

## An Analysis of Two Translations of Chinese Ancient Poem *Changgan Xing* from the Perspective of Transitivity

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**Abstract:** *Changgan Xing* is one of the most excellent poems of Li Bai, a great romantic poet of Tang dynasty in China. This poem uses the tone of a woman, expressing her sincere love and deep missing to her husband who has been out for business for a long time. As a classical Chinese poem, it is deeply enjoyed by many western poets and has been translated into English many times. Among all the English versions, the translation of Ezra Pound is the most famous, which has been praised by critics as the most wonderful translated poem of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the United States. This thesis selects Ezra Pound's translation as well as the translation of Arthur Waley, a noted English sinologist. Based on the theory of systemic functional linguistics, this paper analyzes and compares the two English translations from transitivity under the experiential meaning of ideational metafunction, thus getting to know which version is more faithful to the original poem and the possible reasons for their deviation in translation.

**Key words:** systemic functional linguistics, transitivity, *Changgan Xing*, context

### I Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to explore the transitivity in the Chinese ancient poem *Changgan Xing* and its two English translations: Ezra Pound's *The River-merchant's wife: A letter*, Arthur Waley's *Changgan Xing* based on systemic functional linguistics. *Changgan Xing* is a classical poem presenting the monologue of a married merchant's wife expressing her deep thought to her husband who is out of business, written by famous ancient Chinese poet Li Bai (701-762). Li Bai is an important poet of Tang dynasty in China and a leading figure of romanticism. In his life, he spent most of his time in roaming, traveling almost half of China. *Changgan Xing* was written by Li Bai when he first visited Jinling in Nanjing province. Since the Six Dynasties, Jinling has been the place with highly developed business and prosperous cities. As a result, numerous merchants were very active in this place. What's more, "Wu Sheng" and "Xi Qu" of Yuefu in the Six Dynasties originated in this area and many works of them expressed the parting of merchant's wife and her husband, which Li Bai was very familiar with. In addition, Li Bai's life experience enabled him to have a good understanding of the thoughts and feelings of the merchant's wife. These are the basis for his creation of *Changgan Xing*. *Changgan Xing* originally belongs to Yuefu songs, which is a kind of folk songs in the lower reaches of Yangtze River. Li Bai's *Changgan Xing* is created in imitation of this kind of folk songs.

*Changgan Xing* is about the love and parting between a merchant's wife and her husband. The author writes this poem from the perspectives of a woman. In this woman's monologue, she presents her memories of her childhood when she got acquainted with her husband, her life of marriage and the departure of her husband, expressing her deep love and missing to her husband. In this poem, the author tactfully connected many life scenes of the woman together, clearly showing us the development of the woman's emotions toward her husband at different ages. Through these descriptions, we can see that

there is a very deep emotional bond between them, which helps to better shape a female image who misses her husband very much.

Systemic functional linguistics is a theory of linguistics centered around the notion of language function. It recognizes three functions of language, which Halliday calls meta-functions and refers to as ideational, interpersonal and textual respectively. The ideational meta-function means that language can construe experience in terms of what is going on around us and inside us. Transitivity belongs to this meta-function and is used to realize experiential meaning. The interpersonal meta-function refers to that language can be used to maintain and establish interpersonal relationship and the textual meta-function concerns with organizing a coherent and linear text. In this thesis, the author only focuses on using transitivity to analyze *Changgan Xing* and its two English translations.

This thesis can generally be divided into six parts. The first part is introduction, which briefly introduces the creating background and content of this poem and the three meta-functions of systemic functional linguistics. The second part is the theoretical framework of this thesis. It mainly introduces systemic functional linguistics, the concept of transitivity. The third part concentrates on analyzing Li Bai's *Changgan Xing* by using transitivity. The fourth part mainly analyzes and compares the two English translations of *Changgan Xing*, answering the two questions -- what are the deviations of two translations from the original poem? what are the differences between the two translations? The fifth part seeks to find out the contextual factors that might influence the translators' options for translation. The last part is conclusion, which summarizes the main findings of the thesis.

