

Compare Differences Between Different *Bible* Translations in the View of Globalization: Illustrated by the Case of “*ψυχή*” in the *New Testament*

CHANG, Cheng-hao

National Cheng Chi University, Taipei, Taiwan

The purpose of *Bible* translation is to enable readers to fully understand what the *Bible* says in their own context. The different *Bible* translations use different translation principles, therefore, they show different translated results from each other. In general, translators will make translation choices between the “word-for-word translation” and “sense-for-sense translation”. A good translation usually has two translation choices and the difference is just which kind of choice to use more. In addition to this, whether the same word can be translated consistently is also worthy of being discussed, especially in the case of a proper noun or vocabulary with special meaning. If a vocabulary with special meaning in the *Bible* is translated into different words, it is not only impossible to clarify the conceptual connection or logical relationship between certain words in the *Bible*, but also makes it possible for readers who read different *Bible* translations to have the different understanding of the vocabulary. Under the influence of globalization, Christian communication has become more frequent. After different readers read different *Bible* translations, the problem of inconsistent understanding of the same word or paragraph will be gradually revealed. This article uses the Greek word “*ψυχή*” to explore the above issues. “*ψυχή*” is a vocabulary with special meaning in the *New Testament* and it is mostly discussed in the anthropology of Christian theology. This article compares three English *Bible* translations and six Chinese *Bible* translations on the Greek word “*ψυχή*” and then finds that the Greek word “*ψυχή*” was translated into multiple different words in a single *Bible* translation and in different *Bible* translations. This situation shows that the difference in translation may make the readers of different *Bible* translations have different understandings after reading.

Keywords: *Bible*, translate, translation, soul, spirit, heart

Introduction

The purpose of *Bible* translation is to enable readers to fully understand what the *Bible* says in their own context. The different *Bible* translations use different translation principles, therefore, they show different translated results from each other. In general, translators will make translation choices between the “word-for-word translation” and “sense-for-sense translation”. Due to that the structure of the source language may not be in the specification with the target language, sometimes the target language has to get rid of the structure of the source language. But doing so might lose some meaning of the source language. Therefore, translators must do the proper choice between accuracy and readability. In terms of translation method, these

two methods will be used. In fact, most of the translations are also combinations of word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation. But according to the different construction of the text, the difference is just which kind of choice to use more and the proportion of these two translation methods.

After discussing the above problem, the further problems of “domestication translation” and “foreignizing translation” will be discussed.¹ Actually, the absolute domestication translation and absolute foreignizing translation, as well as the word-for-word translation and sense-for-sense translation, they do not exist alone. The concepts of domestication translation and foreignizing translation are like the extend of the word-for-word translation and sense-for-sense translation, however, they are not totally the same. The core focus of the word for word translation and sense for sense translation is arranging the form and meaning in the level of language. But domestication translation and foreignizing translation are not just under the frame of the level of language, which further expanded to the aspect of culture. According to Lawrence Venuti (1995), domestication translation is to bring the translator, him/herself into the culture of the language he/she translated. Also, foreignizing translation is to accept the foreign culture and language, hence bringing the readers to the foreign environment (Venuti, 1995, p. 20).

From the history of translation, the problems with the above method of translation also exist in the translation of the *Bible*. Especially the trend of popularity and culture-oriented translation has influenced the field of *Bible* translation recently (REN, 2001, p. 43). Although this trend increases the readability, besides the problems of translation we have mentioned previously, another problem that we need to be careful with is whether the same phrase of the source language is translated uniformly or not. In general, a phrase being used in the context, which appeared many times, might be translated into different words to increase the readability. However, some specific nouns and phrases have special meaning. If they were translated into different words, they might lose certain linkage of concepts or the logical relationship among them. In this situation, translating the specific nouns and the phrases with special meaning are better to use the same translation. This is a very crucial point especially for translating a classic or philosophy work. If overly used different words of the target language, the ambiguity of understanding will be inevitable. Therefore, for those special nouns and phrases, they should always be translated in a uniform word, unless there is a special need in context. Otherwise, readers cannot understand the meaning of the word in the paragraph, sometimes, which might further cause the misinterpreting and different understanding between readers.

Under the influence of the globalization, the communications between the different Christianity churches are getting closer. The problem of different understandings among the readers, caused by different versions of *Bible* translations, might be more and more prominent. For this reason, this article compared the Greek word “*ψυχή*” being translated that in three English Bible translations and six Chinese Bible translations. This study is not conducted to discuss which translation is better nor discuss the theological controversy caused by “*ψυχή*”, but to discuss the inconsistencies among these translating versions. And if there is an inconsistency, is it due to the same word of the source language to be translated into the different words which are misinterpreted into different meanings?

The Basic Word Meaning of “*ψυχή*”

From the view of the interpretation of English to explore the basic word meaning of “*ψυχή*”, the

¹ In contrast to localization, foreignizing translation retains the original style or special meaning.

explanation of BDAG (A Greek-English lexicon of the *New Testament* and other early Christian literature) is “the quality of physical life without which a body cannot function, that which animates a body; that which is integral to being a person, the seat and center of the inner human life”. The English translation of “*ψυχή*” can be used as “life”, “soul”, or “self” (inner).²

The first brief definition of this Greek word is “life” in *The New Strong’s Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.³ This definition includes “the breath of life”, “life”, and “that in which there is life”. The second brief definition is “soul”.⁴ As for the Chinese part, CBOL (Chinese *Bible* on-line project)⁵ defined the basic meaning of “*ψυχή*”, which includes “life”, “soul”, and “person”.⁶ Thus, the three main meanings of “*ψυχή*” in Chinese are “life” (生命), “soul” (魂), and “person” (人). According to the meaning of context and the referent objects, although the word similar to the above word can be selected as the translation term, however, we need to pay attention to that this translation language should not deviate from the meaning of the Greek word too far.

Statistics and Comparison of the Translation of “*ψυχή*” in English *Bible* Translations

The Statistics of the Target Language Words of “*ψυχή*”

In this article, we selected three English translating versions of *Bible* to compare the translation of each version. There are King James Version (hereinafter referred to as KJV), New Revised Standard Version (hereinafter referred to as NRSV), and Recovery Version (hereinafter referred to as RV).

King James Version was published in 1611, which was also considered the masterpiece in the history of the English translation. It is translated by 47 university scholars, truthfully based on original text, words and

² (NT103; LXX89) CL, 388; BDAG, 1098. Danker, Frederick William, Bauer, Walter, University of Chicago, 2000.

