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## Original Research Article

### **Stylistic Features of Chinese Translation of Emily Dickinson's Poetry: A Comparison of Kang Yanbin's and Wang Jinhua's translations**

**Abstract:** Up to now, Chinese scholars have made great achievements in study of Emily Dickinson's poetry, but studies of Chinese translation of her poetry, which is an important part of Emily Dickinson's studies and is necessary and feasible as well, are far from enough. By using python programming language to write program code for word segmentation and part of speech tagging, and with the help of authoritative Chinese Thesaurus, big data statistics and analysis on formal and vocabulary features of Kang Yanbin's and Wang Jinhua's Chinese translation of Emily Dickinson's poems are made, and translation features of the two translations are summarized, which will showcase one of the features of Chinese translation of Emily Dickinson's poetry in China. It is found that in comparison, Wang's translation is more fluent and easy to read, yet due to the too many explanatory, descriptive and connective words added in translation, as well as large difference between the original and the translation in the number of punctuation marks, especially of dashes, Wang's translation are is less concise and faithful. Kang's translation is faithful to original form, and is terse and concise, but sometimes there exists excessive conciseness which entails inadequate expression, and the retardant coherence, as well as occasionally use of rare words sometimes make Kang's translation obscure, which hinder fluency and readability to some degree.

**Comment [H1]:** You mean 'stylistic features'?

**Key words:** Emily Dickinson's poetry; Chinese translation; stylistic features; Kang Yanbin's translation; Wang Jinhua's translation

#### **1. Introduction**

Although the famous American poetess Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) was unknown in her lifetime, she won admiration and love of readers all over the world with her unique poetic style and rich poetic implication after her death, and is now considered to be one of the twin stars of modern American poetry, with the other one as Walt Whitman (1819-1892), and has triggered a continuous wave of research. So far, the study of Dickinson and her poetry is booming, and there are endless publications and papers.

However, the study of Chinese translation of Dickinson's poems in China is rare, though important. Translation has its own creativity and value. The Chinese well-known translator Xu Jun (1954- ) believes that "Mechanical changes in the form of words **cannot** convey the soul of words, and blind faithful correspondence **cannot** achieve spiritual resonance." (Xu Jun, 2003:1), indicating that translation is a difficult task with its creativity. The famous poet and translator Mr. Yu Guangzhong(1928-2017) even described translation as a very sacred thing, thinking that original author is a god and translator is a wizard. The oracle must be euphemistically pointed out by the wizard in a human way so that mortals can understand it, otherwise this oracle still staying in the clouds and mists, unattainable, the translator is between the gods and the people, and it is really embarrassing to understand the gods and then speak to the people in a human way (Yu Guangzhong, 2002: 55).

This argument is not unreasonable. When two languages and cultures collide and need transmission, translator's translation plays a central role between original author's original work and readers. The translator is undoubtedly at the central hub. Readers who do not understand foreign languages can only get a glimpse of the original through translation, otherwise the original is only a series of images **and** symbols. Furthermore, in addition to differences in vocabulary and grammar between Chinese and English, the deeper level is the difference in cultural backgrounds. Although not necessarily described as a natural moat, it can also be compared to a trench that is difficult to cross. Dickinson's poetry has a structure so far still seem to be novel and even weird, with very jumping thinking, simple and concise language, and meaningful and mysterious metaphors. It is even more difficult to use Chinese to express them as perfectly as possible. Yet, the more difficult it is to translate, the more valuable it is, and the more necessary it is to investigate. Nowadays, when research on Dickinson and her poetry is booming at home and abroad, the translation study is an effective supplement and an important part of Dickinson's studies.

This paper adopts the method of data collection and analysis to compare the forms and lexical features of the original and the translated versions. Firstly, the program code is written in Python programming language, and with the help of authoritative word segmentation thesaurus, word segmentation and part of speech judgment of the original and translation are realized. Secondly, the number of words, stanzas, punctuation and related parts of speech in the original and translated versions are counted, and translation features of the translation are analyzed by using these data. Hermans pointed out that "there is another voice in the translation, which is the voice of the translator" (Hermans, 1996:27). According to the above research path, the author of this paper collects and analyzes ~~the~~ 68 translation texts of Kang Yanbin version and Wang Jinhua version that have the same source text, summarizes stylistic features of the two translations based on objective data, and tries to reveal the translator's voice hidden in lines of Chinese.

**Comment [H2]:** 'and' inserted

**Comment [H3]:**

**Comment [H4]:** The title of the paper talks of stylistic features which are not limited to lexical features. Reconcile.

**Comment [H5]:** The language is cumbersome. Please recast this statement to properly capture your intention on methodology.

**Comment [H6]:** Below this section, there should be a discussion of translation theories and which one(s) the author adopts in this study.

## 2. Stylistic Features of Kang's Translation and Wang's Translation

There are two translations studied in this paper. One is *No Rose, Yet Felt Myself A'blissom: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*, translated by Kang Yanbin, published by Lijiang Publishing House on March 1, 2013, containing 900 translated poems. The other is *Selected Dickinson's Poems*, translated by Wang Jinhua (1950- ), published by Beiyue Literature and Art Publishing House in 2010, containing 243 translated poems. The poems discussed in this paper adopt the poem serial number given by Johnson's edition, usually with the letter J followed by Arabic numerals. The Arabic numerals are the numbers representing the poem in the complete collection of Dickinson's poems edited by Thomas H. Johnson (1902-1985) and published in 1955 and 1960. Since only four of Dickinson's poems have titles, so Dickinson's poems are generally referred to by the serial number of a poem given in Johnson's edition or Franklin's edition.

### 2.1 Word count

The number of words in the 68 original poems and their 68 translated poems in Kang's translation and Wang's translation respectively is counted. The statistical results are shown in Table 1.

Table1. Word Count of the Original and the Two Translations

Versions	Original	Kang's Translation	Wang's Translation
Word Count	3376	3975	6072
Difference in Word Count	0	599	2696
Difference in Percentage	0	17.74%	79.86%

The total word count of the 68 translated poems of Kang's translation is 3975 and that of Wang's is 6072. The difference between the two translations is 2097 words, and there is also a gap between the two translations and the original, especially in between Wang's translation and the original. Comparing the word count of each translated poem between the two translations, it is found that the Wang's translation has more words than the Kang's translation. It shows that when translating the same poem, Wang's translation uses more words. When translating the same poem, the number of words in the translation can reflect the degree of brevity and conciseness of words to a certain extent. If the number of words is too few and the language is too concise, it may not be

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able to express original poetic meaning adequately; if the number of words is too many and the language is too loose, it may not be a poem but rather a prose. Just take poem 928 as an example.

