

Original Paper

Grammatical Metaphor in the C-E Translation of *Jing Ye Si*

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Abstract

In translation, translators are often confronted with the choice between congruent form and metaphorical form, which is closely correlated with grammatical metaphor theory in systemic functional linguistics. This paper attempts to apply grammatical metaphor theory to Jing Ye Si and its seven translations to assess poetry translation quality and provide guidance for translators from the perspective of systemic functional linguistics. It strives to elucidate the grammatical metaphor in the C-E translation of Jing Ye Si and the way to evaluate its seven translations via grammatical metaphor. In this context, six steps brought forward by Huang Guowen (2004) are taken in the functional discourse analysis of Jing Ye Si and its seven translations. After elaborating the characteristics of the seven translations, the study evaluates their overall translation quality. According to functional equivalence to the source text, the translations of Xu Yuanchong and Amy Lowell outperform other translations. In translation practice, translators are advised to choose between the congruent form and metaphorical form based on the context, original author, target readers, aesthetic value, translation purpose, and so on. Essentially, it is necessary to manipulate the transitivity system, mood system, modality system, and Theme system to realize the equivalence of the translations to the source text in terms of ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions.

Keywords

grammatical metaphor, C-E translation, Jing Ye Si

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

As China enhances political, economic, and cultural exchanges with other countries around the world, a mounting number of foreigners are gripped by traditional Chinese culture. Poetry translation is integral to Chinese culture export. For one thing, the Chinese can have a deeper understanding of the poems. For another, foreigners can appreciate traditional Chinese poems.

Jing Ye Si is a renowned poem composed by Li Bai in the Tang dynasty, whose literary value is beyond doubt. Quite a few translators, whether Chinese or foreign, have left distinctive translations of *Jing Ye Si*. Probing into the C-E translation of *Jing Ye Si* is an alternative to sharing China stories through good communication.

1.2 Research Objectives

Halliday's systemic functional linguistics is widely used in discourse analysis, whereas translation studies can also benefit from it. The paper strives to test the applicability of grammatical metaphor theory in it to *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations. Furthermore, different translations are compared to find better ones. Most importantly, the paper tries to provide insight into poetry translation.

1.3 Research Significance

With the boom of traditional Chinese culture going global, traditional Chinese poems gain traction. Correspondingly, a great many studies are centered on poetry translation. Nonetheless, plenty of domestic scholars set store by poetry translation criticism, particularly the "Three Beauties" principle proposed by Xu Yuanchong (1979): beauty in sense, sound, and form. The grammatical metaphor theory in systemic functional linguistics, established by M. A. K. Halliday (1985), provides a new perspective for translation studies.

Through exposition on the grammatical metaphor in *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations, this article examines the feasibility of the theory in poetry translation studies. It also sparks inspiration for the translators. By virtue of the grammatical metaphor theory, translators can better appreciate and understand the source text. Thus, they can select the appropriate one from the congruent form and metaphorical form to satisfy their needs, improving the translation quality. What's more, the study attracts attention to the traditional Chinese poem, *Jing Ye Si*, in an attempt to spread traditional Chinese culture with the aid of language.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Studies of Grammatical Metaphor in Translation

In general, nominalization in ideational metaphor is in harmony with the ideology of science, and of academic, formal writing, in that it allows processes to be de-personalized: to be expressed without the human doer (Thompson, 2014). Besides, normalization can function as the Theme to facilitate cohesion. It also has the function of encapsulation and condensation. In consequence, it is characteristic of scientific discourse. Multiple scholars elaborate on grammatical metaphor in the translation of scientific discourse, and others are concerned about academic discourse, political discourse, diplomatic discourse, traditional Chinese poems etc.

2.2 Studies of Grammatical Metaphor in the Translation of Scientific Discourse

Based on the theory of grammatical metaphor in systemic functional grammar, Yu (2006) finds that ideational metaphor is an effective way to realize the stylistic features of scientific English discourse.

By dint of nominalization, transformation in process, functional elements and lexicogrammar brings some stylistic features, such as formality, conciseness, and objectivity, to scientific discourse. Her findings aid in translating scientific English discourse.

Xu and Wu (2008) study the translation of scientific discourse from the perspective of ideational metaphor. They analyze how to use ideational metaphors to reflect the stylistic features of scientific discourse, including objectivity, formality, and condensation, in the translation between English and Chinese. They conclude from examples that ideational metaphor has incomparable advantages in scientific discourse translation.

Chen (2012) discusses the construction and E-C translation strategies of metaphorical forms in scientific discourse. Since grammatical metaphor involves shifts in ranks and functions, metaphorical forms in scientific discourse should be translated on the same rank or to a higher rank according to the degree of difficulty.

