

Abstract

This master's thesis analyses and compares the two Bible translations New International Version 2011 (NIV 2011) and Bibel 2011, and their audience reception, with the aim of discovering what the differences are between the two translations. The thesis uses a three-pronged approach, as it analyses textual material, audience reception, and uses data from an interview about the translational process of Bibel 2011. The textual passages in the analysis correspond to passages that the audience has reacted to. The main difference between the two translations is that Bibel 2011 uses a more radically modern language than NIV 2011. In the audience reception, the main difference is that while people reacted strongly towards NIV 2011's use of gender-inclusive language, this was hardly discussed at all in the reception for Bibel 2011, even though it uses gender-inclusive language as well. The reception for Bibel 2011 was also a lot more scattered than the reception for NIV 2011, as people focused on many different elements for Bibel 2011, like for instance the radically modern language and the change of the Lord's Prayer, while the reception for NIV 2011 focused almost exclusively on the gender-inclusive language.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Since people started to make Bible translations, the translations have been a subject for discussion, as they give people the word of God in their own language. Translating a text that is so important for so many people is a difficult task, as a translation can never be the exact same text as its source text. Not only are there differences between the source and target language, but there might also be cultural and social differences found in the content itself, which are hard to convey with equal value in the target text.

This thesis looks at two Bible translations, in two different languages, with the aim of discovering what separates them from each other as translated texts, and in terms of the reactions they have received from their respective reading audiences. The first one was published by United Bible Societies in 2011. This translation, which is known as NIV 2011, was an updated version of their popular English Bible translation, the New International Version. NIV 2011 received both praise and criticism, mainly due to its use of gender-inclusive language. The other translation this thesis looks at is the Norwegian Bibel 2011, which was published in 2011 by Bibelselskapet. It soon became a bestseller in bookstores (Flood), and also received both praise and criticism by its audience, but with this translation the criticism was due to some use of taboo words in several passages, and changes made to for instance the Lord's Prayer.

1.2 Research questions

With the reception of these two Bible translations as a background, the research questions this thesis aims to answer are:

What are the differences between the 2011 update of the New International Version and Bibel 2011, and what are the differences in the audience reception for the two Bible translations?

The project will add new knowledge to the field of translation, as it investigates and compares two translations that have not been compared before. The audience reception will shed light on how cultural differences affect which elements people respond to in a Bible translation, and what they deem as the most important features in such a translation.

1.3 The study

The project is a descriptive translation study, as it describes selected features of already translated texts. To investigate the research questions, this thesis uses a three-pronged method. Firstly, the thesis analyses textual material through looking at different passages from the translations. The examples that have been chosen correspond to aspects of the text that the audience has reacted to. These passages are analysed and compared with the corresponding passages from the other translation, and with two reference texts. These reference texts are the King James Version and Bibelen 1930, which are previous translations of the Bible in the respective languages. The thesis uses the reference texts to give examples of how the Bible has been translated earlier, as this can shed light on how the two languages have developed over the years, and how this development has affected the language of the new translations. Secondly, the thesis analyses reception data for NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011, and compares the reception. Finally, an interview has been conducted with Professor Sylfest Lomheim, one of the people who worked on the translation of Bibel 2011. The idea of interviewing Lomheim came when he was announced to be one of the speakers during the translator event *Translatørdagen (Translator Day)* in Kristiansand on November 8th 2014. He was to talk about Bibel 2011, and the choices they had made during the translation process. To get the interview, Lomheim was contacted via e-mail, and asked if he was willing to give an interview in connection with *Translatørdagen*. The interview followed the general interview guide approach, as it used an interview guide, but added questions to follow up on answers that were interesting or needed further explanation. The interview was recorded, and later transcribed to ensure as correct data as possible. The interview will be used both as a source of information on the translation process, and to shed light on why some of the passages people have reacted to have been translated the way they have.

The reason why this three-pronged approach is chosen for this project is that each of the methods will give data that complements the data of the other two methods. The comparison of textual passages will add an understanding of what people have reacted to, the comparison of reception will add an understanding of why people have reacted to the passages, and the interview will add an understanding of why the passages are translated the way they are, from a translator's point of view. The data gathered from these three methods combined will shed light on what the differences between the two Bible translations are, and what the differences are between the audience receptions.

The thesis starts with looking at the theoretical background for the study, with an

account of the history of Bible translation in general, then the history of NIV 2011, Bibel 2011, and their reference texts. It will then look at the source texts, and Bible translation theory. Some relevant research studies that have already been performed will be looked at, before the thesis goes into analysing the two translations and their reception. Finally, the thesis will discuss the results from the analysis; conclude on what the study has discovered, and on how this can contribute to the research area.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 History of Bible Translation

Bible translation is not a new profession. Translation of the Hebrew Bible started already in the third and second centuries BCE, with the Septuagint (Zogbo 21). The Reformation was however the major starting-point for Bible translation into modern languages. As of 2013, the full Bible had been translated into over 500 languages, and the New Testament had been translated into nearly 1300 languages (“Global Scripture Access”). This subsection takes a closer look at the history of Bible translation, with a focus on its beginning.

2.1.1 The Bible

The Bible is beyond any doubt one of the most influential books throughout history, if not the most influential one. In its Christian form, it consists of sixty-six books, where thirty-nine of these comprise the Old Testament (OT) and twenty-seven the New Testament (NT) (McGrath, *Christianity: An Introduction* 42). The original text material was written in the classical languages Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic, which are unfamiliar languages for most people in the world today.

2.1.2 The first translations

The earliest Bible translation that we know of is that of the Septuagint, which was translated during the third and second centuries BCE (Zogbo 21). The Septuagint was a translation of the OT from Hebrew into Greek, for Jews living in the Graeco-Roman diaspora. According to tradition, 72 Jewish scholars finished this translation in 72 days, and this is also what has given the Septuagint its name – in Latin, *septuaginta* means seventy (ibid.). The Septuagint has been described as “the first major translation in western culture” (Munday 31).

The version of the Bible used in Roman Catholic churches was the Latin Vulgate. Pope Damasus I charged Jerome with the task to produce a Latin version of the full Bible in year 383

CE, which he completed in year 406 (Zogbo 22). Latin was not a comprehensive language for most people, so as they could not read or understand the Vulgate, they had to depend on the clergy to tell them the word of God (McGrath, *Christianity: An Introduction* 45-46).

2.1.3 The Reformation

In the fourteenth century, John Wycliffe fronted the view that everyone should be able to read the word of God, and he wrote an English translation of the Bible. The problem with his translation, however, was that he based his translation not on the original Greek and Hebrew texts, but on the Latin Vulgate. The Vulgate's accuracy was questioned by the scholar Erasmus of Rotterdam, and later by Martin Luther, and Luther therefore translated the NT directly from the original Greek into German to secure a more accurate translation for the public in 1522 (ibid.). William Tyndale followed Luther, and translated the NT into English. His translation was published in 1526, while the first translation of the complete Bible in English, the Coverdale Bible, was not published until 1535 (McGrath, *Christianity: An Introduction* 47).

Translating the Bible into new languages was one of the most important aspects of the Protestant reformation in the sixteenth century, as this was a way of removing power from the Catholic Church, which had previously been the only source for the word of God. At this time, Bible translation was however a very dangerous business, as the translators risked charges of blasphemy and heresy, which could end with the punishment of execution. William Tyndale, who translated the NT into English in 1526, was one of history's Bible translators who were punished. King Henry VIII banned his translation, and even though Tyndale produced his Bible translation in exile, he was abducted, tried for heresy and executed in the Netherlands in 1536 (Munday 37).

Times have changed, and in the Western world translators no longer risk executions on behalf of the state for translating the Bible, even though many readers might still be very critical towards a new translation.

2.2 Two English and two Norwegian translations

This thesis examines the English New International Version (2011) and the Norwegian Bibel 2011 as translations, and their reception. The King James Version (1611) (KJV) and Bibelen 1930 are used as reference texts in the sense that they provide information on how the Bible previously has been translated into the two respective languages. There are two main reasons why the KJV is chosen as a reference text for NIV 2011 in this thesis. Firstly, because it is still, next to the NIV, the most popular Bible translation in English (Goff, Farnsley II and

Thuesen 12). Secondly, because one of the main reasons why new Bible translations are instigated might be that the language of the old translations is outdated. It is therefore interesting to compare the language of a new, modern translation with one that has outdated language, to see how the language has developed. The KJV is written in an English language that is not necessarily familiar to the everyday reader of the Bible, as the language has changed from the time of the KJV to today, and it is therefore possible to see clear differences between the language of the KJV and the NIV 2011. Furthermore, Bibelen 1930 is chosen as a reference text for Bibel 2011 for almost the same reason. There are, however, much fewer Norwegian than English translations of the Bible, and people do not have many as many options when choosing a translation. Generally, Norwegian churches belonging to the Church of Norway have chosen the most recent translation published by Bibelselskapet for liturgical use. Bibelselskapet have only published three full translations of the original source texts of the Bible in ‘bokmål’, these being Bibelen 1930, Bibelen 1978/85 and Bibel 2011 (“Oversettelser i Norge”). The main reason why Bibelen 1930, and not the 1978/85 translation, is chosen as a reference text for Bibel 2011 is therefore due to the changes in the Norwegian language in the 81 years between the translations, as it is expected that the language has not changed as much since the 1978/85 translation.

NIV 2011, Bibel 2011, KJV, and Bibelen 1930 are all Protestant Bibles, which means that they have some differences from the Catholic Bible. The Protestant Bible has for instance seven less books than the Catholic Bible (Coffman). The following subsection gives a short account of the history of these four Bible versions.

2.2.1 The King James Version (1611)

In 1604, King James I appointed six committees of biblical and linguistic scholars to work on a new English translation of the Bible. The final product of this collaboration was The King James Version (KJV), which was published in 1611 (Ryken 50). At the time of this translation, there was still no standard form of English. There were various English dialects, such as Northern, Midlands, Southern, and Kentish English, and a decision had to be made on which form the language of the KJV would use. The choice fell upon the language of the court, which helped reinforcing this dialect as the standard for the English language. The KJV and the works of William Shakespeare are widely recognized as the two literary works that shaped the modern English language (McGrath, “The ‘Opening of Windows’” 14).

There was a focus among translators already at this time, in the Elizabethan Age, that to create a good translation, the translator should be invisible in the text. It appears, however,

that there was still no informing theory on how to conduct a translation, and no general agreement on how to translate (McGrath, “The ‘Opening of Windows’” 16-17). According to McGrath (“The ‘Opening of Windows’” 21), the translators of the KJV tended toward a literal translation of the source text, even though the word order and structure might seem odd to English ears. They translated many phrases directly from the original Hebrew or Greek, which resulted in phrases one had not heard in the English language before. Some of these phrases have become standard phrases in the English language after this, which shows to the impact this translation had on the English language (McGrath, “The ‘Opening of Windows’” 22). One of the distinctive aspects of this translation is that the translators wanted to use a variety of different words in the target text, so instead of repeating the same English word for recurring Greek and Hebrew words, they often used synonyms. In this way, one single recurring Hebrew or Greek word in the source text has several different English translations in different sections of the KJV (Ryken 50). Another feature that is notable is that in printed editions of the KJV, words that did not appear in the source text, but which the translators added to bring out the meaning of the text, are set in a different typeset to distinguish them from the rest of the text. The translators also chose to keep the lexical characteristics of the source text, for instance by using the present tense where it would have been more natural to use the simple past tense in the English translation. The gospel writers used the present tense to add emphasis on important past actions. This resulted in for instance the translation of Matthew 3.13, where the KJV reads “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him” (McGrath, “The ‘Opening of Windows’” 21-22).

