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外语教学与研究出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS
北京 BEIJING

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to Zhu Chunshen, my supervisor, who has inspired, guided, and encouraged me in all aspects of my academic life throughout my stay at the Department of Chinese, Translation and Linguistics, City University of Hong Kong, who has spent an enormous amount of time working with me on every question that arises in my thinking as well as commenting and advising insightfully on the details of every presentation, paper, and translation of mine. My experience in research could never have been so rewarding without his dedication. I am also very grateful to him for his support in more than one aspect in my application for extension on visa and studentship, which makes it ever possible for me to concentrate to write up this dissertation.

My debt of gratitude also goes to my panel members. Johnathan Webster's analysis in his lectures on text linguistics has been so revealing that my interest in language was further inspired. I am greatly indebted to Randy LaPolla for introducing me to the studies within cognitive linguistics, information structure theory, and relevance theory in various informal stimulating discussions, many insights from which have been worked into this dissertation, and for calling my attention to literature of which I was not aware.

I would also like to thank Sin King Kui, the departmental research degree liaison, for nominating me for a United Nations internship programme at its NY headquarters. The experience there constitutes a valuable part of my education at the CityU. Most importantly, I have benefited a lot from his discussions with me, brief every time but thought-provoking indeed, in and outside his lectures on philosophy of language. His patience is also appreciated when I think of the rounds of discussions during the revision period following the oral examination on my thesis.

I also wish to thank other linguists in the department. Mary Erbaugh (having left the department though) alerted me to the aspectual phenomena in discourse by discussing with me some of the findings from her collaborated work with Carlota Smith; while Pan Hanhua followed up with illuminating and encouraging suggestions for further linguistic analysis after one of my presentations at an earlier stage of my candidature.

I also appreciate very much Robert Neather's kind help. He has proofread a few chapters of my thesis and discussed in detail with me despite his own full schedule.

A few words of thanks should also go to the department. Many renowned scholars in linguistics and cross-cultural studies have been invited as visiting professors. Those wonderful seminars they gave have broadened my horizons considerably. Besides, I am very grateful for its sponsorship of my UN internship.

The sweetest part of my tough PhD years in Hong Kong is what those dear friends and fellow students have given me. I am grateful to them for their help, for their

ABSTRACT

This dissertation, concerned with the understanding and production of written language in the context of translation, advances *textual salience* as a legitimate and vital aspect of the role of language in organizing the mind and particularly refers to the potentials manifested by a text in molding consciousness into some structure and hierarchy at the end of discourse experience. It articulates a conviction that every linguistic sign manifests certain cognitive structure and that a text as a combination of linguistic signs displays an overall pattern. Integrating insights from phenomenological aesthetics, discourse studies, and most importantly cognitive linguistics, the author devises some general parameters for mapping textual salience, which take into account three levels of reading, i.e. conceptual reading, contextual reading and intertextual reading, that any of the two fundamental classes of linguistic sign (THING and RELATION) may activate. They include (i) selection, perspective, and abstraction regarding the conceptual reading, (ii) discourse performance such as recurrence, positioning, concurrence, and distribution regarding the contextual reading, and (iii) culture/discipline-specific association regarding the intertextual reading.

A case corpus, which consists of a Chinese essay, 《荷塘月色》, and four of its published English translations of which three have keen analyzed in great detail, has then been investigated with respect to the defined parameters. These authentic texts are each treated as a textual being with independent integrity in its own right and are practically analyzed as such. In the course of characterizing textual salience, such particular indexes as degree of objectification of SELF and temporality in construal of situations as well as their respective interpretive suggestions have been further identified apart from those of discourse performance and culture-specific association. For a given text, once the structure and hierarchy of consciousness that could be projected onto a reading mind comes to light through mapping the textual salience, what psychological implications such mental constructs may point to has been explored. Comparison of these monolinguistic observations regarding textual salience follows in order to systematically capture in what aspects and to what extent the translated texts have been drifting away from the original.

