Semantic Expansion in the Gospel of Matthew

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Abstract:

This study identified and discussed the King James Version (KJV) passages in the Gospel of Matthew that manifest semantic expansion. The original meaning of the words in the Gospel of Matthew before they were translated into English was determined using the Interlinear Bible. After determining the original meaning of the words, the researcher compared the original meaning to the contemporary meaning. The study's findings showed that: The KJV passages in the Gospel of Matthew that manifest semantic expansion are Matthew 3:12, Matthew 3:7, Matthew 12:34, Matthew 23:33, Matthew 22:16, Matthew 6:25, Matthew 6:27, Matthew 6:28, Matthew 6:31, Matthew 6:34, and Matthew 10:19. The words identified in this passages with semantic expansion are fan, generation, person, and thought. The textual analysis of these words was comprehensively discussed in the paper.

Keywords: semantics, semantic change, semantic expansion, diachronic linguistics

The Problem and Its Background

The Bible is a collection of sacred texts or scriptures that Jews and Christians consider a product of divine inspiration and a record of the relationship between God and humans. With estimated total sales of more than five billion copies (Guinness Book of World Records 2022), it is widely considered the most influential and best-selling book of all time. However, choosing a Bible from the various English language translations available today can be daunting. According to the American Bible Society (2010), the number of printed English translations and paraphrases of the Bible, whether complete or not, is about 900. Some translations claim to be literal (word-for-word), while others claim to be dynamic or functional equivalent (thought for thought).

Despite the ample number of printed English translations, no other book or piece of culture seems to have influenced the English language as much as the King James Bible (KJV). Its turns of phrase have permeated English speakers' everyday language, whether or not they have ever opened a copy. (Crystal 2011) underscored, "The King James Bible—either directly, from its own translators, or indirectly, as a glass through which we can see its predecessors—has contributed far more to English in the way of idiomatic or quasi-proverbial expressions than any other literary source" (p. 2).

The KJV Bible reflects the scholarship of a group of men. Fifty-four were selected to undertake the task, but only forty-seven of these are known by name. The men selected were bishops, professors, and college presidents, all with proven scholarship in ancient languages. There are no official records of the process or method of revision. Still, the evidence shows that the company is divided into six groups, each working on an allotted section of the Bible. After its task, each chose two members to serve on the committee, which made a final revision of the entire text. The project was begun in 1607, finished three years later, and in 1611 the King James Bible was published, "Containing the Old and New Testaments Translated out of the Original Tongues and with the Former Translations Diligently Compared and Revised" (The Holy Bible, Authorized Version 1611, title page).

Although KJV Bible is one of the greatest works of English literature, it is also a fact that many words in the KJV Bible were either obsolete or misleading because of semantic changes. The English language is continuously changing. Many words and phrases that were clear and accurate in the Jacobean Era have become obsolete or misleading in contemporary times. Similarly, current words and phrases in 2022 may become archaic or change in meaning within the next few decades. Hence, this study aimed to identify and discuss the semantic expansion in the selected KJV passages in the Gospel of Matthew.

Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on the semantic change classifications of (Campbell 2021), specifically semantic expansion. In semantic changes involving expansion, the range of meanings of a word increases so that the word can be used in more contexts than were appropriate for it before the change. Changes from more concrete to more abstract meanings fit here. For example, the word salary from the Latin salãrium was a soldier's allotment of salt (based on Latin sal 'salt'), which then came to mean a soldier's wages in general, and then finally, as in English, wages in general, not just a soldier's pay. Since words' meanings naturally shift in various ways through time, interpreting some KJV passages could be a formidable task. Hence, the researcher sought to identify and discuss the KJV passages in the Gospel of Matthew that manifest semantic expansion.

Review of Related Studies

This research was conceptualized from the subsequent studies related to semantic expansion.

