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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Big-Data Analysis of Characteristics of Chinese Translation of Emily Dickinson Poems: Case Study of Student Translators' Translation Practice

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| ABSTRACT

A Big-data analysis is carried out by building up relevant language corpus and applying Antconc 3.4.4, etc., to examine the characteristics of 1000 Chinese translations of 10 Emily Dickinson poems translated by 100 undergraduate students of South China University of Technology. Statistics and analysis reveal that the translation of Dickinson's poems by student translators is not faithful to the original poems, neither in form nor in content. Instead, without following the literal translation principle, student translators' translation bears distinct evidence of subjective initiative and arbitrary conduct, including altering stanza numbers and line numbers, omitting punctuation, adding modifiers to simple nouns (images), and cutting off content that is difficult to understand and translate, etc.; thus students' translation practice is more like self-fulfillment of their individual needs than a serious academic event.

| KEYWORDS

Emily Dickinson's poems; Chinese translation; characteristics; student translators

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### 1. Introduction

American female poet Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) is not only the pioneer of modern poetry in the nineteenth Century but also one of the short lyric poetry masters. With no title but massive oral vocabularies and dashes, her poetry is short but refined, and she always capitalizes the initial letter of those notional words. The charm of her language contributes to her unique style of poetry.

As early as the 1980s, there came the first Chinese translation anthology of Dickinson's poetry in mainland China. (Zhou 2) Since then, more scholars have devoted themselves to the translation and publication of Dickinson's poetry. By 2017, 17 kinds of Chinese translations of Dickinson's poetry had been published. However, the quality and the features of the translation are seldom studied, and one of the main reasons is that the standard and criteria of verse translation are always controversial. As a result, it is difficult to make convincing judgments on the translation's features and quality.

Poetry is an organic unity of content and form. For poetry translation, many senior translators pay much attention to the fidelity of the form and content of the translation. The poet and translator Liang Zongdai (1903-1983) once expressed his respect for the original text, "I have a vague belief, or a kind of superstition, that the diction and word order of the original poem which chosen by the poet is the best." (Liang 5) The scholar and translator Wang Zuoliang (1916-1995) thought that the translation of poetry should "make it all according to the original works, with its elegance and vulgarity, its depth, its tone, and its style." (Wang, 1989: 3) Huang Canran (1963- ), a modern poetry translator, also pointed out that "the basic principles of translation are 'no increase or no reduction,' generally to be faithful, although it is actually stricter than loyalty." (Huang, 2005:34) Translator Tu An (1923-2017) attaches great importance to the formal loyalty of poetry translations. He believes that "the metrical poetry should be translated to metrical poetry, and the free verse to free verse, keeping the features of the original poem." (Ding 58) The senior poet-translator

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Huang Gaoxin (1936-) went further to propose a method of measuring form loyalty. He believes that, for measuring form loyalty, translations can be viewed in terms of the number of lines, the meter of each line, the syllables of each line, and the rhyme of the poem (Huang, 1999:14). In order to achieve the loyalty of form and content, there are a lot of people pursuing the literal translation principle, which is faithfully translating the original form and content of poetry into the translation. The poet Liu Bannong (1891-1934) once expressed the hardships of both literal translation and free translation: "I tried to translate poetry into different forms, all of which are limited by style, and cannot be done...I intended to make a complete literal translation of the style. For its hardship, the process would be long." (Liu 433) Therefore, a literal translation is a viable method of maintaining the form and content of the original poetry, but it is by no means easy to implement. In general, the translation of short and clear modern English poetry is easy to use the method of a literal translation.

This paper selects ten concise and clear poems of Emily Dickinson, which are Poems 1186, 1190, 1212, 1218, 1220, 1233, 1250, 1363, 1472, and 1571, in *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, edited by Thomas H. Johnson in 1960. These ten poems are short, with 1 to 2 stanzas, 3 to 8 lines, and 13-34 words. All words are simple and unambiguous without allusions, conveying meaning clearly. For Chinese undergraduates, especially those at research universities, understanding and translating those ten short poems is not difficult for them. The author of this paper asks 100 undergraduates from different majors at the South China University of Technology to translate those 10 poems into Chinese as their course assignment and finally collects 1000 samples. The 1000 translation samples are the objects of the study, and this paper tries to figure out the fidelity of those translations in terms of form and content to see the characteristics of Chinese translations of Dickinson's poetry.