Yang (2013) focuses on the cohesion and translation of nominalization in scientific English discourse, which mirrors the requirements of stylistic appropriateness and formality. Nominalization has dual cohesion functions: thematic cohesion and lexical cohesion. In the E-C translation of ideational metaphor, Yang also suggests methods to achieve equivalent translation and discourse cohesion.

2.3 Studies of Grammatical Metaphor in the Translation of Academic, Political, and Diplomatic Discourse

Xiao and Lyu (2007) conclude that grammatical metaphor plays an indispensable role in the translation of academic discourse. They find some problems in the Chinese translation of an academic book, *The Language War*, and offer better translations under the guidance of grammatical metaphor. Owing to differences between English and Chinese in lexicon and syntax, there are more grammatical metaphor in English than in Chinese. Accordingly, they propose three strategies for translating academic discourse: converting parts of speech, adjusting sentence structure, and adding relevant information.

Tang and Yang (2016) concentrate on translation strategies for nominalization in political discourse. Nominalization is a powerful lexicogrammatical resource of grammatical metaphor. They sort out the types of nominalization in C-E translation from the perspectives of class shift and rank shift and apply them in the analysis of nominalized expressions in *Report to the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China* and its English translation. It is found that the correspondence between Chinese and English nominalization is the most frequent type, and other types are related to lexicogrammatical, semantic, pragmatic, sociocultural factors etc.

Zhang Junfeng (2014) addresses the implicitness constructed and translated in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' diplomatic discourse from the perspective of grammatical metaphor. Implicitness in diplomatic discourse is motivated by interpersonal considerations oriented by desired public responses. It is suggested that syntactic concealment of the human element is largely responsible for the implicitness in grammatical metaphor.

2.4 Studies of Grammatical Metaphor in the Translation of Traditional Chinese Poems

On the basis of Halliday's functional linguistics, Huang (2002a, 2002b) describes the ideational and interpersonal metafunction of Du Mu's poem *Qingming* and its six translations, proving the applicability and operability of functional linguistics in discourse analysis and translation research. Then in 2009, he explores the application of grammatical metaphor in translation studies and points out that the congruent and metaphorical form serve different communicative purposes and needs.

Pan and Fang (2008) conduct a comparative analysis of Wang Wei's *Niao Ming Jian* and its three English translations, proving that ideational grammatical metaphor can provide a new perspective for the evaluation of different translations and the interpretation of the original poem. Metaphorical translations can dig into the connotations of the poem better than congruent translations. They believe that grammatical metaphor theory can help translators make appropriate choices in the process of translation.

He and Zhang (2012)'s discussion revolves around ideational metaphors in translations of traditional Chinese poems. They summarize three main characteristics of ideational metaphor in conveying artistic conception: the transformation between relational process and other processes, the transformation between non-relational processes, and the role of nominalization. The first characteristic adds vividness and liveliness to translations; the second characteristic is rather complicated and translations should conform to the artistic conception of the original poem; the third characteristic can be applied to the translation of static artistic conception and discourse cohesion.

From what has been discussed above, it is obvious that grammatical metaphor is studied in the translation of all kinds of discourse. In fact, there is comparatively insufficient research on the translation of traditional Chinese poems with systemic functional linguistics, especially grammatical metaphor, as the theoretical framework. Additionally, previous studies of grammatical metaphor in the translation of traditional Chinese poems mainly pay attention to ideational metaphors and disregard interpersonal metaphors and textual metaphors. It is expected that this study can be a supplement to existing research.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Halliday's Three Metafunctions

According to Halliday (1985), language has three metafunctions: ideational metafunction, interpersonal metafunction, and textual metafunction. Then they will be introduced one by one. Ideational metafunction is distinguished into two components, the experiential and the logical. Language does construe human experience. We use language to talk about our experience of the world, including the worlds in our own minds, to describe events and states and the entities involved in them. Interpersonal metafunction uncovers that language enacts our personal and social relationships with the other people around us. We also use language to interact with other people, to establish and maintain relations with

them, to influence their behaviour, to express our own viewpoint on things in the world, and to elicit or change theirs. Textual metafunction relates to the construction of text. In using language, we organize our messages in ways that indicate how they fit in with the other messages around them and with the wider context in which we are talking or writing.

3.2 Grammatical Metaphor

Grammatical metaphors serve to reshape and reconstrue our experiences by re-presenting one type of phenomenon as another. On account of his analysis of the metafunctions of language as ideational, interpersonal, and textual, Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) propose two categories of grammatical metaphor, ideational and interpersonal; while some scholars list a third category, textual grammatical metaphors (e.g., Martin, 1992; Thompson, 1996). This paper combines these two views, dividing grammatical metaphor into three categories: ideational metaphors, interpersonal metaphors, and textual metaphors.