(Ariani, Beratha, & Malini 2020) identified the semantic changes in the translation of euphemism and dysphemism in the news text of Tempo Magazine. They used a descriptive qualitative method and took the data from the bilingual Tempo Magazine edition 2019 with Indonesian in a source language and its translation into English. The result shows that six types of semantic change occur in the translation of euphemism and dysphemism of Tempo Magazines such as semantic broadening, semantic narrowing, semantic metaphor, semantic pejoration, semantic amelioration, and semantic metonymy. When euphemism or dysphemism are translated into the same categories, they undergo semantic broadening, narrowing, metonymy or metaphor. While semantic change pejorations occur when euphemism is translated into dysphemism, semantic change ameliorations occur when dysphemism is translated into euphemism. Even though there are changes in the meaning from the earlier one to the new one in the translation of euphemism and dysphemism, the sense relation still ties the words up, so they still have a relation between them.Tang, Qu & Chen

(2015) argues that the succession view reflects the essence of semantic change better and proposes a successive framework for automatic semantic change detection. The framework analyzes the semantic change at both the word level and the individual-sense level inside a word by transforming the task into change pattern detection over time series data. At the word level, the framework models the word's semantic change with an S-shaped model and successfully correlates change patterns with classical semantic change categories such as broadening, narrowing, new word coining, metaphorical change, and metonymic change. At the sense level, the framework measures the conventionality of individual senses and distinguishes categories of temporary word usage, basic sense, novel sense, and disappearing sense, again with an S-shaped model. Experiments at both levels yield an increased precision rate compared with the baseline, supporting the succession view of semantic change.

(Wihadi & Fauziah 2019) pinpointed lexical-semantic changes in three distinct generations of the Kuningan Region to determine their tapestry and determine their prevalent influential factors. They were analyzed and identified using the qualitative descriptive method with questionnaires and interviews as data collection techniques. In terms of 141 appearances, broadening and narrowing meaning took up 24.82% and 7.09%. Meanwhile, both ameliorization and pejorization made up 29.07%, while taboo comprised 9.92%. Subsequently, it was notified that all factors were of prevalence, namely linguistic, historical, psychological, and social causes, foreign language influences, and novel word needs. It is concluded that typical types of lexical semantic changes and their determining factors are prevalently identified. It is imperative that a corpus study be implemented and timelines related-lexical semantic changes be touched upon for further research.

(Gandomkar 2019) explained semantic broadening and examined the difference between this process with metaphor, and, in particular, by emphasizing Persian verbs, tried to show that many of the constructs considered as metaphors are, in fact, instances of semantic broadening that, as a result of this process, have gained multiple meanings. Relying on examples, particularly examples of Persian verbs, he emphasized the distinction between semantic broadening and metaphor and showed that, by tradition, in our metaphor, one tends to separate the tenor from the simile and apply it to other contexts. However, in the case of semantic broadening, the tenor is by no means used in different contexts. Words are semantically broadened over time, and their semantic scope expands, which is a process quite different from metaphor. As such, the results of his study indicate the subtle distinction that exists between semantic broadening and the process of metaphor, which is often neglected. In metaphor, the "tenor" is derived from the simile and is used in other sentences instead of the "vehicle"; in a way that the "tenor" adopts the semantic behavior of the "vehicle." However, in semantic broadening, an independent process occurs, and what emerges as the process of semantic broadening is the semantic expansion of other units of the simile.

In (Hannah's 2019) study, she discussed the kind of semantic changes in English loan words found in Japanese, along with which one is the most dominant. She divided the semantic changes into three: narrowing, broadening, and shifting. The research conducted for this thesis is library research, as written documents, which are books, in this case, are the ones that are to be analyzed. In this research, 215 occurrences of semantic changes are found. All types of semantic changes exist in the English loan words found in Japanese, with narrowing taking the first place with a total of 175 occurrences (81.4%), followed by broadening with 36 occurrences (16.7%) and shifting with four occurrences (1.9%). It is also found that among 110 samples of loan words, 83 of them have semantic changes (75.5%), while the remaining 27 have no semantic changes (24.5%). There are 62 loan words with two types of semantic changes (74.7%) and 21 loan words with only 1 type of semantic change (25.3%).

In (Lusekelo's 2017) research entitled "Additive and Substitutive Borrowing against Semantic Broadening and Narrowing in the Names of Architectural Structures in Tanzanian Bantu Languages," he identified the semantic changes associated with additive and substitutive borrowing in Bantu-speaking communities in Tanzania. Due to the contact of languages, semantic differences in the terms related to architectural structures emanate. Apart from data from a few elderly native speakers, research was carried out with the help of undergraduate students of linguistics. Further linguistic materials analyzed herein come from dictionaries and lexicons. Although retention of the proto-Bantu words is apparent, findings indicate that cases of additive borrowing are obvious for new concepts associated with new architectural structures. The additive Swahili names incorporated into Tanzanian Bantu tend to designate specific concepts related to modern (contemporary) architectural senses, such as mulango 'modern door' vs. luigi' traditional entranceway'. Cases of substitutive borrowing are rare, as demonstrated by the Swahili word dirisha' window', which replaces chitonono in Chimakonde, echihúru in Runyambo, ilituulo in Kinyakyusa etc.