³ <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?strongs=G5590&t=KJV> (last visited Jan. 24, 2015).

⁴ The detailed definition is as follows:

(1) breath

(1a) the breath of life

(1a1) the vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breathing

(1a1a) of animals

(1a1b) of men

(1b) life

(1c) that in which there is life

(1c1) a living being, a living soul

(2) the soul

2a) the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our heart, soul etc.)

2b) the (human) soul in so far as it is constituted that by the right use of the aids offered it by God it can attain its highest end and secure eternal blessedness, the soul regarded as a moral being designed for everlasting life

(2c) the soul as an essence which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death (distinguished from other parts of the body).

⁵ <https://bible.fhl.net/> (last visited Jan. 24, 2015).

⁶ <https://bible.fhl.net/new/s.php?N=0&k=05590> (last visited Jan. 24, 2015). The detailed definition is as follows:

(1) mortal life that enables the body to move (使身體得以活動的塵世生命)

(1a) life breath, vitality, soul (生命氣息, 生命力, 魂)

(1b) mortal life (塵世生命)

(1c) have life or soul (擁有生命或魂的)

(2) (The center of human inner life) Soul ((人類內在生命的中心所在)魂)

(2a) the desire for a rich life (豐厚生活的渴望)

(2b) evil longing (邪惡的渴望)

(2c) feelings and emotions (感受與情感)

(2d) the core of life that beyond world (超越塵世的生命核心)

(3) person ((具有位格的)人).

phrases are properly translated. They mainly used word-for-word translation to secure the original text being translated and generally maintained the order and structure (Sampson, 1970, p. 150). At the time, in order to adapt to the times' changes, a lot of contemporary English was used. And for increasing the fluency of the translating version, the same Greek word/phrase was avoided being translated into the same English (TAN, 2004, pp. 113-114). KJV not only has the great impact on English and Western culture, but also influences other languages translation versions, such as Chinese Morrison Version and Chinese Union Version. They are basically translated from KJV (YANG, 2008, p. 85).

The new Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is based on the Revised Standard Version, which was published in 1946. The NRSV, published in 1989, is characterized by replacing the old traditional words and phrases in the KJV and uses the mutual, daily used words. Then the Recovery Version, accomplished in 1987, referenced about 20 different translating versions and also the Greek Septuagint and Aramaic Targums.⁷ This translating version emphasized on understanding the true meaning of the original text, without additional editing, and using simple direct words and phrases to translate. This translating version has some prominent features. Firstly, the translator is Witness Lee (1905-1997), a Chinese theologian and leader of the "Local Church". This is the first time that the work of English translating version of *Bible* is led by Chinese. Secondly, its translation and content are not only referenced with Lee's books, but also the books of another famous Chinese theologian, Watchman Nee (1903-1972).⁸

As shown in Table 1, they are the statistics of the scripture that contains the word "ψυχή" in the *New Testament* and the number of the target language words.

Table 1

The Statistics of the Target Language Words of "ψυχή" in English Bible Translations

Item	The target language words	KJV	RV	NRSV
1	soul	54	56	31
2	life	29	21	33
3	live	3	2	3
4	mind	3	1	3
5	heart	1	-	2
6	heartily	1	-	-
7	person	-	1	4
8	soul-life	-	11	-
9	being	-	-	1
10	everyone	-	-	2
11	living creatures	-	-	1
12	living thing	-	-	1
13	not translated	3	2	13
Statistics of the target language words		6	6	10

Concerning the translation of the Greek word "ψυχή", there is only some little discrepancy among the above three English *Bible* translations. As for the category of words of the target language, both KJV and RV translated the word "ψυχή" into six words and NRSV translated the word "ψυχή" into 10 words. Therefore,

⁷ It includes King James Version, American Standard Version, New American Standard Version, Revised Standard Version, New International Version, Darby Translation, and Revised Version.

⁸ The main content comes from the *Life-Study of the Bible* (生命讀經). <http://online.recoveryversion.org/> (last visited Jan. 24, 2015).

only NRSV has some differences from the others. As for the number of words of the target language, the main discrepancy between the KJV and RV is only the word “life”, but in NRSV, the number of the words “soul” and “life” are quite different from the others. As a whole, in the three English *Bible* translations, the Greek word “*ψυχή*” is translated as “soul” and “life”, which are the most numerous, other target language words are relatively rare.

The Analysis of the Target Language Words of “*ψυχή*”

As shown in Figure 1, the translation of RV and KJV in the 49 verses is identical, and there are not many cases in which the two versions take different target language words. In verses where RV translates “*ψυχή*” into “soul”, there are five verses in KJV that have been translated into “life”, “heart”, “mind” (two times), “heartily” and two verses have not been translated. In addition, there are five verses having been translated as “soul” in KJV, corresponding to RV that was translated as “soul-life” (three times) and “person” and one verse have not been translated. Therefore, the translations of RV and KJV are quite similar.

Translations	KJV	RV	NRSV	
The number of “soul”	54 verses	56 verses	31 verses	
Same / different translation		4 verses different	4 verses different	
		1 verse not translated	1 verse not translated	
49 verses KJV and RV are the same				31 verses All Translations are the same
			10 verses different	Total 11 verses not translated
			8 verses not translated	
			3 verses not translated	
			4 verses different	
	2 verses not translated			14 verses different
	5 verses not translated			

Figure 1. Corresponding distribution of the same/different of the word “soul”.

As for the 31 verses that translate “*ψυχή*” into “soul” in NRSV, they all are the same as KJV and RV. In addition, corresponding to 18 verses that were translated as “soul” in RV, in NRSV, 11 verses have not been translated and 14 verses were translated as “person” (three times), “life” (two times), “being”, “everyone” (two times), “living thing”, “live”, “mind” (two times), and “heart” (two times). In summary, although the translation of “soul” is slightly different among the three *Bible* translations, but apart from the 11 verses that have not been translated in NRSV, the differences between these translations are very small.⁹

⁹ The verses that “*ψυχή*” have not translated basically failed to cause reading disorders.

