehension (American Bible Society, n.d.). The first principle was that the translation must be ‘understandable by people without stumbling in speech’, meaning that one should be able to read the text out loud fluently and be able to understand the text (ibid.). The second principle was that it ‘must be understandable by those with little or no comprehension of “Bible language”’, meaning that people who perhaps have not read the Bible that much or at all should be able to readily understand the text (ibid.). The third and final principle was that it ‘must be understood by all’, emphasising comprehensibility and accessibility for a wide audience (ibid.).

The Book of Psalms is traditionally attributed to King David, although modern scholarship has not been able to prove his authorship (Murphy and Carm 2004). There are 150 Psalms in total, including hymns (songs of praise) thanksgiving psalms, and laments (ibid.). The Psalms are important part of the liturgy in the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, as well as in Anglican, Lutheran, and other Protestant Churches.

To give a general sense of Psalm 22, in it the psalmist cries out to God to save him as he is surrounded by his enemies, and then gives thanks to God for helping him in need. Psalm 22 has special significance in Christianity because there are allusions to it in the New Testament during Jesus’ crucifixion. Most notably, according to the Gospels one of Jesus’ final sayings on the cross was: ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ (Matthew 27:46, NRSV), a direct allusion to the first verse of Psalm 22. In Christian tradition, Psalm 22 has been interpreted as a prophecy of Jesus’ crucifixion.

The method for analysing the material was qualitative comparative analysis. I extracted the material from the website Bible Gateway, and made a chart in which I set the translations side by side. I then analysed the material verse by verse comparing the two translations on the lexical and syntactic level.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 Lexical level

4.1.1 Words and expressions

As expected, differences in the choice of words or expression were the most numerous differences between the two translations. The RSV had more formal or literary words, whereas

the CEV clearly preferred more common or general variants. This is, of course, in line with the guiding principles of the CEV, which emphasized comprehensibility, simplicity and accessibility. The CEV was meant to be understandable for children in primary school or those who are learning English. In cases where there was variation, the meaning between the two translations remained identical or similar. For example, if we look at verse 1, we can see that the RSV has the verb *forsake*, which belongs to the literary register, but the CEV has the more common verb *desert*.

Example 1. Verse 1

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
To the choirmaster: according to The Hind of the Dawn. A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?	(A psalm by David for the music leader. To the tune "A Deer at Dawn.") / My God, my God, why have you / deserted me? / Why are you so far away? / Won't you listen to my groans / and come to my rescue?

Other examples of this (where the first variant is from the RSV, and the second from the CEV) include pairs such as *despised/hated* (verse 6), *raven/attack* (verse 13), *cleave/stick* (verse 15), *garments/clothes* (verse 18), *cast lots/gamble* (verse 18), and *affliction/troubles* (verse 24). Furthermore, as one of the principles of the CEV was avoiding 'Bible language', it was not surprising that in cases where the RSV had words that are commonly used in Biblical contexts, such as *glorify* (verse 23) or *deliverance* (verse 31), the CEV had more general and common variants, *to save* and *honor* respectively.

Due to the different types of equivalence used in the translations, differences as regards consistent word usage and word classes were noted. Related to the issue of consistent word usage discussed in the theory section, it was noted that where the RSV used a particular word in multiple occasions, the CEV had often different renditions depending on the context. For example, the verb *deliver* used in the RSV was rendered in the CEV as *rescue* in verse 4 and *protect* in verse 8. Another example of this was the word *afflicted* in the RSV that in the CEV was rendered *helpless* in verse 24 and *poor* in verse 26. Furthermore, the RSV and the CEV also had differences in word classes. For example, where the RSV had a verb, the CEV had a noun in the corresponding expression. This can be seen in verse 10, where the RSV has *since my mother bore me*, and the corresponding expression in the CEV is *from the time of my birth*. The verb *bear* used in the RSV in the sense of *give birth to* (*OED*, s.v. 'bear') corresponds to the noun *birth* in the CEV. As I am not examining the source text, I do not know which word class is used in the source language. I can only assume that the RSV would be closer to the

original form, being a more literal translation. As the CEV follows dynamic equivalence, not reproducing the same word classes as in the source language would not be surprising.