## 2. Deviation in form

Poetry conveys divinity through its form. Poetry loses its divinity when it loses its form. The stanza and the line make up the form of poetry which produces the division of semantic meaning and the pause of rhythm, expressing certain meaning and making the emotion more fluent and intense. As Huang Guowen (1956-), a linguistic researcher, said, "Form is the embodiment of meaning. Different forms express different meanings, and give different information to the audience." (Huang, 2003:21). The poet must have his own discretion while arranging its stanzas and lines, so it is important to maintain the original shape of poem while translating it. It is relatively easy to maintain loyalty to the original poem in form rather than in content. As the writer and translator Cheng Fangwu (1897-1984) pointed out, "The translation of a poem is also a poem, which is the least we should forget. Secondly, the translation should be faithful to the original poem. While talking about poetry, we are concerned with three parts: content, emotion, and form. The form of poetry is the easiest to transplant." (Cheng 121) It is easy because there are rules to follow. As mentioned earlier, Huang Gaoxin believes that, for measuring form loyalty, translations can be viewed in terms of the number of lines, the meter of each line, the syllables of each line, and the rhyme of the poem. (Huang, 1999:14)

Inspired by the specific criteria proposed by Huang Gaoxin, combined with the characteristics of the selected poems, this section adopts the method of big data analysis to investigate whether the translation of the undergraduates corresponds with the original text in form from three aspects: stanza consistency, line consistency, and punctuation (dash) consistency.

### 2.1 Deviation in Stanza Consistency

Of the ten selected poems, there is only one stanza in every 8 poems and two stanzas in every 2 poems. Looking at 1000 translation samples, the renderings of those original one-stanza poems are mostly with one stanza. But some renderings of those two-stanza poems are still with one stanza. Table 1 shows the stanza consistency deviation of those translations.

Table 1. Stanza Deviation in Chinese Translations

No.	Poems	Original stanza number	Translational stanza number	Number of deviated translations	Ratio of deviated translations
1	1186	1	2	3	3%
2	1190	1	1		
3	1212	2	1	41	41%
4	1218	1	1		
5	1220	1	1		
6	1233	1	1		
7	1250	1	1		
8	1363	2	1	11	11%

9	1472	1	1		
10	1571	1	1		

As table 1 shows, there are 41% and 11% of 100 students translated Poem 1212 and Poem 1363, respectively, into 1 stanza, while they had 2 stanzas originally. Also, three students translate Poem 1186 into 2 stanzas while its original stanza is 1. The form of poetry is the easiest to transplant in translation, and keeping the translational stanza consistent with the original poem is the easiest of the easiest. Nevertheless, many translations by undergraduates deviate from the original poems in the stanza. Obviously, they are not loyal to original poems in form.

**2.2 Deviation in Line Consistency**

The deviation of line number in translations is more pronounced. The line number of each of the 10 short poems is between 3 to 8 lines, and the word number in each line is between 1 to 7 words. Based on the method of literal translation, the length of the Chinese translation of the line with seven English words shall remain one line without line feeds.

Table 2 shows that the deviation of line numbers is relatively slight in 5 poems' translations (i.e., that of Poems 1190, 1218, 1233, 1250, and 1571), with a ratio of no more than 7%. However, more translations of Poems 1472, 1363, 1186, 1220, and 1212 deviate from the original in terms of a line number, the ratio accounting for 16%, 17%, 26%, 28%, and 34%, respectively. In general, the translations deviating from the original poem in terms of line number are quite large, amounting to 14.4% of the 1000 translations. The specific line numbers of these translations are varied. Take translations of Poem 1186 as an example. There are 26 translations deviating from their original in-line numbers whose lines are all more than their original. As for Poem 1472, there are 16 translations deviating from their original line number, whose lines are all less than their original. And the translations of another 8 poems are with more lines or with fewer lines than their original poems.