## II Theoretical framework

Systemic functional linguistics was founded and developed in the 1960s by M. A. K. Halliday, who inherited ideas from Saussure's Structuralism, Russian Formalism, the Prague School, the London School (especially his teacher J. R. Firth) and notions of context from Malinowski. It is part of a broad social semiotic approach to language and is concerned with the language in actual use. The main focus of systemic functional linguistics is on the analysis of authentic texts which are spoken and written in real-life social interaction, rather than isolated sentences. Therefore, this approach attaches great importance to context and believes that a text always occurs in certain contexts. According to Eggins (1994), there are two different types of context: the context of culture (genre) and the context of situation (register). The latter has more influence on the text. Halliday (2004) thinks that register comprises three variables, that is, field (what the language is being used to talk about), tenor (who is talking and what is the relationship between people involved) and mode (how the communication takes place). And these three variables are associated with three chief functions of language, which are referred to as the ideational, interpersonal, and textual "meta-functions" respectively. The ideational meta-function is made up of two parts: experiential function and logical function and it is mainly realized by experiential function. According to Thompson (1996), experiential function of language means that language can be used by us to talk about our experience of the world, either the external world -- things, events, qualities, etc. or the internal world -- thoughts, beliefs, feelings, etc. The experiential function is achieved through transitivity. Halliday (2004) states that the chief system in the ideational meta-function is the system of "transitivity". (The term is used here in a broader sense than its traditional meaning of whether verbs take objects or not.)

So what is transitivity? Thompson (2013) thinks that it refers a system for describing the whole clause, rather than just the verb and its object. It represents the happenings and events of the world and the relations among states or ideas and values in the language, like "who does what to whom under what circumstances?". The transitivity system construes the experience of the world into a containable group of process types. They are the core of clauses from the experiential perspective and the parts of

“goings-on” and verbal groups about activities in the clauses. At the same time, transitivity points out the participants and circumstances involved in the processes, which represents nominal groups about the doer or recipient of action and adverbial or prepositional groups about space, time, manner, etc) respectively. Taking English as the research subject, Halliday identifies six types of processes of the transitivity system, namely, material process, mental process, relational process, verbal process, behavioral process and existential process.

Material processes are the most active and are usually related to physical actions such as run, kick, write and so on, so they are called the processes of doing and happening. The material process always has actor ( the doer of an action) which may occur with other participants such as goal ( the person or thing to which an activity is done) or beneficiary (the person or thing an activity is done for). Behavioral processes are the processes of human physiological and psychological behavior, such as cough, smile, sing and so forth. According to Halliday (2004), these processes are partly like the material process and partly like the mental process. In the behavioral process, there is usually one participant -- the behavior. In some cases, it may have the range, which plays the role that is not affected by the action denoted by the verb.

Mental processes have more to do the inner world of cognition. They are the processes of thinking, seeing or feeling such as believe, remember, consider, etc. The chief participants involved in these processes are senser (usually a human or human-like) and phenomenon (what is thought, felt, wanted or liked and disliked). Verbal processes are the processes of saying, such as tell, ask, say, etc. In these processes, there are sayer (usually a human), receiver ( the participant to whom the saying is addressed) and verbiage (the content and the message of the saying).

Relational processes are the processes of being and having, such as be, seem, appear and so on. They manifest the relationship between two entities. Relational processes can be divided into two types: relational attributive and relational identifying. In relational attributive, there are two participants -- carrier and attribute and the relationship between the two participants can be presented as “x is an attribute of y”. The participants in relational identifying are the identified and the identifier and the relationship between them can be showed as “x is the identity of y”. Existential processes are the most static and the processes of existing, showing the existence of an entity, such as be, exist, remain and so on. There is only one participant in these process: existent (the entity that exists).

### III Analysis of Li Bai's *Changgan Xing*

This part is divided into two sub-parts. This first part is an initial reading of Li Bai's *Changgan Xing*, which introduces of the main idea and content of this poem. This is the foundation for later analysis, either the analysis of transitivity in this poem, or the analysis of the two English translations. The second part is the transitivity analysis of Li Bai's *Changgan Xing*, which is the main criteria for judging whether the two English translations are deviated from the original poem and what these deviations are.