As shown in Figure 2, the difference in the part of “*ψυχή*” translated as “life” is also very few. NRSV has the highest number of the translation of “*ψυχή*” into “life”, a total of 33 verses; KJV has 29 verses and 28 of them are identical to NRSV. In the part of NRSV translated as “life”, KJV differs from NRSV in only five verses that are translated as “live” and “soul” (four times). The number of “*ψυχή*” translated as “life” in RV is totally 21 verses and 20 of them are identical to NRSV. NRSV translates “*ψυχή*” into “life”, corresponding to RV that does not have the same translation in total 13 verses. In these 13 verses, “*ψυχή*” was translated as “soul-life” (11 times) and “soul” (two times). The verses that RV translated “*ψυχή*” as “soul-life” are the part where RV is the most different from the other two *Bible* translations, but there are only 11 verses.

Translations	KJV	RV	NRSV
The number of “life”	29 verses	21 verses	33 verses
Same / different translation	1 verse different		
21 verses KJV and RV are the same	20 verses All Translations are the same		
		“soul” 1 verse	
		“soul-life” 7 verses	
“live” 1 verse		“soul-life” 4 verses	
“soul” 4 verses		“soul” 1 verse	

Figure 2. Corresponding distribution of the same/different of the word “life”.

After comparing the translations of the three English *Bible* versions, it is found that their translations are concentrated in the two words: “soul” and “life”. In 94 verses with the word “*ψυχή*”, in addition to NRSV, KJV and RV translated “*ψυχή*” into “soul” and “life” more than 70 times. Therefore, for English readers, it should not produce ambiguous understanding after reading.

Comparison and Statistics of the Translation of “*ψυχή*” in Chinese *Bible* Translations

The Statistics of the Target Language Words of “*ψυχή*”

In this article, we discuss about the comparison of six Chinese *Bible* translations, including CUV (Chinese Union Version, 和合本), RCUV (revised Chinese Union Version, 和合本修訂版), LZZ (Lu Zhen Zhong *Bible* Translation, 呂振中譯本), SB (Stadium Biblicum Version, 思高譯本), TCVR (Today’s Chinese Version Revised Edition, 現代中文譯本修訂版), and CRV (Recovery Version, in order to distinguish it from the English version, hereinafter referred to as CRV). The translation of CUV basically follows the original sentences style, which is simple, fluent, and literary. After publishing, CUV becomes very popular and it is a

milestone in translated history of *Bible*. The translated rules of CUV are as following: The language of translation should be used around the country and easy to understand for people in different levels of education. The translation should be faithful to original sentences and words with the same tone and rhyme. During the translation process, the translated type of CUV is from word-for-word translation to sense-for-sense translation. Therefore, CUV is the combination of word-for-word translation and sense-for-sense translation.

LZZ is the first translation from Greek and Hebrew direct to Chinese by Chinese people. It is faithful to the original meaning and mostly follows the original structure. As we mentioned before, the translations are word-for-word for helping scholars and priests learn and map words between source language and target language. Hence, compare to CUV, LZZ is much more focused on word-for-word translation (XIAO, 2013, pp. 109-110). SB is the most popular Chinese *Bible* translations in Catholicism, because the usage of words in *Bible* and church is always in the same way. The translation of SB not only follows the word-for-word translation but also notices the sense-for-sense translation.¹⁰

TCVR focuses on communicative and it is not limited by the original structure. It focuses on the logic and connection between each paragraph, rather than uses the same words or sentences. The rule of the translation is making Christian and non-Christian understand easily (ZHAO, 1993, pp. 104-110). Compared to CUV, CRV not only keeps the original structure, pace, and pronunciations of people and locations from CUV, but also translates the original sense from Greek which is not in CUV. In addition, the CRV has another feature. In order to achieve accuracy, if a word is used in different sentences, the translation will use the same word as much as possible.

As shown in Table 2, they are the statistics of the scripture that contains the word “*ψυχή*” in the *New Testament* and the words of the target language.

Table 2

*The Statistics of the Target Language Words of “*ψυχή*” in Chinese Bible Translations*

Item	The target language words	CUV	RCUV	LZZ	SB	TCVR	CRV
1	people (人, rén)	9	8	9	7	9	9
2	population (人口, rén kǒu)	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	heart (心, xīn)	18	15	20	8	9	6
4	life (生命, shēng mìng)	12	11	-	5	24	4
5	life (命, mìng)	13	12	4	3	6	13
6	life (性命, xìng mìng)	9	15	36	23	4	7
7	life (性, xìng)	3	3	-	-	-	-
8	living creatures (活物, huó wù)	2	1	-	1	-	1
9	mean (意, yì)	1	1	1	1	1	-
10	soul (魂, hún)	2	2	1	-	2	39
11	spirit-soul (靈魂, líng hún)	20	13	12	26	8	-
12	self (自己, zìjǐ)	-	1	1	-	1	-
13	breath (氣, qì)	-	1	-	-	-	-
14	mind (心神, xīn shén)	-	1	-	2	-	-
15	mind-spirit (心靈, xīn líng)	-	2	-	5	-	-
16	living beings (有生命之物, yǒu shēng mìng zhī wù)	-	1	-	1	-	-
17	living beings (有性命之物, yǒu xìng mìng zhī wù)	-	-	1	-	-	-

¹⁰ <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E8%81%96%E7%B6%93%E6%80%9D%E9%AB%98%E6%9C%AC> (last visited Jan. 24, 2015).

(Table 2 continued)

Item	The target language words	CUV	RCUV	LZZ	SB	TCVR	CRV
18	living beings (有生生命的生物, yǒu xìng shēng mìng zhī wù)	-	-	1	-	-	-
19	breath (血氣, xuè qì)	-	-	1	-	-	-
20	life (真性命, zhēn xìng mìng)	-	-	4	-	-	-
21	breath (活氣, huó qì)	-	-	1	-	-	-
22	mean (...心...意, ...xīn...yì)	-	-	1	1	1	-
23	spirit (靈, líng)	-	-	-	5	-	-
24	living beings (生靈, shēng líng)	-	-	-	1	-	-
25	living beings (生物, shēng wù)	-	-	-	-	2	1
26	emotion (情, qíng)	-	-	-	-	3	-
27	spiritual natures (靈性, líng xìng)	-	-	-	-	1	-
28	live (生活, shēng huó)	-	-	-	-	1	-
29	breath (氣息, qì xī)	-	-	-	-	1	-
30	ambition (...心...志, ...xīn... zhì)	-	-	-	-	1	-
31	good behavior (好行為, hǎo xíng wéi)	-	-	-	-	1	-
32	mind (心意, xīn yì)	-	-	-	-	-	1
33	soul life (魂生命, hún shēng mìng)	-	-	-	-	-	11
Not translated		4	6	3	4	18	4
Statistics of the target language words		11	16	16	15	18	11

First, it must be noted that the target language is Chinese that these Chinese characters are slightly different in meaning. Hence, it is necessary to first translate the meaning of these Chinese characters in the Chinese context into English and then list Chinese characters and transliteration in order to accurately distinguish the meaning of these target language words.