Also, poems are translated into different lines by different students; for example, the six-line Poem 1212 is translated into Chinese versions with 2,4,5,7, and 8 lines by different students, and the 8-line Poem 1363 is translated into 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 lines

Table 2. Line Deviation in Chinese Translations

No.	Poems	original line number	translational line number	Number of deviated translations	Ratio of deviated translations
1	1186	7	4、 5、 6、	26	26%
2	1190	4	2、 3、 5	5	5%
3	1212	6	2、 4、 5、 7、 8	34	34%
4	1218	4	2、 5	7	7%
5	1220	4	2、 3、 5	28	28%
6	1233	4	5	1	1%
7	1250	4	3、 5	3	3%
8	1363	8	5、 6、 7、 9、 10	17	17%
9	1472	3	4、 5	16	16%
10	1571	3	2、 4	7	7%
Total				144	14.4%

**2.3 Deviation in punctuation consistency**

Punctuation is also an important part of the form of poetry, but it is most easily overlooked by translators. Modern poetry translator Huang Canran once mentioned the problem of punctuation in poetry translation: "Length arrangement and punctuation itself makes a visual sense of rhythm, which is often ignored by a general translator."(Huang, 1998:127) Chinese punctuation application system is similar to English. In English-to-Chinese poetry translation, it is natural to keep the original punctuation. In order to maintain the fidelity of form in translation, even small punctuation marks are not free to be changed. This is particularly important in the translation of Dickinson's poems because her poems contain a large number of highly individual dashes. When Johnson

edited and published *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*, he attached great importance to the consistency of the printed version with Dickinson's manuscript of the dash, "Dickinson used dash as a musical device, and though some may be elongated end stops, any 'correction' would be gratuitous." (Johnson x-xi) A translator of Dickinson's poems, Jiang Feng (1929-), also noticed the special role of a dash in Dickinson's poetry: "In Emily's poems, she seldom used punctuation as people commonly used. She used tremendous short slash instead of the dash to express transitions, jumps, trivial components, or merely meteoric ups and downs." (Jiang 5). It can be said that the dash in Dickinson's poems is an outstanding mark of formal ideograph, and it is necessary to retain the dash in Chinese translation.

Statistics on the dash left by undergraduate translators in their translations are shown in Table 3. Originally, 7 of the 10 poems contained dashes, which scatter within poems. However, most Chinese translations of each of the 7 poems fail to match the dash of its original poems, which account for 90% of the total. Although a small number of translations still contain a dash, the number of the dash is less than that of the original poem. More translations omitted the dash or replaced the dash with periods or commas. It can be seen that the punctuation marks of most translations clearly deviate from the original poems, and so they are unfaithful to the original in form.

Table 3. Dash Deviation in Chinese Translations

No.	Poems	original dash number	Ratio of translation with full corresponding dash	Ratio of translation with partial corresponding dash	Ratio of translation without dash	Ratio of deviated translations
1	1186	0				
2	1190	2	10%	10%	80%	90%
3	1212	0				
4	1218	2	10%	5%	85%	90%
5	1220	0				
6	1233	1	4%	7%	89%	96%
7	1250	1	7%	4%	89%	93%
8	1363	4	10%	39%	51%	90%
9	1472	2	10%	6%	84%	90%
10	1571	2	9%	0	91%	91%

### 3. Variation in content

#### 3.1 Variation in word number

It is said that *The Septuagint*, a Greek translation for *The Hebrew Pentateuch Moses*, was translated by seventy Jewish scholars on one island. What is surprising is that their translations are mostly identical, which has been seen as a classical example of a literal translation. Word-for-word translation may be the most stringent requirement for a literal translation, which ensures that the translation corresponds to the original in form and also in content to the maximum extent. Liang Zongdai insisted on word for word translation principle. His translation was "largely based on literal translation with only a few exceptions, translating not only line for line, but also a word for word." (Liang 5)

If students keep on the word-for-word translation principle, they could accomplish their work as those seventy Jewish scholars have done. However, regarding the word count of students' translations (see Table 4), it is found that for different translations of the same poem, the number of words varies. The words of the longest translation are two to four times the number of the shortest translation. Compared with the word number of original poems, those translations obviously vary in word number.