After 1611, there have been published new editions of the KJV. This thesis uses Zondervan’s *King James Study Bible*, which conforms to the 1873 edition of the KJV. The 1873 edition, which was edited by F.H.A. Scrivener, is known as *The Cambridge Paragraph Bible*, and Zondervan claims it is the most highly regarded edition of the KJV (*King James Version* ix).

There is no doubt that the KJV translation has influenced not only later Bible translations, but also the English language that we know today. It stands in history as one of the most important translations ever done.

2.2.2 New International Version (2011)

Exactly four hundred years after the KJV was published for the first time, the 2011 version of the New International Version (NIV 2011) was added to the numerous list of English Bible translations. Today, the NIV stands together with the KJV as the most popular Bible

translation in the US (Goff, Farnsley II and Thuesen 12). The NIV is currently the best-selling translation in the US, but in a survey conducted by the Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), 55% of the Americans who participated answered that they prefer to read the KJV when reading the Bible, while 19% preferred the NIV. These were the most read Bible versions, while the other versions were preferred by 8% or less (ibid.).

This thesis looks at the 2011 version of the NIV, but the NIV was published for the first time in 1978. Over a hundred scholars worked with translating the Bible directly from the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. The translators came from the US, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which ensured that the translation would reach readers internationally in English-speaking countries. Not only was it an international collaboration, but also a project that went beyond denomination and church: Anglican, Baptist, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian were only some of the denominations that were represented (*New International Version* xiv). This entails that the NIV's intended audience were English-speaking Christian Protestants beyond the border of denomination.

The version of the NIV used in this thesis is however not from 1978, but from 2011. As the preface of NIV 2011 states: “Updates are needed in order to reflect the latest developments in our understanding of the biblical world and its languages and to keep pace with changes in English usage” (*New International Version* xiv). To ensure that the NIV would be updated regularly, the original translators established The Committee on Bible Translation (CBT), which is a group of biblical scholars who are responsible for keeping track of changes in the English language and possible advances in biblical scholarship. They have revised the NIV several times after its first issue was released in 1978: Once in 1984, then in 2005, which resulted in Today's New International Version (TNIV) as a separately published version, and the latest in 2011. The 2011 revision is based on the original NIV and the TNIV (*New International Version* xiv). In 2009, ahead of completing the translation, the CBT also created a website where scholars and readers in general could comment on the versions of the NIV which already existed (Combs 26). In this way, the NIV 2011 is not exclusively based on the works of the members of the CBT, but also on readers' reception of the previous translations.

Ryken claims that the original NIV from 1978 is a dynamic equivalent translation, but that compared to other dynamic equivalent translations it is more “conservative” or literal. He argues, however, that the TNIV and NIV from 2011 are less conservative, as they use more gender-inclusive language (54). The preface of the 2011 version of the NIV claims that there

has been a shift in the English language, where English speakers today get a different connotation from for instance the word “man”. While this word previously would have been understood as meaning a person in general, people today understand the word as distinctly meaning male. They have therefore substituted male words with other expressions, where they believe the source text refers to both men and women equally (*New International Version* xvi).

2.2.3 Bibelen (1930)

Bibelen from 1930 is the result of almost a century of work on translating the Bible into Norwegian. Already in 1842, W.A. Wexels and J.M.P. Kaurin made a proposition to translate the OT into Norwegian. Their original thought was that it would take five years to do the work, but instead it took almost fifty years. The translation of the OT was finally published in 1891 (Rian 20-21). At the same time as the OT was translated, there was also an ongoing process of translating the NT into Norwegian. J.F. Dietrichson started this work in 1870, and after 1886, F.W.K. Bugge finished the translation after Dietrichson’s death. The translation of the NT was published in 1904. This was the first time the entire Bible had been translated into Norwegian from the original source texts (Rian 22).

Due to changes in the Norwegian language from 1891 to 1904, there was a need to revise the OT translation after the publication of the NT translation. There was a distance between the languages used in the two translations, where the NT used a more modern Norwegian language than the OT. The OT translation was therefore revised, but this process took a lot of time, and the Norwegian language was still rapidly changing. Because of this, the NT from 1904 also had to be revised. In 1930, the revisions were completed, and the translation of the Bible was published in its entirety. This thesis uses an edition of Bibelen 1930 that was published in 1988.

Bibelen 1930 was used as the official church Bible until the new translation of 1978/85 (Rian 23). Some work on the 1978/85 version began already in 1958, but it was not until 1968 that the work started on a large scale. According to Rian (29-30), this version moved away from the translation of 1930 in terms of the language, even though the differences between the two were not dramatic. He says further that the translators were influenced by Eugene A. Nida’s thoughts on Bible translation, which included the aim of achieving dynamic equivalence in the translation, but that they did not follow his principles uncritically. Although there have been published a couple of other Norwegian translations after this version by other publishers, Bibelselskapet did not publish another complete translation of the Bible until 2011 (“De nyeste bibeloversettelsene til norsk”).

2.2.4 Bibel (2011)

The most recent Norwegian translation of the Bible is Bibel 2011. There are few sources available on the work process and history of this translation, and an interview was therefore conducted with Professor Sylfest Lomheim on November 8, 2014 for the purposes of this thesis. Lomheim was one of the people working on this translation, and with his background as a professor in Norwegian and translation, his role in this process was to be a Norwegian language consultant for the NT translation. He worked with the group who did the translations of the Synoptic Gospels and the Act of the Apostles.

According to Lomheim, there were two main reasons for instigating this translation. The first reason was that the Norwegian language is constantly changing. He claims that it might not have changed too much after the translation of 1978/85, but that it had definitely changed from the translation of 1930. The second reason was that by critical reading of the 1978/85 translation, one found that the translation was not good enough, and was in need of revision and some correcting of mistakes so that the meaning would be more in accordance with the source text (Lomheim).

The work on this translation started in 1999, initiated by Bibelselskapet. They started with the NT first, where Hans Olav Mørk was the leader of the project, and Reidar Aasgaard and Hans Johan Sagrusten functioned as the main translators (Bøe and Holmås 217). In 2003 they started translating the OT, and its scriptures were divided between four or five teams. Hans Olav Mørk functioned as the leader of this project as well (Bøe and Holmås 219). The complete translation was published in 2011 in both ‘nynorsk’ and ‘bokmål’, which are the official written standards for the Norwegian language.

According to Bøe and Holmås, there was a focus on conciseness and preciseness in this translation, and a wish to show the literary qualities of the Bible. At the same time, they claim that it is an idiomatic translation, which means that the aim of the translation is to convey the meaning of the source text in a form that is natural in the target language (Bøe and Holmås 220). Lomheim says that this is an idiomatic and equivalent translation due to their focus on following modern, western principles for translation, unlike older translations of the Bible, which tended to be concordant, meaning a translation done word-for-word. To perform a correct, good translation, he says that the source text and target text need to express the same sense and be functionally equal, and that you cannot achieve that if you translate the source text word-for-word (Lomheim). Interestingly, in spite of these viewpoints that this is an idiomatic translation, Bibelselskapet says that it is a concordant translation on their own websites, due to

the focus on being close to the source texts (“Grunntekstnær eller konkordant oversettelse”).

While working on the translation, the group consulted the Norwegian translation of 1978/85, and other translations in languages such as Swedish, Danish, English and French. They did not do this for the entire process, but only if there were passages they needed to discuss further, where it could be useful to see how others had solved the translational problems (Lomheim).

2.2.5 The source texts

It is important to point out that the four translations are not fully based on the same source texts, which means that they cannot be compared without some knowledge of these. Whereas the OT in all the four Bibles are based on the Masoretic text, which is the standard Hebrew text, the NT in NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 are based on a different source text than the NT in KJV and Bibelen 1930. This is due to discoveries made by historians and theologians of older and better-conserved manuscripts of the NT during the last centuries.

The NT in KJV and Bibelen 1930 are both based on Textus Receptus (Rian 18; McGrath, “The ‘Opening of Windows’” 20). Textus Receptus is the term used for Desiderius Erasmus’s published editions of the Greek New Testament, the first one from 1516, and later editions of his text edited by others. All of these editions, not only Erasmus’s, lie behind the term Textus Receptus, as the term is used “to refer to that form of the Greek text that is based, not on the oldest and best manuscripts, but on the form of text originally published by Erasmus and handed down to printers for more than three hundred years” (Ehrman 83).

NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011, on the other hand, are both based on the latest edition of Nestle-Aland: *Novum Testamentum Graece*. NIV 2011 used United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament in addition to the Nestle-Aland edition, as this is a version of the Nestle-Aland text that is created specifically for translation (*Bibel 2011; New International Version xv*). The only differences between the two are some minor punctuation differences, as well as the inclusion of textual variants and evidence of these from the different source texts available, where the variants have significant differences in meaning that the translators should be aware of and consider when translating (“New Testament”).

2.3 Bible translation in theory

This subsection will first look at influential and relevant theories within Bible translation, including Cicero and Jerome, Nida, the functionalist approach, and Descriptive

Translation Studies. Then it will look at some relevant empirical research studies that have been performed, and lastly it will describe what is meant by gender-inclusive language.

2.3.1 Cicero and Jerome – word-for-word and sense-for-sense

Cicero (106-43 BCE) discussed how a translation should be performed in his work *De optimo genere oratorum*, and argued for what is known as sense-for-sense translation. St Jerome (347-420 CE), who according to Munday is the most famous western translator (30), followed in Cicero's footsteps and translated the Bible into Latin in the version known as the Latin Vulgate. This version is previously mentioned in subsection 2.1.2. The terms 'word-for-word' and 'sense-for-sense', which can still be found within translation studies, hence go all the way back to Cicero and Jerome (ibid.). Word-for-word means to translate every single word in the source text with a corresponding word in the target text. Sense-for-sense, on the other hand, means to translate sense or content from the source text with content that shares the same sense in the target text. These two terms were later known as 'literal' and 'free' translation, where literal translation corresponds to word-for-word translation, and free translation corresponds to sense-for-sense translation (Munday 31).

In Bible translation and translation in general there has been an ongoing debate on which of these two is the best way of translating a text. Where sense-for-sense translation is generally seen as the best method, as it ensures a translation where the text conveys the same meaning to the reader both in the source text and in the target text, early Bible translations tended toward a word-for-word translation. Jerome's Latin Vulgate was no exception. Even though Jerome would normally argue for a sense-for-sense translation, he claimed that Bible translation should be done with more special attention to the words and syntax than translations of other texts. One reason for his distinction between the Holy Scripture and other texts might be that it was very dangerous to translate the Bible at his time, as the Bible was perceived as containing the words of God, and changing these would mean sacrilege. The risk of being charged with heresy therefore affected thoughts on Bible translation, and this did not change until after the Reformation (ibid.). The safest method as a Bible translator was to translate the source text word-for-word, and not try to interpret what the source text meant to say.

2.3.2 Nida – formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence

Even though thoughts on translation go all the way back to Cicero and Jerome, translation studies as an academic field is rather new. In the 1950s and 60s, there was a development of a systematic and linguistic-oriented approach to the study of translation. Vinay,

Darbelnet, Malblanc, Mounin and Nida were all important for this development. Eugene A. Nida is of particular interest, as his theories were initially designed for and used by Bible translators (Munday 15). He has also had a continuing influence, and his theories have been widely discussed within the field of Bible translation (Mojola and Wendland 1). In his theories, he incorporated the linguist Chomsky's theoretical framework and terminology, and in the 1960s he wrote the books *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) and, together with Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969).