At times where the RSV used a single word, the CEV had opted for a paraphrased expression. For example, where the word *congregation* occurs in the RSV, the CEV systematically renders the corresponding expression as *when your people meet*, which conveys the same meaning of people gathered together. Another example of this was in the verse 15, where the RSV has the noun *potsherd*, which in the CEV is rendered as *a broken clay pot*.

The RSV had retained certain literary or archaic elements that were not present in the CEV. One of these was the vocative particle *O*, which is used for direct address, for example, in poetry and prayers. It was employed in the RSV but not in CEV. For example, in verse 19 the RSV uses the expression *O Lord*, which in the CEV is rendered simply as *Lord!*.

Example 2. Verse 19

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
But thou, O LORD, be not far off! O thou my help, hasten to my aid!	Don't stay far away, Lord! / My strength comes from you, / so hurry and help.

The RSV had some awkwardly formulated passages likely due to literal renderings. For example, in verses 30–31, the expression *that he has wrought it* found in the RSV seems awkward and confusing. The expression seems to be a part of the phrase *men shall tell of the Lord*, and refer to the *deliverance*, which God has ‘wrought’, or prepared. In the CEV, this metaphor of has been rendered literally, and the resulting rendition is simpler and more natural: *The Lord has saved us*. This rendition of the CEV seems to be informed by receptor response, as in its simplicity it could be argued to be more effective in conveying emotion to the reader than the rendition of the RSV.

Example 3. Verses 30–31

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
Posterity shall serve him; men shall tell of the Lord to the coming generation, and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, that he has wrought it.	In the future, everyone / will worship / and learn / about you, our Lord. / People / not yet born / will be told, / “The Lord has saved us!”

4.1.2 Omissions and additions

When compared to the RSV, there were multiple elements that were found in the RSV but were not present in the CEV. This was noted in passages where the RSV had repetition or

redundancy. For example, in verse 18 the noun *garments* is repeated with the close synonym *raiment* in the RSV. In the CEV, the corresponding passage has no repetition, and the noun *clothes* is used alone instead. These omissions had the effect of giving the CEV a more simple and straightforward structure without altering the meaning, linking to its principles aiming for simple and understandable language.

Example 4. Verse 18

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
they divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots.	They took my clothes / and gambled for them.

On the other hand, in multiple cases the CEV had elements that were not present in the RSV. These additions had a clarifying effect. In most cases the RSV clarified the subject of the sentence where it might have been unclear. For example, in verse 17 the RSV has the pronoun *they*, which has a referent in the previous verse. In the CEV, instead of having a pronoun refer to the previous verse, the subject is repeated.

Example 5. Verse 17

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
I can count all my bones--they stare and gloat over me;	I can count all my bones, / and my enemies just stare / and sneer at me.

4.1.3 Metaphors and figurative language

The RSV and the CEV often differed in regard to figurative language. In cases where the RSV had metaphors, the CEV frequently had paraphrases utilizing non-figurative language. For example, in verse 3 the RSV has the metaphor *enthroned on the praises of Israel*, which contains the elements of *throne* and *praise*. The throne is a seat that God occupies, being a symbol of both royal and divine power, and the praise rendered to God by the people of Israel from the throne on which God is seated. In the CEV the corresponding expression is *ruling from your throne and praised by Israel*. Here the imagery remains as the elements of *throne* and *praise* have been retained, but the metaphor has been lost since the idea of God’s throne being formed by the praise of the people of Israel is not present. Furthermore, the throne has been explicitly connected to the act of ruling. By not using figurative language, the CEV conveys the message in a way that is easier to understand.