**J928<sup>1</sup>**

The Heart has narrow Banks

It measures like the Sea

In mighty -- unremitting Bass

And Blue Monotony

Till Hurricane bisect

And as itself discerns

It's insufficient Area

The Heart convulsive learns

That Calm is but a Wall

Of unattempted Gauze

An instant's Push demolishes

A Questioning -- dissolves.

(Dickinson 436)

**Kang's Translation<sup>2</sup>:**

**Wang's Translation<sup>3</sup>:**

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<sup>1</sup> The original Dickinson's poems quoted in this paper are all from: Dickinson, Emily. *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1960. The following is no longer marked one by one.

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心有窄窄堤岸	心儿有窄窄的堤岸
如大海起伏	它似海一般的宽阔
低音厚重——绵绵	有力——不停地低声奏唱
单调的幽蓝	一片单调的兰色

直到飓风横切	直到飓风来至将它劈开
如同察觉	在它自己发现出
自身缺憾	它空间的不足时
心在悸动时懂得	痉挛的心儿开始悟出

平静是一堵薄墙	平静只是一层未经
细纱无人碰过	触动的薄薄的纱罗
轻轻触及即毁	偶尔的一推一搽或是
稍加追问——消解	一个疑团——都能将其捅破。

The word count of the original and the two translations is shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Word Count of Original Poem 928 and Its Translations

Versions	Original	Kang's Translation	Wang's Translation
Word Count	49	68	101

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<sup>2</sup> Kang's translations quoted in this paper are all from: Kang, Yanbin, tran. *No Rose, Yet Felt Myself A'loom: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Guilin: Lijiang Publishing House, 2013. No further notes are given below.

<sup>3</sup> Wang's translations quoted in this paper are all from: Wang, Jinhua, tran. *Selected Dickinson's Poems*. Taiyuan: Beiyue Literature&Art Publishing House, 2010. No further notes are given in the following.

Word Count Difference and Percentage	/	19 (38.78%)	52 (106.12%)
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It can be seen from Table 2 that the number of words in Wang's translation is significantly more than that of Kang's translation and original text. There are more descriptive and explanatory words in Wang's translation, which helps to create an atmosphere and convey original poetic meaning, and the translation is more lyrical and graceful. For example, the translation expressions of “心儿” (heart) and “一推一搯” (a push and a push) make the translation more appealing. There is a sense of closeness and grace. While Kang's translation is more succinct. The second stanza “直到飓风横切/ 如同察觉/ 自身缺憾/ 心在悸动时懂得” (Till Hurricane bisect/ And as itself discerns/ It's insufficient Area/ The Heart convulsive learns) clearly shows that the translator strives to compress the meaning of the original and translate with as few words as possible, without directly translating the two original words “itself” and “it's”, and the translation seems too concise.

In addition, Wang's translation pays more attention to the cohesion of target language. Sometimes, in order to make the translation more in line with Chinese expression habits, the form of the translation is not completely in accordance with the original. Therefore, Wang's translation appears to be semantically smooth and fluent. For example, for Wang's translation “偶尔的一推一搯或是/ 一个疑团——都能将其捅破。” (i.e. can pierce it with a push and a push or a doubt.), these two lines of translation do not fully follow the original form, and also, the two original words "demolishes" and "dissolves" are combined and translated into “捅破”(pierced). However, the handling of Kang's translation is different from that of Wang's. The translator translates both verbs and follows the word order of the original. In this regard, Kang's translation is more faithful to the original, but not as smooth as Wang's translation.

The translation should be as close as possible to original text in terms of content and form on the premise that the target text expresses its meaning. From the comparison of the translations of poem 928, it can be seen that Wang's translation wins in fluency, but also loses because of fluency. Wang's translation uses more words and adjusts original word order to make translation smooth and fluent, but this also make the translation insufficient in conciseness, which is different from the original. Kang's translation wins in more concise and more faithful to original form, but also loses in its rigid and constrained expression for being over-condensed and over-brief. Professor Liu Shoulun, a Dickinson scholar, pointed out that Dickinson's poems use simple words and short sentences, and “the extensive use of ellipsis is one of Dickinson's main methods of tempering her poems” (Liu Shoulun, 1998: 56). The language of Dickinson's poems is condensed, and the smoothness of Wang's translation due to frequent word additions and word order adjustments conflicts with original characteristics of Dickinson's poems.

In short, Wang's translation is with more explanatory descriptions, more fluent and graceful, but has more words, which is close to twice the number of original text, and it loses conciseness. Kang's translation gives readers an intuitive feeling that it is highly condensed, which is supported and proved by statistics of word count. It is close to one to one with the original word count, but it is too concise and lacks of adequate description. Sometimes, the translation of original words and

sentences is not complete, and sometimes there is omission of pronouns and nouns, making the translation not expressive enough. In short, Wang's translation is fluent but sometimes not concise, while Kang's translation is concise but sometimes inadequate in expression.

## 2.2 Stanzas

The number of stanzas of the 68 original texts and translated texts is counted, and the results are shown in Table 3. It can be seen that the number of stanzas in the two translations differs from the original. Kang's translation has 2 more stanzas than the original, and Wang's translation has 9 more stanzas than the original.

Table 3. Statistics of Stanzas of 68 Original Texts and the Translations

Versions	Original	Kang's Translation	Wang's Translation
Total Stanzas	126	128	135
Difference in Stanzas	0	2	9

Statistics show that there are 5 translated poems in Kang's translation that differ from the original in the number of stanzas, accounting for 7.35% of the 68 original texts (see Table 4), while Wang's translation has 6 translated poems that differ from the original in the number of stanzas, accounting for 8.82% of the total 68 original texts (see Table 5). Most of translated poems in the two translations differs from original text by one stanza, and only one translated poem differs by two stanzas respectively in each of the two translations.