Nida's approach to Bible translation was mainly to aim for what he termed 'dynamic equivalence.' Dynamic equivalence was later known as functional equivalence, and is a form of sense-for-sense translation. Nida distinguished dynamic equivalence translation from what he termed formal equivalence translation, and stated that a formal equivalence translation was source-oriented, with a focus on the form and content of the source text. Such a translation would seek to reproduce for instance grammatical units and meanings in terms of the source context, and it would have a consistency in word usage. It would not make adjustments in idioms, but rather translate them literally (Nida 165). A dynamic equivalence translation, on the other hand, would focus on the receptor response, meaning that the person who reads the translation understands it within his linguistic habitat. Nida describes equivalent effect as an aim to achieve "the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" (Nida 166). In Nida & Taber's training book for translators, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969), they further describe what a dynamically equivalent translation is:

Dynamic equivalence is . . . 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. This response can never be identical, for the cultural and historical settings are too different, but there should be a high degree of equivalence of response, or the translation will have failed to accomplish its purpose. (24)

The only way to measure whether or not equivalent effect has been achieved is therefore to look at the reception a translation receives, as this can give an indication of how the meaning of the source text is perceived in the target culture. In their book, Nida and Taber give two examples of idioms found in the KJV, where people reading what they term a formal equivalence translation of the source text could misunderstand their meaning. The first is "children of the bridechamber" (Mark 2.19), where they claim that the average reader will not understand that this means the wedding guests or the friends of the bridegroom. The other example is "heap

coals of fire on his head” (Rom. 12.20), which does not mean to torture someone, but to make a person ashamed of his behaviour. With these two examples, they claim that “when a high percentage of people misunderstand a rendering, it cannot be regarded as a legitimate translation” (Nida and Taber 2). Instead of performing a formal equivalence translation, their view is that “[a correct translation] must be determined by the extent to which the average reader for which a translation is intended will be likely to understand it correctly” (Nida and Taber 1).

Nida’s theories have later been criticized for not being scientific. Gentzler argues that Nida’s approach to translating the Bible was “governed by his taste, general public opinion, and the economics of his project (converting people to Christianity)” (Gentzler 45). He also points to the limitations Nida’s theory has within the framework of a science of translating. He argues that:

The assumption that this higher, originary message not only exists, but that it is eternal and *precedes* language is always already presupposed by Nida, and it affects his science. He ‘knows’ the message from this higher source, and knows how people are supposed to respond. He does not trust the readers to make up their own minds; in order to achieve the intended response, he has license to change, streamline, and simplify. All potential differences – ambiguities, mysteries, Freudian slips – are elided in order to solicit a unified response that transcends history. (Gentzler 59)

As it is difficult to scientifically measure whether or not equivalence has been achieved in a translation, and it thus comes down to subjective opinion, this raises the question of whether Nida’s theory is scientific (Munday 69).

2.3.3 Modern Bible translation studies

Today, there are various approaches to translation. Mojola and Wendland focus on some of the contemporary approaches that are relevant for translating the Bible as literature. They mention the functionalist approach, the descriptive approach, the text-linguistic approach, the relevance theory approach, post-colonial approaches, the literalist approach, and foreignization versus domestication (14-25). They argue that the multi-disciplinary field of translation has not yet produced its Newton or Einstein, and that there is no overarching, global translation theory. In their view, “it seems wisest to listen to the wide variety of voices on translation rather than attempt to argue for a particular stance on, or an exclusive approach to, Bible translation” (Mojola and Wendland 25). This thesis will not go in depth on all of these approaches, but

rather look at two that are deemed relevant for this project.

The functional approach is part of the *Skopostheorie* school of translation. This school began in the 1980s, with Katharina Reiss and Hans Vermeer, and has later been developed by Christiane Nord. It argues that every text is written with a purpose, and that in its translation it should also serve this purpose. The functional approach should not be mistaken for functional equivalence, as the difference is that rather than focusing on the communication functions of the source language text, it focuses on the translation's function within the target culture and uses this for determining how the translation should be done (Mojola and Wendland 14). Even though this might sound very similar to the theory of dynamic/functional equivalence, Nord argues that equivalence is not possible, as there will always be a difference between source and target communities (Mojola and Wendland 15).

In Nord's article "Loyalty Revisited", she describes the concept of loyalty in translations. The loyalty, she explains, is a "special responsibility" that translators have toward the author of the source text, the one who has ordered the translation, and the receivers of the target text. She states that this responsibility is especially evident for translations where there are differing views on what a good translation is or should be (Nord 185), for instance a translation of the Bible. She argues for this concept of loyalty with the case of her and Klaus Berger's translation from 1999 of the New Testament and Early Christian texts (*Das Neue Testament und frühchristliche Schriften*) into German, which followed the functional approach. They explained this approach briefly in the translation's introduction, as they did not expect the target audience to be familiar with the functional approach. In their opinion, the audience therefore had to be warned that the translation could differ from their expectations (Nord 187). In this article, she also discusses how subjective theory is applied to the reception of Bible translations. By subjective theory, she refers to how receivers of a text may deem a translation as good or bad, even without knowledge of what the source text says. She further states that "the receivers of a translation are not normally aware that their theory is *subjective*; many of them would not even be able to define or describe it. Subjective theories need not be consistent; they often include even incompatible or contradictory elements" (Nord 188). Nord also compares passages from KJV, to her and Berger's German translation, DNT 1999, with an English translation of DNT 1999 as a reference for non-German readers. This she does to explain how they performed the translation within the functional approach, and why she perceives this translation as more in accordance with the language of the target audience than the language of the KJV (Nord 188-90).

With the functional approach in mind, Diphus Chosefu Chemorion's doctoral

dissertation *Translating Jonah's Narration and Poetry into Sabaot - Towards a Participatory Approach to Bible Translation (PABT)* argues that one translation of the Bible cannot fulfil all the communicative functions a language community needs from the Bible. He therefore sees the potential of having complementary translations of the Bible within a language community, to cover these communicative functions. Chemorion argues that such complementary translations must have a specific purpose for which they are produced, but that they also must be acceptable to the intended receptor audience. With this in mind, he asks the question: "What strategies can be applied in determining and producing an alternative mother tongue translation of the Bible that is complementary to the existing translation and also acceptable to the target audience?" (Chemorion 1-2). He argues for what he calls a "Participatory Approach to Bible Translation" (PABT), where both the intended receptor audience and the translator participate in deciding what function the translation should have (Chemorion 280). He bases PABT on Nord's functional theory, which states that the purpose of a translation, its intended function, is what is most important in a translation process. The translator and the initiator of the translation decide this intended function, and Nord also argues that the initiator could for instance be the target text recipient (Chemorion 281). As previously mentioned, the group behind the NIV, the CBT, had a similar approach before translating the NIV 2011, and asked the receptor audience if they had any comments on the previous update of the NIV, and if there were anything that should be changed (Combs 26). This shows that there is an interest among Bible readers to participate in the translation process, and also that it is important for Bible readers that the Bible is translated as well as possible.

Descriptive Translation Studies is another relevant approach to Bible translation, and it was developed in the 1970s. Gideon Toury is one of the pioneers within this approach, which focuses on the finished product in translation, rather than the process. The descriptive approach seeks to describe how a finished translation functions in society and within a certain literary system. This approach stands in opposition to 'prescriptive' approaches to translation, as these approaches aim to define rules and guidelines on how to perform a translation (Mojola and Wendland 17). Pym points out benefits of a descriptive approach also for the purpose of training translators, as a descriptive approach can identify the norms for what is deemed a good translation. These norms can aid translators in their work (75). Toury argues that an analysis of translations should start with the translation itself, instead of the source text, which also opens up for research that does not take the source text into account at all. Translations can in this respect be compared to other translations without first-hand knowledge of the source text (ibid.). This thesis performs this type of descriptive translation study, as it looks at translations

that have already been produced, and describe phenomena that can be found within these, without looking at the original words of the source texts.

David B. Bell performed a translation study with a descriptive approach for his doctoral dissertation *A Comparative Analysis of Formal Shifts in English Bible Translations with a View Towards Defining and Describing Paradigms*. In the dissertation, he compared the formal features of ten different English Bible translations with the formal features of the original Hebrew and Greek source texts. With this, he sought to discover if there truly is a distinction between formal equivalence translations and functional equivalence translations, and to describe what defines such translations. To do this, he selected different passages from both the OT and the NT that represented the major genres and discourse styles that are found in the narrative, as well as the types of poetry that are found in the Bible (Bell 5-6). In his study, he concludes that there is a change found in modern English Bible translations from traditional translations that cannot only be explained with the changes in the English language, but that there actually are types of formal shifts that distinguish modern translations from traditional translations. The shifts he singles out as those found most frequently in the passages were, “in decreasing order of frequency: 1. the deletion of connective words, 2. the change in the degree of specificity of terms, 3. the addition of implicit information, 4. the use of descriptive substitutes, and 5. the deletion of formulaic expressions”. He found that “all of these formal shifts occur more frequently than two percent in the passages studied, and all occur more than twice as often in the modern as in the traditional translations” (Bell 331).

In Resnik, Olsen and Diab’s journal article “The Bible as a Parallel Corpus: Annotating the ‘Book of 2000 Tongues’” from 1999, they introduced a project they were working on. The aim of this project was to create an online database of the different Bible translations available in different languages, and annotate the texts in a way that made it possible to compare the translations for the purposes of linguistic research (Resnik, Olsen and Diab 129). They refer to Bible Gateway as a good online source for retrieving particular passages from different Bible translations, but point out that Bible Gateway lacks the possibility of comparing different passages easily. They state that to their knowledge, no one had, at that time, attempted to create a parallel multilingual corpus of Bible translations previously, where the translations could be easily compared (Resnik, Olsen and Diab 132-33). They believe that such a corpus could help in the translation process, as an important part of the process when translating the Bible is to compare previous translations in the same language or in different languages. They also point to how such a corpus can facilitate research in the original Bible languages, and in comparative linguistics. Further, they state that Bible translations are interesting to investigate, as they offer

representation from every language family, and the source text is usually carefully translated. The Bible is also sorted into books, chapters and verses, and the verses are at near sentence-level, which makes it easier to find the corresponding sentence in another translation (Resnik, Olsen and Diab 143-45). A corpus of this kind enables descriptive translation studies similar to this thesis, as it makes it easier to compare different passages from different Bible translations, both within the same language and between different languages. The online database that Resnik, Olsen and Diab initiated in 1999 is no longer active, but several other online databases exist which use the same idea of creating a multilingual corpus of Bible translations. Thomas Mayer and Michael Cysouw has created such a corpus at <http://paralleltxt.info>, where it is possible to search through and compare 1172 unique Bible translations in different languages. Christos Christodoulopoulos has created another corpus with 100 Bible translations, directly inspired by Resnik, Olsen and Diab's coding system, and published it at <http://homepages.inf.ed.ac.uk/s0787820/bible/>.

2.3.4 The debate on gender-inclusive language

In the late twentieth century, a debate on gender-inclusive language in Bible translation emerged. This debate had its roots in the feminist movement that fought for women's rights (Strauss 13-14). Most new Bible translations produced today are gender-inclusive versions, which, according to Strauss, means "a translation that seeks to avoid masculine terminology when the original author was referring to members of both sexes" (14). Gender-inclusive language is therefore used when the original Greek and Hebrew words are thought to refer to both men and women, or rather humanity in general. The reason for the controversy of gender-inclusive versions is the differing view among Christians on the role of women in the church and the home. This debate separates the egalitarians, who believe in the equality of men and women both in the church and the home, and the complementarians, who believe that God intended for men and women to have different roles, which complemented each other (Strauss 14). The original NIV from 1978 was not a gender-inclusive version, but later revisions, including NIV 2011, have had a focus on inclusive language (*New International Version* xvi). In the interview with Lomheim, conducted for this study, he states that the use of gender-inclusive language was also a discussion during the process of translating Bibel 2011. If the source text did not rule out gender-inclusive language, they included women when translating passages where the message was most likely intended for both men and women alike.