In (Jackson's 2017) study entitled "The Church as Building, Congregation, and Universal Body of Believers: Semantic Change," he discussed that the word "Church" has a complicated lexical history. It is used as both verb and noun, and in Modern English, it is used to describe a universal body of believers, a local body of believers, and a building where religious services occur. A person may be said to be "churched," "un-churched," or "church-going." In the Modern English New Testament, "church" is found in 111 different verses and is first attributed to Jesus. As in this instance (Matthew 16:18), it is anticipated that "Church as body of believers" will be the most common occurrence in early biblical sources. It is expected that the broadening of the term to "church as a building" and the word "church" as a verb occurred later.

(Mapunda & Rosendal 2015) investigated how borrowed words are integrated based on a framework including semantic generalization, specialization, and shift. The study is based on fieldwork conducted in the Songea District in the Ruvuma Region of Tanzania, in the three villages of Peramiho, Kilagano, and Mhepai. It was found that borrowing was most frequent in the semantic fields' modern world', 'food and drink' and 'clothing and grooming.' Additive borrowing was found to be more frequent than substitutive. Only semantic widening of borrowed terms was attested. However, combined with a tendency to replace old Ngoni terms with both Swahili and Ngoni hypernyms, it indicates that speakers' competence in the language is waning. This loss of competence may also be linked to more general attrition of Ngoni culture and traditions, affecting language maintenance.

In (Malo's 2015) study, the use of the word sudah in the spoken use of Bahasa Indonesia in Sumba was analyzed. According to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, sudah is an adverb used mostly to inform that something has already happened or that something has already been done. The position of sudah in phrases or sentences precedes the verb or adjective that it modifies. However, there is a different use of sudah in Sumba, and probably in most eastern islands in Indonesia, where this adverb is placed after the verb. Malo studied the meaning brought by this new arrangement of sudah. The data was spoken use of Bahasa Indonesia collected through note-taking at campus, houses, and public places (markets and stores). The data collected was then analyzed using agih method or meaning-analysis method. There were also two informants asked to get information on the function of the new arrangement. The analysis showed that the adverb sudah underwent the semantic or meaning broadening in its use. This study revealed there were three new meanings as the result of the broadening process, (1) to give an order or to ask other people to do something, (2) to invite other people to do something, and (3) to inform that something is about to happen or

to be done soon. With these new meanings, the adverb sudah can also function as an adverb to show that something has not happened yet or something has not been done yet, the contrast to what is suggested in the Dictionary.

A local study entitled "Semantic Change of the Selected Cebuano Words" by (Maxilom 2008) attempted to determine the types of semantic change of the selected Cebuano words from the written texts, specifically the Bisaya magazine and spoken language of Cebuano speakers aged 15 – 40 years old living in Cebu province. Twenty (20) Cebuano words were analyzed using the classifications of the semantic change. The results revealed that metaphor was the dominant type of semantic change in the written text, and broadening was frequently-used in the spoken language. All these studies are related to the present study because they are all concerned with semantic change. Though they use different semantic change classifications, they all include semantic expansion, which is the main focus of the present study. To the researcher's knowledge, no study has been conducted that classifies the semantic change in the King James Bible, given that it is one of the most influential literature in the English language.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study:

This research does not intend to critique the King James Bible but to clarify only some of its passages that could result in misunderstanding due to semantic change, specifically, semantic expansion.
The scope of the semantic analysis is the Gospel of Matthew. It is the first book of the New Testament and one of the three synoptic gospels. It tells how the promised Messiah, Jesus, rejected by Israel, is killed, is raised from the dead, and finally sends the disciples to preach the gospel to the whole world. Most scholars believe it was composed between AD 80 and 90, with various possibilities between AD 70 and 110 (Duling 2010). The researcher chose it because although the Gospel of Matthew was not the first gospel written, it is generally regarded as the most important and was placed first in the collection of writings that constitute the New Testament. In addition to materials found in the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of Matthew contains a large number of Jesus' sayings and discourses and a group of stories not found in any of the other Gospels. Matthew contains an extensive account of Jesus' teachings and is considered the Christian religion's most authentic and fundamental doctrine (Harcourt, 2020). Given this information on the Gospel of Matthew, the researcher assumes that these meaningful sayings, discourses, and stories of Jesus may contain words that manifest semantic expansion. The book has 28 chapters, 1071 verses, and 23343 words. The analysis was delimited only to one semantic change type, semantic expansion.

