

The Brief Analysis of Cohesive Devices in the Debut of Daiyu in the Third Chapter of A Dream of Red Mansion

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Abstract: Coherence and cohesion play a crucial role in discourse analysis and translation. This paper has chosen a paragraph in the third chapter of *A Dream of Red Mansion* as the material to compare the similarities and differences in the usage of cohesive devices between the two editions which are translated by David Hawkes and Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang respectively. It enables the readers to have a better understanding of the differences between English and Chinese so that the linguistic features can be better captured during the translation.

1. Background Review

Recent years have witnessed a booming development in the study of discourse analysis since the publication of *Cohesion in English* by Halliday & Hasan (1976). A lot of researches have been done in China and the more influential papers include *The outline of discourse analysis* by Huang Guowen (1988), *The Cohesion and Coherence in Discourse* by Hu Zhuanglin (1994), *Discourse Coherence and Translation Exploration* by Wang Dongfeng(1998), *On Discourse Coherence* by Zhang Delu (2000), and *On the Computability of Discourse Coherence* by Li Zuowen and Liang Guojie (2018), which not only have rejuvenated the linguistic area but also the translation field. As one of the four classics in China, *A Dream of Red Mansion* has attracted numerous researchers to study it, which gradually evolves into a research wave that is comparable to the study of Shakespeare. Many scholars also try to translate it into English and there have been nine editions. This paper chooses a paragraph describing the debut of Daiyu as the study object and compares two translation versions translated by David Hawkes and Yang, Hsien-yi & Gladys Yang respectively in the perspectives of cohesion and coherence and tries to find the similarities and differences between English and Chinese as well as the two versions with the aim at offering some enlightenment in translating Chinese works into English.

2. Cohesive Devices

The concepts of cohesion and coherence will be discussed in the following part. "Cohesion is a semantic concept, it refers to the semantic relations among linguistic elements in discourse"(Huang Guowen, 2006:58). Hu Zhuanglin (1994) firmly believed that "the core of discourse study is cohesion and coherence and they are also the essence that determine the success of discourse research. Thompson (2008:179) argues that cohesion is the resource that creates discourse characteristics and is a means to illustrate discourse experience and interpersonal semantic coherence, which belongs to discourse phenomenon; Coherence is a kind of psychological phenomenon that exists in the mind of the authors and readers, which can not be confirmed or calculated as cohesion. To be brief, the most obvious difference between cohesion and coherence is that cohesion is a method and coherence is a psychological feeling. *Introducing Functional Grammar* divides the cohesive devices into three categories including anaphor, ellipsis and cohesion. Here we will analyze the cohesive devices used in the debut of Daiyu in the third chapter of *A dream in Red Mansion*.

2.1 Anaphor

The following part are the two translation versions of Yang, Hsien-yi & Gladys Yang and David, Hawkes, and the former translation version will be called the translation of Yang and the latter the edition of Hawkes for convenience. Also, the original text which will be omitted and readers can find it in the edition of *A Dream of Red Mansion* written by Cao Xueqin and published by Beijing Normal University Press in 1979.

2.1.1 The translation edition of Yang:

“Her whole air is so distinguished! She doesn’t take after her father, son-in-law of our Old Ancestress, but looks more like a Chia. No wonder our Old Ancestress couldn’t put you out of her mind and was for ever talking or thinking about you. But poor ill-fated little cousin, losing your mother so young!” With that she dabbed her eyes with a handkerchief.

“I’ve only just dried my tears. Do you want to start me off again?” said the old lady playfully. “Your young cousin’s has a long journey and she’s delicate. We’ve just got her to stop crying. So don’t reopen that subject.

His-feng switched at once from grief to merriment. “Of course,” she cried. “I was so carried away by joy and sorrow at the sight of my little cousin, I forgot our Old Ancestress. I deserve to be caned.” (Yang, Hsien-yi & Gladys Yang:1978)

2.1.2 The translation edition of Hawkes:

“And everything about her so distingue! She doesn’t take after your side of the family, Grannie. She’s more like a Jia. I don’t blame you for having gone on so about her during the past few days—but poor little thing! What a cruel fate to have lost Auntie like that!” and she dabbed her eyes with a handkerchief.

“I’ve only just recovered!,” laughed Grandmother Jia. “Don’t you go trying to start me off again! Besides, your little cousin is not very strong, and we’ve only just managed to get her cheered up. So let’s have no more of this!”

2.1.3 In obedience to the command Xi-feng at once exchanged her grief for merriment.

“Yes, of course. It was just that seeing my little cousin in here put everything else out of my mind. It made me want to laugh and cry all at the same time. I’m afraid I quite forgot about you, Grannie dear. I deserve to be spanked, don’t I ? (David, Hawkes: 1973)

It is known that reference includes endophoric reference and exophoric reference (Thompson, 2008:184) and this paper focuses on endophoric reference consisting of anaphora and cataphora . The objects of reference are usually nouns, pronouns and verbs in the discourse, now the five nouns (names of the five major persons) will be analyzed from the point view of endophoric reference.