#### A. Initial Reading of Li Bai's *Changgan Xing*

*Changgan Xing* tells a story of a merchant's wife who lives in the place 'Changgan Li' and recalls the process of falling in love with her husband and the parting of her husband, thus showing her sincere love and deep missing to her husband who left home for business for a long time. It narrates from the third person *qie* ( the merchant's wife) and *lang and jun* (the husband), and describes some life scenes of the merchant's life and then links these life scenes in an exquisite way so as to form a complete artistic whole, presenting a vivid picture of the merchant's life to readers.

This poem, consisting of fifteen lines, can generally be divided into four parts. The first three lines are about the wife's recalling of the scene of playing with her husband in childhood, showing the close relationship between them. There was a close contact between their families and they have known each

other since childhood, which emphasizes the solid foundation of their love. Lines 4-9 can be regarded as one part and this part can be classified into three sub-parts. Lines 4-5 present the wife's memory of the scene of her marriage. Although she has known her husband for a long time, when they married, she was so shy that she had no courage to look at her husband. Lines 6-7 tells the wife developed sincere love to her husband after marriage and wished to follow her husband forever. And lines 8-9 is about the departure of the wife's husband. And she showed her deep concern over her husband. The third part consists of lines 10-13, which returns to the present from the wife's past memory, telling her loneliness and melancholy after her husband's leaving and her deep missing to her husband. The last two lines are the last part of this poem, which describes the wife's strong desire for reunion with her husband.

The poet Li Bai uses a very brief fifteen-line poem capturing typical life and psychological details of the wife to successfully reveal the rich inner world of a merchant's wife. Her innocence and happiness in childhood, her shyness in marriage, her fervent love for her husband after marriage, her loneliness after her husband's leaving and her deep missing for her husband, all of these are clearly and vividly presented in front of the readers.

### **B. Transitivity Analysis of Li Bai's *Changgan Xing***

According to Hasan (1988), the experiential function is about the construal of experience of the world and is mainly realized through transitivity as it is concerned with "who does what in relation to whom/what, where, when, how and why". Transitivity is a system for analyzing the whole clauses. To analyze the transitivity system of a clause, we need first to make clear what kind of process the clause belongs to, because the type of clause process directly mirrors the main ideas of the writer and the process is the one obligatory constituent of a clause.

As can be seen from Li Bai's *Changgan Xing*, there are all together 21 material, 2 mental, 3 verbal and 5 relational processes; while no existential and behavioral processes. Halliday (2004) states that in the English transitivity system, the material, mental and relational are the main types of processes and among the three processes, the material process is the most frequent type. As we said above, material processes are the processes of doing and happening and are concerned with our experience in the material world. They are the most active among all the processes. In this poem, we can see that material processes account for a large proportion, which helps to create a vivid picture for readers. The first two lines of the poem only contain material processes, which describes the life scene in their childhood. By using verbs like "折" (zhe, pluck), "剧" (ju, play), "弄" (nong, play), etc., the author presents a very dynamic and lively picture of children playing: the wife and her husband were childhood sweethearts, and they laughed and played games together. Readers can directly feel their innocence and happiness in childhood from these verbs. When they got married, verbs like "开"(kai, open, actually "smile"), "低" (di, lower) and "回" (hui, turn back) fully express the wife's shyness at her wedding though she has known her husband for a long time. The image of a shy and bashful newly-married bride seems appear in front of us. After her husband left, verbs like "伤" (shang, hurt or break) and "老" (lao, fade or age) fully show the wife's sadness and melancholy. In the last two lines, verbs "迎" (ying, meet) and "至" (zhi, arrive or reach) reflect the wife's strong desire to see her husband, thus illustrating her deep missing and sincere love for her husband. Through these verbs, the wife's happiness, shyness, passionate love, loneliness and missing at her different life stages are clearly shown in the writing. This poem is written in a chronological order, that is, according to the age and the change of season, so it proceeds in a dynamic way. It not only describes the growth of the wife but also reflects the change of her emotions toward her husband. The change of seasons is also related to the wife's emotions, because it provides an atmosphere that can better reflects her emotions to her husband. The use of a lot of material processes are in accordance with this characteristic of the poem.