3 Analysis

The main difference between NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 as translations is that Bibel 2011 uses more radically modern language than NIV 2011. When it comes to the reception, the main difference between the two translations is that even though Bibel 2011 also tends to use gender-inclusive language, the audience reception was much more critical towards this feature in NIV 2011 than it was for Bibel 2011, where gender-inclusive language was given very little focus by the audience. The reception of Bibel 2011 focused instead on several different aspects of the translation, like for instance the radically modern language and the change of the Lord's Prayer.

This section will first look at different phrases, words and Bible verses found in the two translations, and compare them with each other. These passages have been selected due to their appearance as specific examples from the translations in the reception data, either because of controversy or as examples of changes from previous Bible translations. The KJV and Bibelen 1930 will be used as reference texts in the sense that they provide information on how the Bible previously has been translated into the two respective languages. Secondly, the section will look at the audience reception of NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011.

3.1 Comparison of textual passages

The examples are sorted thematically, according to what translational theme they fall into. These themes are categorised for the purposes of this thesis as updated, modern language, gender-inclusive language, theological issues and famous passages. Each of the examples in the subsections are further sorted chronologically after where they appear in the Bible, from beginning to end. Some of the verses could fall under several categories, and these verses have therefore been sorted in the category that highlights the most interesting features of the verse.

The four categories can all fall under a wider category termed updated language. Both the use of gender-inclusive language and changing previous phrases either because of new discoveries of manuscripts or to make them function better in today's target language, are ways of updating the language functionally for a modern time and society. The aim of NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 was to create a translated text that functions well in the target language, and to be able to achieve this goal, updated language is not only a natural side effect, but also necessary, as both the English and the Norwegian language are constantly changing.

Note that the verses from KJV sometimes include words in italic type. The reason for this is that the KJV translators used italic type to indicate words in the English translation which

have no exact equivalent in the source language (*King James Version ix*).

To put emphasis on the words or phrases which are focused on in each example, they are underlined for the purposes of this thesis. This is not how they appear in the original translations. It is, again, important to note that NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 are not entirely based on the same source texts as their reference texts the KJV and Bibelen 1930, which could account for some differences between the translations.

3.1.1 Updated, modern language

The category of updated, modern language focuses on verses where NIV 2011 or Bibel 2011 use language which is functionally appropriate for today's modern English and Norwegian.

Gen. 31.35

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; <u>for the custom of women is upon me.</u> And he searches, but found not the images.	Og hun sa til sin far: Min herre må ikke bli vred fordi jeg ikke kan reise mig for dig; <u>for det går mig på kvinners vis.</u> Så lette han efter husgudene, men fant dem ikke.	Rachel said to her father, ‘Don’t be angry, my lord, that I cannot stand up in your presence; <u>I’m having my period.</u> ’ So he searched but could not find the household gods.	Og Rakel sa til faren: «Herren min må ikke bli sint, men jeg kan ikke reise meg for deg, <u>for jeg har det på kvinners vis.</u> » Så lette han, men terafene fant han ikke.

In this verse, the KJV, Bibelen 1930, and even Bibel 2011 are quite vague when it comes to what Rachel's problem is. The NIV 2011, on the other hand, makes it clear that Rachel is having her period, and therefore cannot stand up in her father's presence. The translation's meaning in NIV 2011, where it says "I'm having my period", corresponds to that of KJV, Bibelen 1930 and Bibel 2011, where the latter three say "the custom of women is upon me" and "det går meg/jeg har det på kvinners vis". NIV 2011 does however use a more direct and modern language in this phrase, than the three others. In today's English and Norwegian language, the word "period", or "mensen" in Norwegian, is not necessarily a vulgar or taboo word, even though it is not appropriate for certain genres or language registers. The Holy language of the Bible is an example of a genre where the word might not be deemed appropriate. It is interesting

that Bibel 2011 chose not to be clearer and use for instance the word “mensen”, as this is said to be a Bible translation not afraid of using taboo words. This example is therefore an exception to Bibel 2011’s general use of radically modern language, and a passage where NIV 2011 uses a more radical language than Bibel 2011.

Gen. 34.31

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with a <u>harlot</u> ?	Men de svarte: Skulde han da få gjøre med vår søster som med en <u>skjøge</u> ?	But they replied, ‘Should he have treated our sister like a <u>prostitute</u> ?’	Men de svarte: “Skulle han få behandle søsteren vår som en <u>hore</u> ?”

The words “hore” and “prostitute” are more commonly used today in Norwegian and English respectively to denote what was previously known as “skjøge” or “harlot”. Bibel 2011’s use of “hore” was however controversial, as it bears negative connotations, and is used as an invective in the Norwegian language. A softer translation would have been to use “prostituert”, which is the equivalent of “prostitute” used in the NIV 2011.

In the interview with Lomheim, he explains why they chose to translate into “hore” instead of “skjøge” or “prostituert”. He says that “skjøge” is an old word that very few of today’s Norwegian readers understand, while “hore” on the other hand is something most Norwegians have heard. It is also a vulgar enough word to fit the usage of the corresponding word in the source text. He finds the word “prostituert” too technical, and not fitting the source text material.

2. Sam 18.25

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, <u>there is tidings in his mouth</u> . And he came apace, and drew near.	Vekteren ropte og meldte det til kongen. Da sa kongen: Er han alene, <u>så er det et gledelig budskap i hans munn</u> . Og han kom nærmere og nærmere.	The watchman called out to the king and reported it. The king said, ‘If he is alone, <u>he must have good news.</u> ’ And the runner came closer and closer.	Vaktmannen ropte ned til kongen og meldte det. Kongen sa: «Er han alene, <u>kommer han med gode nyheter.</u> » Mannen kom nærmere og nærmere.

This example shows how the translations of the NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 use a more idiomatic and functional approach appropriate for the English and Norwegian language of today. “There is tidings in his mouth” from the KJV and “så er det et gledelig budskap i hans munn” from Bibelen 1930 are not idioms found in the modern English and Norwegian language of today. The phrases can be rather confusing due to this, as English and Norwegian readers do not know the idiom, and can misinterpret the meaning of the phrase as a man literally having an object in his mouth. To create a more functional translation, the translations from 2011 have therefore chosen to translate this idiom differently. They instead translate the phrase into “he must have good news” in NIV 2011 and “kommer han med gode nyheter” in Bibel 2011, which make sense to modern readers.

2 Kings 18.27

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
But Rab-shakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? <i>hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss</i> with you?	Men Rabsake svarte: Er det til din herre og til dig min herre har sendt mig for å tale disse ord? Er det ikke til de menn som sitter på muren og må <u>ete sitt eget skarn og drikke sitt eget vann</u> likesom I selv?	But the commander replied, ‘Was it only to your master and you that my master sent me to say these things, and not to the people sitting on the wall – who, like you, will have to <u>eat their own excrement and drink their own urine?</u> ’	Men kommandanten svarte: «Tror du min herre har sendt meg for å si dette bare til din herre og til deg? Nei, det er like mye til mennene som sitter på muren, de som snart må <u>ete sin egen skitt og drikke sitt eget piss</u> , slik som dere.»

This example is taken from the reception of the Norwegian Bibel 2011 as a passage with quite vulgar taboo words. Norwegian readers of the Bible were not used to reading the words “skitt” and “piss” in the Holy Scriptures, and these words were therefore singled out as something that was updated and controversial in the new translation. Interestingly, the corresponding verse in the 400-year-old KJV uses quite similar wording, as it reads “dung” and “piss” in the corresponding places. “Dung” is the excrement of animals, and the use of that word in this verse suggests that the translators of the KJV wanted to underline the vulgarity of the action. The NIV 2011, on the other hand, has chosen less vulgar words. It still describes the same action, but it uses the more euphemistic and polished words “excrement” and “urine”. Bibelen 1930 also went for a more euphemistic translation, as it reads “ete sitt eget skarn” and “drikke sitt eget vann”. The word “skarn” is an outdated Norwegian word for muck or dirt.

Due to the inconsistency when it comes to the level of vulgarity in the old translations and the new, it is difficult to argue that the choice of words in this verse is only the result of updated language. In the interview with Lomheim, he states that Bibel 2011 follows the style of 2 Kings in the translation, and that this is the reason for using more everyday words. He claims that this is a good example of how Bibel 2011 respects the original source text.

Mark 2.19

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
And Jesus said unto them, Can the <u>children of the bridechamber</u> fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.	Og Jesus sa til dem: Kan vel <u>brudesvennene</u> faste så lenge brudgommen er hos dem? Så lenge de har brudgommen hos sig, kan de ikke faste.	Jesus answered, ‘How can the <u>guests of the bridegroom</u> fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them.	«Kan vel <u>bryllupsgjestene</u> faste mens brudgommen er hos dem?» svarte Jesus. «Så lenge de har brudgommen hos seg, kan de ikke faste.

This example is used by Nida and Taber in their book *Theory and Practice of Translation*, where they argue for a dynamically equivalent translation, as they claim that readers of the KJV would misunderstand the meaning of the phrase “children of the bridechamber” (Nida and Taber 2). Both NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 are much clearer on what this means, as they use, respectively, “guests of the bridegroom” and “bryllupsgjestene”. Bibelen 1930 is also clearer on the meaning, with the word “brudesvennene”. “Brudesvennene” is however a bit outdated in the Norwegian language, and “bryllupsgjestene” is more commonly used today.

There is a difference in meaning between “guests of the bridegroom” and “bryllupsgjestene”, as a bridegroom is the man who is getting married. “Bryllupsgjestene” is therefore more gender-inclusive, as it includes both the guests of the bridegroom and of the bride.

To sum up, the examples in the category of updated, modern language show that both NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 use a language that is functionally updated for readers who use today’s modern English or Norwegian language. Where NIV 2011 tends to be a bit more conservative, and uses euphemistic words, Bibel 2011 uses a language that is radically modern, with words like “skitt”, “piss”, and “hore”. NIV 2011 does however use the word “period”, where Bibel 2011 in the corresponding place uses the expression “kvinner vis”, which is much

more vague than “period”. That example is therefore an exception to the general tendency of Bibel 2011 using more radically modern language than NIV 2011.

3.1.2 Gender-inclusive language

The category of gender-inclusive language focuses on verses where NIV 2011 or Bibel 2011 use a language that includes both genders, and lessens the patriarchal ideology of former translations.

Gen. 16.12

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
And he will be a wild man; his hand <i>will be</i> against <u>every man</u> , and <u>every man</u> ’s against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his <u>brethren</u> .	Og han skal bli et vill-asen av et menneske; hans hand skal være mot <u>alle</u> , og <u>alles</u> hånd mot ham; og han skal bo østenfor alle sine <u>brødre</u> .	He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against <u>everyone</u> and <u>everyone</u> ’s hand against him, and he will live in hostility towards all his <u>brothers</u> .	Han skal bli et villesel av et menneske. Hans hånd skal være vendt mot <u>alle</u> og <u>alles</u> hånd mot ham. Rett imot alle sine <u>slektninger</u> skal han slå seg ned.