Secondly, the translation of “*ψυχή*” in each Chinese *Bible* translations has more than 10 target language words. The number of target language words is the least in the CUV and CRV, but there are 11 kinds; the TCVR is the most, reaching 18 kinds. In the choice of target language words, All Chinese *Bible* translations do not focus on the few words just as the English *Bible* translations and the main target language word used by each translation also differs from one another. In addition to CRV using the target language word “soul” for 39 times and LZZ using the target language word “life” for 36 times, other translations do not use much of the same target language word.

Moreover, the disparity between all Chinese *Bible* translations is obviously. Each Chinese *Bible* translation uses different target language word, this might cause ambiguous understanding problems for Chinese readers. The most used target language words in CUV are “heart” (心, xīn) and “spirit-soul” (靈魂, líng hún), however, these two words were reduced in RCUV. The most used target language words in LZZ are “heart” (心, xīn) and “life” (性命, xìng mìng); in SB are “life” (性命, xìng mìng) and “spirit-soul” (靈魂, líng hún); in TCVR are “life” (生命, shēng mìng); in CRV are “soul” (魂, hún). These inconsistencies need further describing and comparing in below.

The Analysis of the Target Language Words of “*ψυχή*”

The target language words with high consistent. In six Chinese *Bible* translations, the target language words with higher consistency are “people” (人, rén), “population” (人口, rén kǒu), “living creatures” (活物, huó wù), “mind” (意, yì), “life” (命, mìng), and “life” (性命, xìng mìng).

“Population” (人口, rén kǒu) and “people” (人, rén). In six Chinese *Bible* translations, “ψυχή” in Revelation 18:13 was translated into “people” (人, rén) or “population” (人口, rén kǒu). This is the correct translation in accordance with the context. There are 10 verses related to “people” (人, rén), in addition to not being translated, most of them were generally translated as “people” (人, rén) in all Chinese *Bible* translations. Only SB translated “ψυχή” into “living beings” (生靈, shēng líng) in 1Peter 3:20.

In the above verses, most of the target language words are “people” (人, rén) and “population” (人口, rén kǒu). However, in the always controversial 1Corinthians 15:45, CUV translated “ψυχή” into “people” (人, rén), SB translated as “living beings” (生靈, shēng líng), RCUV and TCVR translated as “life” (生命, shēng mìng), LZZ translated as “breath” (血氣, Xuèqì), and CRV translated as “soul” (魂, Hún). For readers reading this verse, it is obvious that different translations caused a discrepancy of understanding.

“Living creatures” (活物, huó wù). Concerning the similar translation of “living creatures” (活物, huó wù), there is only apparent in Revelation 8:9 and 16:3. Each Chinese *Bible* translation does not use the same target language word, CUV translated as “living creatures” (活物, huó wù), RCUV and SB translated as “living beings” (有生命之物, yǒu shēng mìng zhī wù) and “living creatures” (活物, huó wù), LZZ translated as “living beings” (有性命之物, yǒu xìng mìng zhī wù) and “living beings” (有生性命的生物, yǒu xìng shēng mìng shēng wù), TCVR translated as “living beings” (生物, shēng wù), and CRV translated as “living creatures” (活物, huó wù) and “living beings” (生物, shēng wù). The meaning of these target language words is very similar, thus readers would not have the ambiguous understanding.

“Mean” (意, yì). The target language word “mean” (意, yì) only appears in Acts 4:32. In addition to CRV translating “ψυχή” into “soul” (魂, hún), the other Chinese *Bible* translations translated as “mean” (意, yì). The advantages of translating “ψυχή” into “mean” (意, yì) is easier to understand the meaning of scripture; but the disadvantages are the meaning of Chinese word “mean” (意, yì) seems to be different from the Greek word “ψυχή”.

“Life” (命, mìng) and “life” (性命, xìng mìng). On a basis of the target language words “life” (命, mìng) and “life” (性命, xìng mìng) in CUV, corresponding the other Chinese *Bible* translations as shown in Figures 3 and 4:

CUV	RCUV	LZZ	SB	TCVR	CRV
life (命, mìng) 13 verses	life (命, mìng) 12 verses	life (命, mìng) 3 verses	life (命, mìng) 2 verses	life (命, mìng) 2 verses	Mak3:4 Luk6:9
				not translated	Rom11:3
		life (性命, xìng mìng) 10 verses	life (性命, xìng mìng) 8 verses	life (命, mìng) 4 verses	Jhn13:37 Jhn13:38 Jhn10:11 Jhn10:15
				life(性命,xìng mìng)	Jhn15:13
				life(生命, shēng mìng)	Jhn10:17 Mak10:45
				shēng mìng) 5 verses	Mat20:28 1Jn3:16
	life(性命,xìng mìng)		not translated		life(性命,xìng mìng) Rom16:4

Figure 3. Corresponding distribution of the target language word “life” (命, mìng).

CUV	RCUV	LZZ	SB	TCVR	CRV	
life (性命, xìng mìng) 9 verses	life (性命, xìng mìng) 8 verses	life (性命, xìng mìng) 9 verses	life (性命, xìng mìng) 8 verses	not translated	life(性命,xìng mìng)	Mat2:20
				2 verses	soul life(魂生命 Hún shēng mìng)	Luk14:26 Rev12:11
				life(生命, shēng mìng) 5 verses	life (性命, xìng mìng) 5 verses	Act15:26 Act27:10 Phl2:30 1Ts2:8
				life (性命, xìng mìng) 2 verses		Act20:24
			life (命, mìng)		life (命, mìng)	Act27:22

Figure 4. Corresponding distribution of the target language word “life” (性命, xìng mìng).