Table 4. Translated Poems with Stanza Deviations in Kang's Translation

Serial No. Of Poems	895	1105	1189	1232	1339
Number of Original Stanzas	3	1	2	1	1
Number of Translated Stanza	2	2	1	2	3

Table 5. Translated Poems with Stanza Deviations in Wang's Translation

Serial No. Of Poems	1196	1232	1272	1339	1413	1535
Number of Original Stanzas	1	1	1	1	1	1
Number of Translated Stanza	2	2	2	3	2	2

Poetry stanza helps to reflect emotional rhythm, logical stratum, or switch of topic, and can give poem more coloring and connotations. The structure of Dickinson's poems is flexible and changeable, and is not rigidly constrained by grammar. The emotions hidden between the lines of poems are sometimes enthusiastic and sometimes restrained. When reading her poems, one can feel her sometimes sonorous and sometimes decisive rhythm, which makes her poems have a different aesthetic feeling. Although translation has its translator's creativity, it is necessary to find a balance between creativity and faithfulness, and it should not deviate too much from the original text. If due faithfulness is lost, the translation will be unbalanced, and there will be only translator's voice in the translation, and the voice of the original author will be distorted. Faithfulness of translation not only refers to faithfulness in choice of words and sentences, but also loyalty to overall structure of the original poem, including maintaining faithfulness to the number of original stanzas. The translation of Dickinson's poems should try to keep the original arrangement of stanzas and present the most authentic appearance of original poem. Translator Sun Zhili pointed out that literature is the art of language, in which content and form cannot be separated. Content determines form, and form often plays a decisive role in expressing content. Therefore, a rigorous translator will not only transplant original content, but also be good at preserving original form, striving for integration of content and form (Sun Zhili, 2002: 43). And the "form" naturally includes stanzas of the original poem.

**Comment [H7]:** This, in my view, is a recommendation that should have been reserved for the conclusion

Both translations are not completely faithful to the original text in the total number of stanzas, but Wang's translation deviates more, reaching to a total of 9 stanzas. The number of translated poems that deviates from the original in terms of number of stanza is also slightly more in Wang's translation (i.e. 6 poems, accounting for 8.82%) than in Kang's translation (i.e. 5 poems, accounting for 7.35%). Therefore, in terms of stanza, Kang's translation is more faithful to the original than Wang's translation, and Wang's translation is slightly inferior to Kang's translation in handling of original stanzas.

### 2.3. Punctuation

Punctuation plays an important role in poetry. Lv Jin (1939- ), a famous poet and scholar, believes that punctuation marks are lyrical and musical symbols (Lv Jin, 1998:103). In addition, scholar Duan Caolin believes that punctuation, which is mainly used as a "lyrical and musical

**Comment [H8]:** Some great poets disregard punctuation – e.g. Cumming, Ogbowei



symbol" in poetry, can sometimes be regarded as an image symbol, because it plays a role in guiding, revealing or strengthening the image (Duan Caolin, 2000: 32). Punctuation is not only helpful to convey the author's emotion, but also an integral part of the form of the text, and the use of each punctuation reflects original author's intention. Therefore, translator should keep the original punctuation marks as much as possible, which can not only preserve and convey original author's thoughts and emotions to the maximum extent, but also protect original poetic structure. This is particularly important in Dickinson's poetry translation. Scholar Zhang Yuejun believes that Dickinson's eclectic form of expression complements her rebellious and even shocking thoughts, none of which should be neglected. He believes that when translating Dickinson's poetry, the original form should be retained as much as possible (Zhang Yuejun, 1998: 41 ).

Researcher Liu Xiaomin once summarized the characteristics of Dickinson's poems. One of them is the use of dashes in Dickinson's poems: "The use of dashes fills almost all of Dickinson's works, and plays a role in creating an overall atmosphere, creating dramatic conflicts, highlighting key concepts and triggering readers to think." (Liu Xiaomin, 2010: 91) One of the uniqueness of her poems lies in the large number of unconventional use of dashes. Contrary to conventional practice of using commas and periods, etc. to connect and break sentences in poetry at that time, Dickinson blazed a new trail and dared to innovate. Dickinson created a unique language form by using dashes instead of commas and other punctuation marks. In fact, Dickinson's original manuscript uses a large number of line segments, including horizontal and oblique, long and short, which serve a variety of functions. The English printed version is uniformly printed as short horizontal bar to show the difference between it and a dash, though generally it is also called dash. However, restricted by requirements of Chinese publishing standards and specifications, the Chinese translation of original short horizontal bar can only be translated and printed into dash. It can be seen that dash in Dickinson's poems is one of the distinctive features of her poems, and has important formal and grammatical functions.

Therefore, it is very important to analyze the use of dashes when studying the translation of Dickinson's poems. The number of dashes in Kang's translation is equal to that in the original work, while Wang's translation does not completely reserve dashes in the original, which is 56 less. Among the seven punctuation marks in statistics (see Table 6), the number of dashes is the most noticeable.

**Comment [H9]:** An overall atmosphere of 'what'?

Table 6. Statistics of Punctuation in the Original and the Two Translations

Versions Punctuation	Dashes	Exclamation Marks	Commas	Periods	Questions Marks	Colon	Quotation Marks
Original	439	18	84	68	10	0	14
Kang's Translation	439	20	79	68	10	0	13
Wang's Translation	383	18	53	67	11	0	18

According to the statistical results (see Table 6), among the seven punctuation marks, the quantity of four punctuation marks in Kang's translation is the same as that of the original text (i.e., dash, period, question mark and colon), while the other three are different from the original text (i.e. exclamation mark, comma, quotation mark), but the difference is within 5, which shows that Kang's translation is not much different from the original in terms of punctuation.

In Wang's translation, there are only two punctuation marks (i.e. exclamation marks and colons) that are equal in quantity to the original, the other two punctuation marks (i.e. period and question mark) differ by one from the original, the number of quotation marks is 4 more than that of the original, the number of commas is 31 (36.90%) less than that of the original, and the number of dashes is 56 (12.76%) less than that of the original.

It can be seen that Wang's translation is not as faithful as Kang's in punctuation translation, the most noticeable of which is that the number of dashes deviates from the original the most, followed by commas. Checking Wang's translation and original text, original dashes are not converted into quotation marks and other punctuation marks in translation. It can be seen that the reason for the decrease in the number of dashes in Wang's translation is mainly that the translator directly deletes original dashes in translation. For example, the original line "The peace - the flight - the Amethyst -" [poem 106] is translated in Kang's translation as “平静——逝去——紫水晶——”, while in Wang's translation as “因为平和——祥瑞——美丽的紫色在那边展现,”. Wang's translation directly deletes the third original dash, making the number of dashes in this translated poem not completely corresponding to the original poem.