This verse shows two examples of gender-inclusive language in Bibel 2011, and one in NIV 2011. In the beginning of the verse, NIV 2011 uses “everyone” instead of “every man”, which is seen in the KJV. In this sense, NIV 2011 is more gender-inclusive than the KJV. Both Bibelen 1930 and Bibel 2011 use the Norwegian equivalent “alle” in the corresponding place. In the last sentence of the verse, Bibel 2011 uses “slektninger”, while NIV 2011 uses “brothers” in the corresponding place. In this verse, Bibel 2011 is therefore more gender-inclusive than NIV 2011, as the word “brothers” denotes males, while “slektninger” is gender-neutral. The fact that Bibel 2011 is more gender-inclusive in this verse is interesting, as there has hardly been any criticism of Bibel 2011’s use of gender-inclusive language, while NIV 2011 has been highly criticized for it.

Matt. 5.47

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
And if ye salute <u>your brethren</u> only, what do ye more <i>than others</i> ? do not even the publicans so?	Og om I hilser bare på <u>eders brødre</u> , hvad stort gjør I da? Gjør ikke også hedningene det samme?	And if you greet only <u>your own people</u> , what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?	Og om dere hilser vennlig på <u>deres egne</u> , er det noe storartet? Gjør ikke hedningene det samme?

In this verse, both NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 have chosen to use a more inclusive language. Instead of writing “brethren”/”brothers”/”brødre”, NIV 2011 uses “your own people”, while Bibel 2011 uses “deres egne”. This verse was originally probably intended on men and women alike, but as “brethren”/”brødre” is not understood today as meaning those people that are your own, but rather just brothers, or men you look at as your brothers, this gender-inclusive wording is updated functionally for readers today.

Matt. 23.8

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, <i>even</i> Christ; and all ye are <u>brethren</u> .	Men I skal ikke la eder kalle rabbi; for én er eders mester, men I er alle <u>brødre</u> .	‘But you are not to be called “Rabbi”, for you have one Teacher, and you are all <u>brothers</u> .	Men dere skal ikke la noen kalle dere rabbi, for én er mesteren deres og dere er alle <u>søsken</u> .

In this verse, Bibel 2011 is more gender-inclusive than the NIV 2011, due to its use of the word “søsken” compared to NIV 2011’s “brothers”. Even though NIV 2011 is quite consistently gender-inclusive throughout the translation, this shows that there are exceptions to this rule. In the beginning of the same chapter, NIV 2011 reads “Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples” (Matt. 23.1), which signals that he is speaking to a crowd of people. Bibel 2011 reads “Så talte Jesus til folket og til disiplene og sa” (Matt. 23.1), which corresponds in meaning to NIV 2011. If he was speaking to a crowd of people, there were probably women present as well, and it is therefore likely that his message was also meant for them. If a translation wants to follow a gender-inclusive approach to translation, it would be natural to

translate this word into a word that entailed both women and men, which “søsken” does, as this would be the functional meaning of the word for today’s English and Norwegian language.

Luke 17.3

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
Take heed to yourselves: If thy <u>brother</u> trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.	Ta eder i vare! Om din <u>bror</u> synder, da irettesett ham, og om han angrer det, da tilgi ham!	So watch yourselves. ‘If your <u>brother</u> or <u>sister</u> sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them.	Ta dere i vare! Dersom din <u>bror</u> gjør en synd, så tal ham til rette, og hvis han angrer, så tilgi ham.

In this verse, NIV 2011 is more gender-inclusive than Bibel 2011. It uses “brother or sister” instead of just “brother”/”bror”, which in this case makes it clear that both men and women should be treated the same way if they sin. Following the argument used in the gender-inclusive approach that the word “brother”/”bror” only denotes a man in today’s English and Norwegian, Bibel 2011’s omission of “søstre” could create a theological problem, as this verse then implicitly would only regard men’s sins.

John 14.23

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
Jesus answered and said unto him, If a <u>man</u> love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love <u>him</u> , and we will come unto <u>him</u> , and make our abode with <u>him</u> .	Jesus svarte og sa til ham: Om <u>nogen</u> elsker mig, da holder <u>han</u> mitt ord, og min Fader skal elske <u>ham</u> , og vi skal komme til <u>ham</u> og ta bolig hos <u>ham</u> .	Jesus replied, ‘ <u>Anyone</u> who loves me will obey my teaching. My father will love <u>them</u> , and we will come to <u>them</u> and make our home with <u>them</u> .	Jesus svarte: « <u>Den</u> som elsker meg, vil holde fast på mitt ord, og min Far skal elske <u>ham</u> , og vi skal komme og bo hos <u>ham</u> .

In this verse, NIV 2011 uses “anyone” instead of KJV’s “a man”, and continues throughout the verse to use the gender-neutral word “them”, instead of “him”. Bibel 2011 reads “den”, which could mean both men and women, but later in the verse, it uses “ham” to

correspond to “den”. Both in Norwegian and English there is no singular personal pronoun with an indefinite gender, and this creates a problem when choosing which sex should correspond to the indefinite “anyone” or “den”. Bibel 2011 has chosen to use “ham”, which is quite common when writing about an indefinite singular person in Norwegian. NIV 2011 has on the other hand chosen to go for the plural “them”, which can seem a bit forced when reading the translation. It ensures the gender-neutrality of the translation, but has been criticized as an awkward use of the English language (Alt).

Rom. 2.6

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
Who will render to <u>every man</u> according to <u>his</u> deeds:	han som skal betale <u>enhver</u> efter <u>hans</u> gjerninger:	God ‘will repay <u>each person</u> according to what <u>they</u> have done.’	<i>Han skal lønne <u>hver og en etter det han har gjort:</u></i>

This is another example where NIV 2011’s use of gender-inclusive language creates what some deem an awkward translation. To correspond to “each person”, the translators have chosen to use singular “they” later in the sentence. Singular “they” still sounds incorrect to some readers, even though it is generally accepted as the best choice in many circumstances when one needs a gender-neutral singular personal pronoun. The alternative is to write “him or his”, which generally is considered even more awkward. To achieve the goal of a gender-inclusive Bible translation, NIV 2011 had to make translational choices like in this example throughout the translation, and even if some find it forced and awkward, it is neutral towards the genders.

To sum up, the category of gender-inclusive language gives examples where NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 use words and phrases that are gender-neutral. Due to the extensive criticism from the audience towards NIV 2011’s use of gender-inclusive language, it was expected that the translation would use gender-inclusive language much more frequently than Bibel 2011, as there was no focus by the audience on gender-inclusive language in Bibel 2011. What these examples show, however, is that NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 both use it frequently, even though sometimes not in corresponding places.

3.1.3 Theological issues

The category of theological issues focuses on verses where NIV 2011 or Bibel 2011 create theological problems that have been debated in the reception of the translations. The reason for the debates on these verses is that the new translations can be interpreted as saying something different from previous translations, and this affects theological teachings.

Lev. 18.22

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
Thou shalt not <u>lie with</u> mankind, as <u>with</u> womankind: it is abomination.	Hos en mann skal du ikke <u>ligge</u> som en <u>ligger hos</u> en kvinne; det er en vederstyggelighet.	“Do not have <u>sexual relations with</u> a man as one does <u>with</u> a woman; that is detestable.	Du skal ikke <u>ligge med</u> en mann slik som en <u>ligger med</u> en kvinne. Det er avskyelig.

The NIV 2011 translation of this verse is quite clear on homosexual activity, and what the Bible says about this. While the other translations use “lie”/”ligge”, NIV 2011 reads “sexual relations”. Even though the phrases “to lie with someone” or “ligge med noen” in English and Norwegian, respectively, are commonly understood to mean “have sex with”, they are more open for interpretation. “Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman” is a quite closed statement, with less room for interpretation, and thus makes it harder to defend homosexuality within Christianity.

Isa. 7.14

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a <u>Virgin</u> shall conceive, and bear a Son, And shall call his name Immanuel.	Derfor skal Herren selv gi eder et tegn: Se, en <u>jomfru</u> blir fruktsommelig og føder en sønn, og hun gir ham navnet Immanuel.	Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the <u>virgin</u> will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.	Derfor skal Herren selv gi dere et tegn: Se, den <u>unge jenta</u> skal bli med barn og føde en sønn, og hun skal gi ham navnet Immanuel.

This is a theologically controversial passage from the OT of Bibel 2011. Instead of using the word “jomfru” in this verse, the new translation has chosen “unge jenta”. KJV, Bibelen 1930 and NIV 2011 all read “jomfru”/“virgin”, which means that Bibel 2011 stands out here.

Critics have reacted to this part of the translation. They believe that the idea of the virgin birth is diminished by using the wording “unge jenta” in the OT, as the prophecy corresponds less to what the NT says about the Virgin Mary and the birth of Jesus Christ. In the interview with Lomheim, he states that the word written in the source text does not signalize a virgin, but rather a young woman or girl. Because of this, Lomheim argues that there is no biblical evidence for translating the word into “jomfru”.

1 Cor. 6.9

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, <u>nor abusers of themselves with mankind,</u>	Eller vet I ikke at de som gjør urett, ikke skal arve Guds rike? Far ikke vill! Hverken horkarler eller avgudsdyrkere eller ekteskapsbrytere eller bløtaktige <u>eller de som synder mot naturen,</u>	Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers <u>nor men who have sex with men</u>	Vet dere ikke at de som gjør urett, ikke skal arve Guds rike? La dere ikke føre vill! Verken de som driver hor, de som dyrker avguder eller de som bryter ekteskapet, <u>verken menn som ligger med menn eller som lar seg ligge med,</u>

In this verse, the KJV reads “nor abusers of themselves with mankind”, and Bibelen 1930 reads “eller de som synder mot naturen”. These statements are a bit vague when it comes to what the sin is, and due to this there can be many possible interpretations of this verse. NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011, on the other hand, describe the sinning action as “men who have sex with men” (NIV 2011) and “menn som ligger med menn eller som lar seg ligge med” (Bibel 2011). With these words, the two translations clearly denounce homosexual activity, and state that men who have sex with other men, both on the “giving” and the “receiving” end will not “inherit the kingdom of God”.

What is interesting about this verse is how it specifies homosexual activity as a sin more

clearly in both the translations from 2011 than in the KJV and Bibelen 1930. This might be due to the new translations' stated aim of using more concise and precise language.

1 Tim. 2.12

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor <u>to usurp authority over the man</u> , but to be in silence.	men jeg tillater ikke en kvinne å være lærer eller <u>å være mannens herre</u> , hun skal være i stillhet.	I do not permit a woman to teach <u>or to assume authority over a man</u> ; she must be quiet.	Jeg tillater ikke en kvinne <u>å undervise eller bestemme over mannen</u> , hun skal være stille.

This verse has been controversial in the NIV 2011 translation, as its words have changed slightly from previous translations. Where the KJV reads that a woman cannot “usurp authority over the man”, the NIV 2011 now reads that a woman cannot “assume authority over a man”. The difference is in the word “assume”, as the verse can now be interpreted as allowing women to have authority over men if they are granted it, as long as they do not assume that they have it. Bibel 2011, on the other hand, reads, “Jeg tillater ikke en kvinne å undervise eller bestemme over mannen”, which is not a statement that opens for different interpretations.

To sum up, the category of theological issues gives examples where there have been changes from previous translations in messages the new Bible translations convey. Both of the new translations are clearer on homosexual sins than their reference texts were. They do however differ in other verses, as they have chosen to interpret the message of the source text in a different way than what previous translations have done. This is the case with the change of “jomfru” into “ung jente” in Bibel 2011, and with whether or not a woman can “assume authority” over a man in NIV 2011.

3.1.4 Famous passages

The category of famous passages focuses on changes in verses that are well known for Christians, and which most even know by heart.