There are very few differences of the target language word “life” (命, mìng) and “life” (性命, xìng mìng) between the Chinese *Bible* translations. Most Chinese *Bible* translations use these two words as the main choice for translation. One by one comparing the context of these 22 verses, it is easy to perceive the “ψυχή” in these verses. Whether it is translated as “life” (命, mìng) or “life” (性命, xìng mìng) is not easy for readers to have the ambiguous understanding, for instance John 10:15, “Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep” and Act 20:24, “But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself...”.¹¹

Analysis of the consistency target language words. After the above comparison and analysis, most the target language words include “people” (人, rén), “population” (人口, rén kǒu), “living creatures” (活物, huó wù), “life” (命, mìng), and “life” (性命, xìng mìng), with higher consistency. Although these target language words are not exactly the same, they do not depart from the original meaning of the Greek word “ψυχή”. The only one with controversy is 1Corinthians 15:45.

The target language words with low consistency.

“Life” (性, xìng), “spirit” (靈, líng), “emotion” (情, qíng), and “soul” (魂, Hún). CUV and RCUV translated “ψυχή” into “life” (性, xìng) in three verses, including Mat 22:37, Mak 12:30, and Luke 10:27. These verses are very similar and most Christians are quite familiar, for instance Mat 22:37, “And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind’”. But it is amazing that in these three verses, each Chinese Bible translation uses different target language words. The target language word in LZZ is “life” (性命, xìng mìng), in SB is “spirit” (靈, líng), in TCVR is “emotion” (情, qíng), and in CRV is “soul” (魂, hún).

In the above verses, after the reader reads “life” (性, xìng) in CUV or “spirit” (靈, líng) in SB, it is almost certain that these two different Chinese words will give the reader different imaginations. And neither “life” (性, xìng) nor “spirit” (靈, líng) is easy to connect with the meaning of Greek word “ψυχή”. In addition, “spirit” (靈, líng) may even be confused with the Greek word “πνεῦμα” (spirit) or another target language “spirit-soul” (靈魂, líng hún) of “ψυχή”. As for “life” (性命, xìng mìng) of LZZ and “emotion” (情, qíng) of TCVR, although they are more readable than the others, the shortcomings are also unable to link with the meaning of the Greek

¹¹ Quoted from English Recovery Version *Bible*.

word “*ψυχή*”. The most special Chinese *Bible* translation is CRV, in order to keep with Greek and English, obviously it is literally translated as “soul” (魂, *hún*) only.

“*Life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*), “*life*” (性命, *xìng mìng*), “*spirit-soul*” (靈魂, *líng hún*) and “*soul life*” (魂生命, *hún shēng mìng*). As shown in Figure 5, corresponding to the 12 verses translating “*ψυχή*” into “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*) in CUV, the other Chinese *Bible* translations show very inconsistent results. RCUV translated as “*life*” (性命, *xìng mìng*) in three of 12 verses, LZZ is fully chosen of translated words, such as “*life*” (性命, *xìng mìng*) and “*life*” (真性命, *zhēn xìng mìng*). SB translated as “*life*” (性命, *xìng mìng*) six times, “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*) three times, and “*spirit-soul*” (靈魂, *líng hún*) three times. TCVR translated as “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*) 11 times and “*live*” (生活, *shēng huó*) one time. CRV translated as “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*) three times and “*soul life*” (魂生命, *hún shēng mìng*) nine times.

CUV	RCUV	LZZ	SB	TCVR	CRV	
life(生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>) 12 verses	life(生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>) 9 verses	life(性命, <i>xìng mìng</i> ; 真性命, <i>zhēn xìng mìng</i>) 3 verses	life(性命, <i>xìng mìng</i>) 3 verses	life(生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>) 4 verses	soul life (魂生命, <i>hún shēng mìng</i>) 3 verses	Mat16:25 Mak8:35 Luk9:24
			life(生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>) 3 verses	live(生活, <i>shēng huó</i>)	life(生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>)	Mat6:25 Luk12:22
					3 verses	Luk12:23
	life(性命, <i>xìng mìng</i>) 3 verses	life(性命, <i>xìng mìng</i>) 9 verses	spirit-soul (靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>) 3 verses	life(生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>) 7 verses	soul life (魂生命, <i>hún shēng mìng</i>) 6 verses	Mat16:26 Mak8:36 Mak8:37
			life(性命, <i>xìng mìng</i>) 3 verses			Mat10:39 Luk17:33 Jhn12:25

Figure 5. Corresponding distribution of the target language word “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*).

Further comparing these 12 verses, the 12 verses can be divided into two categories. The first type is related to the basic necessities of life, including three verses, such as Mat 6:25, Luke 12:22, and Luke 12:23. Of the three verses, five of the six Chinese *Bible* translations are translated as “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*), only LZZ translated as “*life*” (性命, *xìng mìng*). In this part where the target language words are inconsistent, but it is occasionally by using the same target language word “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*) in five Chinese *Bible* translations.

The second type is related to the future of believers, including nine verses, such as Mat 10:39, 16:25, 16:26, Mark 8:35, 8:36, 8:37, Luke 9:24, 17:33, and John 12:25. This type of scripture describes save or lose “*ψυχή*” that not to describe the maintenance or survival of life, but to relate to the soteriology. For example in Mat 10:39, “He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it (KJV)”. If the second type of scripture still uses the same target language word as the first type, it is hard to highlight the difference between these two types of scriptures.

So, the second type scripture in CUV uses “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*) but after the end of these verses added a footnote that is “*life*” (生命, *shēng mìng*) or as “*spirit-soul*” (靈魂, *líng hún*), same below (Mat 16:25, 16:26, Mark 8:35, 8:36, 8:37, Luke 9:24). LZZ also changes the target language word as “*life*” (真性命, *zhēn xìng mìng*) in three verses, such as Mat 16:25, Mark 8:35, and Luke 9:24. The target language word “*spirit-soul*”

(靈魂, *líng hún*) is used in SB, such as Mat 16:26, Mark 8:36 and 8:37. As for the second type scripture in CUV, all use “soul life” (魂生命, *hún shēng mìng*). So CRV is the clearest to distinguish these two types of scriptures in all Chinese Bible translations.

“Heart” (心, *xīn*). As shown in Figure 6, corresponding to the 20 verses translating “*ψυχή*” into “heart” (心, *xīn*) in CUV, all of the Chinese Bible translations show some inconsistent results. Both CUV and LZZ use the target language word “heart” (心, *xīn*) in 18 verses, which is the highest number of the six Chinese Bible translations. In addition, SB only uses it in eight verses, TCVR only uses it in nine verses and CRV only uses it in six verses that is the lowest number. In these 20 verses, all of Chinese Bible translations use the same target language word “heart” (心, *xīn*) only in Eph 6:6.