Example 6. Verse 3

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
Yet thou art holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.	Yet you are the holy God, / ruling from your throne / and praised by Israel.

Another example of this can be found in verse 24, where the RSV has the expression *he has not hid his face from him*, which contains the image of God turning his face away as an act of rejection. In the CEV, the corresponding expression *did not turn away*, which conveys the same meaning as the RSV, does not use figurative language and loses the image contained in the RSV.

Example 7. Verse 24

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; and he has not hid his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him.	The Lord doesn't hate / or despise the helpless / in all of their troubles. / When I cried out, he listened / and did not turn away.

On a few occasions, in passages where the RSV had a metaphor the CEV had a simile instead. For example, the RSV has the expression *I am poured out like water* in verse 14. In the imagery the person is likened to a water that has been depleted, referring to his strength (which is explicitly mentioned in a simile in verse 15). In the CEV, the corresponding expression is *I have no more strength than a few drops of water*. This allows the imagery to remain the same, and to make the reference to *strength* explicit, making the passage more understandable in the CEV.

Example 8. Verse 14

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, it is melted within my breast;	I have no more strength / than a few drops of water. / All my bones are out of joint; / my heart is like melted wax.

Another example of this can be found in verse 12, where the RSV has the metaphor *Many bulls encompass me*, in which the *bulls* represent one's enemies. In the CEV, the corresponding expression is *Enemies are all around like a herd of wild bulls*. In this way, the imagery of being surrounded by bulls that represent enemies is the same as in the RSV, but the use of a simile, evident in the use of *like*, allows to make the connection between *bulls* and *enemies* explicit to the reader. Essentially, the use of similes instead of metaphors allows to retain the use of figurative language while making the meaning explicit.

Example 9. Verse 12

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
Many bulls encompass me, strong bulls of Bashan surround me;	Enemies are all around / like a herd of wild bulls. / Powerful bulls from Bashan / are everywhere.

4.1.4 Grammatical forms

The RSV contained many grammatical forms and features that are archaic, whereas the CEV did not, being a translation into contemporary language of its time. For example, the RSV retains the use of the archaic pronoun *thou* when referring to God. For example, verse 2 in the RSV reads *I cry by day but thou dost not answer*, while in the CEV the pronoun *you* is used: *I cry out day and night but you don't answer*. The RSV also systematically preserves archaic verb forms, such as *didst* or *hast*. For example, in verse 9, the RSV has the verb forms *art* and *didst*: 'Yet thou art he who took me from the womb; thou didst keep me safe upon my mother's breasts.'

In the RSV, the auxiliary verb *do* was regularly used as a dummy auxiliary to emphasize something. This emphatic use of the auxiliary verb occurs in the RSV on three occasions, whereas in the CEV there is no marked emphasis in corresponding passages. For example, in verse 15 the RSV has the expression *thou dost lay*, while the corresponding expression in the CEV is *You, God, have left me* with no marked emphasis.

Example 10. Verse 15

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; thou dost lay me in the dust of death.	My strength has dried up / like a broken clay pot, / and my tongue sticks / to the roof of my mouth. / You, God, have left me / to die in the dirt.

There were multiple instances where the RSV referred to the third person singular but the CEV referred to the second person singular. This shift in person can be seen, for example, in verses 7 and 8. In the RSV, the people mocking the speaker refer to him in the third person, thus not addressing him directly. However, in the CEV they address the speaker directly in the second person. I assumed that the RSV, adhering to formal equivalence, reflects the source text in this regard and that the CEV has, in fact, shifted the person. One possible explanation for this is that the choice to shift the person in the CEV was based on avoiding ambiguity and ease of comprehension. In the RSV, both the speaker and God are referred to with the pronoun *he*, creating possible ambiguity. With the CEV, there is no ambiguity since God is referred to in

the third person and the speaker is addressed directly, but the meaning is not compromised. Also, shifting the person might allow the text to have a larger emotional impact, because the speaker being addressed directly perhaps allows the reader to better identify with the speaker.