Matt. 6.9-13

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
<p>After this manner therefore pray ye: <u>Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.</u></p>	<p>Derfor skal I bede således: <u>Fader vår, du som er i himmelen! Helliget vorde ditt navn; komme ditt rike; skje din vilje, som i himmelen, så og på jorden; gi oss idag vårt daglige brød; og forlat oss vår skyld, som vi og forlater våre skyldnere; og led oss ikke inn i fristelse; men fri oss fra det onde. For riket er ditt, og makten og æren i evighet. Amen.</u></p>	<p>This, then, is how you should pray: <u>Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.</u></p>	<p>Slik skal dere da be: <u>Vår Far i himmelen! La navnet ditt helliges. La riket ditt komme. La viljen din skje på jorden slik som i himmelen. Gi oss i dag vårt daglige brød, og tilgi oss vår skyld, slik også vi tilgir våre skyldnere. Og la oss ikke komme i fristelse, men frels oss fra det onde. For riket er ditt og makten og æren i evighet. Amen.</u></p>

A change in the Lord's Prayer is not something that goes unnoticed, as this prayer is one of the most used prayers in church today. Bibel 2011 has changed some of the wording so that the prayer is more updated in accordance with today's Norwegian language. Already from the first sentence, there is a difference from earlier translations, as it now reads "Vår Far i himmelen", instead of "Fader vår, du som er i himmelen". The new translation follows the sentence structure that is used in today's Norwegian. People also reacted to the use of "Far" instead of "Fader". In the interview with Lomheim, he explained why the translators chose "Far" for Bibel 2011. He states that the source text uses the Greek word "abba", which literally translates into "far", and not "fader". He further claims that "fader" could have been used in Danish, but that so far as the word even exists in the Norwegian language, it does not have quite the same meaning as "far", and this is why they chose to move away from the earlier Norwegian

translations.

Another sentence which there has been focus on is “la oss ikke komme i fristelse”, instead of the previous “led oss ikke inn i fristelse”, as this sentence suggests something different from the previous understanding. In the new translation, God no longer leads people into temptation. It can be argued that this is a theological shift, as the idea of God as a tempter is removed from the prayer.

The Norwegian translation of the prayer that most people know today is that of the 1978/85 translation. The most noticeable difference from the 1930 translation to the 1978/85 translation is where the 1930 translation reads “Helliget vorde ditt navn; komme ditt rike; skje din vilje, som i himmelen, så og på jorden”, while the 1978/85 translation reads “La ditt navn holdes hellig. La ditt rike komme. La din vilje skje på jorden som i himmelen.” These sentences from the 1978/85 translation are more similar to Bibel 2011’s “La navnet ditt helliges. La riket ditt komme. La viljen din skje på jorden slik som i himmelen.” The change is mostly in the word order. The word order of the Lord’s Prayer in Bibel 2011 is more in accordance with what one would expect to hear in the Norwegian language today.

NIV 2011’s translation of the Lord’s Prayer is not that different from the KJV translation. The archaic word “thy” has been replaced with the more modern “your”, which is natural for a translation done for today’s English readers, but other than that, the translations are mostly the same. There is however one difference at the end of the prayer, and here the NIV 2011 differs from both KJV, Bibelen 1930 and Bibel 2011: The NIV 2011 does not include the last lines after “deliver us from the evil one”. A note in the translation states that some late manuscripts also include “for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen”, but NIV 2011 has chosen not to include the lines of these manuscripts.

Luke 2.7

KJV	Bibelen 1930	NIV 2011	Bibel 2011
And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no <u>room for them in the inn.</u>	Og hun fødte sin sønn, den førstefødte, og svøpte ham og la ham i en krybbe, fordi det ikke var <u>rum for dem i herberget.</u>	And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no <u>room for them in the inn.</u>	og hun fødte sin sønn, den førstefødte. Hun svøpte ham og la ham i en krybbe, for det var ikke <u>husrom for dem.</u>

This is another example which has been focused on in the reception of Bibel 2011. The previously well-known “herberget” has been exchanged for “husrom”. Lomheim claims that “herberget” was a word that came with Martin Luther’s translation from the sixteenth century, but that the source text does not use a word that would correspond to “herberge”. Further, he argues that there were no such lodgings in Betlehem at the time, and that using “herberge” is therefore historically wrong. This is the reason for why they have translated it into “husrom” instead. NIV 2011 has chosen differently, and kept “the inn” which was also used in KJV.

To sum up, the category of famous passages shows two examples where Bibel 2011 has changed the words of passages people know by heart. The corresponding passages in NIV 2011 are quite similar to its reference text, KJV. The difference between NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 in this category is in other words that Bibel 2011 has moved further away from previous translations than what NIV 2011 has.

3.2 Reception

In order to look at the audience reception for the two Bible translations, reception data has been gathered. These data consist of text material found on the Internet, ranging from online newspaper articles to blogs, in which people have responded to the translations. The people who have responded consist of Christian theologians, Christian laypeople, as well as secular scholars and non-believers. In subsection 3.2.2, part of the interview with Lomheim is also cited. Most of the reception data is negative toward the translations, which does not come as a surprise as the Bible is a touchy text to translate. People who spend time responding to the translations will therefore most likely have some issues with them, as it is an important book for Christians. There are however also positive reactions to the translations. The following subsections look at both negative as well as positive reception of the two translations.

3.2.1 Reception of NIV 2011

The reception of NIV 2011 focused largely on the translation’s use of gender-inclusive language, and this is the main issue of controversy when it comes to this translation.

The Daily Mail’s online version, *MailOnline* published a news article in 2011 titled “‘I will make you a fisher of PEOPLE’: New gender-neutral Bible translation angers conservatives”. It states that NIV 2011 “has come under fire by conservative groups who argue the changes to the language may alter the theological message” (“I Will Make You”). They react to for instance the use of the word “people” instead of “men” in several places, as well as the use of “brother and sister” instead of the previous “brother”. The news article states further

that The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) decided not to endorse the new version already before its release, due to the version's use of gender-inclusive language. The CBMW is an organisation that believes women should submit to their husbands and that only men can hold certain leadership roles in the church ("I Will Make You"). The linguist Joel M Hoffman disagrees with the CBMW, and states that the Greek word "anthropos" does not mean "man", but "person", and that the translation of this word into "person" is therefore correct. He also argues that "man" is not understood in the English language as referring to both men and women, and that the argument the CBMW brings forth of "man" being inclusive enough does not hold water (ibid.).

Steven Scott Alt is an assistant professor of theology at the FIRE School of Ministry in the US. According to their website, this school is "a leadership training institute, birthed out of the fires of revival, which is called to equip authentic and devoted disciples of Jesus who have a burning desire to love, serve God and impact their world" ("Who We Are"). On his blog, *revolutingnow*, Alt discusses the NIV 2011 in the blog post "The New NIV Controversy: Gender Neutral Language". Like *MailOnline*, he also points to how the CBMW argues against some of the gender-inclusive language, and writes that they believe 2,766 translations regarding gender language is inaccurate. The words they focus on are "father", "son", "brother", "man" and "he/him/his" (Alt). Alt argues that when doing a translation, translating the meaning is most important, but that this will also involve a certain amount of interpretation, which is something translators try to avoid. He points to John 14.23 as an example, where Jesus in the 1984 version of the NIV says, "If anyone loves me ... my Father will love him", which in NIV 2011 has been changed to "My Father will love them". He explains the change by saying that the NIV is trying to deal with a problem in the English language, as "anyone" is an indefinite gender, which should be replaced with a pronoun that is also indefinite gender. As there is no singular personal pronoun in the English language that corresponds to "anyone", the translators have chosen to use "them", as writing "him or her" would be clumsy and considered unacceptable by writers and grammarians (ibid.). Alt writes that "for those who consider such use of they/them awkward, the new NIV and its 2,002 uses of this pronoun will be troublesome. But for those who are not offended by this grammatical usage and are not comfortable with using the singular masculine pronoun as an indefinite, this may be a welcoming change" (ibid.). Another example he points to is Luke 17.3, in which Jesus says in the 1984 version, "If your brother sins, rebuke him." This has been changed in NIV 2011 to "If your brother or sister sins..." The CBMW argues that even though Jesus gave an example here which applies to both men and women, the word used in Greek for this passage was "adelphos" (brother), and should therefore be

translated as only “brother”. Alt finds the translation of “brothers or sisters” plausible only when the word “adelphos” is used in the plural in the source text, and believes that the NIV would be a more accurate translation if they did not add “sister” in such passages (Alt). He claims that the NIV 2011 is a Bible translation which will be more appealing to women and the culture in America in the twenty-first century, but even so he asks the question if the translators have not crossed any lines in their philosophy of making the translation more appealing in this sense. He concludes that in some instances, the use of gender-inclusive language improves the translation, but that in most cases there is not enough support for their decisions of using such language (ibid.).

On the co-authored blog *Unlocking Femininity*, Diane Montgomery wrote a blog entry titled “Words Matter: Why We Can’t Recommend the NIV 2011”. She takes the complementarian perspective that women and men are equal in the eyes of God, but have different roles in the church and the home that fulfil each other. In addition to criticising the points which have already been mentioned about gender-inclusive language, she also mentions the change of 1 Timothy 2.12 from the 1984 version of the NIV to the 2011 version. Where the 1984 version reads “I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent,” the 2011 version reads “I do not permit a woman to teach or assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.” She believes that the change of “have authority” into “assume authority” favours the egalitarian approach that says men and women should have equal rights both in the church and in the home. This she believes because it no longer says that a woman is not permitted to have authority over a man, but that she can have this as long as she does not assume that she has it. Montgomery fears that this change can be used to argue that women can become pastors, if they are granted this authority by the church. She does not believe that this wording was God’s intention, and that it is an inaccurate change. She further states that “This isn’t a fight to keep masculine pronouns because we prefer masculinity over femininity; it’s a fight against *any* changes to Scripture. Those subtle changes change our theology, our interpretations, our personal intimacy with God, and, inevitably, the Gospel message!” (Montgomery). What she adds to the discussion with this statement is that the debate is not simply about a battle between the sexes, but rather about the Christian belief that God’s words are holy and unchangeable. Her statement shows that the age-old argument against changes to the Bible is still used to criticize Bible translations.

Trevin Wax, managing editor of *The Gospel Project* at LifeWay Christian Resources, predicts that the decision of Zondervan publishing to phase out the 1984 version of the NIV in favour of the 2011 version will mean the end of the NIV’s popularity, due to the controversy of

gender-inclusive language in the latest version. When people can no longer buy the 1984 version he believes that churches and church leaders will be forced to make a decision whether to use the 2011 version, or to switch to other translations of the Bible. He does not believe that leaders of evangelical churches will want to update all their literature and switch to the 2011 version, and that readers of the Bible will not overlook the controversial changes that have been done. While he sees the need for updating translations, he states that translations of the Bible must be done with great care, as people read, study and memorize the Scriptures. He concludes with comparing the NIV to how the KJV was a translation that has been influential for 400 years, and says that the new NIV translation will have the opposite effect: “The King James Version united Bible readers around a common text. I’m afraid the NIV 2011 will speed up the growing fragmentation of evangelicals in regards to Bible translations” (Wax).

Even though many Christian groups and individuals argue against using the NIV 2011, there are some who believe that this translation should be used in churches today. *Christianity Today* argued for the use of the NIV 2011 in churches in their editorial “Battle for the Bible Translation”. In the editorial, they look at and oppose the decision of The Southern Baptist Convention not to commend the NIV 2011 to Southern Baptists nor the larger Christian community, due to the gender-inclusive language and their view that this Bible translation has “gone beyond acceptable translation standards.” *Christianity Today* claims that the standards The Southern Baptist Convention are referring to are those of Nida’s dynamic equivalence, or as it was later termed, functional equivalence. They write that “such translations try to do something on the order of common sense: When arriving at a word or phrase that literally says one thing but functionally means another, [the translators] choose the functional meaning” (“Battle for the Bible Translation”). *Christianity Today* argues that when speakers addressed an audience of mixed believers in biblical times, they used “brothers” as a greeting, as this would be understood to refer to all the people in the audience at that time. They further claim that “brothers” would also be understood in the English language to refer to both the men and women present in a group just a generation ago. The problem is however that today’s generation would see it as referring just to the males present. Because of this change in the function of the word “brothers” (or “adelphoi” in Greek), *Christianity Today* believes that there is a need for functionally equivalent translations, and that NIV 2011 otherwise would mislead its readers (“Battle for the Bible Translation”).