CUV	RCUV	LZZ	SB	TCVR	CRV	
heart (心, <i>xīn</i>) 18 verses	life(性命) <i>xíng mìng</i>)	life(性命) <i>xíng mìng</i>)	life(性命) <i>xíng mìng</i>)		not translated	2Col 1:23
	mind-spirit (心靈, <i>xīn líng</i>) 2 verses	heart (心, <i>xīn</i>) 16 verses	mind-spirit (心靈, <i>xīn líng</i>)	not translated	soul (魂, <i>hún</i>)	1Pe 1:22
			spirit-soul(靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>) 3 verses	3 verses	not translated	Mat 11:29
				heart (心, <i>xīn</i>) 2 verses		Luk 1:46 2Pe 2:8
			mind-spirit (心靈, <i>xīn líng</i>) 2 verses	not translated	soul (魂, <i>hún</i>) 7 verses	Mat12:18 Mat26:38 Mak 14:34 Luk2:34~35 Jhn 12:27
			mind (心神, <i>xīnshēn</i>)	heart (心, <i>xīn</i>) 4 verses		
	heart (心, <i>xīn</i>) 15 verses		heart (心, <i>xīn</i>) 7 verses	not translated	mean (...心...意 ...Xīn...yì)	Act 14:2
				heart (心, <i>xīn</i>)	soul (魂, <i>hún</i>)	Act 14:22
				not translated		Act 15:24
				heart (心, <i>xīn</i>)	heart (心, <i>xīn</i>) 5 verses	Eph 6:6
				mean (...心...意 ...Xīn...yì) 2 verses		Col 3:23
				not translated		Heb 12:3 Heb 10:38
		mean (...心...意 ...Xīn...yì)	mean (...心...意 ...Xīn...yì)	heart (心, <i>xīn</i>)	soul (魂, <i>hún</i>)	Phi 1:27
not translated 2 verses	not translated 2 verses	heart(心, <i>xīn</i>) 2 verses	heart (心, <i>xīn</i>)	not translated	2 verses	Rev 18:14
			mind (心神, <i>xīnshēn</i>)	2 verses	heart(心, <i>xīn</i>)	Jhn 10:24

Figure 6. Corresponding distribution of the target language word “heart” (心, *xīn*).

In these 20 verses, observing the context of the context, it is no doubt that using “heart” (心, *xīn*) is more fluent than other target language words. However, the disadvantage of using “heart” (心, *xīn*) is that it is confused with the other Greek word “*καρδιά*” in the *New Testament*. The Greek word “*καρδιά*” also means “heart”. For example in CUV, “*καρδιά*” is translated as “heart” (心, *xīn*) in John 14:1; but “*ψυχή*” is also translated as “heart” (心, *xīn*) in John 12:27. In the same verses, there is “*καρδιά*” and “*ψυχή*” appearing at the same time, such as Mat 11:29 in CUV, where the word “*καρδιά*” was translated as “heart” (心, *xīn*) but the word “*ψυχή*” was also translated as “heart” (心, *xīn*).

Additionally, one of the most important verses needs discussing is Heb 4:12. Because in this verse, Simultaneously there are three Greek words: “*ψυχή*”, “*πνευμα*” (this Greek word means “spirit”), and “*καρδιά*”. These three Greek words were translated as “soul” (魂, *hún*), “spirit” (靈, *líng*), and “heart” (心, *xīn*) in CUV.

Therefore, the translation of this verse is quite accurate (or can also say that the translator has no choice). In the six Chinese *Bible* translations, only CRV has translated “ $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ” into “soul” (魂, *hún*) in order to avoid deviation from the original meaning or being confused with other Greek words.¹²

All in all, in the verse where the word “ $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ” is translated as “heart” (心, *xīn*), it will cause trouble for Chinese readers in reading. Because different Chinese *Bible* translations use different target language words and translating it as “heart” (心, *xīn*) will be confused with the other Greek word “ $\kappaαρδία$ ”. Unless the reader has the ability to read the Greek, it will be difficult to avoid ambiguous understanding.

“Spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*). As shown in Figure 7, corresponding to the 20 verses translating “ $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ” into “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) in CUV, all of the Chinese *Bible* translations show some inconsistent results. RCUV uses the target language “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) in 13 verses, LZZ uses it in 12 verses, SB uses it in 18 verses, TCVR uses it in eight verses, but CRV does not use it. The most special Chinese *Bible* translation is CRV that in addition to two verses not translated, all of “ $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ” were translated into “soul” (魂, *hún*).

CUV	RCUV	LZZ	SB	TCVR	CRV	
spirit-soul (靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>) 20 verses	self (自己, <i>zìjǐ</i>) people (人, <i>rén</i>)	self (自己, <i>zìjǐ</i>) people (人, <i>rén</i>)	spirit-soul (靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>)	self (自己, <i>zìjǐ</i>) people (人, <i>rén</i>)		Luk 12:19
	life (性命, <i>xìng mìng</i>) 2 verses	life (命, <i>mìng</i>) life (真性命, <i>zhēn xìng mìng</i>)		life (生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>)		Luk 12:20
	breath (氣, <i>qì</i>)	breath (活氣, <i>huó qì</i>)		life (性命, <i>xìng mìng</i>)		Luk 21:19
	life (生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>)	life (性命, <i>xìng mìng</i>)		breath (氣息, <i>qì xī</i>)		Act 20:10
	mind (心神, <i>xīn shén</i>)		spirit (靈, <i>líng</i>)	not translated		Heb 10:39
				spiritual natures (靈性, <i>líng xìng</i>)		3Jn 2
	spirit-soul (靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>) 13 verses	spirit-soul (靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>) 12 verses	spirit-soul (靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>) total 18 verses			1 Pe 2:25
				spirit-soul (靈魂, <i>líng hún</i>) 8 verses	soul (魂, <i>hún</i>) 18 verses	Mat 10:28
						Heb 13:17
						Jas 5:20
						1Pe 1:9
						1Pe 2:11
						Rev 6:9
						Rev 20:4
				life (生命, <i>shēng mìng</i>)		Heb 6:19
				not translated		Act 2:27
				good behavior (好行為, <i>hǎo xíng wéi</i>)		1Pe 4:19
				not translated		Jas 1:21
				3 verses		2Col 12:15
	not translated	2 verses	not translated	not translated	2 verses	Act 2:31

Figure 7. Corresponding distribution of the target language word “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*).