Table 4. Maximum and Minimum Word Number of Chinese Translations

Poems	1186	1190	1212	1218	1220	1233	1250	1363	1472	1571
Original word number	30	21	19	22	17	21	18	34	17	13
Translational word number(Max.)	78	51	46	50	41	52	41	82	40	31
Translational word number(Min.)	19	15	19	21	14	26	15	50	12	7

The contrast between the largest and least word number of translations demonstrates a great difference in individual translations. And further investigation of the word number of each translation is necessary to see whether the word number of each translation matches its original poem. As for the establishment of a reasonable range of word numbers for each translation, there have been some translators who have made worthy exploration. For example, famous Chinese poet and translator Dai Wangshu (1905-1950) adopted the method of "character accounts for syllable translation," using 12 Chinese characters for the translation of 12 syllables of the original poem, 10 characters for 10 syllables, and 8 characters for 8 syllables in his French to Chinese poetry translation. (Wang, 1985: 42) Similarly, in English-Chinese poetry translation, the Chinese translator Huang Gaoxin used 12 characters for 10 syllables, 10 characters for 8 syllables, and 8 characters for 6 syllables(Huang, 2007:77). Both Dai and Huang set the number of characters in translation according to the number of syllables in original poems. Obviously, it is the way of a literal translation. The 10 poems of Dickinson this paper selected are all modern English poems without strict meter and rhyme patterns like traditional English poems, therefore it is not advisable to adhere strictly to the above-mentioned principle of determining the number of characters of the Chinese translation according to the number of syllables of the English original. Yet inspired by these two predecessors, the author of this paper intends to set the reasonable range of word number of translation according to the principle of a word for word translation while taking two conditions into consideration at the same time. Firstly, for one English word or sentence pattern, usually, there are several ways to translate it into Chinese with different character(word) numbers. So it is sensible to set the reasonable range of word number of relevant translations in between the possible least word numbers and the possible largest word number of the translations. Secondly, fluency in translation must be taken into account. As Huang Canran said, "Translators of the new era should mainly translate poetry by way of literal translation, but the literal translation must conform to modern Chinese grammar and maintain proper fluency."(Huang, 1998:123 ) Accordingly, the author of this paper establishes the reasonable range of word number for each poem's translation and, based on big-data analysis, finds out word number variation features of all 1000 translations for the 10 English poems by comparing each translation with its reasonable range of word number(see Table 5).

Table 5. Word Number Variation in Chinese Translations

Poems	1186	1190	1212	1218	1220	1233	1250	1363	1472	1571	Total
Reasonable range of translational word number	32-34	22-24	26-29	38-40	28-30	32-34	21-25	64-66	20-27	14-16	
Ratio of translations with reasonable word number	21%	17%	36%	17%	19%	50%	28%	33%	48%	23%	29.2%
Ratio of translations with insufficient word number	24%	6%	14%	74%	68%	21%	31%	34%	2%	10%	28.4%

Ratio of translations with excessive word number	55%	77%	50%	9%	13%	29%	41%	33%	50%	67%	42.4%
Ratio of translations with word number beyond reasonable range	79%	83%	64%	83%	81%	50%	72%	67%	52%	77%	70.8%

Statistics (Table 5) show that of all 1000 translations, 70.8% of the total are with unreasonable word numbers, of which 42.4% with excessive words and 28.4% with fewer words. Obviously, translations with excessive words are likely to have additional content, while translations with insufficient words are likely to have scanty content. Therefore, variation in word number is actually a reflection of variation in content. In other words, over 70% of 1000 translations violate the literal translation principle, which has been proposed as the basic principle for modern poetry translation by Huang Canran in such words as no increase, no reduction. (Huang, 2005: 34)

### 3.2 Addition of content

In regard to those translations with unreasonable word numbers, the larger part of them is with excessive words, amounting to 42.4%. The author of this paper speculates that this may result in the addition of extra content to the original poem. To verify the speculation, the author of this paper takes the 100 Chinese translations of Poem 1190 as samples to carry out a corpus analysis. The original text of Poem 1190 is as follows:

The Sun and Fog contested  
 The Government of Day—  
 The Sun took down his Yellow Whip  
 And drove the Fog away—  
 (Dickinson 527)

Taking the translation of the central image "fog" in the poem as an object of study, the author of this paper builds a corpus of the 100 translations of Poem 1190 and uses Antconc 3.4.4 for analysis and gets a word list of the corpus. Screening out all Chinese translations of "fog," a list comes out, as can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Variation of Chinese translation of "fog."

Rank	Freq	Chinese Trans.	Rank	Freq	Chinese trans.
1	86	雾	11	3	尘雾
2	28	迷雾	12	3	雾霾
3	19	浓雾	13	2	烟雾
4	19	雾气	14	1	乌云
5	11	云雾	15	1	云
6	11	大雾	16	1	云烟
7	8	晨雾	17	1	妖雾

8	5	白雾	18	1	烟云
9	3	薄雾	19	1	阴霾
10	3	雾霭	Total	207	

The word "fog" in the original text appears 2 times, so the frequency of its translation in the translation corpus should be 200 times. While statistics (as can be seen in Table 6) show the total frequency of the translation of "fog" is 207, which indicates that in some translation samples, the image "fog" appears more than twice, hence adding extra content to the original poem. It can be seen that there are altogether 19 versions of translation for "fog," which can be categorized into three groups. The first group includes 3 translations, "雾," "雾气," and "雾霭," which are the results of literal translations, with a total frequency of 108 times. The second group consists of 7 translations with additional content, i.e., "迷雾," "浓雾," "云雾," "大雾," "晨雾," "白雾", and "薄雾", with the frequency of 85 times. In original English text, the word "fog" does not have any modifier, but all of these seven types of Chinese translation contain modification to the "fog", for example, the color of fog, the thickness of fog and the time of fogging, etc., thus extending the connotation of the original fog image. The third group comprises 9 mistranslations of the original "fog", i.e. "尘雾", "雾霾", "烟雾", "乌云", "云", "云烟", "妖雾", "烟云", and "阴霾", with a total frequency of 14 times.

Statistics ( see Table 6) show that addition of content in translations result either from extra repetition of fog images or extension of original meaning of "fog". In addition, browsing through these 100 translations reveals that other ways of injecting extra content into translation include the addition of adjectives directly before the noun, such as the translations like "弥漫的雾", "氤氲的晨雾", "茫茫晨雾" and "层层迷雾"

**3.3 Deduction of content**

Although the majority of translations are with excessive word numbers beyond reasonable range, there are quite a few translations with insufficient word numbers, accounting for 28.4%. The insufficiency of words may result in a deduction of original content in translation. Taking Poem 1250 as an example, the author of this paper carries out a corpus analysis of its 100 Chinese translations. The original text of Poem 1250 is as follows.

White as an Indian Pipe  
 Red as a Cardinal Flower  
 Fabulous as a Moon at Noon  
 February Hour ——  
 (Dickinson 548 )

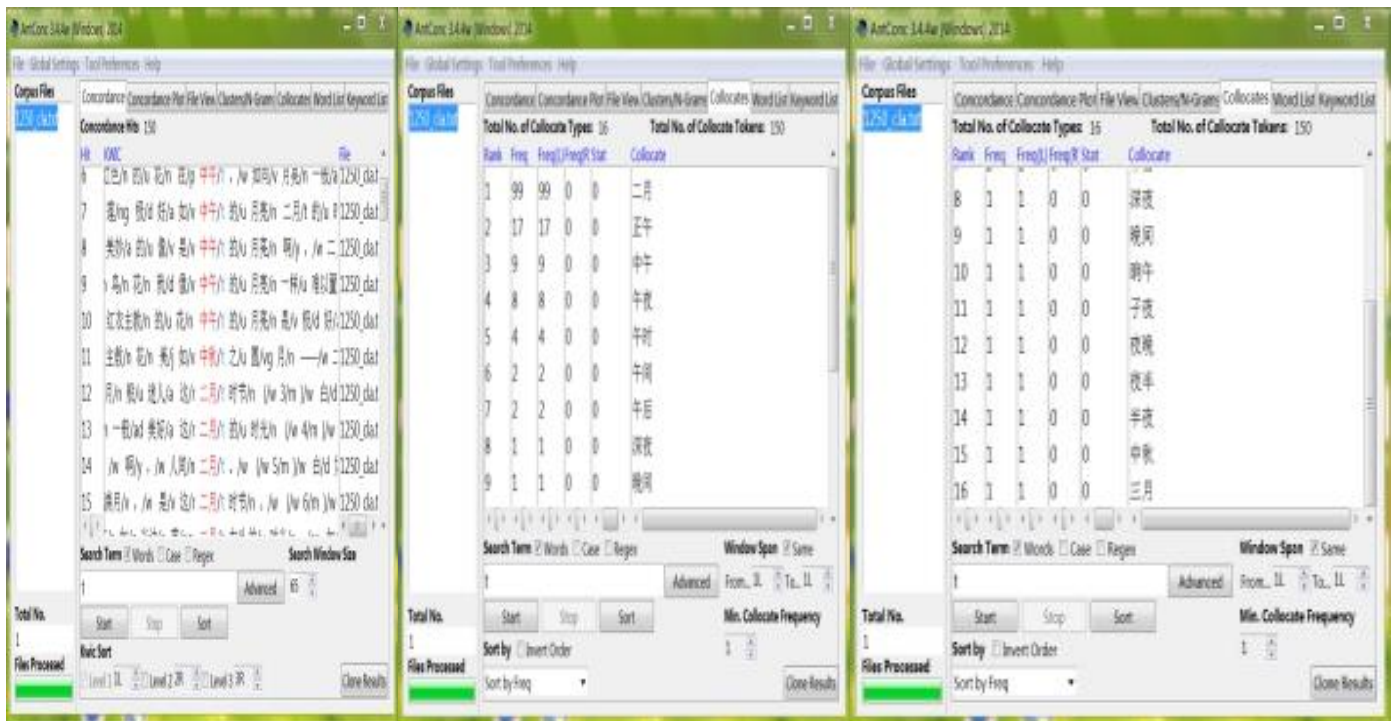
The author of this paper builds up a corpus for its 100 translations and uses Antconc 3.4.4 to acquire a word list of the corpus, which shows that the frequency of time label "t" is 150, indicating that there are 150 words that denote time in this translation corpus. While there are 2 words denoting the time in the original poem(i.e., "Noon" and "February"), it should have been 200 "words"(Chinese character group) labeled "t" in this corpus of 100 translations if all students apply literal translation. Obviously, 50 words denoting time have been omitted in 100 translations.

Taking the label "t" as a search term and collocating statistics on its 2L position to get a list of words denoting the time in the translation corpus, the result is shown in Chart 1. The word with the highest frequency appears to be "二月" which is the rendering of "February" in Chinese, with a frequency of 99. The word "三月 (March) " is a mistranslation of "February". In this corpus, the frequency of the rendering for "February" is exactly 100. Examining other Collocate Types, it is found that they are all translations for "Noon", with the Collocate Token of 50. Obviously, there are still 50 translations that are without the rendering for "Noon", thus resulting in a deduction of content from the original poem.

The original expression "Moon at Noon" maintains a consonance of "/u:/". In English to Chinese translation, it is very hard for the translator to make the translation both faithful to the original meaning and the original rhyme scheme at the same time. Moreover, The meaning of "Moon at noon" violates daily common sense and so it is hard for students to understand and follow. Therefore it

is no wonder that half of the student translators have omitted it in translation in the face of the difficulty in understanding and translating.

Chart1. Corpus analysis of 100 translations of Poem 1250 by Antconc 3.4.4



### 3.4 Mistranslation

In regard to translation cases of "fog" and "noon" mentioned in the previous two sections, there are respectively 19 and 14 corresponding Chinese translations in their translation corpus. While translating English poems into Chinese, different student translators may choose different word words from a broad Chinese vocabulary corresponding to the original text. This is a fact illustrated by statistics on the ratio of word types in the original text to word types in translated text (see Table 7). The results demonstrate that in these 1000 translation samples, there are about 17 kinds of Chinese translations for each English word on average, taking no account of translation accuracy.

Table 7. Ratio of original word types to translational word types

Poems	1186	1190	1212	1218	1220	1233	1250	1363	1472	1571	Average
Ratio	1:21.5	1:21.9	1:15.0	1:14.3	1:20.5	1:15.8	1:14.5	1:12.4	1:19.1	1:26.0	1:17.4

Of course, not all of the translations are in line with the original meaning. Take the case of "fog" as an example. In its 19 kinds of Chinese translations, only 3 are literal translations, while the other 16 translations have had their meanings deviated, either by adopting extended meaning or completely mistranslating, both of which can be identified as a mistranslation.

In order to examine details of mistranslation in these 1,000 translation samples, the author of this paper selects 1 typical word from each poem as the object of study and uses Antconc. 3.4.4 to calculate the various translations of these 10 selected words. Based on each poem's context, these 10 words should be literally translated. Therefore, statistics may show clearly which translation is a literal translation and which one is a mistranslation. The proportion of literal translation and mistranslation for each of these 10 words is shown in Table 8.