Except the material processes, the foregrounding process types deserve great attention. As mental

processes are concerned with what is going on in the internal world of the mind, the transitivity selections indicate that the poet emphasizes the wife's inner thoughts in the flow of events taking place. In this poem, there are two mental processes and the corresponding verbs are “愿” (yuan, wish) and “感” (gan, think). “愿” illustrates the wife's mental thought that she wished to stay with her husband for a lifetime. This is actually an emotional shift of the wife -- at fifteen, she began to know what was love and her emotion for her husband changed from friendship to love. “愿” shows that her love is very deep. “感” implies the wife's inner sadness. When the wife thinks of the scene that the paired butterflies fly over the grass, her heart is filled with sorrow, because butterflies are in pairs, but she is alone at home. Relational process manifests the relationship between two entities, so the transitivity selections describe the current relation between the wife and her husband, the relationship between two things. The relational process of “无” (wu, don't have) presents the profound relationship between the wife and her husband in their childhood. There is no any hate and suspicion between them, which lays the foundation for their love; and “为” (wei, become) indicates a change of relation between them -- they develop from friends to couples. “存” (cun, have) indicates the sincere love of the wife to her husband after marriage -- she has the faith to stay with her husband forever. “迟” (zhi, stay/keep) and “生” (sheng, grow) implies the wife's husband has been out of business for a long time and the tracks he left have already been covered by mosses. The verbal process of “道” (dao, say) exerts an important one on showing the wife's desire of seeing her husband. She will come to meet her husband even to Chang Feng Sha and will not say it is too far. “哀” (ai, wail) adds an atmosphere of sorrow when the wife's husband left.

#### IV Analysis of the Two Translations

##### A. Transitivity Analysis of the Two Translations

Through the transitivity analysis of the two English translations, we can see that there are 30 material, 2 mental, 1 verbal, 3 relational and 2 behavioral processes in Pound's translation, while in Waley's translation, there are all together 29 material, 7 mental, 1 verbal, 4 relational and 2 behavioral processes. It is obvious that the process types in Waley's translations (total 43, especially mental process) are more than Pound's (total 38) and Li's poem (total 31), which indicates more complex flow of the wife's consciousnesses or the author pays more attention to make clear the inner thought of the wife as it stands out distinctly and explicitly. Besides, in both translations, the behavioral process is added, which is apparently absent from the original poem. Behavioral processes in the two translations appear nearly in the same place, indicating that both Pound and Waley take material processes of “开” and “展” in the original poem as the behavioral processes of “laugh or smile” and “stop scowling and stop wrinkling”. The reason for the change of transitivity process in the two translations may lie in the difference of Chinese and English. In writings of classical Chinese, we usually use set phrases like “开颜” and “展眉”, which actually means the same as the English expressions “smile or laugh” and “stop scowling or stop wrinkling”. Though they have the same meaning, “开” and “展” are material processes and “smile or laugh” and “stop scowling or stop wrinkling” are behavioral processes. In both translations, we can see a great increase of the use of material verbs. This may also lie in the different characteristics of Chinese and English.

Look separately, Pound's translation contains more material and behavioral verbs than the original poem, but it has less relational and verbal processes. From the amount of process types, it seems that Pound's translation are more close to Li's poem, but when the translation lines are measured one-to-one corresponding to the original poem, we can get a different conclusion. In translating the first three lines of Li's poem, Pound keeps nearly the same process types as the original poem with only the change of the relational verb “无” to a prepositional phrase. In line 7, the material verb “marry” gives a dynamic picture to the reader that the wife married her husband, but it hasn't the function to show the change of