Ramifications of the study on the case corpus turn out to be illuminating to reflections on two issues in relation to the translational phenomenon, i.e. *effect* and *shift*:

(1) An analysis of the notion of effect per se finds two possible dimensions in understanding the issue of effect: potential effect and actual effect. Such a distinction is frequently neglected by translation scholars. Our discussion of the problems in the existing views on effect leads to a recognition that potential effect is substantially characterizable while actual effect is beyond rigorous description as far as the current

human understanding of the mind and its relation with language is concerned. The mapping of textual salience in this dissertation demonstrates a method by which some potential sources of effect, with respect to textual salience in particular, have been characterized from within a text as a being with integrity. Discussion of such sources here, however, ceases to be a mere effort to locate the regularities, or even patterns, within the surface textual physique, and has taken into account and sought to explore the cognitive workings underpinning the presentation via language. It, in the long run, will help bridge the gap in explaining why certain textual properties can be related to certain psychological implications;

(2) The results from comparing the mapped textual salience patterns bring up the issue of shift. The existing approaches to shift are not without problems with their conceptual and methodological limits. Since each text in this dissertation is independently characterized with respect to parameters of textual salience with interpretive suggestions, shifts thus observed show empirical authenticity and alert us to the nature of the phenomenon of shift in translation as well as the relationship between translation and original, even the nature of translating. On one hand, why shift appears inevitable in translation becomes accountable in the course of characterizing the linguistic presentation in texts with reference to cognitively defined indexes for the language phenomena involved. On the other hand, the translations in the corpus, presumably all striving to stay as close as possible to one and the same original text, prove to be endowed linguistically with different potentials that would in turn impress the reading mind in different manners. A translation is thus construed as a textualized presentation of a translator's reading of the original rather than an equivalent, or even the equivalent, to the original.

ABBREVIATIONS

1sg	1st person singular pronoun
3rd	3rd person pronoun (regardless of the gender or number)
3sg-a-f	3rd person singular animate female pronoun
3sg-a-m	3rd person singular animate male pronoun
ACD	morpheme showing that something happens accordingly
ADV	manner adverbial marker (地/de5)
ASTV	a clause-final particle that adds an assertive tone to clause (的/de5)
ASSOC	associative (的/de5, or 得/de5) that connects two phrases or two relational predications
CL	classifier
CCSN	a morpheme that usually echoes a prior morpheme and indicates concession
DISP	a pre-THING morpheme marking the THING's being at disposal
EMPH	morpheme that adds an emphatic tone to clause
IMPFV	imperfective viewpoint marker
INFTV	infinitive form in English (*to* being the marker, or zero marking)
NOM	nominalizer (的/de5) that follows a modifying clause or a personal pronoun
PAST	past tense form in English that has different orthographic realizations (*-ed* being one of them)
PERF	participial form in English that has different orthographic realizations and that appears in either perfect or passive constructions (*-en* being one of them)
PFV	perfective viewpoint marker
PL	plural suffix
PRST	present tense form in English that has zero marking
RC	a post-RELATION morpheme marking the result or completion of the relational predication
SFP	sentence-final particle
SIP	a particle used sentence-initially to start a sentence
ST	source text
TT	translated text/target text

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1   Introduction and Overview

This thesis advances *textual salience* as a legitimate and vital aspect of the role of language in organizing the mind, which helps reveal how the structuring manifested through linguistic organizations within a text can impose on consciousness through discourse experience, and how it potentially shapes the cognition of the textual world. A descriptive framework of textual salience, informed by and derived from the concern with salience in phenomenological aesthetics, discourse studies, and most importantly cognitive linguistics, will prove fruitful in this regard after we apply it to an authentic text. An in-depth analysis of the text and its translations will not only consolidate the validity of textual salience (when language is construed as inseparable from human cognition), but also illustrate its operability (when a given text is to be characterized with respect to defined indexes). The significance, however, goes beyond the scope of written language understanding in monolinguistic circumstances. Textual salience will turn out to be more conspicuous in the bilingual context of translation. Its characterization will provide a perspective from which the phenomenon of shift can be seen more profoundly than from sporadic local semantic or syntactic differences, and will illuminate the conception of such controversial issues as *effect* in Translation Studies.