Methods and Techniques of the Study

The researcher determined the original meaning of the words in the Gospel of Matthew before they were translated into English using the Interlinear Bible. The Interlinear Bible is keyed to the Greek and Hebrew text using Strong's Concordance. Through this, the researcher can read the original and literal Greek or Hebrew text with Strong's words using the King James Version. The interlinear allows the researcher to each parallel reading and lexicon study. After determining the original meaning of the words, the researcher compared the original meaning to the contemporary meaning. The words with changed meanings were analyzed to determine if the semantic changes were

expansion. After identifying the words with semantic expansion, the researcher discussed the potential problems in understanding the passages due to the semantic change.

This study used textual analysis because the data are based on the Bible. According to Given (2008), textual analysis is a method of data analysis that closely examines texts' content and meaning or their structure and discourse. Texts are deconstructed to explore how they operate, how they are constructed, how meanings are produced, and the nature of those meanings. Linguists use textual analysis to assess texts from a range of cultural settings.
In this study, word is the unit of analysis since only the words that underwent semantic expansion were chosen.

Results and Discussion

Matthew 3:12, Matthew 3:7, Matthew 12:34, Matthew 23:33, Matthew 22:16, Matthew 6:25, Matthew 6:27, Matthew 6:28, Matthew 6:31, Matthew 6:34, and Matthew 10:19 are the identified KJV passages in the Gospel of Matthew that manifest semantic expansion.
In Matthew 3:12, the word that has undergone semantic expansion is *fan*. The passage in the KJV Bible states:

> *Matthew 3:12*
> *"Whose **fan** is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."*

The English word *fan* was translated from the Greek word ***ptuon.*** The Greek words of the passage are presented in the Interlinear Bible below.

> *Matthew 3:12*
> *"Whose <hos> **fan <ptuon>** is in <en> his <autos> hand, <cheir> and <kai> he will throughly purge <diakatharizo> his <autos> floor, <halon> and <kai> gather <sunago> his <autos> wheat <sitos> into <eis> the garner; <apotheke> but <de> he will burn up <katakaio> the chaff <achuron> with unquenchable <asbestos> fire. <pur>"*

Strong's Concordance provides the following information on the Greek word ***ptuon***.

> Original Word: πτύον, ου, τό
> Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter
> Transliteration: ptuon
> Phonetic Spelling: (ptoo'-on)
> Definition: a winnowing shovel
> Usage: a simple wooden pitchfork; a winnowing shovel or fan.

The presented textual data show that the **fan** of Matthew 3:12, "Whose **fan** is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff

with unquenchable fire," is from the Greek **ptuon**, which means a winnowing shovel. It is a shovel made entirely of wood that is used to toss harvested grain up into the air on breezy days so that the lighter "chaff" - the dry husk that encases the grain - becomes separated from and lands farther downwind than the heavier grain. The term has broadened to cover a wide range of devices that are used to create a current of air. The contemporary meaning of the word fan does not suggest the primitive implement used by the farmer two thousand years ago.

Several trusted online dictionaries support this analysis. According to Dictionary.com, whose main proprietary source is the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, the word fan, in the sense of "any device for producing a current of air," is very old, recorded in English before 900. It comes from the Old English, fann, directly from the Latin vannus, a "winnowing basket." A winnowing basket is a type of broad, shallow basket used to winnow, that is, to free grain from lighter particles of chaff, dirt, and the like. This can be done by tossing the grain, allowing the wind or a forced current of air to blow away the chaff and any impurities. A winnowing basket is what fan originally meant in English. The word fan expanded to refer to other kinds of devices used to blow away chaff. By association with the movement of air involved in winnowing, fan further expanded to name various devices for generating currents of air, especially for cooling and ventilation. In the 17th century, the meaning of the word fan broadened to a winnowing shovel, as indicated by the translators of the King James Bible. In the present time, the meaning of the word fan has further broadened to an apparatus with rotating blades that creates a current of air for cooling or ventilation and a device, typically folding and shaped like a segment of a circle when spread out, that is held in the hand and waved so as to cool the person holding it by causing the air to move. Though the meaning of the word fan has changed, the concept of air movement is still retained.