Even though the main focus of the receptors was on the gender-inclusive language of NIV 2011, there were some different perspectives on the new translation. A theologian who worked with the translation says that the new version is clearer on homosexual sins.

Dr. Douglas J. Moo, who is chair of the Committee on Bible Translation, backs him up, and says that the 1984 version of the NIV was not clear on “whether homosexual activity per se was being condemned or whether only certain kinds of ‘offensive’ homosexual activity was being condemned” (Gryboski). Referring to Corinthians 6.9, he says that the 2011 version “makes clear that the Greek words here indicate any kind of homosexual activity” (ibid.).

In general, the negative reception of the NIV 2011 has come from forces within Christianity who oppose its use of gender-inclusive language. Their reasons for this opposition differ. Some hold the complementarian belief that women and men have different roles that fulfil each other, and argue against gender-inclusive language due to this. Others have focused on whether or not the NIV 2011 translates correctly in correspondence with the source texts when choosing gender-inclusive and gender-neutral terms. The Southern Baptist Convention is a strong force, as they are the biggest Protestant denomination in the US (Rainer), and their choice not to commend the NIV 2011 to its members nor other Christians in general is therefore a strong statement against the translation. The evangelical magazine *Christianity Today*, is however a strong force within Evangelical Protestantism, and they stand on the other side of the debate with their approval of NIV 2011’s use of gender-inclusive language. Their view is that there is a need for a translation of the Bible that is functionally updated for today’s English readers. The reception for and against the translation is rooted in different Christian’s theological beliefs, and what they perceive as a good translation of the Bible.

3.2.2 Reception of Bibel 2011

While the reception of NIV 2011 focused mainly on its use of gender-inclusive language, the reception of Bibel 2011 focused on a wide range of aspects in the new translation. These include changes of the Lord’s Prayer, the use of “ung jente” instead of “jomfru”, vulgar taboo words, but also on how it is a Bible for the future, and its popularity. Editor of *Høgskoleavisa*, Einar Myrenget, asks the rhetorical question of whether the publisher Bibelselskapet changed the Lord’s Prayer to beguile the youth by calling the prayer “Vår Far” instead of “Fader Vår”, in the belief that this was a more youthful language. In an interview published in *Høgskoleavisa*, he talks to Astri Ramsfjell, who was part of the group working on the translation, about the change of the Lord’s Prayer. She says that the reactions to the new translation are easily understood, but that it is still necessary to translate into a language that people understand today. She further claims that the language of the Bible should be as close as possible to the source text, but also as close as possible to the language one is translating the text into, in this case Norwegian. She believes the most noticeable change is that of using the

more familiar “Far”, which they now have used quite consistently throughout the NT, instead of the more solemn “Fader”. “Forlat oss vår skyld” is now “Tilgi oss vår skyld”, and the translators state that the reason for this is that the word “forlate” no longer means to take something away from someone in the Norwegian language. They have also changed “Led oss ikke inn i fristelse” to “La oss ikke komme i fristelse”, which entails that God is not actively leading people into temptation. Ramsfjell states that the disadvantage of this way of putting it is that God is no longer the subject of the action, but that the advantage is that God is no longer portrayed as a tempter (Myrenget).

Another aspect of Bibel 2011 which has been highly debated is how Isaiah 7.14 does not say “jomfru”, but “ung jente”. People have been critical to this change. *Aftenbladet* interviewed Birger Helland, leader of Norwegian Lutheran Mission region South West. In the interview he claims that part of the biblical fundament of the virgin birth is weakened by this change, and he believes that the Bible translation should still say “jomfru” in this verse. The translators have defended the change by stating that the source text does not use a word which means “jomfru”, but rather “ung jente”. *Aftenbladet* also interviewed Knut Alfsvåg, theologian at School of Mission and Theology. He is not convinced by the translators’ argument. He claims that theologians have known about the problem of this passage in the source texts from ancient Christianity, and in spite of this have previously chosen to use “jomfru”. He would have preferred that the new translation followed the previous solution from older translations. Svein Arne Lindø, who is leader of the Norwegian Church Council, does however not see a problem with this word in the new translation. He believes that the translators have evaluated this in accordance with the source text, and he is confident in their choices (Moi).

In the same interview with *Aftenbladet*, Helland also reacts to the use of the words “hore”, “fødselsrier”, “evnukk”, “rakkerpakk”, “piss” and “sjalusi” in Bibel 2011. He calls this a vulgarisation of the language, and does not see the need to use what he calls slang language in a Bible translation. He points out that the Bible is God’s word to the people, and that the use of such words is undignified (ibid.)

Dagen’s news article “Bibelselskapet gjør Jesus til forbryter” looks at how Luke 23.32 in Bibel 2011 reads: “Også to andre forbrytere ble ført bort for å bli henrettet sammen med ham.” Bibelen 1930, on the other hand, reads “Også to andre, to ugjerningsmenn, blev ført bort med ham for å avlives”. A reader of Bibel 2011 had pointed out this change, and argued that the new translation implicitly calls Jesus a criminal, as he is not separated from the two criminals. In the following verse, Luke 23.33, Bibel 2011 reads “Og da de kom til det stedet som heter Hodeskallen, korsfestet de både ham og forbryterne der, den ene på høyre side av

ham og den andre på venstre side.” This verse, on the other hand, separates Jesus from the criminals. Per Egil Hegge, who answered the reader in a language column in *Aftenposten* believed the missing comma in Bibel 2011 to be a simple mistake in the proofreading. Translators of other Norwegian Bible translations claim that the Greek source text makes it possible to translate the verse in this way, as the source text does not have any punctuations, but at the same time they state that Luke probably did not mean to characterize Jesus as a criminal (Gudvangen, “Gjør Jesus til Forbryter”). Professor Anders Aschim, who was part of the group translating Bibel 2011, states that Bibelselskapet intentionally did not write a comma in this verse, due to two different versions being available in the manuscripts. They chose to follow the three eldest manuscripts, in which the word order does not imply that there should be a comma. Aschim claims that the reason why they chose these eldest manuscripts is that they are considered most reliable. He also argues that Jesus was seen as a criminal by those who sentenced him, and that what Bibel 2011 reads is therefore not entirely incorrect (Gudvangen, “- Ingen Korrekturfeil”).

There were also many positive reactions to Bibel 2011. In the interview with Lomheim, he spoke about the reception of Bibel 2011. In general, he claims that the reception was very good, as there was a lot of media attention, and people queued up to get a copy of the new translation. He further states that those who are concerned about the Bible being translated in the best way possible, were pleased with the changes in Bibel 2011, as the translation lies very close to the source text. Even so, he states that in certain groupings there will always be people who get angry about anything that has to do with change. In this case, it is the groupings who are very concerned with what they call “God’s words” who reacted negatively to changes in the new translation, as they do not want changes of God’s words, or rather what they believe to be God’s words from having read previous translations. Here he points to how most readers of the Norwegian Bible are not acquainted with what the source texts say.

Leif Hadland in The Norwegian Mission Society (NMS) states that the language of the new translation is more appropriate for this century. He recognises that this translation was done only 30 years after the last translation Bibelselskapet published, and claims that the 1978/85 version still communicates the message of the Bible well to its audience. Even so, he hopes that the new translation lies ahead of the development of the Norwegian language, and hence can be used by Christians for many years to come (Hadland).

Even international media reacted to the popularity of Bibel 2011. *The Guardian* called it a surprise bestseller, as it was on the top fifteen list of bestselling books for 54 out of 56 weeks after it was published. During the first fourteen months, it sold 157,000 copies, which was far

more than what the editors of Bibel 2011 had estimated. Dag Smemo, project manager for Bibelselskapet, believes that the popularity is due to Bibel 2011's strength of translation, where they did not only include Hebrew and Greek experts on the source text, but also literary writers like Karl Ove Knausgård to perfect the language (Flood).

4 Discussion

The thesis started out initially asking the questions of what the differences are between NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011, and what the differences in the audience reception for the two are. In the following subsection, the thesis will address the results from the analysis, with these two questions in mind. The section will first look at potential limitations of the project, and then summarize the results from the analysis, showing how the data answer the research questions. Further, it will look at potential reasons for the differences in the Bible translations, and finally at potential reasons for differences in the reception.

4.1 Summary of results

In a project like this, it is difficult to make a conclusion of one, or even a few, major differences that separate the two translations. The Bible is a massive book, and the translations are therefore the result of a collaboration of several different groups working with the translations. Even though the goal for translators is to be invisible in the target text, that task is almost impossible to achieve as they all have different styles and opinions, which go into the translation. This means that different parts of the Bibles might have been translated differently. In a master's thesis of this size, there is also a limit to the number of examples from the translations that can be looked at. This means that some features that could help distinguish the translations from each other might not be included in this project. Another element that might affect the results of this project is that the translations are only compared to other translations of the Bible, and not with their Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek source texts. Without knowledge of what the source texts say, it is possible that some differences in the examples that are singled out are the result of differences in the source texts used for the different translation.

Having said that, the results from the comparisons in the analysis do give a general idea of the differences in how NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 have been translated, based on what choices the translators have made compared with the other translation and previous translations. To sum up the results briefly, the comparisons show that the main differences between the two is that Bibel 2011 uses a more radically modern language register with more taboo words. They both create some theological issues by choosing to translate some verses differently from what

previous translations have done. The reception data, which is the foundation for the passages that have been selected as examples, also give an indication on what the differences between the two translations are. The four themes updated, modern language, gender-inclusive language, theological issues and famous passages, summarize what the reception has focused on, and they are thus an indication of what the translations have led the readers to notice.

4.2 Why so different?

This subsection will look at potential reasons for the differences that are found between NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011. It will first look at differences between the translations themselves, and then at differences between the receptions the two translations have received.

4.2.1 Differences in the two Bible translations

There might be several different reasons for the differences between NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011. One reason is the translational approach the translators had when writing the translation. When it comes to the approach for Bibel 2011, Lomheim said in the interview conducted for this thesis that there was a focus on making it an equivalent translation, in terms of it being of equal value in meaning and function to the source text. He also said that in terms of style, the translated text should suit the language style of the different books of the Bible. If the source text used solemn language in a passage, then the translated text should also use solemn language in the corresponding passage.

Interestingly, different sources do not seem to agree whether Bibel 2011 should be called an idiomatic or concordant translation (Lomheim; Bøe and Holmås 220; “Grunntekstnær Eller Konkordant Oversettelse”). The reason for this could be that it is difficult to distinguish a translation as fully idiomatic or concordant, as it will most likely have some elements from both of the approaches. The translation is shorter and uses a more concise language than what the 1978/85 version did, which could hint towards it being more concordant than the previous Norwegian translation, but it is still idiomatic in terms of translating sense-for-sense instead of simply word-for-word. The examples in subsection 3.1 also show that the translation functions well in today’s modern Norwegian language, both idiomatically and semantically, and it is therefore at least as idiomatic as it is concordant. The idea that it is a concordant translation is thus probably rooted in it being more concordant than what its predecessor was.