Example 11. Verses 7–8.

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
All who see me mock at me, they make mouths at me, they wag their heads; "He committed his cause to the LORD; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"	Everyone who sees me / makes fun and sneers. / They shake their heads, / and say, / "Trust the Lord! / If you are his favorite, / let him protect you / and keep you safe."

Along with the differences in person, there were also differences in tense and mood between the RSV and the CEV. For example, in verse 21 the RSV uses the imperative *Save... my afflicted soul from the horns of the wild oxen*, but the CEV uses the past tense indicative *You rescued me from the horns of wild bulls*. It is not clear whether this difference is due to adjustment in the CEV or whether it reflects different readings from the source text.

Example 12. Verse 21

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
Save me from the mouth of the lion, my afflicted soul from the horns of the wild oxen!	Don't let lions eat me. / You rescued me from the horns / of wild bulls,

Another case of this can be seen in verse 18 (example 4). In verse 18, the RSV uses present tense: *they divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots*. On the other hand, the CEV uses past tense: *They took my clothes and gambled for them*. As with the previous example, it is not clear as to why the translations differ in this regard.

There were other grammatical differences between the two translations, such as the use of contractions. The CEV employs contractions, such as *don't* or *doesn't*, whereas the RSV does not.

4.1.5 Gender-neutral language

The RSV did not employ gender-neutral language, whereas the CEV did. The RSV uses the pronoun *he* or nouns denoting males (e.g. *man*). This likely reflects the assumed author of the Psalms, but it is likely to also refer to people in a general sense, as the Psalm lends itself for us to relate to the speaker. On the other hand, the CEV systematically employs gender-neutral language. In verse 6, for example, the RSV has *man* and *men*, which may be interpreted as

referring to people in general, that is, both men and women. In the CEV, these are rendered *human* and *people* respectively.

Example 13. Verse 6

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
But I am a worm, and no man; scorned by men, and despised by the people.	But I am merely a worm, / far less than human, / and I am hated and rejected / by people everywhere.

Another example of the usage of gender-neutral language can be found in verse 23. In the RSV, there is a reference to *sons of Jacob and sons of Israel*, which again can be interpreted as referring to offspring in general rather than only male offspring. In the CEV, the corresponding expression to *sons of Jacob* is *you belong to Jacob's family*. Instead of using a neutral expression referring to offspring, such as *children*, the CEV has opted for a more general expression, conveying the meaning of *belonging to a family* instead of the stricter sense of *being the offspring of*. Furthermore, where the RSV has the expression *sons of Israel*, the corresponding expression in CEV is *people of Israel*, using the gender-neutral *people*.

Example 14. Verse 23

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
You who fear the LORD, praise him! all you sons of Jacob, glorify him, and stand in awe of him, all you sons of Israel!	All who worship the Lord, / now praise him! / You belong to Jacob's family / and to the people of Israel, / so fear and honor the Lord!

4.2 Syntactic level

4.2.1 Word order

There were many cases in the RSV where a constituent, usually the object of a clause, was fronted for emphasis or stylistic effect. In the CEV, the word order in these cases is often neutral. For example, if we look at verse 4, in the RSV the object of the clause *in thee* is fronted. In the CEV, the corresponding clause *Our ancestors trusted you* follows the neutral subject-verb-object word order.

Example 15. Verse 4

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
In thee our fathers trusted; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.	Our ancestors trusted you, / and you rescued them.

Another example of this can be seen in verse 5, where in the RSV the complement *To thee* is fronted. Again, in the corresponding passage in the CEV, *When they cried out for help*, there is no fronting.