The table below shows the comparison of the meaning of fan in the past and in contemporary times.

Table 1
Meaning of *Fan* in the Past and in the Contemporary Times

Meaning of *Fan* in 1611	Meaning of *Fan* in 2022
A device for winnowing grain	1. an apparatus with rotating blades that creates a current of air for cooling or ventilation. 2. A device, typically folding and shaped like a segment of a circle when spread out, that is held in the hand and waved so as to cool the person holding it by causing the air to move

Other modern translations use the words winnowing fork as in the case of the New International Version, New Living Translation, English Standard Version, Berean Study Bible, New American Standard Bible, Amplified Bible, and International Standard Version; the words winnowing shovel as in the case of GOD'S WORD® Translation, Good News Translation, Holman Christian Standard Bible, and Christian Standard Bible, and the words threshing fork as in the case of Contemporary English Version. Winnowing fork and winnowing shovel are the same. However, even though threshing fork can also be used in winnowing. Threshing is different from winnowing.

Threshing is pounding the sheaves against the wooden bars; it is performed to remove the grains from the stalks. On the other hand, winnowing is the method of separating the unpleasant husk from food. It is achieved by pouring the grains on a windy day from a height when the grains fall on the ground, and the chaff is swept away. Hence, winnowing fork and winnowing shovel are better modern translations than the threshing fork.

In Matthew 3:7, Matthew 12:34, and Matthew 23:33, the word that has undergone semantic broadening is *generation*. The passages in the KJV Bible state:

> *Matthew 3:7*
> *"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O **generation** of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"*

> *Matthew 12:34*
> *"O **generation** of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."*

> *Matthew 23:33*
> *"Ye serpents, ye **generation** of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"*

The English word *generation* was translated from the Greek word *gennema.* The Greek words of the passages are presented in the Interlinear Bible below.

> *Matthew 3:7*
> *"But <de> when he saw <eido> many <polus> of the Pharisees <Pharisaios> and <kai> Sadducees <Saddoukaios> come <erchomai> to <epi> his <autos> baptism, <baptisma> he said <epo> unto them, <autos> O **generation <gennema>** of vipers, <echidna> who <tis> hath warned <hupodeiknumi> you <humin> to flee <pheugo> from <apo> the wrath <orge> to come <mello>?"*

> *Matthew 12:34*
> *"O **generation <gennema>** of vipers, <echidna> how <pos> can ye, <dunamai> being <on> evil, <poneros> speak <laleo> good things <agathos>? for <gar> out of <ek> the abundance <perisseuma> of the heart <kardia> the mouth <stoma> speaketh. <laleo>"*

> *Matthew 23:33*
> *"Ye serpents, <ophis> ye **generation <gennema>** of vipers, <echidna> how <pos> can ye <pheugo> escape <apo> the damnation <krisis> of hell <geenna>?"*

Strong's Concordance provides the following information on the Greek word *gennéma*.

Original Word: γέννημα, ατος, τό
Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter
Transliteration: gennéma
Phonetic Spelling: (ghen'-nay-mah)
Definition: offspring
Usage: offspring, child, fruit.

The presented textual data show that the **generation** of Matthew 3:7, Matthew 12:34, and Matthew 23:33, "generation of vipers," is from the Greek **gennéma**, which means offspring. The term has broadened to refer to all people born and living collectively at about the same time. The contemporary meaning of the word generation does not suggest a person's child or children or an animal's young.

Several trusted online dictionaries support this analysis. According to Merriam-Webster.com, the word generation, in the sense of "a body of living beings constituting a single step in the line of descent from an ancestor," is very old; the first known use was in the 14th century. It comes from the Middle English generacioun, which means "procreation, development, offspring, lineage." It is borrowed from Anglo-French & Latin; Anglo-French generacion, borrowed from Late Latin generātiōn-, generātiō, going back to Latin, "procreation," from generāre "to bring into being." In the present time, the meaning of the word generation has expanded from offspring to the entire body of individuals born and living at about the same time. Though the meaning of the word generation has changed, the concept of bringing into being is still retained.