relationship between them, which is clearly presented by relational process in Li's poem. In line 13, there is a relational process in the original poem, which shows that the wife has the faith as the man mentioned in the allusion to stay with her husband forever, while here it is replaced by an adverb expressing time, thus losing the cultural connotation of Li's poem. Pound uses two material verbs in line 19, while in original poem Li uses two relational verbs, which are concerned with the wife's husband and his tracks, implying that her husband has left home for a long time. Pound's translation only presents the situation of the husband's leaving and doesn't have such an implicature. In Line 23-24, the relational verb "are" is about the characteristic of two butterflies, while in original poem Li uses a material verb "飞", displaying a vivid picture of paired butterflies flying, thus forming a contrast with the wife's situation and highlighting her loneliness. Pound's translation shows a static picture that paired butterflies are yellow over the grass of the west garden, losing the function of foil. The relational verb "grow" is concerned with the description of the wife, while in the original poem, Li uses exaggeration -- melancholy or sorrow makes the wife grow older, which emphasizes that the wife misses her husband very much. Pound's translation shows that the wife grow older because of time or because the paired butterflies hurt her, deviating from the original meaning.

Different from Pound, in Waley's translation, it can be found that there are more mental and relational processes, especially mental processes. When the transition lines are measured one-to-one corresponding to the original poem, process types of Waley's translation are more close to Li's poem. Waley lays more stress on mental processes to tell more about the inner consciousness of the wife. The mental verb "dared" expresses the shyness of the wife in the wedding. Verbs "desire", "thought" and "guessing" contribute to expressing the wife's deep love to her husband -- in her inner heart, she thinks that they will be together forever and her husband will never leave her. "I sorrow" tells explicitly the sadness of the wife; and "let me know" and "as you please" indicates the wife's strong desire to know her husband's news and to see him as soon as possible, though she will go to Chang Feng Sha. As to relational processes, in this translation, they are all concerned with the attribute of the wife and her husband, the relationship them. For example, "I wore", "I was" and "you were" indicate one characteristic of them. "Became" shows a change of relation (from his company to his wife).

## B. Participant Roles in *Changgan Xing* and Two Translations

Transitivity system illustrates the different types of processes. At the same time, it also points out the participants and the circumstantial elements involved in the processes. Therefore, it is of great significance to explore the use of participants and circumstances in *Changgan Xing* in order to know their functions and deviations created in the two translations.

In this poem, we can see the appellation words of *qie*, *lang* and *jun*. In ancient Chinese, *qie* is self-abasing term for women and *lang* and *jun* are the respectful appellation words of women to unmarried and married men respectively. *Changgan Xing* uses *qie* and *lang* or *jun* to imply an unequal status of the relationship between the wife and her husband, which is determined by the cultural background of ancient Chinese. However, because of the cultural and linguistic differences, in both the two translations, Pound and Waley translated these address terms into "I" and "you", "your", which indicates a equal position between people. As a result, their translations of the personal pronouns may lead to the loss of Chinese ethical values, but their translations meet the expectations of western reader, because their personal pronouns system has no such an implication. This deviation in the choice of personal pronouns as actor/goal or other participants can be found in nearly all English translations. It is hard to overcome cultural and linguistic differences in translation.

Moreover, through analysis, we can see that participants of actors and goals in two translations (Pound, 37; Waley 45) are much more than that of the original poem (22). This difference may be caused by linguistic differences. As we all know, Chinese is a paratactic language, which mainly focuses on the



meaning. Chinese does not need to follow strict standard of grammar as long as the meaning is clear. Therefore, in many cases, subjects can be omitted. In the original poem, expressions without actor/goal are very common such as “十四为君妇” which omits the subject “I”, because we can know the participants from the context. English is a hypotactic language, which attaches great importance to the form. English sentences cannot omit the subjects. Every participants must be clear in the sentence, which leads to the increase of participants in the two translations.