The concepts of soul ($\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$) and spirit ($\piνευμα$) are separated in Christian early history. Every creature has the soul, but only human has spirit. However, by the influence of Greek philosophy, after Middle Ages the human is separated into two parts, soul and body (XU & TAO, 2014, p. 122). After that, the concepts of soul and spirit are combined. Until 18th century, some of German and United Kingdom theologians brought back the concept of Tritheism and considered that soul and spirit should be separated. Indeed, it has been argued for

¹² A Brief of The Holy *Bible* Recovery Version.

a long time whether soul and spirit are separate or not. This concept also refers to the argument of anthropology; whether human is built up by Tritheism or Dualism (YU, 2008, pp. 3-4). Hence, when a translator selects “soul” as the target language word, it shows up the position in anthropology.

Anthropology is not the topic in this article. This article discusses whether the translation will cause ambiguity or not. As using “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) as a translation, it is ambiguous, because, in the *New Testament*, “ψυχή” and “πνευμα” are translated into the same word in Chinese *Bible* translations, such as “spirit” (靈, *líng*), “soul” (魂, *hún*), or “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*). Does the Chinese word “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) refer to soul (ψυχή) or spirit (πνευμα)? It is very clear in the Greek and in English *Bible* translations. However, in Chinese *Bible* translation, soul (ψυχή) and spirit (πνευμα) confuse people in same degree. In CUV, “ψυχή” is often translated into “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) and “πνευμα” is also translated into “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*), but sometimes even “soul” (魂, *hún*) (YU, 2008, pp. 3-4). For example in CUV, “πνευμα” (spirit) was translated as “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) in Luke 23:46; and “πνευμα” (spirit) was translated as “soul” (魂, *hún*) in Luke 24:37.

In the most Chinese *Bible* translations, most of them use “soul” (魂, *hún*) as the target language word, but only CRV does not use “soul” (魂, *hún*) completely. In addition to the “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*), most of them use different target language words, however, only CRV uses “soul” (魂, *hún*) constantly. Despite using soul might not be fluent in some sentences in reading, but it completely identifies “ψυχή” (soul) and “πνευμα” (spirit). Therefore, there is no rule in using the target language words: “spirit” (靈, *líng*), “soul” (魂, *hún*), and “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*). It truly causes a huge ambiguity, and also, makes readers misunderstand. Obviously, the comprehension of the same verse is extremely different in Chinese and English *Bible* translations.

“Soul” (魂, *hún*) in very few cases—“uniform” in “inconsistency”. Concerning the translation of “soul”, there are two points in these six Chinese *Bible* translations. First, except in CRV, the using frequency of “soul” (魂, *hún*) in the other Chinese *Bible* translation is low. Second, the most Chinese *Bible* translations both use the target language word “soul” (魂, *hún*) in two verses: 1Ts 5:23 and Heb 4:12. “ψυχή” is translated into “soul” (魂, *hún*) in CUV, RCUV, TCVR, and CRV.

The main reason that “ψυχή” must be translated into “soul” (魂, *hún*) in 1Ts 5:23 and Heb 4:12 might be that the translator cannot (or very difficult) choose other words. Both Greek words “ψυχή” (soul) and “πνευμα” (spirit) appear in 1Ts 5:23. Moreover, “ψυχή” (soul), “πνευμα” (spirit), and “καρδία” (heart) appear in Heb 4:12. Therefore, the translator has no choice to use other words.

When translating “ψυχή” (soul) and other related words such as “πνευμα” (spirit), there is a basic problem that needs to be handled. There are a lot of verses in the *New Testament* where “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) can represent “ψυχή” (soul) and “πνευμα” (spirit), or “spirit” (靈, *líng*) and “soul” (魂, *hún*) are exchangeable, or “πνευμα” (spirit) and “ψυχή” (soul) can be translated into “heart” (心, *xīn*) for wonderful readability and it might be harmless. However, in many verses, “ψυχή” (soul) and “πνευμα” (spirit) cannot be represented by “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*), or “ψυχή” (soul) and “πνευμα” (spirit) are unchangeable (XU & TAO, 2014, p. 127). *Bible* has already separated “ψυχή” (soul) and “πνευμα” (spirit) and it is very clear in 1Ts 5:23 and Heb 4:12. However, in all Chinese *Bible* translations, it seems that only CRV has noticed this problem. CRV did not use the target language word of “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) at all.

In addition, the target language word of “*ψυχή*” needs to be not only in line with 1Ts 5:23 and Heb 4:12, but also in line with other verses with “*ψυχή*”. From this point, “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) is not a good target language word. Because when we back to the translated rule of consistency, the same words (especially for the words which repeat as the proper noun or with special meaning) should be translated into a uniform word for clarifying the concept and link or logic between some specific words. Because the soul involves Christian theology, especially in the anthropology and the soteriology, examining the translation of “*ψυχή*” under the *New Testament* and Christian theology, only “soul” (魂, *hún*) is an “unhindered”¹³ target language word. Although translating into only one word “soul” (魂, *hún*) might be abstract, difficult to understand, or reduce the readability, there is no sense lost, or misleading original meaning, and reducing the probability of comprehension ambiguity. Hence, in the most Chinese *Bible* translations, the Greek word “*ψυχή*” was translated into “soul” (魂, *hún*) in 1Ts 5:23 and Heb 4:12, which is the most reasonable choice.

The Analysis of the target language words with low consistency. In the inconsistency parts of target language words, these Chinese *Bible* translations generally use too much kind of target language words, or several Greek words mapping to the same target language word, or one Greek word mapping to several target language words. In CUV, there are not many target language words, but the main problem is that several Greek words map to one target language word or using several target language words maps to one Greek word. Compared to other Chinese *Bible* translations, RCUV and TCVR are published relatively late and they also have similar problems with CUV and use too many translated words more than CUV. These problems are caused by the translated strategy. For example, the translated strategy of TCVR is according to the dynamic-equivalent of Eugene A. Nida. The main propose of this strategy is making unbelievers easy to understand and can read fluently.¹⁴ SB has the same problem with RCUV and TCVR, target language words are too many and special, such as “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*, 26 times), “mind” (心神, *xīnshén*, two times), “mind-spirit” (心靈, *xīnlíng*, five times), and “spirit” (靈, *líng*, five times). By comparing the target language words of “*ψυχή*” in these Chinese *Bible* translations, it shows out the tendency of the literaturization of the Chinese *Bible* translation which some scholars have pointed out (REN, 2003, p. 90).