From table one, it can be seen that there are 5 words including 4 nouns and 1 pronoun standing for Daiyu in the original text, while in the edition of Yang, there are 4 nouns and 3 pronouns in contrast with that of Hawkes which consists of 4 nouns, 5 pronouns and 1 verb phrase. As for Xifeng, there are 3 pronouns and 1 noun in original text with 5 pronouns and 1 noun in Yang edition and 7 pronouns and 1 nouns in Hawkes edition. There are 4 nouns and 2 pronouns representing Ancestress, while there are 4 nouns and 3 pronouns in Yang Edition and 3 nouns and 4 pronouns in Hawkes edition. From the table, it can be seen that English uses more nouns and pronouns to refer to the same thing than that of Chinese due to the reason that Chinese is parataxis while English is hypotaxis (Lian,1993:18).Chinese depends on its discourse to convey the meaning while English focuses more on the form, so the anaphora appears in English more frequently. It is also clear that Hawkes edition uses more pronouns in anaphora than Yang’s edition.

Table 1: The frequency of names of the main characters in original text and the endophoric reference in two editions

Names	Daiyu	Xifeng	Old Ancestress	Auntie
Edition by Yang	she, take after her father, a Chia, you, little cousin, young cousin, her, little cousin	She, You, his-feng I, I, I	our Old Ancestress, our Old Ancestress, her, I, me, the old lady our Old Ancestress	your mother
Edition by Hawkes	her, she, take after your side, she, a Jia, her, poor little thing, little cousin, her, little cousin	I, she, you, Xi-feng, her, me, I, I, I	Grannie, you, I, Grandmother Jia, me, You, Grannie dear	auntie
Edition by Yang	she, take after her father, a Chia, you, little cousin, young cousin, her, little cousin	She, You, his-feng I, I, I	our Old Ancestress, our Old Ancestress, her, I, me, the old lady our Old Ancestress	your mother
Edition by Hawkes	her, she, take after your side, she, a Jia, her, poor little thing, little cousin, her, little cousin	I, she, you, Xi-feng, her, me, I, I, I	Grannie, you, I, Grandmother Jia, me, You, Grannie dear	auntie
Items	anaphora	anaphora	anaphora	anaphora
Original Text	5	5	6	1
Edition by Yang	8	6	7	1
Edition by Hawkes	10	9	7	1

2.2 Ellipsis

Ellipsis is a very common device which makes articles more concise. “Clause or part of the clause, verbs or part of the noun phrases will be omitted in the following discourse.”(Halliday, 2006:309). Thompson also discussed that ellipsis often occurred in adjacent sentences which made it easy for readers to memorize the information (Thompson, 2006:184). Ellipsis can be found easily in both Chinese and English and the ellipsis in the target paragraph can be illustrated as follows:

Table 2: Ellipsis frequency of names in original version and the two English versions

Ellipsis frequency	Daiyu	Xifeng	Old Ancestress
Original version	5	5	1
Yang edition	1	1	0
Hawkes edition	0	0	0

What can be seen from the table is that pronouns are often omitted in Chinese as the readers can easily identify the character mentioned in the former context. The names that mentioned in former text in the original text are eclipsed, which will be redundant with them. As Chinese is parataxis which focuses on the meaning of the context while English emphasis the form and the connection between sentences, therefore the eclipsed content will be reappeared. Moreover, both Yang version and Hawkes version grasped the essence of the original language.

2.3 Connected Component

There are three kinds of connectors including the preposition in the clause, the conjunction between clauses and the conjunctive adverbs in clause complex (Thompson, 2006: 189).

Table 3: The comparison of connected component between original text and two translation version

Connected component	Preposition in clause	Conjunction between clauses	Conjunctive adverbs in clause complex
Original text	0	3	0
Yang version	1	4	1
Hawkes version	2	6	1

It can be seen from the table that Chinese uses less conjunctions than that of English and conjunctions in Chinese usually occur between sentences. Yang version uses less conjunctions than the Hawkes version and does better in concision.

In addition, the original text has one paragraph while the Yang version has three paragraphs and Hawkes four paragraphs. The original text recorded the conversation between Xifeng and our Old Ancestress and Xifeng had two turn-taking while our Old Ancestress one. While in translation, the hidden meaning needs to be displayed and the two English versions adjusts the paragraphs and obeys the turn-taking. Hawkes also puts the turn-taking signal of Xifeng as one paragraph to reflect Xifeng's slippery characteristics, which also works as a transitional paragraph and cohesive device.

3. Conclusion

It is clear that there exists differences in the usage of cohesive devices through the analysis of the original text and two English versions. Chinese uses less pronouns and omits subject and component more, while English uses less ellipsis. English uses more conjunctions and pays more attention to the form. From the comparison of the two English versions, Yang version is more concise in the perspective of cohesive devices usage. The study of cohesive devices can give us a new perspective to appreciate translation and make the translation area more active.

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