Before I set out to establish the framework more fully, it is necessary to articulate my general conception of language in relation to my focus of concern, i.e. the understanding and production of written language. First of all, I fully subscribe to the conviction that language is an integral part of human cognition and must be analyzed as such, which also reflects an intellectual trend in the studies of language. Understanding or producing a linguistic sign on a spontaneous occasion involves a sequence of cognitive processes and depends to a considerable degree on the overall epistemic experiences and the cognitive capacity of a given cognizing subject. Yet secondly, language, in my mind, does not exist in a vacuum and constitutes an indispensable aspect of human social life. It must be investigated as it is in real and natural communication. Whenever I say "language", or "a linguistic sign", it should be taken as language or a linguistic sign in real and natural use unless otherwise specified. Consideration with historical genesis aside, any linguistic sign manifests certain semantic structure, that is, a cognitive structure. Thirdly, due to the constraining role of linguistic conventions, such a cognitive structure will project itself onto the mental processing of a subject that comes in contact with a linguistic sign. The claim that the concrete neurobiological procedures in operation remain mysterious, or the concern with what such projection looks like in the mind, gives way to the more significant recognition that the semantic structure of a linguistic sign has the potential to orient the cognitive events going on in the mind of a subject. Fourthly, a text, an object

for perception and conception in its entirety, has a cognitive structure as well and is˙ highly likely to display some overall patterns formulated progressively all the way up from lower-order cognitive components to higher-order ones and eventually contributing to the structure of the receiving mind. Last but not least, I am convinced that semantic structure is language- or culture-specific to a considerable degree. All my contentions concerned will be made, and should be evaluated (where an evaluation is attempted), under this primary premise.

It should be acknowledged that the motivation of this work has originated in an attempt to conceptualize problems in relation to the translational phenomenon, a category where various linguistic and cognitive activities convene. The sweeping influence of modern linguistics in the twentieth-century academic world has also been conspicuous in various contemporary attempts at translation. The trend to study language as connected with the general structure of human cognition, however, did not gain momentum in linguistics proper until the late 1970s. There have merely appeared sporadic efforts in this direction in Translation Studies such as those ushering relevance theory and cognitive linguistics into the discipline (for example, Gutt, 1991; Tabakowska, 1993). A more popular interest in the relationship between language and the mind can be identified among the translation scholars that work within the tradition of critical linguistics, like Mason, Hatim, Stubbs, Fawcett, to name but a few. Critical linguistics refers to the approach to discourse developed from Halliday's systemic functional linguistics and was said to have inspired the most promising developments within the broad linguistic orientation in Translation Studies (Baker, 2005). The perspective represents a growing concern with the role of world view, ideology and power relations in shaping translational behaviour, thus the desire to know how the ways of thinking, or the systematic body of ideas, of an individual or a class can be revealed with support from text analysis in the context of translation. It should be noted that such preoccupations with both language and the mind have not reached for insights beyond critical linguistics. Coupling with the fact that the differences between psycholinguistic and cognitive approaches to translation have not been taken seriously (see Bell <1998>), it may readily suggest a lack of awareness of the findings published from the cognitively oriented research on language among most translation scholars within the linguistics paradigm, let alone those within the cultural studies paradigm in Translation Studies (see such distinction between approaches made in Baker <1996>). These updated findings can not only inspire conceptual and analytical perspectives, but also encourage an inquiry into the increasingly popular mention of *culture*, which will hopefully become less elusive when anchored in text-based studies of language and cognition, and cease to be all-encompassing.

The limited horizons found in the field as above and my persisting wonder at the nature of the language-cognition relationship explains in part the attention granted to closely related studies such as Ingarden's phenomenological investigations of text, and extensively to linguistics in its broadest sense. A seeming digression from the translational phenomenon per se plus a dedication to identification of parameters for

mapping textual salience and meticulous monolinguistic analysis of a text accordingly may invite criticisms for not being focused. But results from this analysis reveal the fruitfulness of the outlined descriptive framework in demonstrating the workings of language on the mind, and prepare me for further application of it to translated texts. The investigation in this regard in turn proves illuminating to my reflections on translation. In particular, I feel in a position to conceive the phenomenon of *shift* as inevitable in translation in view of the contemporary obsession with equivalence—as is apparent in the various scholarly attempts at its taxonomy—and to propose a descriptive framework, accommodating both linguistic and cognitive factors, for characterizing shift in view of the problems in prior attempts. The establishment of textual salience also assures me on the elusive issue of effect in Translation Studies. That is, effect is to be construed in regard to potentiality or actuality, and since actual effect is too idiosyncratic to be described with adequate rigor, it is meaningful to look into a text for all kinds of linguistic resources that endow it with potentials for a certain effect.

I will review in Chapter 2 the relevant literature in aesthetics and linguistics where I have identified a common concern with salience. Be it explicit or implicit, there is awareness that language can mold consciousness into some pattern and some hierarchical architecture through discourse experience. The aesthetic contemplation that provides me with insights into the understanding of the text refers to Ingarden's phenomenological approach to literary works while linguistics covers a range of cognitive and functional approaches to language. Langacker's cognitive grammar deserves separate mention because I will heavily rely on it for my conceptual basis and methodological instrument.

Departing from all these documented studies of salience, Chapter 3 sets out to establish the notion of textual salience and is mainly devoted to defining parameters for mapping textual salience. The feasibility of this descriptive framework will be verified through close analysis of authentic texts. Due to the limit of space, I can only demonstrate the mapping of textual salience in one case study. A modern Chinese essay entitled 《荷塘月色》 (*he2 tang2 yue4 se4* in Mandarin Chinese pinyin notations or *lotus-pond-moon-scene* in English gloss) has been selected. Chapter 4 introduces the background information of the case material and explains why this particular text has been selected. The rest of the chapter is engaged in analyzing the case material to map out the textual salience that its linguistic organization manifests and in uncovering the indexical significance of such textual salience for discourse experience. The chapter closes with evaluations of my descriptive framework of textual salience in terms of its fruitfulness in locating linguistically endowed potentials for patterning the mind.

Having gained solidarity through the analysis of a modern Chinese essay, the descriptive framework for characterizing textual salience will then be applied to the analysis of its three English translations in Chapter 5, each taken as a text in its own right. The results of analysis will be compared to the Chinese original in terms of their respective textual salience. As can be anticipated, shift is observable and will be summarized in regard to the aspects in which textual salience has been shifted and the linguistic channels through which the shift has occurred of a text as a whole when it is

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re-presented in another language.

Chapter 6 will indicate ramifications of the above case study for rethinking on translation. In particular, the study sheds light on the elusive issue of effect in the various discourses on translation. In addition, it dismisses once more the contemporary obsession with equivalence and proves the inevitability of shift in the translational phenomenon. The results will demonstrate the advantage of textual salience over existing efforts in Translation Studies in characterizing shift. Such empirical efforts will also offer a reference for any further step to explain what factors could have been involved in the phenomenon of shift in translation, as we have observed. The chapter concludes with a summary of my conceptual and methodological contribution to the study of translation.

The concluding chapter will identify some further topics of a more fundamental nature and worthy of further exploration. These include the interplay between language/culture and cognition, and some corpora-based investigations along the current line of thinking. All these have become manifest in the course of the present work but are unable to be completed within a doctoral thesis, much less one that intends to initiate an approach to the problems in translation from a new perspective and with solid analytical evidence.