

# **Examining Passages with Differing Equivalence in The Finnish Translation of Gregory Koukl's *Tactics***

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In this thesis, I examine and compare translated passages between Gregory Koukl's book *Tactics* and its Finnish translation *Taktinen viisaus*. The equivalence of the examined passages differs from the general equivalence between the book and its translation. The book discusses Christian themes, meaning that the thesis belongs to the field of religious translation.

The aim of the thesis is to establish how the translator has adapted the translation into the Finnish culture for the benefit of the Finnish readers. I have conducted this by reading the original book and the translation side by side, searching for passages that include adaptations made by the translator. Then I discuss 15 passages that demonstrate the adaptations.

The analysis shows that the translator has mostly preferred a word-for-word translation style and refrained from making clear changes and adaptations to the text. He has made some adaptations when translating realia and in some other places where the changes have improved the text. The translation includes passages where no adaptations have been made even though it would have benefited the readers. The results of the thesis are only applicable to the translation in question, and it would be beneficial to conduct similar studies into the translations of other religious books in the future.

**Key words:** Religious Translation, Equivalence, Comparison.

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## 1 Introduction

Having differing world views easily leads to conflict with family, friends, and other people. English speakers can find tactics for averting such conflicts for example in Gregory Koukl's book *Tactics* (2009 & 2019). The tactics have recently become available to Finnish speakers as well, as the book has been translated into Finnish by J. J. Aleksi Markkanen (Taktinen viisaus, 2024). In this thesis, I examine and compare the Finnish translation to the original book. *Tactics* is a handbook and guide for Christians who would like to discuss their world view and convictions with other people in a respectful and nonconfrontational way. The Finnish translation of the book is compelling research material because the religious culture in the United States, where the book was originally written, is quite different compared to the religious culture in Finland. The differences have led me to wonder whether they have affected the Finnish translation. Another factor that makes the subject interesting is that research into religious translation mostly focuses on sacred texts, such as the Bible or the Quran, even though a plethora of other kinds of religious texts exist as well. Even less researched are translations of such texts into Finnish.

In this thesis, I examine and compare short passages from the original English text, ranging from a sentence to a paragraph, with the corresponding part in the Finnish translation. I have chosen passages where the type of equivalence between the source text and the translation differs from the type of equivalence found elsewhere in the translation, or more simply, where the translation is not as literal and word-for-word as it mostly is. Based on my findings, I claim that the translator has mostly chosen not to adapt the translation into the Finnish culture, even in places where it could have been beneficial for the Finnish readership.

I begin by explaining the terms equivalence and realia, and some of the differences in religious culture between the USA and Finland. I then introduce my material, also explaining how comparison can be used as a research method in translation studies, before analysing specific passages. The aim of the analysis is to establish through comparison whether specific passages have been adapted to better suit the needs of the Finnish readership. Finally, I conclude the thesis by summarising the analysis results.

## 2 Theory

This section introduces the theoretical concepts and background of this thesis. In subsection 2.1, I discuss the term *equivalence*. It is a central term in my thesis and the concept that my analysis is based on. In subsection 2.2, I explain the term *realia*. In addition to equivalence, this term is central to my thesis because I will discuss the translation of realia in the analysis section. In subsection 2.3, I discuss the role of religion in the USA and Finland, as well as the differences in religious discourse between the two countries. The claim that such differences exist is important for my thesis because the need for a translator to change the text often arises from cultural differences. I will briefly discuss some sources showing this to establish a foundation for the thesis. In subsection 2.4, I introduce a sub-field of translation studies called religious translation along with some previous research in the field. This is important because my thesis also belongs to the field of religious translation.

### 2.1 Equivalence

Equivalence is a term and concept in translation studies, the origins of which are “as old as translation practice itself” (Leal 2012, 39). Equivalence encompasses a multitude of different types of typologies and divisions. There are also other, drastically different ways of understanding equivalence. Firstly, there are many binary equivalence typologies proposed for example by Eugene Nida (1964, 159), Peter Newmark (1981 & 1991), and Juliane House (2005). These typologies include two categories and make a similar distinction, though with slightly different focus, between literal, source language oriented equivalence and freer, target language oriented equivalence. Secondly, there are equivalence typologies with more than two categories, for example by Werner Koller (2001, 187). His typology includes five types of equivalence and considers aspects such as the target audience, textual norms, extralinguistic context, and some specific language characteristics such as figures of speech. Thirdly, equivalence has been approached with less exact methods than in the typologies mentioned above (Leal 2012, 44). For example, some see equivalence as such a broad term that it has lost much of its meaning. An example of this is Mona Baker who claims to use the term equivalence mostly because it is well known, not because of its theoretical utility (Baker 2011, 5).

For the purposes of this thesis, I will use a simple binary typology proposed by Peter Newmark (1981 & 1991). In his typology, he divides translation strategies into two

categories, *communicative translation* and *semantic translation* (Newmark 1981, 38–54). Newmark himself refrains from using the term equivalence when discussing his typology and even sees the quest to define equivalence as redundant, or “fruitless” (Newmark 1991, 3). However, his typology is similar to an earlier one proposed by Nida, which includes two categories named *dynamic equivalence* and *formal equivalence* (Nida 1964, 159). Thus, it seems that Newmark’s theory also refers to equivalence. When referring to Newmark’s typology in this thesis, I will also use the terms *communicative equivalence* and *semantic equivalence*.

A translation with high semantic equivalence focuses on the meaning of the source text and is quite literally translated (Newmark 1991, 11–13). This causes a bias towards the source language and leaves no room for the translator to make improvements (ibid.). Translations produced using such a strategy will inevitably suffer from the loss of some meaning (ibid.). A translation with high communicative equivalence, on the other hand, focuses on the message and the readers and is translated more freely (ibid.). Still, it remains faithful to the original, being however more biased towards the target language, and gives the translator the possibility to improve the original work for the benefit of the readers (ibid.). Thus, a translation where such a strategy is used might even be better than the original (ibid.). Communicative and semantic translation can often coincide with one another, and it is wrong to see them as two opposing ends of one spectrum (Newmark 1991, 10). It is also important to note that neither type of translation should be considered inherently better than the other, and both types have their uses depending on the situation.

## 2.2 Realia

Another term important for my analysis is realia. It is important because many of the examples I will analyse include realia. According to Leppihalme (2011, 126), realia are words or phrases that reference specific culture-bound notions. They may be, for example, names of objects, companies, or places, or other phrases that reference something specific to the culture in question. Usually when discussing translations, “references to realia are nouns or noun phrases without precise target-language equivalents” (ibid.). This means that they pose a challenge for translators and often lead them to make difficult choices requiring careful consideration.

In this thesis, I will discuss realia using a categorisation of seven realia translation strategies proposed by Leppihalme (2011, 129). The seven strategies are “(1) direct transfer of the

source text word” (Leppihalme 2011, 129), “(2) calque, or a word-by-word translation resulting in a target-language neologism” (ibid.), “(3) cultural adaptation” (ibid.), “(4) superordinate term” (ibid.), “(5) explicitation” (ibid.), “(6) addition of a text-external [...] explanation, as in a footnote or glossary” (ibid.), and “(7) omission of the realia item altogether” (ibid.). Strategies (1) and (2) result in a high level of semantic equivalence, as both preserving the foreign-language realia and using a word-by-word translation are literal translation strategies that have a bias towards the source language. Strategies (1) and (2) can also sometimes result in a high level of communicative equivalence if a direct translation is natural in the target language. Strategies (3-7) will usually result in a low level of semantic equivalence. They are freer translation strategies that require changing, adding, or removing something for the benefit of the translation’s target audience, thus resulting in a high level of communicative equivalence. These strategies also let the translator to improve the text as is typical for communicative translation. I will further discuss some of the strategies in the analysis section. Only strategies (3–5) will be included in greater detail, as those are the only strategies used in my example passages.

### **2.3 Religion in Finnish and American societies**

The role of religion in Finnish society is quite different to the role of religion in American society. This is relevant for my thesis because the translation I examine brings the book from the American religious sphere into the Finnish religious sphere, and the differences potentially affect the translation. In Finland, there is only one especially notable religious body, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, as around 3.6 million or 63.5 % of all Finns are members of the church (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, 2024). In the United States there is no one religious body with such a strong position in society, but there are a multitude of significant religious bodies, mostly churches of various Christian denominations.

Another difference is that in the US religion is closely linked with politics and, according to David Congdon (2024, 11), strong assertions regarding their relation, such as that Bible-believing Christians could only vote Republican, are becoming more common in the polarized American society. In Finland, religion has a much smaller influence on societal and political discourse by comparison. The relationship of church and societal discourse in Finland is quite complex (Sakaranaho, Pesonen and Haapakoski, 2002). For example, non-Christian press in Finland is usually only interested in the opinions of the church regarding topical issues and not interested in their religious views or gatherings (Sakaranaho, Pesonen and Haapakoski

2002, 10–11). News articles are also often critical towards the church and its actions, at least in the leading Finnish newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* (Sakaranaho, Pesonen and Haapakoski 2002, 70–71).

## 2.4 Religious translation

This thesis belongs in part to the field of religious translation, which is a branch of translation studies that studies the translation of religious texts. Anne O'Connor argues that “[i]n translation studies and in religious studies, canonical texts have long been the centre of attention” (2019, 441). It is true that most studies in this field focus on the translation of texts that are considered sacred or canonical in some religion, such as the Bible in Christianity or the Quran in Islam. Sacred texts provide plentiful material to study because they are frequently translated. Even the written standards of some languages have been developed in order to translate the Bible into the language. This has also made early Bible translations an important research subject in many languages, such as Finnish (Kela 2013, 396). Sacred texts are that central that some works in the field of religious translation do not even consider or mention the possibility of including other types of religious texts (cf. Naudé 2010). Little research has been conducted on younger or even contemporary religious texts, even though they would also provide plenty of material for such studies.

Still, some research on such texts has been conducted. For example, O'Connor discusses the effects that printed translations of non-sacred popular religious texts had on society and popular culture in 19th-century Ireland (O'Connor 2019). Another example of researching non-sacred religious translation is Dadui Yao's examination of how Christian themes in Shakespeare's works have been translated into Chinese by 20th-century Christian missionaries (Yao 2019). He focuses on how mentions of Christianity and Christian values and themes have been changed in the translation process to better suit the Chinese culture as well as the goals of the translator. These articles show that religious translation can be studied even without studying sacred texts, and that is also what I aim to accomplish in this thesis.

### 3 Method

In this thesis, I analyse passages through comparison. Comparison is a method that is widely used in the field of translation studies. In his article, Kujamäki (2013) argues that a translator tries to find expressions in the target language that are in some way equivalent to the original expressions, and that this can be done through comparison. He also says that similar comparison-based analysis methods can be used when studying translations and their equivalence, and that there are multiple ways to use these methods. Here, I use the binary division by Newmark as I examine through comparison whether various cultural aspects affect the ways in which the passages are equivalent with each other.

Throughout most of *Tactics* and its Finnish translation *Taktinen viisaus*, the semantic equivalence between them is extremely high. In practice, this means that the translation is literal and mostly translated word-for-word. Thus, for the purposes of the analysis I have chosen passages where the semantic equivalence is significantly lower than in most passages in the translation, and where the communicative equivalence is higher, respectively. To elaborate, in the chosen passages the translator has for some reason deviated from his general, quite literal, semantic translation style, and made notable changes to the text.

Now that the basis for my method has been established, I will explain how I have performed this in practice. I have read the original book and the Finnish translation side by side, paragraph by paragraph, occasionally even sentence by sentence, and searched for passages where either something has been elaborated, added to, or removed from the translation, or where the translation of a passage in some other way clearly is more communicative and less semantic when compared to other parts of the text. I have also chosen passages where the cultural differences seem to have no visible effect on the translation, even though it might have been beneficial for the Finnish readership. In total, I have collected 42 passages. From these, I have chosen the 15 most relevant and interesting passages to analyse in this thesis. I have divided the chosen passages into three categories to make discussing them more manageable and structural. The categories are:

1. Replaced realia: passages where specifically American realia, such as a term or a proper noun, has been replaced by a Finnish counterpart or explained in greater detail.
2. Omissions and other changes: other passages where the translator has either added, changed or removed something from the original.

3. Unchanged passages: passages where the translator has not made an adaptation for the benefit of Finnish readers, even though it would have been beneficial.

I will discuss the chosen examples one category at a time, especially focusing on examples where the differences in religious culture between the US and Finland seem to have affected the translator's choices in some way.

It is important to notice that the equivalence of a passage in comparison to other passages can easily be discussed only in the context of a specific text and its translation, as different translations of different works have been conducted in varying ways and for multiple purposes. Kujamäki clarifies this when discussing the task of a translator (Kujamäki 2013, 359-377). He introduces multiple viewpoints for examining the role of a translator, including the production of equivalent expressions, the production of an equivalent translation, and the production of a translation best suited for its purpose. Thus, depending on the nature of the source text, the purpose of the translation and the translator's choices, the nature of equivalence between texts will vary significantly in different contexts. This means that the results of my analysis are relevant for the translation in question, but it should not be assumed that they apply to any other translation, even ones that are similar in some aspect. Even other translations by the same translator, as well as translations of the same work to other languages, could greatly differ from *Taktinen viisaus* in how they are translated and what kind of equivalence can be found in the translation. Next, I will advance to describing and analysing the passages I have chosen for the analysis.

## 4 Analysis

In the Finnish translation of *Tactics*, the translator has extremely faithfully retained the paragraph structure and even the sentence structure of the original and also preferred to translate the meanings word for word wherever possible. Thus, the semantic equivalence between the texts is high and easy to notice. There are only relatively few places where the equivalence differs from this norm, becoming more communicative. Even in these places, the differences are usually quite limited, meaning that most of the passages I will examine are still quite similar to each other, even when I highlight them because of a specific change or difference. For this reason, I will also analyse some passages where the translator has decided to use a word-for-word translation, but where I find that changing the text to better suit the Finnish culture would have been beneficial for the Finnish target audience.

As I explained in the method section, I have divided my findings into three categories to aid with the analysis. I will examine the examples one category at a time, and after that I will draw the conclusions based on the whole analysis. Because all the examples come from only two books, one of which is a translation of the other, and I will frequently cite them in the form of the examples, I have decided to simplify the references in the text. In the analysis section, I will use the abbreviations *T* to refer to *Tactics* (2019), and *Tv* to refer to *Taktinen viisaus* (2024).

### 4.1 Replaced Realia

The first category consists of passages where realia, short expressions pertaining to the American culture, have been either replaced with a Finnish counterpart or explained in greater detail for the benefit of the Finnish audience. The book includes many examples of such expressions that are noticeably American in nature and unfamiliar to most Finns. The expressions include names of American newspapers, companies, institutions, and cities, as well as terms referring to American football, for example. I evaluate how the expressions have been translated into Finnish by categorising them using the realia translation strategies proposed by Leppihalme (2011). The strategies that my examples belong to are “(3) cultural adaptation” (Leppihalme 2011), “(4) superordinate term” (ibid.), and “(5) explicitation” (ibid.). As I stated in the theory section, strategies (1) and (2) usually result in high semantic equivalence. Because I have selected passages where the semantic equivalence is lower than normal, the chosen passages include no examples of these strategies. Strategies (6) and (7)

have hardly ever been used by the translator, meaning that the passages also include no examples of them. I will explain strategies (3–5) in greater detail as I discuss the examples.

#### 4.1.1 Cultural Adaptation

In places where the specific entity in question is not important, the translator has often replaced the American name or term with a similar Finnish name or term. This strategy is called cultural adaptation (Leppihalme 2011) and is frequently used in *Taktinen viisaus*. Here is an example of this strategy where the name of an American newspaper was translated with the name of a Finnish newspaper.

- (1) This would be like trying to secretly remove a paragraph from all copies of yesterday's *New York Times*. (T, 66; emphasis in the original)

Tempu olisi samanlainen kuin yrittää poistaa salaa yksi tekstikappale kaikista eilisen *Hesareista*. (Tv, 67; emphasis in the original)

In this example, the mention of the American newspaper *The New York Times* has been replaced with a mention of an important Finnish newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*, as in this passage, changing the newspaper in question has no effect on the point being made. Here, Koukl is making the point that after publishing a newspaper or any text with wide distribution, it is impossible to remove anything from it anymore because there are already a huge number of copies in circulation. Thus, the cultural adaptation strategy works because the point being made is not dependent on a specific newspaper.

The following two examples illustrate the same phenomenon.

- (2) The statement, “All *English* statements are false” is about all *English* sentences, including itself. (T, 144; emphases added)

Esimerkiksi lause “kaikki *suomenkieliset* lauseet ovat valheita” koskee kaikkia *suomenkielisiä* lauseita, myös itseään. (Tv, 148–149; emphases added)

In example (2), the language name *English* has been replaced with the word *suomenkielinen*, meaning Finnish-language. This is perhaps a special case because usually the translator may choose between multiple possible translation strategies, but here the translation would not have remained meaningful had some other strategy been used instead of cultural adaptation, as a sentence written in the Finnish language would not refer to itself if it only mentioned English-language sentences. This is a great example of a situation where there cannot exist a

high level of both semantic and communicative equivalence and preserving communicative equivalence is the better choice.

The final example of cultural adaptation is varied and includes multiple American city names replaced with names of Finnish cities:

- (3) If you were visiting *Los Angeles* and wanted to go to *Santa Barbara* up the coast, someone might draw a map to guide you to your destination. If, however, you followed the instructions very carefully *and took the highway they suggested* but found yourself in *Riverside*, on your way to *the desert*, you would know something was wrong with the route you were given. [...] I doubt you would try to find your way around *New York* using a map of *Chicago*. (T, 178; emphases added)

Jos olisit käymässä *Turussa* ja haluaisit päästä ylempänä rannikolla sijaitsevaan *Poriin*, joku voisi piirtää kartan opastaakseen sinut määränpäähän. Mutta jos seuraisit ohjeita huolellisesti ja huomaisit olevasi *sisämaassa Tampereella*, tietäisit saaneesi jollain lailla vialliset ohjeet. [...] Epäilen, ettet yrittäisi suunnistaa *Helsingissä Oulun* karttaa käyttäen. (Tv, 187; emphases added)

This closely resembles example (1), as in both cases, Koukl uses an imaginary example to illustrate a point totally unrelated to the example's contents. Here, he makes the point that for effective travel, you need a map that matches reality. He then relates that to the cruciality of having a world view that matches reality. Thus, the illustration is not tied to particular cities, and the translator has decided to replace the American cities with Finnish cities. The mention of heading towards the desert has also been replaced with the mention of traveling inland, as there is no desert in Finland. These changes will probably benefit the Finnish audience, as especially Santa Barbara and Riverside would probably be unknown to most Finns. It is interesting, however, that the translator has decided to replace a city in southwestern USA (Los Angeles) with a city in southwestern Finland (Turku), and then replaced a coastal city north of Los Angeles (Santa Barbara) with a coastal city north of Turku (Pori) as well as an inland city (Riverside) with another inland city (Tampere), as even this level of correspondence is unnecessary for the illustration. However, these choices are in line with the translator's style of keeping to the original as closely as possible.

In addition to the replaced city names, example (3) also includes an omission: the words *and took the highway they suggested* have been omitted from the translation. I will examine this more closely in section 4.2.1. when discussing omissions.

#### 4.1.2 Superordinate Term

In some cases where the specific realia in question are important, but their exact definition or type are not, the translator has used a tactic called superordinate term. This means that a higher-level blanket expression that can refer to all similar realia is used in the translation in place of the exact term (Leppihalme 2011). This strategy has been used more rarely in the translation of *Tactics* as cultural adaptation, but there are also fewer passages in the book suitable for this strategy. I will examine two examples of this. In the first example, the name of the Barnes and Noble bookstore has been translated using just the superordinate term *bookstore*.

- (4) Of course, he wasn't thinking of sin and judgment when he walked *into the Barnes and Noble*. (T, 106; emphasis added)

Hän ei tietenkään ajatellut syntiä ja tuomiota kävellessään sisään *kirjakauppaan*. (Tv, 110; emphasis added)

Here, the example is more than just an imaginary event created to make a point, as Koukl is telling a true story about a conversation he had with someone in a Barnes and Noble bookstore. Even so, only that the conversation took place in a bookstore is important. The Barnes and Noble has also already been mentioned in the text. Thus, the translator has decided to replace the store name with the superordinate term.

Example (5) is similar to example (4):

- (5) A consortium of religious groups in Chicago [...] issued a statement condemning the *SBC* [...]. (T, 163; emphasis added)

Chicagolainen uskonnollisten ryhmittymien liitto [...] antoi julkilausuman, joka tuomitsi *baptistit* [...]. (Tv, 171; emphasis added)

The abbreviation *SBC* used in the source text refers to the Southern Baptist Convention and is translated simply as *the Baptists*, which is a superordinate term in this situation. Such a translation might not be beneficial if it was used on its own, but in this case, the Southern Baptist Convention was already mentioned in the text. The name of the convention was translated into Finnish as *Eteläinen baptistikonventio*, and using the English abbreviation would seem odd after that. Thus, the superordinate term fits better here. In both examples, using a superordinate term lowers the semantic equivalence of the translation, but is more beneficial for the Finnish readership. Communicative equivalence also remains high in both

cases, as the text will still be similarly understood by the Finnish readers when compared to the American readers.

### 4.1.3 Explication

Another strategy used for translating realia is called explication. It means that the translator adds a short explanation or definition to the text to explain a foreign name or term to the target audience (Leppihalme 2011). This strategy is usually used in situations where keeping the specific concept is important, but the term will likely be unfamiliar to the target audience. The translator of *Taktinen viisaus* has not used this strategy that extensively, and later I will show an example of a passage where it would have been beneficial. Still, the following passage includes two consecutive examples from the book.

- (6) Regarding the separation of *church and state*, *the First Amendment* restricts the government, not the people (read it). (T, 74; emphases added)

Mitä tulee *uskonnon ja politiikan (tai kirkon ja valtion)* eroon, *Yhdysvaltain perustuslain ensimmäinen lisäys* rajoittaa hallintokoneistoa, ei kansaa – lue se. (Tv, 76; emphases added)

The two example realia in the original are *church and state* and *the First Amendment*. Their counterparts in the translation are longer, because the translator has chosen to add explanations for them. In the latter explanation, the translator has added the information that the amendment in question is specifically a part of the constitution of the United States, and not the Finnish constitution, for example. In the earlier one, the translator emphasises that the separation of church and state means that religion and politics should be kept separate. This explanation is not as necessary as the other one, but it is still clearer for a Finnish reader because there is a national church in Finland, unlike in the US. For this reason, only mentioning the separation of church and state could be confusing in the translation.

## 4.2 Omissions and Other Changes

The second of the three categories defined for this study consists of passages where something in the original has been either removed from the translation or changed in some way. The changes discussed in this category can include changes to any non-realial phrases or expressions. Here, the changes are less necessary than the changes I have already examined in the *Replaced Realia* category, as preserving a higher level of semantic equivalence by not performing the changes would have also been fine. Still, they may be improvements to the

original text, and that is also one of the central features of communicative translation. When translating communicatively, the translation “[m]ay be better than the original because of gain in force and clarity” (Newmark 1991, 12). Thus, the changes are definitely justified.

However, it is not clear why the translator has chosen to make these changes, as in most cases he has preferred semantic translation. In any case, I will provide some possible explanations for the changes.

#### 4.2.1 Omissions

I will now examine five passages where the translator has completely omitted something that was present in the original. Here is the first example.

- (7) “What do you mean by that?” is a question you can use with virtually every challenge [...] leveled at you *as a believer*. (T, 69; emphasis added)

“Mitä tarkoitat tuolla?” on kysymys, jota voi soveltaa käytännössä joka ikisen sinua päin heitetyn haasteen kanssa [...]. (Tv, 70)

Here, the words *as a believer* have been excluded from the Finnish translation. The change could have been made because in Finland it might feel weird to emphasise a personal connection to a particular religion when discussing topics only indirectly related to the religion in question. However, including the word *uskovana* (as a believer) in the sentence would have also been fine.

Example (8) includes the omission of a whole sentence:

- (8) Don’t underestimate the power of the question, “What do you mean by that?” *Use it often*. You can ask it in a variety of ways to stay engaged in productive, genial conversation while keeping the focus and the pressure on the other person, not on you. (T, 69–70; emphasis added)

Älä aliarvioi kysymyksen “mitä tarkoitat tuolla” voimaa. Sen voi esittää monin eri tavoin pysyäkseen mukana hedelmällisessä ja ystävällisessä keskustelussa, joka sinun sijastasi kohdistaa paineen toisen osapuolen niskaan. (Tv, 71)

I will discuss examples (8) and (9) at once because of their similarity. In example (9), a whole sentence has been omitted as well.

- (9) Ultimately, [...] we don’t want the conversation to feel like we’re forcing our opinions on them. *Instead we want to persuade them*. When the steps to a conclusion are unambiguous, straightforward, and reasonable, it’s much easier for someone to follow along with us on the journey, because he can see the

route clearly. (T, 97, emphasis added)

Viime kädessä [...] emme tahdo keskustelun tuntuvan siltä kuin tyrkyttäisimme näitä näkemyksiä heille. Kun johtopäätökseen vievät askelet ovat yksiselitteisiä, mutkattomia ja johdonmukaisia, toisen on paljon helpompi kulkea samaa matkaa, koska hän näkee reitin selvästi. (Tv, 101)

The omitted sentence is short in both examples, and the purpose of the omitted sentences seems to be to contrast and reinforce the point made in the previous sentence. However, the points are still conveyed without the latter sentences, although more implicitly, as then the reader is only told what to avoid, and not what to strive for. It seems like the translator has found these sentences redundant and decided to improve the passages in a way typical to communicative translation.

The next example is taken from a passage where Koukl recounts an event where he was defending the Christian doctrine that Christianity is not compatible with other world views.

- (10) *I addressed* the controversial issue of why Jesus is the only way when the question came up during a book promotion at a local Barnes and Noble bookstore. (T, 105; emphasis added)

Kiistanalainen kysymys, miksi Jeesus on ainoa tie, nousi esiin kirjan julkistamistilaisuudessa paikallisessa Barnes and Noble -kirjakaupassa. (Tv 109)

Here, the translator has decided to remove the explicit mention of Koukl being the one to address the question and has only written that this controversial question came up. This is similar to examples (8) and (9) in that it has no effect on the point being made, as it is implicitly clear from the passage that Koukl addresses the question even if it is not explicitly mentioned.

The omission found in example (3) earlier is also similar to the previous examples. The example discusses different cities and travel between them, and the words *and took the highway they suggested* are removed from the translation of the passage. These words emphasise that the instructions are carefully followed, but they are noncrucial for the argument. Like in examples (8–10), the translator seems to have decided to translate the passage more communicatively by removing material that can be considered redundant.

In any of the examples (7–10), as well as in example (3), the omitted part could just as well have been kept in the translation, had the translator decided to emphasise semantic equivalence. The decision to translate these passages less semantically is unexpected because

semantic translation is much more common than communicative translation in the translation as a whole, and changes like these could probably have been made in countless places throughout the book, but the translator has generally decided against it.

#### 4.2.2 Other changes

There are also changes other than omissions to be found in the translation that are valid translation choices but that seem unexpected given its overall semantically equivalent nature. I will examine three such examples, and here is the first one:

- (11) Simply *refuse* to answer them, but do so in a cordial way. Politely *respond* to unwelcome queries by saying, “Before we go further, let me say something. [...] Would that be all right with you?” (T, 127; emphases added)

*Voit kieltäytyä* vastaamasta niihin, mutta tee se ystävällisesti. Ei-toivottuihin tiedusteluihin *voi vastata* kohteliaasti näin: ”Ennen kuin jatkamme, tahtoisin sanoa jotain. [...] Kävisikö se sinulle?” (Tv, 132; emphases added)

Here, the guiding command-like expressions *refuse* and *respond* have been softened in the Finnish version to be only suggestions of what you could do in that situation. The expressions used are *voit kieltäytyä* (you can refuse) and *voi vastata* (one can respond). Softer forms like these are quite common in Finland because trying to avoid conflict even when you disagree is usually considered polite. Thus, using such forms is unsurprising and probably a fine choice, but I still found it unexpected due to the nature of the translation.

Example (12) is taken from a passage where Koukl recounts a conversation he once had with his two-year-old daughter who did not quite understand the implications of a statement she had made.

- (12) The philosophical subtlety was lost on her, but it should not escape you.  
(T, 158)

Tilanteen filosofinen hienous meni häneltä *vielä tuossa vaiheessa* ohi, mutta ota sinä se haltuun. (Tv, 165; emphasis added)

This is an interesting example because the translator has made an addition here that somewhat changes the meaning of the sentence. The addition *vielä tuossa vaiheessa* implies that the girl would later realise the philosophical subtlety of the statement and she was just too young at that moment. This is a plausible interpretation, as the girl would grow and become more intelligent. However, this conversation would be long forgotten by then, and there are no other cues in the original suggesting such a translation. Taking into consideration the

translation's semantic nature, this is perhaps the most surprising change in the whole translation.

The only change in example (13) is the emphasis added to the word *good*.

(13) If there is no God, then no conduct is actually good. (T, 174)

Ellei Jumalaa ole, mikään toiminta ei itse asiassa ole *hyvää*. (Tv, 183; emphasis in the original)

In this passage, Koukl argues that objective goodness cannot exist if there is no God. The change made by the translator in this passage is minor, but the added emphasis highlights the point being made. However, the emphasis could just as well have been left out. Once again, the change is unexpected when examining the translation as a whole. This is also an excellent summarising statement for all the omissions and other changes that I have examined. The changes might improve the translation, but they are not necessary. This also makes them unexpected in the context of this translation because the translator has mostly not taken the opportunities to make such changes. However, they would not seem unexpected had the translator generally chosen to use a more communicative translation strategy instead.