The table below shows the comparison of the meaning of generation in the past and in contemporary times.

Table 2
Meaning of *Generation* in the Past and in the Contemporary Times

Meaning of *Generation* in 1611	Meaning of *Generation* in 2022
Offspring	all of the people born and living at about the same time, regarded collectively

Other modern translations use the word offspring, as in the case of the New English Translation and New American Standard Bible; the word brood, as in the case of the New International Version, New Living Translation, English Standard Version, Berean Study Bible, Amplified Bible, and Christian Standard Bible; the word children as in the case of International Standard Version; and the word bunch as in the case of Contemporary English Version. The words offspring, brood, and children are the same based on the passage's context. However, though the word bunch is related, it does not have the same meaning. Also, in some modern translations like GOD'S WORD® Translation and Good News Translation, they removed and did not replace the word generation. The verse in the GOD'S WORD® Translation says, "You poisonous snakes!" while the verse in the Good News Translation says, "You snakes."

In Matthew 22:16, the word that has undergone semantic broadening is the word ***person***. The passage in the KJV Bible states:

Matthew 22:16

*"And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the **person** of men."*

The English word ***person*** was translated from the Greek word ***prosópon.*** The Greek words of the passages are presented in the Interlinear Bible below.

Matthew 22:16
*"And <kai> they sent out <apostello> unto him <autos> their <autos> disciples <mathetes> with <meta> the Herodians, <Herodianoi> saying, <lego> Master, <didaskalos> we know <eido> that <hoti> thou art <ei> true, <alethes> and <kai> teachest <didasko> the way <hodos> of God <theos> in <en> truth, <aletheia> <kai> neither <ou> carest <melo> thou <soi> for <peri> any <oudeis> man: for <gar> thou regardest <blepo> not <eis> <ou> the **person <prosopon>** of men. <anthropos>"*

Strong's Concordance provides the following information on the Greek word ***prosópon***.

Original Word: πρόσωπον, ου, τό
Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter
Transliteration: prosópon
Phonetic Spelling: (pros'-o-pon)
Definition: the face
Usage: the face, countenance, surface.

The presented textual data show that the **person** of Matthew 22:16, "regardest not the **person** of men," is from the Greek **prosópon**, which means the face. The term has expanded to refer to a human being regarded as an individual. The contemporary meaning of the word person does not suggest the front part of a person's head from the forehead to the chin.

Some reliable online dictionaries validate this analysis. According to Dictionary.com, the word person was first recorded in 1175–1225. The Middle English word persone is from the Latin word persōna, meaning role in life, play, or tale. It originally means actor's mask from the Etruscan word phersu, which is also from the Greek word prósōpa, which means face or mask. As we trace back the history of the word, it is clear that it shifted from the face or mask of a character in a drama, then to the actor himself, and presently to human beings in general.

The table below compares the meaning of the word person in the past and contemporary times.

Table 3
Meaning of *Person* in the Past and in the Contemporary Times

Meaning of *Person* in 1611	Meaning of *Person* in 2022
the face	a human being regarded as an individual

Other modern translations use the word appearances as in the case of the English Standard Version; the words external appearance as in the case of the International Standard Version and Berean Study Bible. However, other modern translations removed the word person and just provided their interpretation of the text; "you pay no attention to who they are," as in the case of the New International Version, "don't play favorites," as in the case of New Living Translation, "You are not partial to anyone" as in the case of New American Standard Bible, "You treat all people alike, regardless of status" as in the case of Amplified Bible, "You don't care what anyone thinks nor do you show partiality" as in the case of Christian Standard Bible, "you treat everyone with the same respect, no matter who they are" as in the case of Contemporary English Version, "you pay no attention to anyone's status" as in the case of Good News Translation, "You don't favor individuals because of who they are" as in the case of GOD'S WORD® Translation, and "you show no partiality" as in the case of New English Translation. The passage in the KJV indicates that Jesus does not show partiality based on the face or appearance of men. This basis of partiality, the face or appearance of men, is disregarded in other modern translations. They all point out that Jesus shows no partiality but does not mention the basis of partiality. Some even use a different term like the word status, as in the case of Amplified Bible and Good News Translation. The word face or appearance is different from the word status though they are related based on the passage's context.

In Matthew 6:25, Matthew 6:27, Matthew 6:28, Matthew 6:31, Matthew 6:34, and Matthew 10:19, the word that has undergone semantic broadening is ***thought***. The passages in the KJV Bible state:

> *Matthew 6:25*
> *"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"*
>
> *Matthew 6:27*
> *"Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?"*
>
> *Matthew 6:28*
> *"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:"*
>
> *Matthew 6:31*
> *"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?"*
>
> *Matthew 6:34*
> *"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."*
>
> *Matthew 10:19*
> *"But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak."*

The English word ***thought*** was translated from the Greek word ***merimnao.*** The Greek words of the passages are presented in the Interlinear Bible below.

Matthew 6:25
"Therefore <dia> <touto> I say <lego> unto you, <humin> Take no <me> ***thought <merimnao>*** *for your <humon> life, <psuche> what <tis> ye shall eat, <phago> or <kai> what <tis> ye shall drink; <pino> nor yet for <mede> your <humon> body, <soma> what <tis> ye shall put on. <enduo> Is <esti> not <ouchi> the life <psuche> more than <pleion> meat, <trophe> and <kai> the body <soma> than raiment <enduma>?"*

Matthew 6:27
"<de> Which <ek> <tis> of you <humon> by taking ***thought <merimnao>*** *can <dunamai> add <prostithemi> one <heis> cubit <pechus> unto <epi> his <autos> stature <helikia>?"*

Matthew 6:28
"And <kai> why <tis> take ye ***thought <merimnao>*** *for <peri> raiment <enduma>? Consider <katamanthano> the lilies <krinon> of the field, <agros> how <pos> they grow; <auxano> they toil <kopiao> not, <ou> neither <oude> do they spin: <netho>"*

Matthew 6:31
"Therefore <oun> take no <me> ***thought, <merimnao>*** *saying, <lego> What <tis> shall we eat <phago>? or, <e> What <tis> shall we drink <pino>? or, <e> Wherewithal <tis> shall we be clothed <periballo>?"*

Matthew 6:34
"Take <merimnao> therefore <oun> no <me> ***thought <merimnao>*** *for <eis> the morrow: <aurion> for <gar> the morrow <aurion> shall take thought <merimnao> for the things <ho> of itself. <heautou> Sufficient <arketos> unto the day <hemera> is the evil <kakia> thereof. <autos>"*

Matthew 10:19
"But <de> when <hotan> they deliver <paradidomi> you <humas> up, <paradidomi> take <merimnao> no <me> ***thought <merimnao>*** *how <pos> or <e> what <tis> ye shall speak: <laleo> for <gar> it shall be given <didomi> you <humin> in <en> that same <ekeinos> hour <hora> what <tis> ye shall speak. <laleo>"*

Strong's Concordance provides the following information on the Greek word *merimnao*.

> Original Word: μεριμνάω
> Part of Speech: Verb
> Transliteration: merimnaó
> Phonetic Spelling: (mer-im-nah'-o)
> Definition: to be anxious, to care for
> Usage: I am over-anxious; with acc: I am anxious about, distracted;
> I care for.

The presented textual data show that the **thought** of Matthew 6:25, Matthew 6:27, Matthew 6:28, Matthew 6:31, Matthew 6:34, and Matthew 10:19, "take thought," "take no thought," is from the Greek **merimnao**, which means to be anxious or to care for. The term has expanded to refer to the action or process of thinking. The contemporary meaning of the word thought is no longer associated with feelings of care or anxiety; rather, it has become a word without any hint of emotional stress.

Thesaurus.com, which is based on Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus, Third Edition copyrighted by the Philip Lief Group in 2013, defines the phrase "take no thought of the morrow" as carpe diem or live for the day. Also, other modern translations like New English Translation, New American Standard Bible, New International Version, New Living Translation, English Standard Version, Berean Study Bible, Amplified Bible, Christian Standard Bible, International Standard Version, Contemporary English Version, GOD'S WORD® Translation, and Good News Translation use the words worry and anxious instead of thought.

The following table compares the meaning of thought in the past and contemporary times.

Table 4
Meaning of *Thought* in the Past and in the Contemporary Times

Meaning of *Thought* in 1611	Meaning of *Thought* in 2022
anxious or worry	the action or process of thinking

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