In the original poem, we can see “竹马” (zhu ma, a bamboo stick used a toy horse) plays as goal, and the “郎” is the actor who ride it. But in both translations, Pound and Waley translate it in to the circumstance that reflects manner. “抱柱信” (bao zhu xin) functions as attribute in Li’s poem. It is an Chinese allusion, which refers to the solemn pledge and firm promises between lovers. Here it means that the husband breaks his promise that he will never leave her. But this is not completely reflected in Pound’s translation. Pound translated it into a temporal adverbial and Waley takes it as phenomenon. “愁”(chou, melancholy) in Line 13 plays as actor and “红颜” (hong yan, beauty/appearance) acts as goal, having the meaning that melancholy makes her grow older. This expression emphasizes the missing of the wife. This is not embodied in the two translations.

Considering the amount, both translations have more circumstances than the original poem. Excluding the most common space, time, both translations also have the type of manner, which is absent in the original poem. Circumstance playing as manner is embodied in “you came by on bamboo-stilts”. The amount of circumstances playing as space and time is the same in both translations (8 and 10). In the original poem, the total circumstances appear 13 times, while in Pound’s and Waley’s 19. This difference is in fact caused by different characteristics of Chinese and English.

## V Contextual Consideration

As can be seen from the above analysis, Pound and Waley favor different using of transitivity, though the essential meaning of the original poem is clearly conveyed by both translations. And we have to admit that this variation in translation is inevitable and no two translators will translate a poem in exactly the same way. This variation is actually caused by many factors, such as the cultural and educational background of the translator, the linguistic characteristics of both languages, the understanding of cultural traditions to other countries and so on. It is of great significance to explore the contextual factors that lead to different translations of Pound and Waley.

Ezra Pound was a famous American poet, critic and translator in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In his life, he translated European and Chinese poets and his translated works were highly praised by western people. T. S. Eliot, the great American poet, once regarded Pound as ‘the inventor and creator of Chinese of our time. His imagism movement, his translation collection of Chinese classical poetry and his Cantos made Pound brilliant in the history of Chinese poem translation.

Pound’s translation of *Changgan Xing* is included in his collection *Cathay*. When he began to translated *Changgan Xing*, he neither knew Chinese language nor had historical background and knowledge about China. Actually, his translation work of *Cathy* is just a coincidence. In 1912, Pound was concentrating on studying imagery poetry which was inextricably linked with oriental poetry. At that time, he met Mary, the widow of American scholar Fenollosa, who had been engaged in the study of oriental literature for many years, leaving many unfinished manuscripts. Mary wanted to find someone to help organize and publish her husband’s manuscripts of Japanese drama and Chinese poetry. Then Pound was suitable for her eyes. At the end of 1913, Mary gave Pound 17 notes and some manuscripts of her husband. However, these manuscripts only had original texts and pronunciation, meaning and understanding in Japanese. When translating Chinese poems, he can only resort to Fenollos’s notes in Japanese and two Chinese scholars. Moreover, Fenollos’s manuscripts were finished with the help of two

Japanese scholars. As a result, his translation of *Cathay* was from Japanese not directly from Chinese. This is the main reason for Pound's deviation in translation. The translation of *Cathay* inspired Pound's lifelong interest in studying Chinese poetry. Late in his life, Pound studied Confucius and wrote the "Chinese Cantos" as part of his long work, *The Cantos*.

Pound's translation of *Changgan Xing* is also greatly influenced by his imagism movement. He was the initiator of imagism movement, which doesn't advocate a word-for-word translation. Rather, this movement emphasizes the principles of direct treatment, precise image, economical expression and musical rhythm. His translation is actually a 'remaking', which edits and reshapes the original, and casts it into the English style Pound chooses or forges for it. Pound's translation is free from the external form of the original poem and he employs various images to recreate the poem.

Because of lacking enough understanding to Chinese culture and language, Pound's translation of *Changgan Xing* has many mis-translations, omissions and rewrites. Mis-translations are mainly embodied in his translations of place name and time. For example, '瞿塘滟滪堆' is translated to 'Ku-to-yen'. What's more, these place names are obviously influenced by Japanese. Omissions and rewrites is reflected in the translation of Chinese allusions, for example, "抱柱信" is omitted and changed into "forever and forever and forever".

Unlike Pound, Waley knows very well about Chinese culture and language. He was a noted English Orientalist and Sinologist, and is still considered one of the world's greatest Asian scholars. During the first half of the twentieth century, his translations introduced the best of Chinese and Japanese literature and poetry to English-reading audiences. His many translations of Chinese works include *A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems*, *Tao Te Ching*, *the Analects of Confucius*, *the Book of Songs and so on*, which are still well received by English readers. Waley has neither been to China or received formal education and training on Chinese language. He was self-taught in both Chinese and Japanese.

From 1907 to 1910, Waley was educated in King's College, Cambridge, where he devoted himself to studying the major Western languages and Classics. By the time he left the college, he mastered 11 major European languages. In 1913, due to his language talent, he was appointed Assistant Keeper of Oriental Prints and Manuscripts at the British Museum in 1913. During this time he taught himself Chinese and Japanese in order to help catalog the paintings in the Museum's collection. Waley was a veritable language genius. In his third year at the British Museum, he translated and published a pamphlet entitled "Chinese Poems". In 1929, Waley quit his job at the British Museum so as to concentrate on translating and studying Chinese and Japanese literature. In 1953, Waley was awarded "Queen's Medal for Poetry". In translation, Waley prefers literal translation. He once said in the preface of *Chinese Poems* that in translation, he prefers those poems which can be translated literally, at the same time, they are classical. With this concept, Waley adopted literal translation when translating *Changgan Xing*, which makes his translation more close to Li's poem, though the process types are greatly increased.

## VI Conclusion

This thesis is the application of transitivity in Systemic Functional Linguistics into two English translations of Li Bai's *Changgan Xing*. It has been found that process types in both translations are apparently more than the original poem, especially material and behavioral processes, and mental processes in Waley's translation. In terms of the amount of processes, Pound's translation is more close to Li's poem, but when evaluated on the basis of one-to-one correspondence to the original poem, process types of Waley's translation are more close to the original poem. In Li Bai's poem, there are much more material processes than other process types, which contributes to creating a dynamic and vivid picture of the wife's emotional development toward her husband, thus shaping a lonely wife who



expresses her sincere love and deep missing to her husband who has left home for business. Pound changes more material processes than Waley and the great increase of material processes in the two translation is in a large degree related to the difference of Chinese and English. In Pound's translation, all the relational processes in the original poem are changed, while with much more mental processes and sensors than Li's poem, Waley's translation pays highly attention to the complicated consciousness flows and emotional changes of the wife.

Pound and Waley's different options of transitivity (process types, participants and circumstances) have their contextual factors. Pound, as an American, has little knowledge of Chinese language and culture when translating *Changgan Xing*, so his translation is greatly influenced by Japanese and imagism movement. In his translation, we can see many place names which are close to Japanese. Also, he doesn't translate the allusions in the original poem. Influenced by imagism, Pound's translation prefers 'remakes' of the original poem. Waley, as a celebrated English Orientalist and Sinologis, he has a comprehensive understanding of Chinese language and culture. What's more, when translating, he prefers literal translation. As a result, he can correctly translate many cultural phenomena of the original poem. At the same time, his option of transitivity is more close to Li's poem.

## Appendix

Transitivity selections in Li Bai's *Changgan Xing*

Line	Participants	Processes	Circumstances
1	妾发- actor, 额- goal 花- goal	初覆- material 折- material, 刷- material	门前- space
2	郎- actor, 竹马- goal 床- range, 青梅- goal	骑, 来- material 绕, 弄- material	
3	两小- carrier 嫌猜- attribute	同居- material 无- relational	长千里- space
4	头- goal	低- material 千唤- verbal, 不一回- material	向暗壁- space
5	君妇- identified 羞颜- goal	为- relational 未尝开- material	十四- time
6	眉- goal 尘与灰- phenomenon	始展- material 愿同- mental	十五- time
7	抱柱信- attribute 望夫台- range	常存- relational 岂上- material	
8	君-actor 瞿塘滟滪堆- goal	远行- material	十六- time
9	猿声- verbiage	不可触- material 哀- verbal	五月- time 天上- space
10	门前- carrier, 行迹- attribute 一一- carrier, 绿苔- attribute	迟- relational 生- relational	
11	苔深- goal 叶- actor	不能扫- material 落- material	秋风早- time
12	蝴蝶黄- actor	双飞- material	八月- time 西园草- space
13	此- phenomenon, 妾心- goal 愁- actor, 红颜- goal	感- mental 老- material	
14	三巴- goal 书- goal	下- material 报- material	早晚- time 家- space
15	远- verbiage 长风沙- goal	迎- material, 不道- verbal 直至- material	