In grammatical metaphor, the same meaning can be expressed in a congruent or metaphorical way. Thompson (2014, p. 236) glosses the congruent form as “closer to the state of affairs in the external world”. The metaphorical form is a different way of expressing the same meaning that would be more congruent. Strictly speaking, congruent and metaphorical wordings are a matter of degree. They are doing different jobs and can’t be graded as better or worse than the other. He (ibid.) provisionally defines grammatical metaphor as: “the expression of a meaning through a lexico-grammatical form that originally evolved to express a different kind of meaning”. Transitivity analysis helps us recognize grammatical metaphor. If a transitivity analysis does not seem to reflect adequately the state of affairs being referred to, it is very likely that the meaning is being expressed metaphorically (Thompson, 2014, p. 240).

3.2.1 Ideational Metaphors

Nominalization is a primary focus of ideational metaphors. It is a key phenomenon in ideational metaphor, where processes and qualities are construed as entities. This type of grammatical metaphor involves a realignment of all the other elements of the message (Thompson, 2014, p. 241). Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 59) propose that verbs typically refer to processes, nouns to entities, and adjectives to qualities (of entities or of processes). When nouns are used to express processes or qualities, there appears ideational metaphors in the form of verbal nominalization and adjectival nominalization.

3.2.2 Interpersonal Metaphors

Naturally, a declarative clause indicates a “statement”, an interrogative clause expresses a “question”, and an imperative clause suggests a “command”. For instance, when an interrogative clause is used to express a command for action, there emerges a mood metaphor. Mood metaphors represent a kind of interpersonal metaphor, there is another kind of interpersonal metaphor in modality. Explicit subjective modality and explicit objective modality are seen as modality metaphors.

3.2.3 Textual Metaphors

Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) don't include textual metaphor in grammatical metaphor, but Thompson (2014) argue that thematic equatives and predicated Theme need a double transitivity analysis, confirming the presence of metaphor. Textual metaphor derives from the textual metafunction in systemic functional linguistics. A change in the textual organization of language, for example, the positioning of the Theme and Rheme, can cause a textual metaphor.

3.3 Grammatical Metaphor Re-Defined in Translation

In translation, translators often have to choose the correct and appropriate structure among various grammatical structures and sentence patterns that can express the meaning of the source text. The choice of these alternative structures must be based on specific considerations, such as communicative intention, translation purpose, aesthetic effect, cultural transmission, etc. The same applies to the choice between domestication and foreignization. If the source text can be translated into at least two target texts, there will be a congruent form and a metaphorical form. Huang (2009) thinks that the target text closest to the original meaning can be regarded as a congruent form, while the target text far away from the original meaning can be regarded as a metaphorical form. In this vein, the target text adopting foreignization is a congruent form, while the target text adopting domestication is a metaphorical form. In brief, grammatical metaphor in translation refers to the linguistic form in the target text different from that in the source text. In terms of ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions, a congruent form shows equivalence to the source text, while a metaphorical form displays deviation from the source text.

4. Research Design

4.1 Research Questions

This study endeavors to address the following research questions:

- 1) What is grammatical metaphor in the C-E translation of *Jing Ye Si*?
- 2) How can seven translations of *Jing Ye Si* be evaluated via grammatical metaphor?

4.2 Research Methodology

Huang (2004) puts forth that six steps can be adopted in the practice of functional discourse analysis: observation, interpretation, description, analysis, explanation, and evaluation. The first step is to test the research value of the discourse (translation) in research interest, research aims and research scope by observation. The second step is to interpret the meaning, connotation, and research questions of the discourse (translation). The third step is to describe the translation or research questions under the guidance of theory to conduct a systematic, repeatable, and verifiable study. The fourth step is to analyze the translation and research questions according to research aims and research scope. The fifth step is to explain the translation and research questions based on analysis. The last step is to evaluate the discourse (translation) as successful or unsuccessful in some aspects in consideration of the

discourse itself, its cultural and situational context as well as myriad relations between it and context. In conclusion, these six steps are on a cline ranging from objectivity to subjectivity. Observation is the most objective, and evaluation is the most subjective.