Example 16. Verse 5

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
To thee they cried, and were saved; in thee they trusted, and were not disappointed.	When they cried out for help, / you saved them, / and you did not let them down

4.2.2 Sentence division and length

The RSV and the CEV had differences in terms of sentence division. Where the RSV had clauses linked with semicolons, the CEV often divided these clauses with a full stop, or alternatively, a comma. For example, in verse 29 we can see that in the RSV, the two clauses *Yea, to him shall all the proud of the earth bow down and before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and he who cannot keep himself alive* are linked with a semicolon, whereas in the CEV, the corresponding clauses are divided with a full stop.

Example 17. Verse 29

<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	<i>Contemporary English Version</i>
Yea, to him shall all the proud of the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and he who cannot keep himself alive.	All who are rich / and have more than enough / will bow down to you, Lord. / Even those who are dying / and almost in the grave / will come and / bow down.

5 CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I examined the differences in the translation of Psalm 22 between the *Revised Standard Version* and the *Contemporary English Version*. As the theoretical framework for my study, I used the theory of dynamic equivalence and formal equivalence, and the retranslation hypothesis. My material consisted of the translations of Psalm 22 in the two Bible translations mentioned. My method for analysing the material was qualitative comparative analysis. I analysed the material verse by verse comparing the two translations on the lexical and syntactic level.

My research question was how the *Revised Standard Version* and the *Contemporary English Version* differ as regards the translation strategies used and the translation choices made on the lexical and syntactic level. I found that differences in word choices or expressions were the most common type of difference between the two translations. The RSV employed more formal

or literary words, while the CEV clearly favoured more common or general words. In cases where there was variation, the meaning between the two translations remained identical or similar. Where the RSV used a particular word in multiple occasions, the CEV had often different renditions depending on the context. The RSV and the CEV had differences between word classes, as the word classes used were not always the same, and the CEV sometimes used paraphrased expressions in cases where RSV used a single noun. In cases where the RSV had repetition or redundancy, the CEV avoided these by omitting features that were present in the RSV, giving the CEV a more simple and straightforward form of expression. On the other hand, the CEV had many clarifying additions, most often to indicate who or what is the subject of the sentence in cases where it might be unclear. Furthermore, the CEV used less figurative language compared to the RSV. In cases where the RSV had metaphors, the CEV often favoured non-figurative paraphrases or similes in order to convey the message in a way that is more explicit and easier to understand. There were also grammatical differences between the two translations. The RSV retained some archaic grammatical forms, such as the pronoun *thee* or archaic verb forms. In addition, the RSV sometimes had a marked word order, with usually the object fronted for emphasis. Instead, the CEV preferred a neutral word order. The CEV utilized gender-neutral language, while the RSV did not. Overall, the two translations were very different in style. The CEV had a natural and simple style that was easy to read. This can be attributed to its adherence to dynamic equivalence and the principles in the translation process that emphasized simplicity and comprehensibility. In addition, the translation was based on studies on how English was spoken at the time, especially by children, which likely contributed its naturalness. The CEV also paid more attention to receptor response, in line with the principles of dynamic equivalence. The RSV had a more elevated literary style that was significantly more complex. Some of the passages in the RSV were awkwardly formulated likely due to literal renderings.

The method I used for analysing the material worked well. It was easy to examine the differences between the two translations when they were in a chart next to each other, and examining the material on two broader levels, the lexical and syntactic level, rather than using a strict predetermined categorization allowed me to find differences that were the most relevant for the material used, and group them accordingly. The present study is relevant to the translation field, because it shows how translations that adhere formal and dynamic equivalence can differ. It can also show how the motivations and principles that guide the translation process manifest in the text.

As regards the possibilities for further research, it may be of interest to count all the instances where the translations differ and examine the numerical amount and ratio between different categories. The material could also be expanded. This could mean examining differences in different books and text types of the Bible to see if a certain book or text type has more differences or less differences compared to others. Also, other Bible translations than the ones used in this study could be used to examine differences between them. Furthermore, the CEV could be examined in the light of the principles of plain language, as it was designed to be a simple and understandable translation.

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