## Process types in two translations

Line	Pound	Waley
1	cut-- material, play --material Pull -- material	wore --relational, covering-- material pluck --material, play- material
2	came -- material, play -- material walk -- material, play -- material	came -- material, walk -- material play -- material
3	went on -- material living -- material	live -- material
4	married -- material laugh - behavioral, being -- relational	became -- relational, was --relational dared-- mental, smile-- behavioral
5	lower -- material, look -- material called -- verbal, look back -- material	sank -- material, called -- verbal, did not turn -- material
6	stop - material, scowling - behavioral Desired - mental, mingled -- material	stopped-- material, wrinkling--behavioral,desired-mental mingled -- material
7	climb -- material	thought -- mental, were-- relational clung--material, guessing -- mental, climb --material
8	departed -- material, went-- material	went -- material
9	gone -- material, make -- material	venture -- material cluster -- material
10	dragged -- material, went -- material grown -- material	made -- material, cover -- material
11	clear-- material, fall -- material	sweep -- material falling -- material
12	are -- relational	flit-- material
13	hurt -- material, grow -- relational	wounds -- material, sit -- material sorrow -- mental, fade -- material
14	coming down -- material, let- material, know--mental	send -- material, let -- material know -- mental, go through--material
15	come out -- material meet -- material	come -- material, meet -- material, please -- mental

## Process types in Li's Changgan Xing and each translation

	<b>material</b>	<b>mental</b>	<b>relational</b>	<b>behavioral</b>	<b>verbal</b>	<b>existential</b>	<b>total</b>
<b>Li</b>	21	2	5	0	3	0	31
<b>Pound</b>	30	2	3	2	1	0	38
<b>Waley</b>	29	7	4	2	1	0	43

## Participants in Li's poem and each transition

	<b>Actor/goal</b>	<b>Senser/ phenomenon</b>	<b>Carrier/ attribute</b>	<b>Behaver/ behavior</b>	<b>Sayer/ receiver</b>	<b>total</b>
<b>Li</b>	22	2	6	0	2	30
<b>Pound</b>	37	3	6	2	0	48
<b>Waley</b>	45	7	8	2	0	62

## Circumstance divisions in Li's poem and each translation

<b>Circumstances</b>	<b>Li</b>	<b>Pound</b>	<b>Waley</b>
<b>space</b>	6	8	8
<b>time</b>	7	10	10
<b>manner</b>	0	1	1
<b>others</b>	0	0	0
<b>total</b>	13	19	19

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## 从及物性视角分析中国古诗《长干行》的两个译本

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**摘要:** 《长干行》是中国唐代浪漫主义诗人李白最优秀的诗歌之一。这首诗以女性的口吻, 表达了其对长期外出经商的丈夫真挚的爱和深深的思念。作为一首中国古典诗歌, 其深受许多西方诗人的喜爱, 并多次被翻译成英文版本。在所有英文译本中, 以埃兹拉·庞德的译本最为著名, 其被评论家誉为美国 20 世纪最精彩的译诗。本论文选取了两个英文译本, 即埃兹拉·庞德的译本, 以及著名的英国汉学家亚瑟·韦利的译本。本文基于系统功能语言学的理论, 在概念元功能的经验功能下, 从及物性的角度对两个英译本进行分析和比较, 从而了解哪个版本更忠实于原诗以及造成其翻译偏差的可能原因。

**关键词:** 系统功能语言学; 及物性; 《长干行》; 语境

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