In terms of the number of commas, Kang's translation has 5 fewer than the original, and the difference is not large, while Wang's translation has 31 fewer, accounting for 36.90%, and the deviation is more obvious. In both translations, commas may be adjusted. In translation, original comma can be deleted or converted into other punctuation marks. For example, the original line of "Become, alas, more fair --" [poem 1196] in Kang's translation is translated as “啊!变得,更美

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——”, and the first original comma is converted into an exclamation mark. In Wang's translation, there are often cases such as condensing the original sentences (lines) and rearranging the order of sentences (lines) to make the translation more fluent and easy to read and understand. However, compared with the original, the more fluent translation naturally has had some changes, such as sentence breaks and so on, including the change of comma. For example, there are two commas in the original line of “Because, Sir, love is sweet!” [poem 106]. Wang's translation combines “Because” and “love is sweet!” and translates into “先生,是甜蜜的爱情使然!”, which is more clear and smooth than Kang's translation of “大人,因,爱意甜美!”, but Wang's translation has slightly changed the original sentence structure and also has deleted an original comma.

In terms of other punctuation marks such as period, colon, and question mark, Kang's translation and Wang's translation have little deviation from the original.

On the whole, the use of punctuation in Kang's translation is more consistent with the original than that in Wang's translation. Except that there is a slight deviation from the original in the number of exclamation marks, commas and quotation marks, the number of other four punctuation marks is equal to that of the original. Since punctuation marks are also an important part of poetry, keeping the original language form as much as possible in translation is what poetry translation should have. In this respect, Kang's translation is closer to the original text than Wang's translation, and is more faithful to original punctuation and structure.

## **2.4. Part of Speech**

In terms of vocabulary, statistics of parts of speech, such as nouns, pronouns, verbs and conjunctions in the original and translations, as well as repetitive words, four-character structures, erhua words (r-coloring words) and classical Chinese function words, are counted and compared and analyzed.

### **2.4.1 Noun, Pronoun, Verb and Conjunction**

The number of parts of speech such as nouns, pronouns, verbs and conjunctions in the original and the two translations are counted in order to have a glimpse of the characteristics of words used in the two translations. The statistical results are shown in Table 7

Table 7. Statistics of Original and Translated Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs and Conjunctions

Word Classes and Contrast	Original	Kang's Translation	Wang's Translation
Nouns	869	344	658
Original and Translated Noun Ratio	1: 1	1: 0.40	1: 0.76
Pronouns	285	159	466
Original and Translated Pronoun Ratio	1: 1	1: 0.56	1: 1.64
Verbs	481	481	888
Original and Translated Verb Ratio	1: 1	1: 1	1: 1.85
Conjunctions	118	44	113
Original and Translated Conjunction Ratio	1: 1	1: 0.37	1: 0.96

As can be seen from Table 7, the number of nouns and pronouns in Kang's translation is much less than that in the original. The number of nouns is only about 40% of that of the original, that is, 525 less. The number of pronouns is only 56% of the original, with 126 less. The total number of nouns and pronouns in translation differs greatly from that in the original, indicating that the translator has deleted original nouns and pronouns during translation, which can cause major changes in translation structure compared with the original text. Nouns and pronouns are one of the central components of a sentence. Omitting too many original nouns and pronouns will also cause the translation to deviate significantly from the original meaning and impair the fidelity of the translation. At the same time, it may also make the translation too concise and affect meaning expression of the translation.

In addition, Kang's translation also used many words that are not included in the built-in dictionary of the analysis system, resulting in fewer nouns being counted. The part-of-speech analysis standard used in this study refers to the relatively authoritative "Peking University Modern Chinese Corpus Basic Processing Specification" and "Chinese Part-of-Speech Tag Set of the Institute of Computing Technology", among which "Chinese Part-of-Speech Tag Set of the Institute of Computing Technology" is the Chinese part of speech tag set of Chinese word segmentation program ICTCLAS of Chinese Academy of Sciences. If a word is not included in built-in dictionary of the analysis system, it indicates that this word is not a common word, but rather a relatively rare word or a word created by the translator. There are indeed many uncommon or translator-created words in Kang's translation. For example, the original third line, "It's bright impossibility", of poem 505 is translated by Kang Yanbin as “让人惊艳的亮彩”, in which the

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word “亮彩”(bright color) is a rare word. The use of rare words and self-created words will make translation appear complicated and obscure, the reading will not be smooth, and the meaning will be more abstruse.

Compared with the jerky translation of Kang's version, Wang's translation is more familiar and clear. The number of nouns in Wang's translation is closer to the original, reaching 76%; and the number of pronouns is 64% more than the original. Checking the translation, it can be found that Wang's translation often adds subjects where subject is omitted from the original text. Among them, pronouns are often added as subjects to prevent unclear references and vague meanings, which also makes the translation context more cohesive and the writing more fluent.

In Wang's translation, the pronouns “这”(this) and “那”(that) are often added to play role of cohesion and express degree. For example, Wang Jinhua translates the original line, “It deem it be -- Continually --”, of poem 611 into “这样,他们的正午——不就是——”, in which the word “这样”(such) is used for connection, but there is no such part in the original text. According to statistics, the use of “这” or “那” is used as a reference or express the degree, and there are 29 such cases in Kang's translation, 27 of which are used for reference; while Wang's translation has 85 cases, which is obviously much more frequent. In addition to common addition of sentence components and explanatory and descriptive words, word order in Wang's translation is often adjusted to make the translation more fluent. Therefore, the “subjective trace” left by the translator in Wang's translation is more prominent.