4.3 Research Procedures

Firstly, the author selects *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations as the research subject by observation, for it is a classic and attractive poem written by Li Bai, an established poet. Secondly, the author interprets the meaning of the *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations and lists two questions. Thirdly, the author describes *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations under the guidance of grammatical metaphor theory. Fourthly, the author analyzes *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations in terms of the transitivity system, mood system, modality system, and theme system. Fifthly, the author explains different translators' translations and answers research questions. Lastly, the author evaluates the translations and their respective strengths and weaknesses.

5. Grammatical Metaphor in the C-E Translation of *Jing Ye Si*

As a renowned and classic poem, *Jing Ye Si* has been translated by dozens of translators. In this study, the author selects seven translations, which are produced respectively by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, Witter Bynner, Herbert A. Giles, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata. Both Chinese and foreign translators are taken into account. Grammatical metaphor in these seven translations falls into three categories: ideational metaphors, interpersonal metaphors, and textual metaphors.

According to the register theory, the equivalence between the source text and target text is not only in form, that is, in vocabulary and grammar, but more importantly in meaning. In meaning, it is not only the equivalence in one kind of meaning (usually ideational meaning), but the equivalence in three kinds of meaning—ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and textual meaning—that is, the functional equivalence of the source and target text (Hu et al., 2005, p. 348). Hence, these seven translations can be evaluated via ideational metaphors, interpersonal metaphors, and textual metaphors.

5.1 Ideational Metaphors in the C-E Translation of *Jing Ye Si*

Ideational metaphors originate from the ideational metafunction. Since ideational metafunction is realized by the transitivity system, ideational metaphors can be identified through transitivity analysis. By analyzing the transitivity in the source text and target texts, this study finds that processes are either retained or altered in the translations. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 214), transitivity is classified into six types of processes, i.e. material process, behavioural process, mental process, verbal process, relational process, and existential process. Here, ideational metaphors refer to the transformation of varied processes.

5.1.1 Transitivity in “床前明月光” and its Translations

Table 1 shows transitivity in “床前明月光” and its translations.

Table 1. Transitivity in “床前明月光” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Processes	Participants	Circumstances
Li Bai	床前明月光	Existential process	Existent: 明 月光	Location: 床 前
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	Beside my bed a pool of light –	Relational process: [is]	Carrier: a pool of light Attribute: beside my bed	
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I descry bright moonlight in front of my bed.	Mental process: descry	Senser: I Phenomenon : bright moonlight	Location: in front of my bed
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Abed, I see a silver light,	Mental process: see	Senser: I Phenomenon : a silver light	Location: abed
Tr. Witter Bynner	So bright a gleam on the foot of my bed—	Relational process: [was]	Carrier: so bright a gleam Attribute: on the foot of my bed	
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	I wake, and moonbeams play around my bed,	Material process: wake Material process: play	Actor: I Actor: moonbeams	Location: around my bed
Tr. Amy Lowell	In front of my bed the moonlight is very bright.	Relational: is	Carrier: the moonlight Attribute: very bright	Location: in front of my bed
Tr. S. Obata	I saw the moonlight before my couch,	Mental process: saw	Senser: I Phenomenon : the moonlight	Location: before my couch

In the source text, “床前明月光” is an existential process, while seven translators change the process into other processes. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang, Witter Bynner, and Amy Lowell adopt the relational process; Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, and S. Obata adopt the mental process; Herbert A. Giles adopts the material process. Hence, all translations belong to ideational metaphors.

The existential process is on the borderline between the relational and the material processes. Thus, the translations of Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Witter Bynner, and Amy Lowell are closer to the source text. Regarding the mental process in the translations of Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, and S. Obata, the senser “I” is added and subjectivity is highlighted. Furthermore, “I” is likely to divert readers’ attention away from the “moonlight”. Worse still, this ideational metaphor loses the sense of haziness in the source text that the poet suddenly catches sight of the moonlight in front of the bed. The next line “疑是地上霜” confirms that the poet is in a trance, whereas “I” in the mental process demonstrates that the poet is awake. Giles adds additional meaning to the translation by means of the material process represented by the verbs “wake” and “play”. On the heels of the poet waking up, moonbeams playing around his bed are personified to paint a dynamic picture. Nevertheless, this metaphor runs counter to the static beauty in “静夜思”. After the analysis of seven translations of “床前明月光”, it is found that the congruent form has more aesthetic effect in tranquility and mistiness than the metaphorical form.

5.1.2 Transitivity in “疑是地上霜” and its Translations

Table 2 shows transitivity in “疑是地上霜” and its translations.

Table 2. Transitivity in “疑是地上霜” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Processes	Participants	Circumstances
Li Bai	疑是地上霜	Mental process: 疑	Senser: [我] Phenomenon: 是地上霜	Location: 地上
		Relational process: 是	Identified: [明月光] Identifier: 霜	
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	Is it hoarfrost on the ground?	Relational process: is	Identified: it Identifier: hoarfrost	Location: on the ground
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I suspect it to be hoary frost on the floor.	Mental process: suspect	Senser: I Phenomenon: it to be hoary frost on the floor	Location: on the floor
		Relational process: to be	Identified: it Identifier: hoary	

		frost		
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	I wonder if it's frost aground.	Mental process:	Senser: I	
		wonder	Phenomenon: if it's frost aground	
Tr. Witter Bynner	Could there have been a frost already?	Relational process: 's	Identified: it	Location: aground
		Existential process: could have been	Identifier: frost	Location: already
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Glittering like hoar-frost to my wandering eyes;	Material process: glittering	Actor: [moonbeams]	Manner: like
			Recipient: to my wandering eyes	hoar-frost
Tr. Amy Lowell	I wonder if that can be frost on the floor?	Mental process:	Senser: I	
		wonder	Phenomenon: if that can be frost on the floor	
Tr. S. Obata	And wondered if it were not the frost on the ground.	Relational process: can be	Identified: that	Location: on the floor
			Identifier: frost	
Tr. S. Obata	And wondered if it were not the frost on the ground.	Mental process:	Senser: [I]	
		wondered	Phenomenon: if it were not the frost on the ground	
Tr. S. Obata	And wondered if it were not the frost on the ground.	Relational process: were not	Identified: it	Location: on the ground
			Identifier: the frost	

The source text involves mental and relational processes. Apparently, there is a basic distinction between inner and outer experience. A mental process clause construes the inner experience, the processes of consciousness, while a material process clause construes the outer experience, the processes of the external world. In a relational process, a relationship is set up between two concepts. Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata retain the two processes, so their translations are the congruent form. The two processes are turned by Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang into the relational process, Witter Bynner into the existential process, and Herbert A. Giles into the material process, resulting in ideational metaphors.

Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang omit the mental process, losing the poet's inner experience. Witter Bynner puts the existential process to use, lacking the poet's personal feelings. Herbert A. Giles' translation deviates furthest from the source text in terms of the process. It interprets “疑” as “好像”, which means “like, seem, as if, as though” in English. In many traditional Chinese poems, “疑” refers to “好像”, such as “青山缭绕疑无路, 忽见千帆隐映来”, “山重水复疑无路, 柳暗花明又一村”, “平头奴子摇大扇, 五月不热疑清秋”, “望中疑在野, 幽处欲生云”, “听歌疑近楚, 投馆忽如归”, and so on. Similarly, “疑是地上霜” can be understood as “Light cast by the bright moon looks like frost on the ground”. The moonlight is also compared to frost in the foreign poem composed by William Wordsworth, *An Evening Walk*, as is shown in “From his grey re-appearing tower shall soon salute with gladsome note the rising moon, while with a hoary light she frosts the ground, and pours a deeper blue to Aether's bound”. In view of different interpretations of “疑” as “怀疑” (suspect) or “好像” (like), varied processes are used in translations. Whether the translation is the congruent form or metaphorical form, it conveys the same meaning as the source text. The major difference lies in the poet's participation.

5.1.3 Transitivity in “举头望明月” and its Translations

Table 3 shows transitivity in “举头望明月” and its translations.

Table 3. Transitivity in “举头望明月” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Processes	Participants	Circumstances
Li Bai	举头望明月	Material	Actor: [我]	
		process: 举	Goal: 头	
		Behavioural	Behaver: [我]	
		process: 望	Phenomenon: 明月	
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	I lift my eyes and see the moon,	Material	Actor: I	
		process: lift	Goal: my eyes	
		Mental	Senser: [I]	
		process: see	Phenomenon: the moon	
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I watch the bright moon, as I tilt back my head.	Behavioural	Behaver: I	
		process: watch	Phenomenon: the bright moon	
		Material	Actor: I	
		process: tilt back	Goal: my head	
Tr. Xu Yuanhong	Looking up, I find the moon bright;	Behavioural process:	Behaver: [I]	

		looking up		
		Mental process: find	Senser: I Phenomenon: the moon bright	
		Material process: lifting	Actor: [I] Goal: my head	
		Behavioural process: look	Behaver: [I]	
Tr. Witter Bynner	Lifting my head to look, I found that it was moonlight.	Mental process: found	Senser: I Phenomenon: that it was moonlight	
		Relational process: was	Identified: it Identifier: moonlight	
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Up towards the glorious moon I raise my head,	Material process: raise	Actor: I Goal: my head	Location: up towards the glorious moon
		Material process: list up	Actor: I Goal: my head	
Tr. