

---

**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

## Characteristics of Chinese Translation of Emily Dickinson's Poetry: A Big-Data Analysis Based on Nine Translations

Jianxin Zhou

Professor, School of Foreign Languages, South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, 510641, Guangdong, China

**Corresponding Author:** Jianxin Zhou, **E-mail:** [wo777277@sohu.com](mailto:wo777277@sohu.com)

---

**ABSTRACT**

Using a program written in python language to conduct a big-data statistical analysis of poetic form and vocabulary use of nine Chinese translations of Emily Dickinson's poetry, it is found that the current Chinese translations deviate significantly from the original in terms of poetic form in which deviation of punctuation is greater than that of stanzas and lines, and no translation completely retains formal characteristics of the original. Different characteristics in the use of vocabulary can be found in different translations. Some translations have too many additions and deletions, which makes language content deviate from the original too much. In translating Dickinson's poetry, the form and content of the original text should be faithfully translated. In particular, dashes of the original text should be kept completely, reduce the manifestation of the translator in the translation and avoid addition and deletion in translating.

**KEYWORDS**

Chinese translation; Emily Dickinson's poetry; characteristic; big-data analysis; nine translations

**ARTICLE INFORMATION**

**ACCEPTED:** 30 August 2022

**PUBLISHED:** 09 September 2022

**DOI:** 10.32996/ijllt.2022.5.9.3

---

### 1. Introduction

The 19th-century American poetess Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) was a pioneer of modern English poetry. She wrote nearly 1,800 poems in her life. Her poems were short and refined, generally untitled, and had a very individual writing habit, such as extensive use of dashes, frequent capitalization of the first letter of nouns, and its unique language charm has created her unique poetic style. Her poems were translated and introduced by Chinese scholars long before 1949. For example, Yuan Shuipai (1916-1982) translated 5 Dickinson's poems in his collection of translation, *Modern American Poetry*, published in March 1949 (Zhou, 2012: 50). In the 1980s, the first collection of the Chinese translation of her poems appeared, namely *Selected Poems of Dickinson* (Zhou, 2011:58), which was translated by Jiang Feng (1929-2017) and published in 1984. Since then, more translators have devoted themselves to translating Dickinson's poems, and more than 10 Chinese translations have been published (Zhou, 2011:1-9). Several scholars have evaluated some of these translations (He, 2004; Zhou, 2004; Hu, 2010; Zhou, 2011; Niu, 2011; Zeng, 2012), but these evaluations are basically impressionistic comments, and there is no relatively objective empirical analysis. It is necessary to examine the overall quality and translation characteristics of the current Chinese translation of Dickinson's poems in China from a macro perspective to show an overview of Chinese translation so as to provide a reference for scholars, translators, and readers to explore more possibilities of Emily Dickinson's poetry in a Chinese context. Yet this research is currently lacking. One of the main reasons for this is that the criteria for poetry translation and the criteria for measuring quality have always been inconsistent, so it is difficult to make a convincing and comprehensive assessment of translation quality and translation characteristics.

This research selects 9 representative Chinese translations of Dickinson's poetry. With the help of big data statistics of poetic form and vocabulary use, by studying a single translation separately or comparing two translations, the characteristics of each representative translation are found, and then the overall translation characteristics of the Chinese translation of Dickinson's poetry are summarized. In terms of selection criteria, the choice is made based on the principles of classicity and contemporariness.

**Copyright:** © 2022 the Author(s). This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). Published by Al-Kindi Centre for Research and Development, London, United Kingdom.

Classicality refers to the translation of Dickinson's poetry which is of historical importance or has been praised by readers since its publication and has been reprinted continuously, for which the former is like Mu Yu's translation, and the latter is like Jiang Feng's translation and Pu Long's translation; Contemporariness refers to the translations published since 2000, which are currently on sale in the market and are viewed by readers and have certain influence or importance, such as Wang Jinhua's translation, Wang Hongyin's translation, Shi Li's translation, Tu An's translation, Xu Chungang's translation, and Kang Yanbin's translation.

Among the many Chinese translations, Jiang Feng's(1929-2017) translation has the most reprints, the largest sales volume, the most extensive influence, and long-term stable sales (Zhou, 2011: 60). The quality of his translation has been unanimously recognized by most readers and researchers. As Professor Liu Shoulan (1957- ) of Yunnan Normal University said in her book, *A Study of Dickinson*, "Mr. Jiang's translation is the closest to the style of the original poem. It is plain, clean and clear, with no redundant words and few mistranslations." (Liu, 2006: 360-361). In addition to Jiang Feng's translation, Shanghai Translation Publishing House 2014 launched the only complete translation of Dickinson's poems in China translated by Mr. Pu Long(1941- ), which is a milestone achievement in the Chinese translation of Dickinson's poems, and its influence cannot be ignored. Wang Jinhua(1950-) is a professor at North University of China, Wang Hongyin(1953-2019) is a famous professor of translation at Nankai University; Shi Li(1965- ) is one of the representatives of a poet of avant-garde poetry school in contemporary China; Tu An(1923-2017) is a famous poetry translator, especially on the translation of the poetry of John Keats (1795-1821); Xu Chungang(1975- ) is a poet, translator and famous photographer; Kang Yanbin(1979- ) is a university professor.

In terms of judging criteria, the principle of translation fidelity is used as the evaluation dimension. By comparing the translation and the original, the conformity of form and content of the translation with the original is investigated. Poetry is an organic unity of content and form. For poetry translation, many predecessor translators pay special attention to fidelity of translation, that is, the fidelity of form and content, because the form and content of poems show the significance that cannot be ignored. The poet translator Liang Zongdai (1903-1983) once expressed the highest respect for the original text: "I have a dark belief, which can actually be said to be superstition: I think the words and order of the original work, that is, the words and word order selected by the great poet are the best and the most beautiful." (Liang, 1936: 5) The scholar-translator Wang Zuoliang (1916-1995) believed that in poetry translation, "everything should be as the original, i.e, elegant or vulgar as it is, deep or shallow as it is, with tone as it is, and with style as it is." (Wang, 1989: 3) Modern poetry translator Huang Canran (1963-) also pointed out that "the basic principle of translation is not to add, not to reduce, which is generally called loyalty, although this principle is actually stricter than loyalty." (Huang, 2005: 34) The translator Tu An (1923-2017) attached great importance to faithfulness of poetry translation in form, and believed that "metrical poetry should be translated into metrical poetry, free verse should be translated into free verse, and the original appearance of poetry should be translated as much as possible." (Ding, 2017:58). The senior poetry translator Huang Gaoxin (1936-) further proposed a method to measure the faithfulness of the form. He believed that the fidelity of the translation form could be observed from the following four aspects: line breaks, the number of feet of each line, the number of syllables of each line, and the rhyme scheme. (Huang, 1999:14). In order to achieve the faithfulness of form and content, in the practice of poetry translation, many translators follow the principle of literal translation, which is to faithfully translate the original form and content of poetry into the translation. The poet Liu Bannong (1891-1934) once expressed his desire to use literal translation and the difficulty of free translation: "I have tried to translate poem into poem, ode or lyrics, etc., yet each of which has the limitation of their particular style and therefore is hardly satisfactory. Now I translate in the way of predecessors' translation of the Scriptures, making the twists and turns to be easily reached, but still, it is not very comfortable; I want to create a style of complete literal translation, but because it is very difficult, and it can only be slowly 'tried'." (Liu, 1918: 433). The literal translation is a feasible way to keep the form and content of poetry translation faithful, but it is not easy to implement. Generally speaking, it is easier to use literal translation in translating short modern English poems.

Adhering to the principle of faithful translation, this research aims to discover the translation characteristics of each translation from the deviation between the translated version and the original and then summarizes the current situation and characteristics of the Chinese translation of Dickinson's poetry in China. In terms of specific research content, this research not only studies the deviation of translated poetic form from the original but also investigates the fidelity of the translated content. The poetic form includes stanzas, lines, and punctuation. These factors are concrete and stable. Objective data of poetic form can be obtained through big data statistics, and specific features can be discovered. Poetry content is more complex, rich, and dynamic, and it is difficult to have a unified measurement method and evaluation standard. For this reason, this research mainly selects vocabulary and part of speech usage as the exploration direction. Through statistical analysis of the number of words and the characteristics of vocabulary use, some characteristics of translation of poetry content can be revealed. Since the contents of each translation are not the same, the number and characteristics of vocabulary in each translation are also different; therefore, parts of speech selected from each translation in statistics will be different, and the lexical features found by analysis are also different, but through a general survey of lexical features of each translation, characteristics of the current Chinese translation of Dickinson's poetry in terms of vocabulary can be summarized. The original poems of the 9 translations are all from *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*(1955) or *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1960), edited by Thomas Herbert Johnson(1902-1985). Dickinson's poems have almost

no titles. Each poem in the Johnson Edition is designated a serial number, and generally, when referring to a poem in Johnson Edition, the letter J is added before the serial number of the poem.

## **2. Characteristics of Chinese Translation of Emily Dickinson's Poetry**

The research object of this article is the following 9 Chinese translations of Dickinson's poems: *Stormy Night, Stormy Night: Essence of Dickinson's Poems* (2008) translated by Jiang Feng; *The Complete Poems of Dickinson*(2014) translated by Pu Long; *The Final Harvest: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1996) translated by Mu Yu; *I Know He Exists: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson* (2013) translated by Tu An and Zhang Yan; *Selected Dickinson's Poems*(2010) translated by Wang Jinhua; *200 Poems of Emily Dickinson* (2013) translated by Wang Hongyin; *Lilacs in the Sky: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson* (2016) by Shi Li; *Dust is the Only Secret* (2015) translated by Xu Chungang; *No Rose, Yet Felt Myself A'bloom: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson* (2013) translated by Kang Yanbin.

A program written in a python programming language is used to count not only the formal elements of each poem in each translation, such as stanza, line, and punctuation but also the vocabulary elements, such as the number of words and word use, for comparative analysis. In the statistical process, in order to find the difference between vocabulary elements of the translated text and the original text, two-word segmentation databases --- Chinese word segmentation database BosonNLP and English word segmentation database NLTK are used to segment the original text and the translation, and the word frequency is counted to find lexical translation characteristics. BosonNLP is the natural language processing SDK of the Boson Chinese Semantic Open Platform. By calling the interface of the database, users can obtain relevant semantic analysis service functions (Shi, 2018: 22). NLTK is an abbreviation of a natural language tool kit. It provides standard interfaces for tasks such as basic categorization of data representation related to natural language processing, part-of-speech tagging, grammar analysis, text classification, etc., as well as the standard implementation of these tasks. They can be combined to solve complex problems (Wei, 2016: 4). This research mainly uses its part-of-speech tagging function. By comparing and analyzing the statistical results, taking fidelity of translation as a judging criterion, this article aims to find differences between the translation and the original text, in other words, the translation characteristics in terms of form and vocabulary.

### **2.1 Formal Characteristics**

The formal characteristics of modern poetry mainly include "blank space," "line breaks," and "stanzas". Poets often achieve certain poetic expression purposes by visually separating the form of poetry, such as semantic separation, jumping, association, or continuation (Xue, 2010: 50). Another way to cause disconnection in poetry is the use of punctuation. Generally speaking, the construction of poetic form by a poet also reflects the poet's careful consideration, just like what he usually does in his repeated scrutiny of wording and sentence formation. For poetry translators, it is reasonable to faithfully reproduce the original poetic form in translation and strive to convey the original poetic flavor that the poet gives to the form.

Poetry relies on its form to express its spirit, and if it loses its form, it loses its spirit. The form of poetry is overtly reflected in stanza breaks and line breaks, which produce semantic division and rhythmic pause, leaving a certain blank for meaning expression and making emotional expression more fluent or stronger. As the well-known Chinese linguist Huang Guowen (1956-) said: "Form is the embodiment of meaning. Different forms express different meanings and convey different messages to the audience." (Huang, 2003:21). When creating a poem, the poet must have his own consideration in terms of line break and stanza break. Therefore, it is extremely important that the translated poem maintains the original poetic form. It is easier to maintain faithfulness in poetic form than faithfulness in content.

Cheng Fangwu (1897-1984), a Chinese writer and translator, pointed out that "A translated poem should also be a poem. This is the most important thing we must not forget. Secondly, the translated poem should be faithful to the original work. A poem can be roughly divided into three parts: content, emotion, and poetic form. Poetic form is the easiest to transplant."(Cheng, 1985: 121) The so-called easy here means that there are rules for a translator to follow. As mentioned earlier, the translator Huang Gaoxin(1936-) believes that the correspondence between the translation and the original can be observed from the following four levels: the line break of the poem, the number of feet of each line, the number of syllables of each line, and the rhyme scheme of the poem (Huang, 1999:14). Regarding the characteristics of Dickinson's poems which are generally short and concise, this article uses big data statistical method to investigate the formal correspondence between the translation and the original text from three aspects: stanza break, line break, and punctuation.

#### **2.1.1 Stanza Break and Line Break**

Stanzas are of great significance to poetry. Poets often "tend to separate the most dignified lines into a stanza and give them an independent status to achieve a sense of emphasis," at the same time, they also hope that "readers can give different stanzas the same aesthetic attention as possible." (Xue, 2010:53). Therefore, in translation, the original number of stanzas should be maintained, so as to retain the significance of stanza break of the original poem. Most of Dickinson's nearly 1800 poems are short

poems, many of which are of one stanza, some are of two, three, four, five, or even more stanzas; for each stanza, there are also single-line, two-line, three-line, and even more lines. For such irregular stanza breaks, the translator needs to pay more attention to making translated stanza breaks and line breaks consistent with the original text.

Based on statistics of the differences between the nine translation collections and their original texts in terms of stanzas and lines and the number of deviated translated poems, it is found that a large number of deviated stanzas and lines does not necessarily mean that there is a large number of deviated translated poems. Therefore, the aim of statistics is to find out the number of deviated translated poems, that is, to discover how many translated poems there are in each translation collection that are deviated from their original texts in terms of stanza break and line break. The number of deviated translated poems in a translation collection can clearly and intuitively show the degree of fidelity of the translation collection to the original. The statistical results are shown in Table 1 and Table 2. For the sake of convenience, hereafter, the translator's name is used to refer to the translator's translation collection.

**Table 1 Statistics of number of translated poems deviated in stanza**

Collections Deviation	Jiang g's	Pu's	Mu's	Tu's	Jinhua's	Hongyin's	Shi's	Xu's	Kang's
Deviated translated poems	18	2	16	8	8	0	93	60	5
Deviation Rate (%)	8.3	0.9	5.3	10.3	11.8	0	84.6	15.7	7.4
Average Deviation Rate(%)	16.3								

**Table 2 Statistics of number of translated poems deviated in line**

Collections Deviation	Jiang's	Pu's	Mu's	Tu's	Jinhua's	Hongyin's	Shi's	Xu's	Kang's
Deviated translated poems	5	1	0	8	7	6	17	30	5
Deviation Rate (%)	2.3	0.5	0	10.3	2.9	7.7	15.5	7.9	0.6
Average Deviation Rate(%)	5.3								

According to statistics (see Tables 1 and 2), of the nine translation collections, no translation collection is completely consistent with the original in terms of stanza and line. Shi Li's translation deviated the most from the original in terms of stanza and line, followed by Xu Chungang's and Tu An's translation, while Pu Long's translation deviated the least from the original, followed by Wang Hongyin's translation and Mu Yu's translation. The average deviation rate of the nine translation collections in terms of stanza and line is 16.3% and 5.3%, respectively. Stanza deviation is more obvious than line deviation.

### 2.1.2 Punctuation

As mentioned above, stanza breaks and line breaks of poetry maintain significance for their own sake and also have the function of indicating a pause. However, in poetry, the written mark of pause mainly adopts two types: one is punctuation marks; the other is blank space, including one or more spaces indicating pauses of varying lengths (Duan, 2001: 74). Punctuation plays an important role in poetry. The famous poet and scholar Lv Jin believes that punctuation marks are lyrical and musical symbols (Lv, 1998: 103). In addition, scholar Duan Caolin believes that punctuation, which is mainly used as a "lyrical and musical symbol" in poetry, can sometimes be regarded as an image symbol because it plays a role in guiding, highlighting, or strengthening the image (Duan, 2000: 32). Punctuation not only helps convey the author's emotion but also is one of the components of poetic form.

The use of each punctuation mark reflects the original author's intention. Therefore, the translator should keep the punctuation marks of the original work as much as possible, which can not only preserve and convey the original author's thought and emotion to the maximum extent but also protect the original poetic structure, which is particularly important in Dickinson's poetry translation. Scholar Zhang Yuejun(1965- ) believes that Dickinson's eclectic form of expression complements her rebellious and even shocking thought, none of which should be neglected. He believes that when translating Dickinson's poems, the original form should be retained as much as possible (Zhang, 1998: 41 ).

The use of punctuation in Dickinson's poems always attracts the attention of readers and researchers. This is mainly due to her extensive and unconventional use of dashes. Originally, Dickinson's manuscript uses a large number of line segments, including horizontal and oblique, long and short, which serve a variety of functions. In the English print version, these line segments are uniformly printed as short horizontal bars to distinguish them from dashes, even though they are now still called dashes. In Chinese translation, they are translated and printed into dashes to meet the requirements of the Chinese Language Publishing Standard. When Johnson edited and published *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* (1960), he attached great importance to the consistency between the printed poems and Dickinson's manuscripts on dashes: "Dickinson used dashes as a musical device, and though some may be elongated end stops, any 'correction' would be gratuitous." (Johnson, 1960:10-11) The well-known Chinese poetry translator Jiang Feng (1929-2017) also pointed out in the preface of his translation collection of Dickinson's poems, "Emily's poems rarely use commonly used punctuation marks. She uses a large number of oblique line segments, yes they are oblique line segments instead of dashes, to express transition, jump, ellipsis, or just to cause rhythmic ups and downs." (Jiang, "Preface," 2008: 5) It can be seen that the use of dashes is one of the distinctive features of Dickinson's poetry, which has important formal functions and grammatical and ideographic functions as well.

Apart from dashes, Dickinson also uses other punctuation marks. Her poems have the characteristics of free verse. For example, she sometimes only uses punctuation marks in the verse lines, and there are no punctuation marks at the end of the lines. However, there are also many verse lines that end with dashes, commas, periods, question marks, or exclamation marks. The punctuation of modern Chinese was originally introduced from Western languages, especially English, during the late 19th century and early 20th century and developed and standardized on this basis. Therefore, the punctuation system of Chinese and English is quite similar, and only a few punctuation marks are used slightly differently. Therefore, it is highly feasible to maintain corresponding punctuation marks when translating English poems into Chinese.

Statistics of the differences between the 9 translation collections and their originals in terms of main punctuation marks may reveal to a certain extent, the formal faithfulness of the translations to the originals. The statistical results are shown in Table 3. Among them, due to the large number of translated poems included in Pu Long's translation collection, only 217 translated poems with the same source texts as that of Jiang Feng's translation are counted for statistics.

Table 3. Statistics of punctuation deviation rate(%) of the 9 translation collections

Collections \ Punctuation	Jiang's	Pu's	Mu's	Tu's	Jinhua's	Hongyin's	Shi's	Xu's	Kang's	Average
Dash	36.8	2.3	0.3	0.2	12.4	86.6	98	10.5	0	27.5
Comma	143.8	11.8	2.2	8.4	16.3	136.1	64.5	29.6	6	45.9
Period	24.9	0.8	0.9	27.4	3.6	138.7	97.5	22.5	0	35.1
Exclamation Mark	12.4	1	0	10.2	1.7	14.3	97.8	4.2	11.1	17
Question Mark	2.5	1.3	1.9	4	2	12	26	1.2	0	6.9
Average	44.1	3.4	1.1	10.0	7.2	77.5	76.8	13.6	3.4	26

The deviation rate of 5 types of punctuation marks in each of 9 translation collections from their originals is counted and listed in Table 3. Statistics show that, of the 5 main punctuation marks, the average deviation rate of commas of the 9 translation collections reaches 45.9%, which is the highest of all punctuation marks, followed by periods, which reaches 35.1%, and the third is dashing, which reaches 27.5%.

From the perspective of individual translation collection, the most significant deviation of punctuation marks is found in Wang Hongyin's translation and Shi Li's translation, with a deviation rate of 77.5% and 76.8%, respectively. The lowest punctuation deviation is found in Mu Yu's translation(1.1%), followed by Pu Long's translation(3.4%) and Kang Yanbin's translation(3.4%). There is no translation collection whose punctuation is completely consistent with the original. It can be seen that punctuation deviation from the original is a common phenomenon found in translation collections and a problem worthy of attention. According to statistics, the main reason for the deviation of punctuation marks in the translation is that the translator pays much attention to the writing and expression conventions of the Chinese language and the reading habit of readers, and so adjusts original punctuation marks accordingly by means of deletion, conversion or addition, etc., so as to make the translated form more in line with Chinese expression norm and readers' expectation.

To a certain extent, it is understandable that the original punctuation marks should be adjusted according to the expression habit of the target language. However, if the adjustment is too large, it is questionable. As for the iconic punctuation mark of Dickinson's poems, i.e., the dashes, one should try not to change it. However, statistics show that most of the translation collections have made changes to the original dashes, and some of the changes are obvious, which is worth warning.

### 2.1.3 Summary

In terms of stanzas or lines separately, there are translation collections that do not deviate from the original, while some translation collections deviate greatly. However, there is no translation collection that does not deviate from the original, both in stanzas and lines. The average deviation rate of the 9 translation collections in stanza and line is 16.3% and 5.3%, respectively, none of which is significant. In terms of punctuation, the average deviation rate of the 9 translation collections is more obvious, reaching 26%. No individual translation collection is completely free of deviations; some collections have a very small degree of deviation, while some have a large degree of deviation. It can be seen that, on the whole, there are obvious differences between the translation collections and the originals in terms of poetic form.

## 2.2 Vocabulary

Chinese is a pictographic ideogram, which can be single-character or word ideographic, and Chinese characters have a wealth of synonyms. Therefore, an English word sometimes only needs to be translated into one Chinese character, sometimes it must be translated into a Chinese word with one or more than one character, and sometimes there are multiple translation options from among many Chinese synonyms, which is one of the reasons why multiple Chinese translations often appear in the translation of an original English word. The translator's different choices at the lexical level when translating, such as the number of characters or words, the bias of wording, and so on, will form different characteristics of the translation. Since the original texts of each of the 9 translation collections are not exactly the same, and the number of translated poems in each collection is different, this article will explore the lexical features of each translation collection and discover the overall lexical translation features either by investigation of individual collection or comparison of two collections.

### 2.2.1 Vocabulary in Jiang Feng's and Pu Long's Translation Collections

Jiang Feng's translation collection, *Stormy Night, Stormy Night: Essence of Dickinson's Poems*, published by People's Literature Publishing House in 2008, contains 217 translated poems, while Pu Long's translation collection, *The Complete Poems of Dickinson*, published by Shanghai Translation Publishing House in 2014, contains 1775 translated poems. A comparison of 217 of Pu Long's translations with 217 of Jiang Feng's translations with the same 217 original poems is to be made.

#### 2.2.1.1 Number of Words

According to statistics, 217 Jiang Feng's and Pu Long's translations include 22,351 characters and 23,024 characters, respectively. Pu's collection has 673 characters more than Jiang's collection, accounting for 3.01% more, with an average of 3.1 characters more per translated poem. In the Chinese language, a word refers to one character or a group of more than one character that makes sense in communication, and a character can be called a word if it does make sense or can not call a word if it does not make sense.

Table 4 Statistics of vocabulary in Jiang's and Pu's collections

Collections	Items	Tokens	Word Types	Token and Type Ratio
Jiang's Collection		18689	4396	4.25
Pu's Collection		19287	4785	4.03

According to statistics of words from the two collections (see Table 4), the total number of tokens and word types in Pu's collection is slightly more than that in Jiang's collection. Word types refer to the word forms that do not recur in a text, tokens refer to the total number of words used in a text, that is, total occurrences of words in a text, while the token and type ratio is an indicator that reflects the vocabulary richness of the corpus, which is the ratio of the total number of occurrences of words to the number of word types. The lower the ratio, the richer the vocabulary. Obviously, the words used in Pu's collection are more diversified. Further comparing the similarities and differences between the two collections in terms of vocabulary (see Table 5), it can be found that about half of the words used in each collection are words that have appeared in both collections, and nearly half of the words used in each collection are different from each other. Specifically, 55.3% and 50.8% of the words in Jiang Feng's and Pu Long's

collections, respectively, are the same as the other's collections, and 44.7% and 49.2% of words are different from the other's collections.

Table 5 Co-occurrence words and non-co-occurrence words in Jiang's and Pu's collections

Items \ Collections	Word Types	Co-occurrence words (ratio)	Non-co-occurrence word (ratio)
Jiang's Collection	4396	2431 (55.3%)	1965 (44.7%)
Pu's Collection	4785	2431 (50.8%)	2354 (49.2%)

Furthermore, according to statistics, compared with Pu's collection, 118 of the 217 translations in Jiang's collection use fewer words, accounting for 54.38%; 13 translations use the same number of words as Pu's translations, accounting for 5.99% of the total 217 translations; 86 translations use more words than Pu's translations, accounting for 39.63%.

**2.2.1.2 Quantifiers, modal particles, prepositions, conjunctions, and idioms**

Through vocabulary statistics, it is found that there are obvious differences in the use of quantifiers, modal particles, prepositions, conjunctions, and idioms between the two collections. Table 6 shows their differences in the number and frequency.

Table 6 The number and frequency of parts of speech in Jiang's and Pu's collections

Items	quantifiers	modal particles	prepositions	conjunctions	idioms
Jiang's Collection	81 (343)	12 (88)	45 (850)	53 (466)	50 (54)
Pu's Collection	98 (384)	15 (57)	46 (943)	61 (474)	102 (107)
Differences	17 (41)	3 (31)	1 (93)	8 (8)	52 (53)

Statistics show that the frequency of quantifiers in Jiang Feng's and Pu Long's collections are 343 and 384, respectively, and Pu's is 11.95% higher than Jiang's. This is because Jiang's translation ignores the quantitative features of some original nouns, omitting their numerals and quantifiers to make the translation more concise, but Pu's translation tries its best to translate all the quantifiers, trying to retain the original language's meaning. In terms of modal particles, "了"(Le), "吧"(Ba), and "么"(Me) are more frequently used in Jiang's collection, with a frequency of 23, 15, and 6, respectively, but only with frequency of 5, 6 and 0 respectively in Pu's collection. However, Jiang's collection has never used the modal particle "呀"(Ya), which is frequently used in Pu's collection, and the most frequently used modal particle "哦"(Oh) in Jiang's collection has never been used in Pu's collection. There are more prepositions and conjunctions in Pu's collection than in Jiang's collection, showing that Pu's translation is more affected by the original text, with a higher degree of hypotaxis, complete language structure, and more fluency. For example, in the use of the preposition "把"(Ba), Pu Long's collection uses 166 times, which is much higher than Jiang's 71 times, which is more than twice that of Jiang's collection, indicating that the extensive use of "把"(Ba) has made Pu's translation more prosaic, while Jiang's translation is more paratactic and neat. The number and frequency of idioms in Pu's collection are about twice as many as those in Jiang's collection. It shows that Jiang's collection is more cautious in using idioms. On average, only one idiom appears for every four translated poems, while Pu's collection uses one idiom in every two translations. The use of idioms may not only give Chinese readers a sense of familiarity and play a finishing touch but also may weaken the defamiliarization effect of the translation and reduce the freshness of the translation. In addition, the idioms used in the two collections are rarely the same; only the following 10 idioms are used in both collections: 一如既往(Yi Ru Ji Wang), 不为所动(Bu Wei Suo Dong), 为时已晚(Wei Shi Yi Wan), 摇摆不定(Yao Bai Bu Ding), 自食其果(Zi Shi Qi Guo), 不知不觉(Bu Zhi Bu Jue), 小心翼翼(Xiao Xin Yi Yi), 引人注目(Yin Ren Zhu Mu), 战战兢兢(Zhan Zhan Jing Jing), 趾高气扬(Zhi Gao Qi Ang).

**2.2.1.3 Summary**

Compared with Pu's collection, Jiang's collection uses fewer words, and 54.38% of the 217 translations use fewer words than Pu's translations. On the whole, Jiang's translation is more concise, and its vocabulary richness is slightly lower than that of Pu's translation. In addition, there are more occurrences of modal particles in Jiang's translation, whose emotional expression is more direct and intense. The extensive use of prepositions and conjunctions in Pu's translation makes the translation more hypotactic, prosaic, and more fluent than Jiang's translation, but its conciseness is slightly lower than that of Jiang's translation. In addition, there are a certain amount of idioms in both collections, but only 10 of them are both used in Pu's and Jiang's collections. Jiang's translation is more cautious in using idioms, and the frequency of use is only about half of Pu's translation. In other words, Pu's

translation uses idioms more frequently than Jiang's translation, which gives readers more familiarity and less freshness than Jiang's translation. In short, the comparative analysis on a lexical level shows that Jiang's translation is freer and more flexible, while Pu's translation adheres more rigidly to the overall trend of the original text.

### 2.2.2 Vocabulary in Kang Yanbin's and Wang Jinhua's Collections

Kang Yanbin's collection, *No Rose, Yet Felt Myself A'bloom: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*, published by Lijiang Publishing House in 2013, contains 900 translations. Wang Jinhua's *Selected Dickinson's Poems*, published by Beiyue Literature and Art Publishing House in 2010, contains 238 translations. 68 translations with the same original text from each of the two collections are selected respectively as samples to make a comparison.

#### 2.2.2.1 Number of Words

The number of words of the 68 original poems and their translations in both Kang's and Wang's collections is counted. Data are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Statistics of number of words of 68 original and translated poems

Versions	Original	Kang's translation	Wang's translation
Number of words	3376	3975	6072
Deviation from the original	/	599 (17.7%)	2696 (79.9%)

The 68 original poems contain 3376 words, while Kang's 68 translations contain 3,975 words, 599 words (17.7%) more than the original, and Wang's 68 translations contain 6072 words, 2692 words (79.9%) more than the original. Moreover, Wang's translation is 2097 words (52.8%) more than Kang's translation. Comparing the word count of each translated poem between Kang's and Wang's versions, it is found that Wang's translated version has more words than Kang's translated version. It shows that when translating the same poem, Wang's translation generally uses more words. When translating a poem, the number of words used in the translation can reflect the degree of simplicity and conciseness of languages to a certain extent. If the number of words is too few and the verse line is too short, it may not be able to fully express the original poetic meaning; if the number of words is too many and the verse line is too long, it may be more like prose rather than poetry.

#### 2.2.2.2 Nouns, pronouns, verbs, and conjunctions

It can be seen from Table 8 that for Kang's translation, except for the verbs, whose total number is the same as the original text, the other three parts of speech are significantly less in quantity than those in the original. The number of nouns, pronouns, and conjunctions is only 39.6%, 55.8%, and 37.3% of the original text, respectively. This demonstrates that in Kang's collection, there exists such phenomenon as a deletion in the translation of original nouns, pronouns, and conjunctions, which damages the faithfulness of the translation. At the same time, it may also affect the expressiveness of the translation due to excessive conciseness of the translation and make the translation obscure.

Table 8. Number of original and translated nouns, pronouns, verbs, and conjunctions

Parts of Speech	Original	Kang's translation (ratio)	Wang's translation (ratio)
Nouns	869	344(39.6%)	658 (75.7%)
Pronouns	285	159(55.8%)	466(163.5%)
Verbs	481	481(100%)	888(184.6%)
Conjunctions	118	44(37.3%)	113(95.8%)

While in Wang's translation, the number of nouns and conjunctions is close to the original text, reaching 75.7% and 95.8% of the original; the number of pronouns and verbs is 63.5% and 84.6% more than the original text. According to a detailed inspection, pronouns are often added as subjects in Wang's translation in case of unclear reference or cohesion. For example, in cases of the use of "这"(this) or "那"(that) as reference or to express degree, there are 29 instances in Kang's translations and 85 instances in Wang's translations. In Wang's translation, there are many occasions in which either additional verbs are added, or original nouns are translated into verbs. In addition, additional sentence elements and explanatory and descriptive words are often added to Wang's translation. Therefore, compared with the conciseness and sometimes obscure of Kang's translation, Wang's translation is more fluent and straightforward and prosaic.



**2.2.2.3 Repetitive words, idioms, Er-hua words, and classical Chinese function words**

A repetitive word refers to a phrase with two or three, or four same Chinese characters with exactly the same sound, shape, and meaning, which can not only increase the vividness and verisimilitude of the language but also play a role in emphasizing (Chen, 2003: 107). According to statistics (see Table 9), the number and frequency of repetitive words in Kang's and Wang's translations are almost the same, and there are 5 co-occurring repetitive words in both collections: "小小"(Xiao Xiao), "悄悄"(Qiao Qiao), "轻轻"(Qing Qing), "窄窄"(Zhai Zhai), and"频频"(Pin Pin).

Table 9. Number of repetitive words, idioms, er-hua words, and classical Chinese function words

Versions	Repetitive words	Idioms	Er-hua words	Classical Chinese function words
Kang's translation	21 (27)	5 (5)	2 (2)	12 (70)
Wang's translation	25 (29)	22 (22)	17 (26)	12 (114)

Statistics show that each idiom in both Kang's and Wang's translations occurs only once. The 22 idioms used in Wang's translation are more than 4 times that of the 5 idioms used in Kang's translation. The total number of words in Wang's translation is 6072 words, which is only 1.53 times the total number of 3975 words in Kang's translation ( See Table 7), which indicates Wang's translation uses idioms more often than Wang's translation. The use of idioms in translation can make translation read more linguistically familiar. Proper use of idioms can add emotional color to the translation and make the description more vivid (Yuan, 1997: 20). An er-hua word refers to a word with the suffix "儿"[ə:r] as a light-sound morpheme, such as"花儿" [hwa-ə:r], "鸟儿" [niao-ə:r], etc. In literary works, appropriate use of er-hua words can highlight the character's language style, express the character's personality, and set off a contextual atmosphere (Liu, 2003: 5). In poetry, proper use of er-hua words also helps to better reflect an emotional atmosphere of poetry. The number of 17 er-hua words used in Wang's translation is 8 times that of 2 in Kang's translation, and the frequency of 26 er-hua words is 13 times that of 2 occurrences in Kang's translation, making Wang's translation more colloquial and with more local Chinese language characteristics, and hence more cordial. However, Kang's translation language, which uses fewer idioms and er-hua words, is more characteristic of written language. Some classical Chinese function words (actually, all of which are single Chinese characters) are used in both Kang's and Wang's translations. In Wang's translation, the frequency of occurrence is 114, which is 44 (62.86%) more than that of 70 in Kang's translation. Compared with Kang's translation, Wang's translation contains a more quaint flavor, which coexists with the prose style of the translation.

**2.2.2.4 Summary**

In Kang's translation, the deletion of original nouns, pronouns, and conjunctions is obvious, which makes the translation concise, while sometimes insufficient in the expression of meaning. The number of nouns and conjunctions in Wang's translation is 75.7% and 95.8% of the original text, but verbs and pronouns are 84.6% and 63.5%, respectively, more than in the original text, which is the result of the frequent addition of verbs and pronouns in Wang's translation, and consequently, makes Wang's translation more cohesive, smooth and fluent in writing, clearer in the expression of meaning, but not concise enough. Wang's translation uses more idioms, er-hua words, and classical Chinese function words, which makes the translation display more local Chinese characteristics and more cordial, and with some quaint flavors, while Kang's translation is more formal and more written.

**2.2.3 Vocabulary in Wang Hongyin's and Tu An's Translation Collections**

In each of Wang Hongyin's *200 Poems of Emily Dickinson* and Tu An's *I Know He Exists: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson* (258 poems), there are 78 translations that are translated from the same original poems. Statistical analysis and comparison are made between the 78 translations in Wang's collection and those in Tu's collection.

**2.2.3.1 Number of Words**

There are 4225 words in 78 original poems, 6582 words in Wang's translation, and 6991 words in Tu's translation. Tu's translation is 409 words more than Wang's translation, with an average of 5 more words per poem (409 / 78 ≈ 5.2). According to statistics and verification, one of the reasons why Wang's translation has fewer words than Tu's is that it often deletes such original sentence elements as subjects and quantifiers. Another reason is that classical Chinese is often used in Wang's translation, and an important feature of classical Chinese is its conciseness.

**2.2.3.2 Repetitive words, modal particles, onomatopoeias, er-hua words, idioms**

The frequency of repetitive words, modal particles, onomatopoeias, er-hua words, and idioms in the 78 translations in Wang's and Tu's collections are counted. The results are shown in Table 10:

Table 10 Occurrences of part of speech in 78 translations

Parts of speech	Wang's translation	Tu's translation	Differences
Modal particles	24	12	12(100%)
onomatopoeias	5	2	3 (150%)
Repetitive words (without onomatopoeias)	52	56	4 (7.7%)
Er-hua words	15	19	4 (26.7%)
idioms	17	17	0

There are 6 modal particles in the 78 original poems, all located at the beginning of the verse line. Both Wang's and Tu's translation have more than 6 modal particles, and the total occurrences of 24 in Wang's translation is twice that of 12 in Tu's translation. Specifically, in addition to retaining the 6 initial modal particles of the original text, Wang's translation also adds 1 initial modal particle, 17 mid-line /line-end modal particles, while Tu's translation only retains 5 of the 6 original initial modal particles, and adds 7 mid-line /line-end modal particles. Both Wang's and Tu's translations have added line-end modal particles, which are used to express imperatives and exclamations in enhancing emotional touch; in addition, Wang's translation also tends to add interrogative modal particles at the end of question sentences (lines), thereby enhancing the question or rhetorical tone of the poem. The occurrences of onomatopoeias in Wang's translation are 5, while in Tu's translation are 2. The frequency of onomatopoeias in Wang's translation is slightly higher. Repetitive words help to enhance the sense of melody of the verse, making it more catchy and also enhancing the emotional atmosphere. The frequency of repetitive words used in Wang's and Tu's translations is 52 and 56, respectively. The difference in quantity number is not large. The repetitive words that appear more frequently in Tu's translation are "小小" (Xiao Xiao) 8 times, "轻轻" (Qing Qing) 6 times, "缓缓"(Huan Huan) 3 times, and "匆匆"(Cong Cong) 3 times; in Wang's translation, repetitive words with more occurrences are "小小" (Xiao Xiao) 11 times, "静静" (Jing Jing) 4 times, "轻轻" (Qing Qing) 3 times. In terms of frequency of use, the 19 er-hua words used in Tu's translation are 26.7%, relatively more than the 15 occurrences of er-hua words used in Wang's translation, but most of the er-hua words used in Tu's translation are grammatical "儿"(Er) suffixes, while Wang's translation uses more dialectal "儿"(Er) suffixes, therefore, in this regard, the language style of Tu's translation is relatively closer to the original. The occurrences of idioms in Wang's and Tu's translations are the same, both of which are 17, yet between them, there are only 5 identical idioms that are translations from the same original texts.

### 2.2.3.3 Summary

Wang's translation uses fewer words, is more concise and flexible, and also reflects the translator's personalized understanding of the original poem. With more modal particles, onomatopoeia, and er-hua words with characteristics of China's northern dialects added, the language of Wang's translation is characterized more by regionalism, cordiality, and individuality, with richer and stronger emotional expression, and more instances of deletion of original sentence elements, which makes the translation sometimes deviate from the original obviously. As a whole, words in Tu's translation are relatively plain and fluent, without prominent specificity, and have high fidelity to the original text.

### 2.2.4 Vocabulary in Wang Jinhua's Translation Collection

Wang Jinhua's *Selected Dickinson's Poems*, published by Beiyue Literature and Art Publishing House in 2010, contains 243 translations. The vocabulary and parts of speech (nouns and verbs) of the 243 original and translated poems are counted and comparatively analyzed as follows.

#### 2.2.4.1 Number of words

Statistics of the number of words show (see Table 11) that the tokens and word types in the target text are both more than that of the original text, but the token and type ratio is slightly lower than that of the original text, indicating that the translation is not as concise as the original, but the use of vocabulary is richer and more diversified than that of the original text, which is the result of additional translation and prose translation which makes the translation easy to understand (Zhou, 2011: 83).

Table 11 Statistics of words in translation and the original

Version \ Items	Tokens	Word types	Token-to-type ratio
Original	13130	3233	4.1
Wang's Translation	16475	4400	3.74

**2.2.4.2 Nouns and verbs**

Nouns and verbs, as the most important and active word classes in language, are selected for statistics. Nouns and verbs are parts of speech that can be found in almost all languages in the world, and they differ from each other in many aspects, such as semantics and grammatical functions (Wu, 2019: 49). A noun refers to a unified name for people, matter, thing, place, or abstract concept. The accurate use of nouns in an article plays an important role in conveying the author's ideas. Verbs are generally used to indicate action or state. The ingenious application of verbs can make the things described in the article come alive, more vivid, and more dynamic. There is more than one classification standard for part of speech (or word class) (Song,2019: 183). The statistical results of nouns and verbs in the original text and Wang's translation are shown in Table 12.

Table 12 Statistics of number of original and translated nouns and verbs

Parts of Speech	Versions	Quantity	Frequency	Frequency to tokens ratio
Nouns	Original	1846	3500	26.7% (3500/13130)
	Translation	1662	3071	18.6% (3071/16475)
Verbs	Original	1142	2401	18.3% (2401/13130)
	Translation	1453	4186	25.4% (4184/16475)

According to statistical results, an interesting phenomenon is that the total frequency of original nouns and verbs accounted for 26.7% and 18.3% of the total frequency of 13130 of original vocabulary, respectively, and the proportion between the two is about 5:3; while the total frequency of target nouns and verbs accounted for 18.6% and 25.4% of the total target vocabulary frequency of 16475 respectively, and the proportion between the two is the opposite to that of the original nouns and verbs, that is, about 3:5, indicating that the performance of nouns in the original text is more prominent, while the performance of verbs in the translation is more significant. In addition, the total frequency of both original verbs and nouns accounted for 45% of the total frequency of the original vocabulary, and the total frequency of both target verbs and nouns accounted for 44% of the total frequency of the target vocabulary, indicating that the overall weight of nouns plus verbs in the translation and the original is close.

**2.2.4.3 Summary**

The total number of vocabulary of Wang Jinhua's translation is more than that of the original, with obvious addition and subtraction in translation. The expression in the translation is not as concise as the original, but the use of vocabulary is relatively richer and more diversified than the original. The proportion of nouns plus verbs to the total vocabulary in both target text and original text are close, both occupying about 45%. Nouns in the original text are more prominent, and verbs in the target text are more significant.

**2.2.5 Vocabulary in Mu Yu's Translation Collection**

Mu Yu's *The Final Harvest: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*, published by Flower City Publishing House in 1996, is a Chinese translation of Dickinson's poetry collection, *Final Harvest*, edited by Thomas Herbert Johnson (1902-1985) and published in 1961. Of all the 576 poems included both in the original and translation collections, 302 poems, which range from the 1-100th, the 288th-388th, and the 476th-576th poems in the collection, are selected as research objects. Statistics of transliterated words and conjunctions in the 302 poems are carried out.

**2.2.5.1 Transliterated Words**

Transliteration refers to the translation of the original text into Chinese according to its pronunciation. According to statistics, there are 68 transliterated words used in the 302 translations, but only 22 transliterated words are accompanied by footnotes and explanations. Of the 22 transliterated words with footnotes, three are place names: Thessaly (No. 292), Hybla (No. 292), and Bethlehem (No. 516); two are names of wine: Hock (No. 52) and Dim Burgundy (No. 52); one is a word of cheer: Hallelujah (No. 1), and one is a word of measurement unit: League (No. 30), but the most are the names of people, gods, and animals, with a total of 15 words, as shown in Table 13.

Table 13 The 15 transliterated words of people, gods, and animals

No.	Transliterated words, original texts, and serial number		
1	阿尔班 (Alban, No.22)	布里更 (Brigand, No.26)	加百利 (Gabriel, No.38)
2	布赖恩特 (Bryant, No.24)	彼得(Peter, No. 37)	墨丘利 (Mercury, No.344)

3	汤姆森 (Thomson, No.24)	赫歇耳 (Herschel, No.344)	伊阿宋 (Jason (Easun) ,No.510)
4	门农 (Memnon, No.68)	切尔克斯人 (Circassian, No.383)	俄耳甫斯 (Orpheus, No.525)
5	尼科迪默斯 (Nicodemus, No.25)	德摩斯梯尼 (Demosthenes, No.493)	达拉膜 (Durham, No.524)

The 22 transliterated words translated by the method of foreignization retain not only the original foreign flavor but also their footnotes to help Chinese readers understand the specific meaning of the words and are easily appreciated by Chinese readers. However, there are still about two-thirds of transliterated words which are without footnotes, and only a few of them are familiar words to ordinary Chinese readers, such as “伊甸园” (Eden, No. 44), “莱茵河”(the Rhine, No. 46), “波斯普尔海峡”(Bosporus, No. 293), etc.; therefore, most of these transliterated words without footnotes are difficult for readers to understand. To name some for example, such as: “基德”(Kidd, No. 2), “几尼”(guinea, No. 5), “雅各”(Jacob, No. 9), “辛马勒”(Himmaleh, No. 61), “萨克逊”(Saxon, No. 75), “奥甘迪”(Organdy, No. 76), “戈尔康达”(Golconda, No. 92), “辛玛勃”(Himmaleh, No. 352), “多明各”(Domingo, No. 355). The existence of a large number of transliterated words without footnotes, which are difficult for readers to understand, affects the faithfulness of the translation to the original text in content, reduces the readability of the translation

### 2.2.5.2 Conjunctions

Counting the number of conjunctions in the 302 original and translated poems (see Table 14), it is found that the use of conjunctions in translated texts does not correspond closely to that in original texts. There are differences between the translation and the original in a number of conjunctions representing causality, transition, concession, assumption, inheritance, and condition. More obviously, the number of English conjunction “and” and Chinese conjunction “和”(He) indicating parallelism is greatly different from each other. On the whole, the total number of the nine types of conjunction counted in translation is significantly less than that in the original text, with a deviation of 331, accounting for 41.69%.

Table 14 Statistics of original and translated conjunctions

No.	Freq.	Original conjunctions	Freq.	Translated conjunctions	Deviation value
1	14	because/due to/since	26	因为/由于	-12
2	27	So/therefore/hence/thus	11	所以/因此/于是/故	16
3	13	although/though /even though/even if	15	尽管/即使	-2
4	15	still	18	仍然/依旧/依然/仍旧	-3
5	139	but/however/while	126	但/却/而/然而	13
6	406	and	130	和/与	276
7	49	then	14	然后/之后/随后	35
8	75	or	55	或/或者/或是	20
9	56	if	68	如果/假如/假若/倘若/若	-12
Total	794		463		389 331

Specifically speaking, first of all, the number of conjunctions indicating causality in original and translated texts does not correspond. For example, the number of translated conjunctions of “因为” and “由于” (meaning “because/due to/since”) is 12 more than that of the original conjunctions of “because,” “due to,” and “since”, yet the number of translated conjunctions of “所以,” “因

此”，“于是”，和“故”(meaning “so/, therefore,/hence/thus”) is 16 less than that of the original conjunctions of “so”, “therefore”, “hence”, and “thus” (see Table 14). It can be seen that there are addition or subtraction happen in translating when dealing with the logical relationship of the original text or adjusting the original logical relationship of “because (/ so)” to “so (/ because)”. Secondly, in terms of conjunctions indicating concession and conjunctions indicating inheritance, the number of translated conjunctions corresponds to the original conjunctions to a high degree, and the deviation value is only 3. Thirdly, in terms of conjunctions indicating transition, there is a big discrepancy between the translation and the original text, for which 13 original conjunctions indicating transition are not translated, which may cause confusion for readers in understanding the text. Fourthly, 276 original conjunctions of “and” representing parallelism are omitted in the translation. Due to the differences in the ways of expression between English and Chinese languages, the original “and” sometimes do not need to be translated, but it is not normal to omit so many original “and” conjunctions in translation. It is also questionable to have omitted 35 original conjunctions of “then” in translation. Fifthly, the number of translated hypothetical conjunctions is 12 more than that of the original “if.” The addition or deletion of original conjunctions with obvious hypothetical functions in translation will greatly change the original meaning and logic.

In short, since the logical relation contained in conjunctions is closely related to the meaning and expression of the verse, a large number of additions or deletions of original conjunctions in translation will distort the original meaning and affect the faithfulness of the translation to the original text in the content.

**2.2.5.3 Summary**

A large number of transliterated words in Mu Yu's translation are not supplied with explanatory footnotes, which will reduce the readability of the translation. The number of conjunctions in the target text does not correspond to that of the original text to a high degree, indicating that in translation, there exists a significant deviation of logical relations from that of the original text. It can be said that transliteration and the translation of conjunctions obviously affect the faithfulness of the translated text to the original text in the content.

**2.2.6 Vocabulary in Shi Li's Translation Collection**

Chinese avant-garde poet Shi Li's *Lilacs in the Sky: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*, published by Foreign Languages Press in 2016, contains 110 translations. The following statistics show the number of words and the use of modal particles, prepositions and conjunctions, adjectives and verbs, and idioms in translation collection and the original text.

**2.2.6.1 Number of words**

According to statistics of vocabulary in source and target (see Table 15), there is little difference between the source text and the target text in terms of tokens and word types, and each of the token and type ratios is relatively close to each other, indicating that the source and target texts share a similar degree of richness of vocabulary.

Table 15 Statistics of vocabulary in translation and the original

Collection \ Items	Tokens	Word types	Token to type ratio
Original	8442	2802	3.0
Shi's Translation	8619	2583	3.3

Although there are huge differences between Chinese and English words in terms of word formation and word connotation (Jia, 2008: 110), the statistics, as shown in Table 15, reveal that there is no significant difference in the richness of vocabulary expression between the translation and the original text.

**2.2.6.2 Modal particles, prepositions, conjunctions, adjectives, verbs, and idioms**

A modal particle is a rhetorical device used to enhance emotional color and make literary works more vivid and individual. According to statistics of the five parts of speech in the original text and translated text (see Table 16), the number and frequency of modal particles in the original text are significantly lower than those in the translated text, indicating that the emotional expression of the translation is more abundant. A preposition is a function word used to express the relationship between words and words, words and sentences. Conjunctions are function words used to connect words and words, phrases and phrases, or sentences and sentences, and express a certain logical relationship (Yu, 2017: 8). The frequency of prepositions and conjunction in the translation is 348 (44.67%) and 53 (16.11%) less than that of the original respectively. This proves that, on the one hand, the Chinese language is rich in reference and powerful in expression, while on the other hand, the translation lacks, to a certain extent

reproducing the original logical relationship between words completely and so is insufficient in its faithfulness to original language structure.

Table 16 Statistics of Parts of speech in translation and the original

Parts of speech	Modal particles	Prepositions	Conjunctions	Adjectives	Verbs	Idioms
Original number (frequency)	2 ( 6 )	49 (779)	6 (329)	292 (434)	437 (822)	/
Translated number (frequency)	7 (17)	39 (431)	53 (276)	215 (344)	808(1987)	46 (49)
Differences	5(11)	10(348)	47(53)	77(90)	371(1165)	46 (49)

The number and frequency of original adjectives are higher than those in translation, indicating that the original text pays more attention to rhetoric and description and has a stronger sense of picture and image. The number and frequency of translated verbs are much more than those of the original, indicating that the language of the translation is more specific and vivid than the original. In short, the original text is superior to the translation in the use of adjectives, while the translation is superior to the original in the use of verbs. There are 49 occurrences of idioms in the translation. With regard to 110 translations, it is close to an average of one idiom in every 2 translations, which makes the translation more characteristic of native Chinese expression.

### 2.2.6.3 Summary

There is no obvious difference between Shi Li's translation and the original in terms of the richness of words, but there are more modal particles in Shi's translation and making the translation more abundant in emotional expression. The original logical relationship has not been faithfully reproduced in translation due to the significant differences in the number of prepositions and conjunctions between the translation and the original text. Language description in the translation is not as delicate as the original text but is more vivid and specific than the original text. The idioms are frequently used in the translation and so give the translation a native flavor of the Chinese language.

### 2.2.7 Vocabulary in Xu Chungang's Translation Collection

Xu Chungang's *Dust is the Only Secret*, published by East China Normal University Press in 2015, contains 381 Chinese translations of Dickinson's poems. The top 10 nouns, verbs, and adjectives with the highest frequency in the translation collection and the original text are counted and compared.

#### 2.2.7.1 Number of words

Statistics of the number and frequency of words in the translation collection and the original are shown in Table 17.

Table 17 Statistics of vocabulary in translation and the original

Collections \ Items	Tokens	Word types	Token to type ratio
Original	24764	6011	4.1
Xu's translation	38996	2425	16.1

The number of word types in translation collection is less than that of the original text, but the total occurrences of words are much more than that of the original text, and the token to type ratio is 4 times that of the original text, indicating that vocabulary used in the translation collection is less abundant and diversified than the original text. But it also demonstrates that Chinese is more expressive than English.

#### 2.2.7.2 Nouns, verbs, and adjectives

Statistics of the number and frequency of nouns, verbs, and adjectives in the translation and the original text are made, and the top 10 nouns, verbs, and adjectives with the highest frequency are listed in tables 18, 19, and 20, respectively.

Table 18 Statistics of top 10 original and translated nouns with the highest frequency

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Original words	heaven	sun	day	death	life	bird	way	sea	me	god	
Frequency	33	32	28	25	25	24	24	24	24	22	261
Translated words	人	天堂	太阳	上帝	生命	灵魂	心	眼睛	人们	天空	
Frequency	84	39	36	36	34	33	29	29	24	19	363

According to statistical Table 18, the top 10 nouns with the highest frequency in both the translated and original text have obvious religious connotations, indicating that the translated poems have religious contents that cannot be ignored. At the same time, the total frequency of the top 10 translated nouns is 363, which is more than the total frequency of 261 of the top 10 original nouns, indicating that there are more occurrences of nouns in the translation than in the original. In addition, in the table, 4 translated nouns, i.e., “天堂”(heaven), “太阳”(sun), “上帝”(God), and “生命”(life) are with the same meaning as 4 original nouns: "heaven," "sun," "God" and "life," accounting for 40% of 10 nouns in table 18, indicating that the translated nouns in the translation have a high degree of faithfulness to the original nouns.

Statistics and examination of the translation and the original texts show that most of the original nouns are literally translated, which results in a high correspondence between the translated nouns and the original nouns. In addition, many original nouns with similar meanings are often translated into the same single Chinese noun, which leads to a relatively less diversified use of nouns in the translation as compared with the original text.

Table 19 Statistics of top 10 original and translated verbs with the highest frequency

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Original words	be	see	tell	know	do	take	go	have	look	die	
Frequency	128	31	29	22	18	17	15	15	13	13	301
Translated words	会	没有	像	能	让	说	去	知道	直到	看	
Frequency	91	88	82	61	53	52	51	46	46	37	607

Statistics (see Table 19) show that the total frequency of the top 10 translated verbs with the highest frequency is 607, which is twice as many as the total frequency of 301 of the top 10 original verbs, indicating that the total occurrences of verbs in the translation are more than that in the original text, and the language in the translation is much more vivid and concrete. In table 19, the meaning of 4 translated verbs, i.e., “说”(say, tell), “去”(go), “看”(see), and “知道”(know), are the same as the 4 original verbs, i.e., "tell", "go", "see" and "know", accounting for 40% of the 10 verbs listed in table 19, which partly indicate that the translation of verbs in the translation is quite faithful to the original.

Statistics and inspection of the original and the translated texts show that there exists the obvious phenomenon of multiple translations of an original verb; that is, an original verb in different contexts is often translated into different Chinese verbs. For example, the Chinese translations for the original verb "go" and "know" are varied according to different contexts the original verbs are in, and some of the Chinese translations are not even quite comply with the original verbs in terms of meaning as well as in language style, of which some are of vernacular, some other are of classical style, etc. Consequently, verbs used in the translation are more abundant and diversified than those in the original text.

Table 20 Statistics of top 10 original and translated adjectives with the highest frequency

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Original words	little	other	last	such	many	more	much	new	only	own	
Frequency	45	29	19	18	16	13	12	11	11	11	185
Translated words	小	远	大	难	新	庄严	痛苦	好	黑暗	多	
Frequency	34	28	19	19	14	14	14	14	12	11	179

Statistics(see Table 20) show that the total frequency of the top 10 translated adjectives is 179, which is close to the total frequency of 185 of the top 10 original adjectives, indicating that there is no significant difference in the occurrences of adjectives between the translation and the original text. Of the top 10 high-frequency adjectives, only 2 translated adjectives, i.e., “小”(small) and “多”(many, much), are with the same meaning as 3 high-frequency original adjectives, i.e., "little," "many," and "much".

The reason for the low correspondence between the original and the translated adjectives is that, after statistics and inspection, many original adjectives with similar meanings are often translated into the same single Chinese adjective, which makes adjectives in the translation less diversified than the original.

### 2.2.7.3 Summary

On the whole, the vocabulary in Xu Chungang's translation is not as rich and diversified as the original. To be specific, the translation of nouns is the most literal translation, and the frequently "one translation for multiple original nouns" results in slightly less abundant translated nouns than the original. Due to the frequent "multiple translations for one original verb", verbs in the translation are obviously more diversified than that in the original text, and the language of the translation is more vivid and specific. Although there is little difference in the number of adjectives between the translation and the original, the frequent instances of "one translation for multiple original adjectives" obviously impairs the delicacy of the language description of the translation, which is slightly inferior to the original text. In a word, the richness of nouns and the delicacy of language description of the translation are slightly inferior to the original text, but the translation is far better than the original in terms of a specific and vivid description of language.

### 3. Conclusion

Through statistical analysis of 9 translation collections in terms of poetic form (stanza, line, and punctuation) and vocabulary use, it is found that none of them fully retain formal features of the original texts; some translation collections have minor deviations, while some have significant deviations. The deviation in stanza and line is not as large as the deviation in punctuation. Therefore, it can be said that the Chinese translation of Dickinson's poetry is not very faithful in terms of poetic form.

In terms of vocabulary use, Jiang Feng's and Kang Yanbin's translations are relatively concise, but Jiang's translation is concise and flexible, and Kang's translation is sometimes too concise and insufficiently expressive. Pu Long's translation, Tu An's translation, and Mu Yu's translation are more on alert to the faithfulness of vocabulary translation, but Pu's translation is too strict in following up original vocabulary and language when translating and thus lacks adequate flexibility in expression, Mu's translation is deficient in expression and lacks readability to some degree, while Tu's translation is modest and moderate in vocabulary use and has no significant defects. Wang Hongyin's and Wang Jinhua's translations are more individualized and localized. The two translators often add or delete in translating based on their personal understanding of the original texts. Specifically speaking, both addition and deletion in Wang Hongyin's translation are prominent, while it is mainly an additional translation that is significant in Wang Jinhua's translation. The language of Shi Li's translation is more vivid and specific than that of the original text, with abundant emotional expression, but the logical integrity of the language form is not as complete as the original text, and the description is not as fine and delicate as the original text. The language and vocabulary of Xu Chungang's translation are not as rich as the original. Xu's translation is slightly inferior to the original in terms of the diversity of nouns and the fine and delicate description of adjectives but is far better than the original text in terms of the specific vividness of language facilitated by an abundance of verbs.

In short, all 9 Chinese translation collections of Dickinson's poetry deviate significantly from the original in terms of poetic form, but each has its own characteristics in the use of vocabulary. One of the distinctive points is that some translators add or delete too much in translating, which makes the translation deviate too significantly from the original. The author of this article holds that poetry is a literary work with a perfect combination of form and content. Poetry translation should not only remain faithful to the content but also ensure the consistency of the form. Especially for Dickinson's poems, the original iconic dashes should be kept intact in translation. But in fact, among the 9 translation collections, only one collection completely retains the original dashes. In terms of content, the original content should be translated faithfully while keeping in mind that the translator's visibility in the translation should be minimized, and the occurrence of additional or subtracted translations should be reduced as far as possible.

**Acknowledgments:** This research is supported by the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities in 2021 for the project: "Research on Emily Dickinson's Multidimensional Paratextual Images." (Project code: ZLTS2021024).

**Conflicts of Interest:** Declare conflicts of interest or state, "The authors declare no conflict of interest."

**Author Biography:** Jianxin Zhou, Ph.D. is a professor of English Literature. He is a writer, translator and researcher whose research interests include Anglo-American poetry, comparison and translation of English and Chinese poetry, and pedagogy. Studying and translating Emily Dickinson's poetry is one of his enduring passions, and has produced fruitful research results in the past 30 years.

**Publisher's Note:** All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations or those of the publisher, the editors, and the reviewers.



## References

- [1] Cheng F.W. (1985). On Poetry Translation. *Collected Works of Cheng Fangwu*. Ed. Editorial Committee of *Collected Works of Cheng Fangwu*. Jinan: Shandong University Press, 121-128.
- [2] Dickinson, E. (1955). *The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Including Variant Readings Critically Compared with All Known Manuscripts*. 3 vols. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press.
- [3] Dickinson, E. (1960). *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.
- [4] Dickinson, E. (1961). *Final Harvest: Emily Dickinson's Poems*. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company.
- [5] Ding Zh.Q. (2017). English-Chinese Poetry Translation Principles, Strategies, and Others: An Interview with Poet Translator Mr. Tu An. *Chinese Translators Journal*, (3), 56-61.
- [6] Duan, C.L. (2000). The Formal Signification Function of Punctuation in Poetry. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, (4), 32-34.
- [7] Duan, C.L. (2001). The Written Marks for Poetic Pauses. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, (2), 74-75.
- [8] He, R.D. (2004). On Translation of Dickinson's Poems from Chinese Version of *Final Harvest*. *Journal of Leshan Normal University*, (1), 54-57.
- [9] Hu, Q.R. (2010). From Translating to Composing: Yu Guangzhong's Reception of Dickinson's Poetry. Ed. Zhao Minli. *Chinese Poetry Research*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 237-250.
- [10] Huang C.R. (2005). Translation of Poetry without Addition and Reduction: A Letter on Poetry Translation. *Jiangan Academic*, 24 (6), 34-38.
- [11] Huang G.X. (1999). Quantification and Application of the Standard of Chinese Translation of English Metrical Poetry. *Chinese Translators Journal*, (6), 14-18.
- [12] Huang G.W. (2003). Formal equivalence as a Criterion in Poetry Translation. *Chinese Translators Journal*, 24 (2), 21-23.
- [13] Jia, X.Y. (2008). Dynamic Equivalence of Loyalty and Elegant Delightful Betrayal —— Analysis of the Art of English-Chinese Translation of Poetry in A Study of American Poetry. *Tribune of Social Sciences*, (10), 107-110.
- [14] Jiang F. (2008). Preface. *Wild Nights, Wild Nights: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Trans. Jiang Feng. Beijing: People's Literature Publishing House, 1-6.
- [15] Jiang, F. (2008). *Wild Nights, Wild Nights: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Beijing: People's Literature Publishing House.
- [16] Johnson, Thomas H. (1960). Introduction. " *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, v-xi.
- [17] Kang, Y.B, tran. (2013). *No Rose, Yet Felt Myself A'bloom: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Guilin: Lijiang Publishing House.
- [18] Liang Z.D. (1936). Preface. *The Summit of All*. Trans. Liang Zongdai. Shanghai: Shanghai Times Book Company, 3-6.
- [19] Liu B.N. (1918). Preface by Translator to 'I Walk Along the Snow.' *The New Youth*, 4(5), 433.
- [20] Liu S.L. (2006). *A Study of Dickinson*. Shanghai : Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 360-361.
- [21] Liu, Zh.X. (2003). On R-Coloring. *Applied Linguistics*, (3), 2-8.
- [22] Lv, J. (1998). *Creation and Appreciation of New Poetry*. Chongqing: Chongqing Publishing House, 103.
- [23] Mu, Y. (1996). *Final Harvest: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Guangzhou: Flower City Publishing House.
- [24] Niu, X.Y. (2011). Comments on Zhou Jianxin's Translation of Dickinson's Poetry. *Literature Education*, (12), 150.
- [25] Pu L. (2014). *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House.
- [26] Shi, L. (2016). *Lilacs in the Sky: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Beijing: Foreign Languages Press.
- [27] Shi, Y., Yan L.L., He Q., and Liu W. (2018). Application of Semantic Analysis Based on Aipnlp and Bosonnlp. *Computer Programming Skills & Maintenance*, (8), 21-22, 32.
- [28] Song, Z.Y. (2019). Comparative Study on Principles of Word Class Division between Russian and Chinese. *Popular literature and Art*, (20), 183-184.
- [29] Tu, A and Zhang Y. (2013). *I Know He Exists: Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Beijing: Central Compilation&Translation Press.
- [30] Wang, H.Y. (2013). *200 Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Tianjin: Nankai University Press.
- [31] Wang, J.H. (2010). *Selected Dickinson's Poems*. Taiyuan: Beiyue Literature&Art Publishing House.
- [32] Wang Z.L. (1989). View of Translation in New Era: A Speech at a Symposium on Translation. *Translation: Thinking and Writing*. Ed. Wang Zuoliang. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2-6.
- [33] Wei, W.J., Han J.X., and Xia H.Y. (2016). Research on Text Classification Based on Python Natural Language Processing. *Journal of Fujian Computer*, 32(7), 4-5, 8.
- [34] Wu, M. (2019). Verbs Specific Deficits and Nouns Specific Deficits. *Journal of Leshan Normal University*, 34 (6), 49-55.
- [35] Xu, C.G. (2015). *Dust is the Only Secret*. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press.
- [36] Xue, X. (2010). The Formation of "Speaking Module" in Modern Poetry: Leaving Blank, Dividing Lines and Dividing Stanzas. *Poetry Periodical*, (6), 50-53.
- [37] Yu, J. (2017). The Arrangement of the Functional Words: Comparative Study in Primary Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language Textbooks. [Dissertation] Wuhan: Central China Normal University.
- [38] Yuan, R. (1997). On the Application of Chinese Idioms in Translation. *Chinese Translators Journal*, (4), 18-21.
- [39] Zhang, Y-J. (1998). Translation of Emily Dickinson in China. *Chinese Translators Journal*, (6), 38-42.
- [40] Zeng, Y.F. (2012). Translation and Introduction of Emily Dickinson by Yuan Shuipai. *East Journal of Translation*, (5), 24-29,79.
- [41] Zhou, J.X. (2004). Comments on Five Translated Versions of Dickinson's Poems. *Journal of Zhengzhou University of Aeronautics*, 23(1), 95-98.
- [42] Zhou, J.X. (2011). The Revelation of Sales of the Translations of Dickinson's Poems in the Last 30 Years in China. *View on Publishing*, (6), 58-60.
- [43] Zhou, J.X. (2011). Comments on 11 Chinese Translated Versions of Dickinson's Poems. *Translations*, (1), 77-88.
- [44] Zhou J.X. (2011). Translation of Emily Dickinson's Poems in China. *Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson*. Trans. Zhou Jianxin. Guangzhou: South China University of Technology Press, 1-9.
- [45] Zhou, J.X. (2012). Translation of Dickinson's Poems in China. *New Perspectives on World Literature*, (2), 50-52.