In terms of verbs, the number of verbs in Kang's translation is the same as that in the original text, which indicates the conciseness of Kang's translation. The number of verbs in Wang's translation is 85% more than that of the original. Checking the translation, it is found that there are several situations in which translator adds verbs in translation. Firstly, Conversion of part of speech, such as converting nouns into verbs. For example, Wang translates the original line, “Transport's decomposition follows --”, of poem 1315, into “只是其迷人的力量随即消失——”, in which the original noun “decomposition” is translated into Chinese verb “消失”(disappear). The original meaning of “decomposition” is “disintegrate, decay”, which has a similar meaning to “disappearance”. Scholar Luo Hongxia believes that the ultimate goal of translation is to achieve equivalence of content, information and function with the original, rather than pursuing a complete correspondence in form (Luo Hongxia, 2014: 114). Therefore, in order to make translation more fluent, Wang's translation converts original part of speech without obviously distort original meaning, which is feasible to some extent. Secondly, Wang's translation will add verbs that are not available in the original to make language structure more complete or vivid, and the number of verbs in translation will naturally be more than that in the original text. For example, Wang translates the second stanza of poem 886, “Our Retrospection of Them/ A fixed Delight,/ But our Anticipation/ A Dice -- a Doubt --” into “我们对它们的回顾/ 是一种欣怡, / 而我们的预想和展望/ 却是一个疑虑——一粒骰子——”, in which two copular verbs “是”(is) are added,

and the original noun "Anticipation" is translated into two verbs “预想和展望”(anticipate and expect), which is the verb translation of an original noun, an additional verb is also added. Here, Wang's practice of adding copular verbs in order to make sentence structure more complete and poem easier to read does not change obviously the original meaning. Lu Xun (1881-1936) once wrote in "The 'Title Undecided' Grass (1 to 3)": "Any translation must take into account both sides, one of which is of course to strive to be easy to understand, and the other is to preserve the beauty of the original." (Lu Xun, 2003: 516) Therefore, Wang's translation is feasible, but the translation of one original verb into two translated verbs is questionable.

In terms of conjunctions, the number of conjunctions in Wang's translation differs from that of the original by only 5, while the number of conjunctions in Kang's translation is only 37% of that of the original, which shows that Kang's translation has many missing translations of original conjunctions. Judged only from the statistical data, Wang's translation is more faithful to the original in the translation of conjunctions. As a matter of fact, the apparent cohesiveness of Wang's translation is outstanding, which makes Wang's translation obviously more fluent than Kang's translation. The translation of poem 1116 reflects difference between Kang's translation and Wang's translation in the use of conjunctions

#### J1116

There is another Loneliness

That many die without --

Not want of friend occasions it

Or circumstance of Lot

But nature, sometimes, sometimes thought

And whoso it befall

Is richer than could be revealed

By mortal numeral --

#### Kang's Translation:

另一番孤独

#### Wang's Translation:

这儿还有另外一种孤独

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许多人至死亦无——	许多人至死也没有 <b>体尝</b> 到——
并非缺少朋友所致	这孤独不是由于缺少朋友
或命运使然	或环境运气的坏与好

自然,有时,有时以为	而是 <b>源于</b> 自然,有时是灵感
不管它降临谁谁	有自然之灵感降至的人
就丰盈富足	它的富足无法用通常的
胜过尘世无数——	计数单位量衡——

When translating, the translator will more or less incorporate his own understanding based on the original poem. He is creating while reproducing. Kang's translation is relatively concise, but it can be seen that when connecting the first and second stanzas, Kang's translation omits the original conjunction "but", which makes the connection between the two stanzas a little out of touch, and the logical relationship between the two stanzas is not obvious, which is contrary to the original. So the translation feels blocked here. It can be seen that by omission, the translation gains succinct but loses coherence and lacks faithfulness. Wang's translation translates "but" into a conjunction “而是”(but), which helps to maintain the original logical relationship of the two stanzas, and makes the meaning of the entire translated poem coherent. There are also additional translations in Wang's translation, adding the verbs“体尝” (taste) and“源于” (originate) to make the original meaning clearer. Kang's translation is more concise than Wang's translation, and Wang's translation is more coherent and fluent than Kang's translation. This can be seen from the comparison of translation of this poem.

To sum up, through statistical comparison of the number of nouns, pronouns, verbs and conjunctions between Kang's and Wang's translations and the original text, it can be seen that the number of nouns, pronouns, and conjunctions in Kang's translation is much less than the original, which indicates that there are many omissions of nouns, pronouns and conjunctions in translation.

While the number of verbs in Kang's translation is the same as that of the original. Among the four word classes in Wang's translation, the number of nouns and conjunctions is slightly less but is close to the original text, while the number of pronouns and verbs is 64% and 85% respectively more than the original text. This shows that Kang's translation is more concise than Wang's translation. However, Kang's translation sometimes has too many omissions, and the translation sometimes has a sense of rigidity and abruptness, which leads to the loss of fluency. At the same

time, Wang's translation not only has a lot more pronouns and verbs than the original and Kang's translation, but also has a lot more nouns and conjunctions than Kang's translation, which shows that Wang's translation is more coherent and smooth than Kang's translation, but the addition of words in Wang's translation sometimes results in a loose expression.

#### 2.4.2 Repetitive Word

Repetitive words refer to words containing two or more consecutive words with the same single word. The so-called repetition is a common language phenomenon in Chinese. The overlapping use of two words with exactly the same sound, form and meaning can not only increase the vividness and dynamic of the language, but also play an important role in emphasizing (Chen Hongwei, 2003: 107). Repetitive words can mimic color, onomatopoeia, lyricism, set off atmosphere of the environment and so on. The use of repetitive words has a long history and a unique position in Chinese, especially in ancient poetry. Repetitive words can bring phonological beauty to poetry and transmit pleasing feeling to readers of poetry. When translating Chinese poems into English, the translation of repetitive words is often a big problem, which requires the translator's painstaking efforts and careful consideration of words to reproduce the unique meaning of Chinese repetitive words in English; when translating English poems into Chinese, appropriate use of repetitive words will add a unique flavor to the Chinese translation, and make readers feel familiar with it.

**Comment [H10]:** Make the meaning clear by rephrasing the sentence.

Kang's and Wang's translations of the first line of poem 928 both use the same repetitive word “窄窄”(narrow narrow) in the same place. Kang translates the line as “心有窄窄堤岸”, Wang translates it as “心儿有窄窄的堤岸”, and the original text is "The Heart has narrow Banks". It can be seen that here Kang's translation and Wang's translation are almost the same. The same repetitive word “频频”(frequent frequent) is also used in Kang's and Wang's translation of the penultimate line, “The Daisy that has looked behind”, of poem 1232. Kang translates the line as “雏菊频频回顾”(daisy has looked behind) and Wang translates it as “回头频频顾盼的雏菊”(the Daisy that has looked behind). The fact that the two translations happened to use same repetitive word in translation of same original text shows that the two translators have same thinking brilliance in translation of certain original words and lines, although there are not many such examples.