Table 8. Literal translation and mistranslation of 10 selected words

Poems	1186	1190	1212	1218	1220
Selected words	Mornings	Fog	A Word	Light	Bumble bee
Translation with highest frequency	清晨	雾	词	阳光	大黄蜂
Literal translation ratio	82%	54%	77%	97%	78%
Mistranslation ratio	18%	46%	23%	3%	22%
Poems	1233	1250	1363	1472	1571
Selected words	Wildness	Indian Pipe	shelf	sky	Slow
Translation with highest frequency	荒凉	水晶兰	架子	天空	慢
Literal translation ratio	56%	73%	85%	78%	81%
Mistranslation ratio	44%	27%	15%	22%	19%

The words "Mornings", "Fog", "Light", "sky" are all simple nouns that refer to things in nature. Among them, "light" is rarely mistranslated, the proportion of its literal translations amounts to 97%, while "Mornings(清晨)" is mistranslated with the proportion of 18%, either extended as "晨光", "晨曦", or misunderstood as "白天", "白日", "日光". "Fog(雾)" is mistranslated with the proportion of 46%, either extended as "迷雾", "浓雾", "云雾", "大雾", "晨雾", "白雾", and "薄雾", or misunderstood as "尘雾", "雾霾", "烟雾", "乌云", "云", "云烟", "妖雾", "烟云", and "阴霾". And "Sky(天空)" is mistranslated with the proportion of 22%, either extended as "蓝天", "晴空", "朗空", or misunderstood as "星空", and "星斗".

Both "Bumble Bee" and "Indian Pipe" are proper nouns. With the help of dictionaries and other tools, the corresponding translations can easily be found as "大黄蜂" and "水晶兰" in Chinese. Yet statistics (Table 8) show that the proportion of mistranslation amount to 22% and 27%, respectively. The former was mistakenly translated as "蜜蜂", "蜂蝶", "群蜂", "蜂群", and the latter as "印度烟斗", "印第安管子", "印第安管道", and "印第安长笛".

"A word(一个词)", "Wildness(荒凉)," and "shelf(架子)" are with some metaphoric meaning in the original text; the proportion of their mistranslation amounts to 23%, 44%, and 15%, respectively. "A word" is mistranslated as "一句话", "文字", and "句子". "Wildness" is mistranslated as "荒野", "荒芜", "荒原", "寂寞", and "视野"; and "shelf" is mistranslated as "阑珊", "平静", "澹澹", "温和", "减慢", "安逸", and "安静".

In short, the statistics in Table 8 demonstrate a prominent phenomenon of a mistranslation of the 10 selected words, among which only one word was seldom mistranslated, two words' mistranslation are both more than 40%, and each of the other 7 words has about 20% mistranslation.

#### 4. Conclusion

This paper conducts a statistical analysis of translations of 10 Dickinson poems by 100 undergraduate translators. Taking literal translation as the reference translation principle, the author of this paper employs big-data analysis to examine the faithfulness of translations in form and content to the original poems. The results are as follows. Firstly, translations by undergraduates deviate prominently from the original poems in form, many of which render the original 2-stanza poem into one stanza translation, 14.4% of which have different line numbers from the original poems, and 90% of which are not in line with original poems on the aspect of punctuation dash. Secondly, translations by undergraduates maintain nonetheless remarkable variation in content, with 70.8% of translations being of unreasonable word numbers indicating addition or deduction of original content in translation. There are some translations with excessive word numbers, which may result in the addition of content to their original poems, and some other translations have insufficient word numbers, which contribute to the reduction of the content of their original poems. Moreover, the phenomenon of mistranslation is prominent.

In brief, the translation of Emily Dickinson's poems by undergraduate student translators is not faithful to the original poems, neither in form nor in content. Obviously, student translators fail to follow the principle of literal translation, and their translation bears distinct evidence of subjective initiative and arbitrary conduct, including altering stanza numbers and line numbers, omitting punctuation, adding modifiers to simple nouns(images), and cutting off content that is difficult to understand and translate, etc. For the phenomenon that translators tend to fill individual subjective thinking in their translation, Chinese poetry researcher Hai'an (1965-) once explained that "When a translator is engaged in a purposeful translation, he will accordingly have his intention to fulfill the needs of his inner personality."(Hai'an 27) In undergraduate students' poetry translation practice, the phenomenon of distracting from original poems and over-emphasizing the expression of their inner subjective wishes is just a manifestation of their appeal to satisfying their individual needs. In other words, students' translation practice is more like self-fulfillment of their individual needs than a serious academic event.

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