### 4.3 Unchanged passages

The third and final category defined for this study includes examples where the translator has decided not to change a passage even though it might have been beneficial for the Finnish readership. There are some examples of such passages in the book, but most are adequate translations even without making any adaptations. Mentioning these unchanged passages where potential for changes exists is important to achieve a balanced view of the translation. However, my focus in the analysis is on the two previous categories, and I will only give two examples of this. The example (14) includes realia translated using strategy (2) by Leppihalme (2011), meaning it is a word-for-word translation. In this case, using strategy (5), explicitation, would have been clearer for Finnish readers because the abbreviation UCLA will be foreign to most Finns. Here is the example.

(14) Consider this comment made to me by a *UCLA graduate student*: “What gives you the right to say someone else’s religion is wrong? (T, 133; emphasis added)

Pohdipa tätä kommenttia, jonka minulle esitti *UCLA:n jatko-opiskelija*:  
”Mikäs sinulle antaa oikeuden sanoa, että jonkun toisen uskonto on väärä?  
(Tv, 139; emphasis added)

In this case, explaining that UCLA refers to the University of California, Los Angeles, would have been a better translation choice and more in line with the translations of the other realia, as can be seen from examples (1–6). However, the more semantically equivalent translation used is also correct and acceptable.

The last example in this thesis, example (15), is one that is more similar to examples (7–13). Here, the translation possesses a high level of semantic equivalence, and the translation is adequate and problem-free. However, the translator would have had the opportunity to improve the text by employing a less semantic translation. There are also other similar places in the text where the translation could have been improved by using a communicative, less semantic translation strategy.

- (15) Some professors are on a crusade to crush the confidence of any Christian who wanders into their lecture hall, and they're not afraid to admit it. (T, 87)

Eräillä professoreilla on henkilökohtainen tavoite murskata luentosaliinsa harhailevien kristittyjen vakaumus, ja he jopa myöntävät tämän häpeämättä.  
(Tv, 90)

In this case, the passage describes a situation that might be common in America but sounds unusual to Finnish readers. In Finnish culture, religious views or personal convictions usually stay hidden in public or formal situations, such as when teaching at university. Openly attacking religious beliefs in such a situation would probably be frowned upon. Thus, it would have been beneficial to either explain the American situation more thoroughly or to soften the expression in the translation. However, the translation is valid and in line with most other decisions the translator has made.

## 5 Conclusions

I have found through the analysis that the Finnish translator of *Tactics* has preferred to use a semantic translation method throughout the whole book. This means that the translator has diligently and faithfully retained the structure of the original, even down to sentence structures wherever possible. He has translated the book word-for-word wherever possible, mostly deviating from this method only when that would have made the translation difficult to understand. In some cases, the translator has used less semantic translation methods with a clearer focus on achieving communicative equivalence. These especially include passages where realia pertaining to the American culture are present, but occasionally other types of changes can be found as well.

I divided the examples I used in the analysis into three categories. The first category, translating realia, includes the most examples, and these are the most common type of adaptation in the translation. The translator has used multiple of the seven realia translation strategies proposed by Leppihalme (2011, 129), and the three strategies that my examples belong to result in communicatively equivalent translations, the semantic equivalence of which are much lower. Examining the use of these three strategies, I have found that cultural adaptation is the most common strategy used. The second of my three categories includes omissions and other changes in places where realia are not present. The examples I examined in this category include some unexpected changes when examining the Finnish translation as a whole, as most passages where similar changes could have been made have been translated word-by-word. However, the changes that have been made mostly make sense and benefit Finnish readers. Thus, it might have been beneficial to make even more such changes, as I mentioned when discussing the last category. There are passages in the book where the translator has not made changes even though it might have been beneficial. However, I have only given two examples of this, as my focus in the analysis has been on the existing changes that can be found in the translation.

The topic could be researched further by making similar studies into other religious, non-sacred books. This way it could be established whether translating word-for-word is normal when translating such works, and whether a common and over-arching translation style for the genre exists. It may also well be that it depends on the translator and on the specific work being translated. However, the results of this thesis are also interesting and potentially useful on their own.

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