LZZ and CRV are other kinds of translation which emphasizes on accuracy. Although LZZ has a lot of different kind of translated words, but the problem of consistency in target language words is relatively small. The Greek word “*ψυχή*” in LZZ is translated into “life” (性命, *xìng mìng*, 36 times) and “heart” (心, *xīn*, 20 times). This result is because of the rule of keeping original meaning, original structure, and word consistency (XIAO, 2013, p. 111).

Finally, we need to discuss CRV in depth. CRV has the least target language words, and the Greek word “*ψυχή*” is mostly translated into “soul” (魂, *hún*, 39 times). In 1Ts 5:23 and Heb 4:12 and all other verses with “*ψυχή*” (in the other translations is translated into “spirit-soul” (靈魂, *líng hún*) or “heart” (心, *xīn*), “soul” (魂, *hún*) is wildly used. There are several advantages: First, it keeps the consistency of translation. Second, it can easily to identify “*ψυχή*”, “*πνευμα*”, and “*καρδιά*” in original verses. But the disadvantage is that the readability is decreased compared to other Chinese *Bible* translations and might not easy to understand. Therefore, in CRV, many important verses with “spirit” (靈, *líng*) or “soul” (魂, *hún*) usually have a footnote.

¹³ Act 28:31.

¹⁴ TCV mentioned in the preface that the *Bible* is a highly respected great literary work.

Conclusion

“*ψυχή*” Cannot Be Accurately Understand in All *Bible* Translations

Through the comparison and statistical analysis of the aforementioned three English *Bible* translations and the six Chinese *Bible* translations, the situation that the Greek word “*ψυχή*” was translated into different meanings is more serious in the Chinese translations; and these different translations adopted for “*ψυχή*” have caused significant ambiguity to the readers. This problem may not only cause the Chinese readers to interpret this word according to their own understanding, but also bring in discrepancy into the understanding of the word “*ψυχή*” between the Chinese and English readers of the *Bible*.

Word-for-Word Translation Is the Proper Way for the Proper Noun or Vocabulary With Special Meaning

The historical background of Christianity in China when the Chinese Union Version (CUV) of the *Bible* was translated is quite different to the spreading of Christianity today in China. Whether it was to make the translation more acceptable by the readers or it was affected by culture, tradition, or language, the translators use different target language word of “*ψυχή*” and then affect the readers’ understanding of “*ψυχή*”. The British translation theoretician Peter Newmark pointed out, Eugene A. Nida considered many metaphors in *Bible* which are not understandable to the readers, and these metaphors need to be all deleted, if we remove all of them, this will inevitably cause the loss of meanings (TAN, 2002, pp. 6-7). In the same principle, if we do not consider whether the original text in the *Bible* contains an important meaning, then it will be lost in translation.

With the increasing history of Christianity in the Chinese-speaking world, the wide spreading of Christianity and the theological terminology, the improved education quality, and the advancement of *Bible*-study software, how to accurately translate the *Bible* has become an increasingly important topic. Famous Chinese modern writer Lu Xun (鲁迅) in his book *Communications Regarding Translation* (關於翻譯的通信) mentioned that the purpose of translation is not only to input new contents but to bring in new expressions. Because Chinese character is rather vague in concept, the grammatical inaccuracy leads to the inaccuracy in expression. Therefore, in his opinion, the Chinese language should import the large number of new ingredients, including the Westernized grammatical structure. The moderate Westernization of the Chinese language deserves recognition, as it indeed helps to express the accurate, profound, and complex thoughts (Modern Literature Editing Room, 1981, p. 382).

The primary goal of any translation work is to accurately express the meaning of the original text. From the readers’ point of view, it is almost impossible to connect five to six different Chinese words to one Greek word. Apparently, the diverse translations of “*ψυχή*” have brought in the significant influence on *Bible* reading of the Chinese readers and their understanding of the word “*ψυχή*”. Hence, when the translators are facing the choice of being faithful to the original text or being faithful to the readers, the better solution is to take the safer approach of direct translation as the basic principle and then add footnotes for further explanation. Another alternative to keep the consistency of translation is to at least develop several guidelines of translation or options for “*ψυχή*” based on its original meaning and the scriptural context.

The Advantages of Word-for-Word Translation for Important Vocabulary and of Maintaining the Consistency of Target Language Words

Responding to the many divergent views on “spirit-soul”, “spirit”, “soul”, and “heart” in the anthropology of Christian theology, the simplest way is to go directly back to the original meaning from Greek. Martin

Luther proposed the principle of biblical self-explanation and he believed that although there are certain words that may not be clear in the *Bible*, but the original text of the *Bible* itself has a meaning that can be learned from itself (CUI & SU, 2008, p. 117). When translators are faced with the choice of readability and accuracy, they should adopt a more reliable word-for-word translation. Although the result of word-for-word translation may be not easy to understand, for example, many words in CUV are also hard to understand at the beginning. But after a period of time, it is also used by popularity. There are many common expressions today that do not come from ancient Chinese but from translation.

From the aspect of the word-for-word translation of important vocabulary and maintaining the consistency of target language words, CRV translated “*ψυχή*” into “soul” (魂, *hún*) in the most of related verses, which is a good choice, because this choice has played a role in returning to the meaning of the original text. In the context of Chinese, for general readers or even believers, the concept of “spirit” (靈, *líng*), “soul” (魂, *hún*), and “heart” (心, *xīn*) seems to be still vague. Therefore, it is worthwhile to distinguish these words appropriately. Furthermore, translating “*ψυχή*” into “soul” (魂, *hún*) is useful to clarify the concepts of “*ψυχή*” (soul), “*πνεῦμα*”(spirit), or “*καρδία*”(heart) and helps Chinese Christians read the *Bible* in more precise concepts.

Bible translation is an important item in translation history that cannot be ignored. Because in different times and regions, how to maintain accuracy and readability at the same time has always been a challenge for translators. Especially in the tide of globalization today, differences in translation between different *Bible* translations and whether these differences will cause ambiguity in understanding have gradually become an important issue. How *Bible* translation can pursue the continuous improvement to reach the perfection is still the goal that *Bible* translators should strive for.

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