The NIV 2011’s approach when they did their translation of the Bible was quite similar to that of Bibel 2011. According to its preface, the NIV 2011 translators “prioritised accuracy, clarity and literary quality with the goal of creating a translation suitable for public and private

reading, evangelism, teaching, preaching, memorizing and liturgical use” (*New International Version* xiv). Further, it states that:

The first concern of the translators has continued to be the accuracy of the translation and its faithfulness to the intended meaning of the biblical writers. This has moved the translators to go beyond a formal word-for-word rendering of the original texts. Because thought patterns and syntax differ from language to language, accurate communication of the meaning of the biblical authors demands constant regard for varied contextual uses of words and idioms and for frequent modifications in sentence structures. (*New International Version* xv)

In other words, the NIV 2011 translators also followed an idiomatic approach, and dismissed the concordant translation approach, where one translates word-for-word. They also saw the importance of being faithful to the intended meaning of the biblical writers. In addition to this, the translators of NIV 2011 explicitly stated that they wanted to use gender-inclusive language in passages where the message was probably intended on both men and women alike. They argued for gender-inclusive language due to changes for masculine terms in the English language, where they previously were used to denote both men and women alike, but now only denote men (*New International Version* xvi). Bibel 2011, on the other hand, did not state an explicit focus on using gender-inclusive language, although they have incorporated this approach many places in the translation.

The approaches the translators have used for the two Bible translations have had an impact on the outcome of the texts, as the approach colours the language that has been used. The Bibles are both easy to read and follow for today’s Norwegian and English readers respectively, which is a result of their focus on creating translations that function for today’s readers. This is in accordance with Nida & Taber’s theory of dynamic equivalence, as both NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 focus on the receptor response. This means that they focus on writing a target text that corresponds to the original message of the source text, and in such a way that the reader of the target text will receive the same message, or the closest equivalent possible, from the translated text as he would have from the source text (Nida 166).

There are however passages where the two translations do not correspond entirely. Most of the examples where this occurs fall under the category of updated, modern language. Some of the examples from updated, modern language show that there is a difference between the two translations when it comes to language register. Bibel 2011 tends to use more vulgar and taboo language than NIV 2011. One possible reason for this is the difference between the

Norwegian and English language, in terms of what is deemed an appropriate language register for the two languages in general in their respective societies. Another reason might be the translators view on what is the appropriate language register for a Bible translation. Bibel 2011 used literary writers like Karl Ove Knausgård during the process, as language style consultants (“Prosjektdeltakere”). Their role was to look at the Bible as a literary text, and to help preserve the literary qualities of the source text in the target text (Bøe and Holmås 220). It is possible to argue that viewing the Bible as a literary text instead of as a holy text might affect what language register one sees as appropriate, and this might be one of the reasons for the more radically modern language of Bibel 2011.

4.2.2 Differences in the reception for the two Bible translations

What is clear from the examples and from the reception data is that there is a difference between the two translations when it comes to what issues their readers react to. Where the focus lay mostly on the use of gender-inclusive language for NIV 2011, the issues people commented on in Bibel 2011 were a lot more scattered. The reason for this difference could be grounded in the stated aims that lay behind the translation projects, as the audience then were led to notice how the new translations differ from previous translations of the Bible. Another reason for the difference between the receptions could be the differences between the readerships in the two cultures.

NIV 2011 openly declared itself as a Bible translation that wanted to use gender-inclusive language, to make sure their readers were aware of the translational approach that lay behind the gender-inclusiveness. This did not fall under the radar among those who already used the 1984 version of the NIV. The NIV is a Protestant Bible, and one of the most popular English Bible translations (Coffman). Within Protestantism, there are numerous different denominations, which again means that there are most likely numerous opinions on what a Bible translation should be (Rainer). With this in mind, the fact that people reacted differently to the gender-inclusive language in NIV 2011 comes as no surprise. Those who opposed the gender-inclusive language did so for several different reasons, for instance either because of the idea of complementarianism or because of translational ideologies, which shows that there is a diversity when it comes to readers’ opinion on what language a Bible translation should use, and what message it should convey.

There were hardly any reactions to the use of gender-inclusive language in Bibel 2011, even though the examples that are analysed in this thesis show that Bibel 2011 also uses a lot of it. Part of the reason why there were no reactions could be the difference between the

Norwegian and American culture in terms of gender equality. Most of the reactions towards the gender-inclusive language in NIV 2011 came from the US, which is why American culture is singled out here, instead of cultures in other English-speaking countries. *The Global Gender Gap Report* of 2014, published by World Economic Forum, lists the world's countries after how much gender equality they have achieved. On this list, Norway ranks as number four in the world, with a score of 84 %, meaning that the country has closed 84 % of the gap between the genders when it comes to equality. The US is much further down on the list, and ranks as number twenty, with a score of 75 % (*The Global Gender Gap Report 2014*). This achievement of gender equality could be linked to the way gender-inclusive language is perceived in a culture. If women are seen as equal to men elsewhere in a society, it is not unlikely that they are seen as equal also in terms of the language. As Norway has achieved more gender equality than the US in general, this might be one reason for why the readers of Bibel 2011 did not react to the use of gender-inclusive language. In addition to this, it is worth noting that those who reacted to the use of gender-inclusive language might belong to Christian denominations that either have achieved less gender-equality than the American society in general, or believe in complementarianism.

Instead of focusing on gender-inclusive language, the reception of Bibel 2011 focused on the updated, modern language. The use of updated, modern language is a consequence of the translators' aim to translate the source text into a functionally appropriate target text for today. This resulted in the use of a biblical language that Norwegian readers were not accustomed to encounter when reading a translation of the Bible, with some vulgar taboo words and other changes to well-known passages, like the Lord's Prayer. Those who have reacted negatively to such changes are generally Christians who do not believe in changing a translation of the Bible too much from previous translations. This shows that many people want to read what they already know and have accepted as part of their religious belief, as it is something they hold very close and dear to their heart. Those who reacted positively to the changes, on the other hand, were more concerned with the Bible being translated correctly in accordance with what the source text actually says, and some also saw the need for a Norwegian Bible that uses a modern Norwegian language that people actually speak today.

It is interesting that the reactions to Bibel 2011 appear to be more scattered in their focus than the reactions to NIV 2011. One reason for this might be the role of the churches in the US, where the reactions for NIV 2011 mostly came from, versus the role of the Church of Norway. In the US, there is a bigger focus on attending church and hence on collective belief, and the congregations are an important part of Christians' life. Even though church attendance in the

US is on a decline, about 40 % of all Americans still attend church every week, according to a survey performed by Barna Group in 2014 (“Americans Divided on the Importance of Church”). The attendance is therefore much higher than in Norway, where only 2 % of the population on average attended church on Sundays in 2009, even though 80.7 % of the population were members of the Church of Norway at that time (Goa). It is therefore natural to expect that the church leaders in the US have more impact on Christians’ theological beliefs than what they have in Norway, as a higher percentage of those who are Christian attend church in the US than in Norway. Thus, most Christians in Norway will have heard less of the theological teachings of the church. What Bible translation to use is also part of the theological guidance church leaders can offer, but as Norwegian Christians are less in contact with the opinions of church leaders than American Christians, it might be more natural for Norwegian Christians to decide for themselves what is important for them in a Bible translation. Consequently, they take a more individual stand when it comes to whether they endorse a translation or not, and this stand is based on the translational arguments that are important for them as an individual, whether they argue for a word-for-word or sense-for-sense translation, or for instance gender-inclusive language.

Another reason for the difference in the reactions to NIV 2011 and Bibel 2011 might be the number of translations done in English and Norwegian respectively. English readers can choose from a vast number of Bible translations, while Norwegian readers do not have nearly as many to choose from. Due to this, English and American denominations can handpick the translation that falls closest to their theological teachings, while the Church of Norway generally has chosen the latest translation released by Bibelselskapet. There are of course other, smaller denominations in Norway as well, that have chosen to use one of the translations released by other publishers than Bibelselskapet, but the majority of Norwegian Christians fall under the Church of Norway. When the English readers can choose between so many translations, those who would have reacted to other parts than the gender-inclusive language of NIV 2011 might have chosen to go with another translation than NIV even before NIV 2011 was published, and are therefore not part of the audience that responds to it. The ones that have been using previous versions of the NIV, on the other hand, and have mostly agreed with what those versions have said, will react to changes to the NIV that do not correspond with their theological beliefs, and for many of them this was what happened with the use of gender-inclusive language in NIV 2011.

5 Conclusion

This thesis set out to answer the research questions: “What are the differences between the 2011 update of the New International Version and Bibel 2011, and what are the differences in the audience reception for the two Bible translations?” To answer these questions, a three-pronged method was used. The method consisted of analysing and comparing textual material from the two translations, analysing and comparing reception data, and interviewing Sylfest Lomheim, who worked on the Norwegian translation.

To conclude on what has been discovered, the most profound difference between the two translations is the language register, where Bibel 2011 uses a more radically modern language than NIV 2011. When it comes to the audience reception, the difference lies in what the audience has reacted to. Even though both translations use gender-inclusive language, it was only an issue in the reception of NIV 2011, where people focused almost exclusively on it. The reception of Bibel 2011 did not focus on gender-inclusive language at all, and focused instead on several other aspects of the text, like for instance the radically modern language, and the change of the Lord’s Prayer.

The thesis mentions possible reasons for the differences in translation and reception. These are the translators’ approach when translating, the readers’ view on what a good Bible translation is, societal differences, theological factions, how likely the readers are to be affected by church leaders and the opinions of other theological counsellors, and lastly how many available translations of the Bible there are in the respective languages.

When it comes to the field of Bible translation, this project contributes to the field as it gives a new comparison of two recent Bible translations, based on their reception in the English and Norwegian language respectively. Even though there exist comparisons of Bible translations already, these two translations have not previously been compared. The idea of reception data being an informant on what distinguishes one translation from another also adds a new perspective to the study of Bible translations. The reception can in addition give an indication of a translation’s degree of success.

In future studies it might be interesting to compare more Bible translations and their receptions. Including the source texts in such comparisons could also add another dimension to such studies, as differences that are due to different source texts could be separated from differences that are due to how the translators have interpreted what the source texts say, and the approach they have when translating. To add more reception data, a survey could be

conducted, in which respondents answer concrete questions about their opinion on different passages in the Bible translation, or about the translation in general.

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Appendix A: The master's thesis' relevance for the teaching profession

This master's thesis was written as part of the teacher's education at NTNU. Due to this, it is relevant to look at how it can be useful for working in schools.

Firstly, when teaching English as a second language, awareness of differences between the students' first language and the second language is important. This thesis compares one English and one Norwegian Bible translation, and looks at differences between how they have been translated, and in what way that affects the meaning that is conveyed. It can therefore give insight into differences between the first language and second language, and potential problems when learning a second language.

Secondly, the theory section is full of information about Bible history and translation theory. The Bible history is very relevant for teachers of religion, as knowledge about the background of the Bible, as well as what it says, is central when teaching Christianity. The translation theory is relevant for language teachers, as translations of texts are part of how we communicate with people who speak other languages. Translated texts and translated speech is something both students and teachers see every day.

Lastly, working on this thesis has been useful for working in schools, as it has involved writing, being critical towards one's own text, getting feedback, and editing it during the whole process. It has also involved searching for relevant literature and sources, and learning to cite them correctly and according to set standards. This is something that is done a lot in schools on lower levels as well, as students are set to write their own texts about either a given subject or a subject of their own choice. When given such a task, the students will have to write their own texts, be critical to what they write, get feedback from either a fellow student or the teacher, and edit the text. They will also have to learn how to search for relevant literature and sources, and learn how to cite them correctly. It is therefore important that the teacher has thorough knowledge on how the writing process works, and thus can help his or her students with it.