According to statistics, Kang's translation uses 21 repetitive words with a total of 27 occurrences. The most frequent repetitive word is “悄悄”(gently gently), with a total of 3 occurrences; while Wang's translation uses 25 repetitive words, with a total of 29 occurrences. The repetitive word with highest frequency is “小小”(little little), with 3 occurrences. The 5 repetitive words occur in both two translations are: “小小”(little little), “悄悄”(gently gently), “轻轻”(lightly lightly), “窄窄”(narrow narrow), “频频”(frequent frequent), of which “悄悄” and “轻



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轻” are more frequently used in the two translations, with between 2-3 occurrences.

Most of repetitive words in the two translations occur only once, while the number of repetitive words and their total occurrences in Wang’s translation are more than those in Kang’s translation. This also shows that Wang’s translation is slightly more diverse and vivid, as well as more cordial in terms of description, .

#### **2.4.3 Four-character Structure**

The four-character structure is a common language phenomenon in Chinese. It is composed of four Chinese characters with a total of four syllables. It has a relatively stable, neat and compact structure, with its specific meaning and strong expressive power. The four-character structure includes four-character idioms, such as “取而代之”(substitute), and ordinary four-character structures, such as “远近闻名”(famous far and near). Statistics show that the four-character structures used in Kang's translation and Wang's translation are all four-character idioms, and each idiom occurs only once. There are 5 four-character idioms in Kang's translation and 22 in Wang's translation, which is more than 4 times that of Kang's translation. However, the total number of words in Wang's translation is 6072 words, which is only 1.53 times of the total number of 3,975 words in Kang's translation (see Table 1). It can be seen that compared with Kang's translation, the frequency of four-character idioms in Wang's translation is higher.

Idioms are a common language phenomenon in Chinese. The use of idioms in translation can make the translation read more intimately and give readers a sense of linguistic familiarity. Scholar Yuan Rong believes that proper use of idioms can add emotional color to the translation and make description more vivid (Yuan Rong, 1997: 20). In addition, the use of four-character idioms sometimes makes translation look more concise, because it condenses meaning of the words; but sometimes it also makes meaning of the translation more verbose and broader, because the meaning of the idioms used in translation may be richer than that of the original words and covers more connotations, so that the meaning of the translation is not equivalent to the original, adding meaning that the original text does not contain. Some four-character structures in Kang's translation and Wang's translation are used properly, some others probably not.

On the positive side, for example, the translation of the last stanza of poem 611 shows the positive effect of using four-character idiom in translation:

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**Original:**

What need of Day

To Those whose Dark -- hath so -- surpassing Sun --

It deem it be -- Continually --

At the Meridian?

**Wang's Translation:**

白昼有什么用

对那些处在黑暗而觉胜似有阳光的人——

这样,他们的正午——不就是——

永无止境?

**Kang's Translation:**

谁还需白昼——

若——黑暗——逾越太阳——

它自恃——天长地久——

独霸正午?

Wang's translation translates "Continually" as "永无止境"(Never Ending), and Kang's translation as "天长地久"(Long forever). The two idioms have similar meanings, and both can describe the duration of time, which corresponds to semantics of the original "Continually". Without affecting semantic expression of the original text, the use of four-character structure in the two translations increases the beauty of translation language. As scholars Sheng Nan and Huang Yazhong have pointed out, the four-character structure reflects unique charm and aesthetic habits of Chinese expression, and appropriate use of Chinese four-character structure when translating from English to Chinese can reduce the traces of translation and greatly enhance aesthetic effect of the translation (Sheng Nan and Huang Yazhong, 2019: 32). Another example is the use of four-character idioms in translation of poem 847, which also reflects its enhanced effect:

**J847**

Finite -- to fail, but infinite to Venture --

For the one ship that struts the shore

Many's the gallant -- overwhelmed Creature

Nodding in Navies nevermore --

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**Wang's Translation:**

失败——是有限的,可冒险是无限的——

为一只船舰威风凛凛地返航靠岸

多少英勇无畏的斗士——被海水吞没

永不能再在队列中出现——”

**Kang's Translation:**

有限——毁灭,无限——冒险

那船神气地挑衅堤岸

多少勇敢——淹没的生命

再不会颌首舰队”

For the translation of the word "struts" in the poem, Kang's translation uses “神气”(air) to express its emotional connotation, while Wang's translation uses “威风凛凛”(majestic), which is more vivid and dynamic and allows readers to better perceive majesty of the mighty ships in the poem.

There are also examples in which the effect of the use of four-character structure in Kang's translation and Wang's translation is questionable. Take poem 771 as an example, there are two lines in the original text: “The fact of Famine -- could not be / Except for Fact of Corn --”. Wang's translation translates these two lines into: “饥荒的事实——如果没有五谷丰登/ 的事实佐证也不能算数——”, while Kang's translation is: “不识——饥肠辘辘/ 若不闻玉米飘香——”. Wang's translation extends the content of the original "corn", and translates it into the four-character structure “五谷丰登”(grains are abundant), so that it contains more information that is not available in original text, and incorporates translator's understanding of the original text, at the meantime, original word order is adjusted. Kang's translation retains the original meaning of "corn" and directly translates it into “玉米”(corn), which is a better translation. Translation should fit the original as much as possible, when literal translation makes sense, additional expansion of original meaning is not necessary, and may possibly mislead readers.

Another example can be seen in translation of the two lines in poem 1036: “Want -- a quiet commissary/ For Infinity.” Wang's translation is: “欲求——是孜孜以求的无限的/ 代表”, while Kang's translation is: “缺憾——悄悄引向/ 无限——”. The idiom“孜孜以求”(assiduously seeking) in Wang's translation is a metaphor for tireless exploration. It is not owned by original text, but belongs to translator's additional translation, which reflects translator's personal understanding and is indeed redundant. In translation of the first stanza of poem 505, the use of idioms with Chinese local cultural characteristics in Wang's translation may not fully conform to cultural background of original English poem. This kind of excessive “domestication” in translation may produce confusing effect. The first stanza of poem 505 is as follows:

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**Original:**

I would not paint -- a picture --

I'd rather be the One

It's bright impossibility

To dwell -- delicious -- on --

And wonder how the fingers feel

Whose rare -- celestial -- stir --

Evokes so sweet a torment --

Such sumptuous -- Despair --

**Wang's translation:**

我不愿——绘画——

我宁愿自己是幅画

能甜甜地品味

画帙的——出神入化——

揣摩画工的手指有如何的感受

它的——鬼斧神工的——挥洒——

引发豪情无限——

绝望的浪潮——无涯——

**Kang's Translation:**

我不愿描绘——图画——

更愿是那个

让人惊艳的亮彩

细——细——品味——

唏嘘指尖所触

律动——稀奇——超逸——

惹起这甜蜜痛楚——

这豪奢——绝望——

In Wang's translation, the original "bright impossibility", which describes the exquisite paintings, is translated as “出神入化”(excellent and superb), and the "rare -- celestial", which describes the superb painting skills of painters, is translated as “鬼斧神工”(ghost and axe magical), which basically conveys the original meaning. However, whether these two idioms are completely appropriate is debatable. “出神入化” was originally a Taoist term, referring to the "transition state" in which the Taoist Soul entered and exited to the highest state. Taoism is a native religion in China, and its language is very Chinese culture-loaded. It seems inappropriate to

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use this idiom in Chinese translation of western poetry. Scholar Lv Jie once pointed out: "The use of these four-character patterns with too strong national color will often destroy connotation and image of original work and cause misunderstanding among target readers." (Lv Jie, 2002: 76), The so-called "four-character pattern" here refers to four-character structure.

Proper use of four-character structure in translation can give readers a sense of familiarity like reading native language, which is a kind of "domestication" in translation. The translator Mr. Sun Zhili once summarized domestication method in translation: Domestication method requires the translator to approach target language readers and adopt target language expression used by target language readers to convey content of original text (Sun Zhili, 2002: 40). He also believes that "the fundamental task of translation is to accurately and completely convey original 'thought' and 'flavor'. To achieve this goal, it is undoubtedly necessary to take the path of alienation, and therefore foreignization has become the first and main aspect of contradiction; and domestication, as a 'compromised' means of solving language barriers, has become second and minor aspect of contradiction. In short, try to alienate as much as possible when possible, and domesticate when necessary." (Sun Zhili, 2001: 34) When translating, the language form and language flavor of the original should be preserved as much as possible. The use of four-character structure will bring "Chinese flavor", but it is also the "Chinese flavor" that makes translation lose the original "foreign flavor", so it must be used with caution.

Compared with Kang's translation, four-character structure in Wang's translation is used more frequently, and it has two effects. On the one hand, four-character structure in Wang's translation is not uncommon, which allows readers to read translation with a sense of intimacy and reduces the traces of translation, but on the other hand, there are some four-character idioms in Wang's translation that have a wider range of meanings than corresponding original words. Therefore, semantics of the translation are deviated from that of the original. Moreover, some idioms involve cultural differences between China and the West, and their use is also questionable. Kang's translation uses less four-character structures, and the effect is also twofold. Some are used properly to make translation more vivid; while others fail to fully convey original meaning, with some omissions, and therefore some deficiencies.

#### **2.4.4 Erhua words**

Erhua words refer to words with the suffix “儿”[ə:r] as light-sound morpheme. The use of erhua words, with [ə:r]-sound coloring at the end of the words, is a unique linguistic phenomenon of Chinese language. Scholar Liu Zhaoxiong pointed out that in addition to distinguishing parts of speech and other grammatical and pragmatic functions, proper use of erhua words can highlight language style of characters in literary works, express the characters' personalities, and set off atmosphere of the context (Liu Zhaoxiong, 2003: 5). In poetry, proper use of erhua words also

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helps to better reflect emotional atmosphere of poetry.

According to statistics, there are 17 erhua words used in Wang's translation, with a total of 26 occurrences, and Kang's translation uses 2 erhua words, which a total of 2 occurrences. It can be seen that Wang's translation is a bit more fond of using erhua words than Kang's translation. The use of these carefully chosen erhua words helps make translation style more gentle and friendly felt by readers, and the addition of "儿" [ə:r] suffix can also be interpreted as one of the reasons why the number of words in Wang's translation is more than that in Kang's translation and the original text. The erhua words used in Wang's translation are not limited to words formed by adding "儿" after various single-character nouns. At the same time, the two erhua words of “那儿”(there) and “这儿”(here) with location implications are also used, which also demonstrates that language description in Wang's translation is richer and more specific, with more words used.

The use of erhua words makes Wang's translation closer and familiar to readers. In contrast, Kang's translation is slightly farther away from the readers, but this does not mean that Kang's translation is inferior to Wang's translation. In terms of distance between the translation and the readers, as has been mentioned in previous section, translator must be careful in using words with strong "Chinese flavor" in translation, so as not to damage the original "foreign flavor" too much.

To sum up, compared with Kang's translation, Wang's translation is more frequent in the use of erhua words, which makes language style of Wang's translation biased toward local Chinese language style, making the translation feature colloquial. Although erhua words are common in China's northern dialects and may not be familiar to readers in south China, objectively, they can still create a cordial atmosphere brought about by daily language. Kang's translation uses fewer erhua words. In pursuit of brevity, it is clear that Kang's translation will not like to add the suffix "儿" to increase the number of words if only it can express in a single word. For example, for the first line of poem 928, "The Heart has narrow Banks", Kang translates it as “心有窄窄堤岸”, Wang translated it as “心儿有窄窄的堤岸”. Compared “心” with “心儿”, the former is of course more brief. As far as the effect of erhua words is concerned, compared with Wang's translation, the language of Kang's translation appears to be more written and formal, which may be the translator's choice of language style when translating.

#### **2.4.5 Classical Chinese Function Word**

The use of function words is one of the characteristics of classical Chinese and an important part of classical Chinese grammar. However, function words in classical Chinese generally do not serve as sentence components and do not express actual meaning. They can be adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary words, interjections, etc.. Although Kang's translation and Wang's translation use modern Chinese instead of classical Chinese, they are also mixed with

some classical Chinese function words (characters), which make some translations exude a trace of classical Chinese and appear quaint.

The occurrences of 12 classical Chinese function words used in the two translations (see Table 8) is counted. Statistics show that these 12 classical Chinese function words witness 70 occurrences in Kang's translation, 114 occurrences in Wang's translation, which is 44 (62.86%) more than that in Kang's translation.

Table 8 Occurrences of Classical Function Words in the Two Translations

Classical Function Words	于	之	若	而	所	以	其
Occurrences in Kang's Translation	7	5	20	7	4	4	8
Occurrences in Wang's Translation	28	24	3	18	11	11	9
Classical Function Words	者	何	且	乃	矣		
Occurrences in Kang's Translation	8	5	0	1	1		
Occurrences in Wang's Translation	4	4	2	0	0		

The top 5 classical Chinese function words that appear most frequently in Wang's translation are "于" (28 times), "之" (24 times), "而" (18 times), "所" (11 times) and "以" (11 times); the top 5 classical Chinese function words occurring most frequently in Kang's translation are "若" (20 times), "其" (8 times), "者" (8 times), "而" (7 times) and "于" (7 times). In addition, the words that occur most frequently in Wang's translation do not occur frequently in Kang's translation, and vice versa. It can be seen that there is a significant difference of emphasis in classical Chinese function words used in the two translations.

On the whole, the occurrences of classical Chinese function words in Wang's translation is 62.86% higher than that in Kang's translation. Wang's translation seems to be more "quaint". However, according to previous statistical analysis of erhua words and repetitive words in the two translations, Wang's translation also uses more life-breathing words than Kang's translation, and adds more explanatory and descriptive words. At the same time, word order and sentence structure are often adjusted to make translation more familiar and coherent. Therefore, Wang's translation mainly displays a cordial and fluent style, but also mixed with ancient elegant flavors, making it appear more diverse in style. In contrast, the occurrences of classical Chinese function words in Kang's translation is much less than that in Wang's translation, which is consistent with statistical data of Kang's translation in previous sections, that is, Kang's

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translation tends to reduce use of words, therefore displays a more concise style.

### 3. Conclusion

Through the above analysis, it can be found that the number of words in Kang's translation is nearly equivalent to that of the original text. The main reason is that Kang's translation is brief and neat, sometimes even omitted pronouns or conjunctions, so that the translation sometimes lacks of adequate expression of meaning; while Wang's translation is with more explanatory, descriptive and connective words, and there are additional translation from time to time, the number of words of Wang's translation is 80% more than the original, but the translation is fluent, although not necessarily concise.

The number of stanzas in the two translations is not exactly the same as the original, but there is not much difference between them. The total number of stanzas in Kang's translation is 2 more than the original, involving 5 translations, in which there are addition and subtraction of stanzas. The total number of stanzas in Wang's translation is 9 more than the original, involving 6 translations.

The punctuation marks of Kang's translation are basically consistent with the original, in which the number of dashes, periods, question marks, and colons is the same as that of the original. Among the other three punctuation marks, there are 5 less commas, 1 less quotation mark, and 2 more exclamation marks. In contrast, Wang's translation has a bigger gap with the original. Only the number of exclamation marks and colons is the same as the original. The periods and question marks deviate by one from the original text. There are 4 more quotation marks, 31 less commas, and 56 less dashes. The main reason of obvious reduction of dashes in Wang's translation is that original dashes are omitted in translation rather than translated into other punctuation marks.

In terms of vocabulary, the number of verbs in Kang's translation is the same as that of the original, but the numbers of nouns, pronouns and conjunctions are only 40%, 56% and 37% of the original respectively. It can be seen that omission of words in Kang's translation is obvious, which contributes to succinctness of the translation on the one hand, but also damages fidelity of the translation on the other hand. The number of nouns and conjunctions in Wang's translation is close to that of the original by 76% and 96% respectively. However, verbs and pronouns are 85% and 64% more than those of the original. The frequent addition of verbs, as well as demonstrative pronouns and degree pronouns makes Wang's translation more cohesive, fluent and clear.

In addition, Kang translation and Wang's translation use 21 (27 occurrences) and 25 (29 occurrences) repetitive words, respectively. There are 5 co-occurring repetitive word in the two translations, they are “小小”, “悄悄”, “轻轻”, “窄窄” and “频频”, among which “悄悄” and “轻轻” occur more frequently in the two translations. More repetitive words gives Wang's translation



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more obvious phonological effects and emotional expression. The four-character structures occurring in the two translations are all four-character idioms, and each idiom occurs only once. Kang's translation uses 5 idioms and Wang's translation uses 22, which helps make Wang's translation more naturalized in Chinese. What makes Wang's translation more localized in Chinese is the use of erhua words. Kang's translation uses only 2 erhua words, with a total of 2 occurrences, while Wang's translation uses 17 erhua words, with a total of 26 occurrences, which is much more than that of Kang's translation. In addition, Wang's translation is more elegant. Statistics of 12 classical Chinese function words occurring in both translations show that Kang's translation has 70 occurrences of classical Chinese function words and Wang's translation has 114 occurrences. In short, statistics of vocabulary show that Kang's translation is more concise and introverted in the use of words, but there are more omission and deletion in translation, and sometimes there are insufficient expressions; while Wang's translation has more addition in translation, more coherent and fluent text, and more capable in expression, more pronounced phonological effect and exposed emotion, and more localized with Chinese characteristics. At the same time, it has more elegant flavor than Kang's version, but lack of adequate succinctness.

To sum up, in comparison of the two translations, Wang's translation is better in fluency and readability, which reveals its inferiority at the meantime. Translation should conform to content, form and language style of the original as much as possible. Wang's translation sometimes expands and supplements original words, so that the total number of words in translation is obviously more than that of the original. Great changes are also made in translation of nouns, verbs and pronouns. Translator's personal understanding is sometimes obviously incorporated into the translation, and words and sentence patterns are recreated to make translation appear coherent, fluent and easy to read and understand, while being insufficient in conciseness and faithfulness. Kang's translation is superior in faithful adherence to original form and conciseness. However, excessive succinctness makes the translation appear constrained and restricted. The frequent omission and deletion in translation sometimes make the translation less expressive, and less prominent contextual cohesion, resulting in a sense of blockage and slight rigidity. The description is usually straightforward and dull, with little change, and the use of uncommon words sometimes makes the translation obscure, not as graceful, flexible and fluent as Wang's translation which is sometimes elegant and has certain local Chinese characteristics.

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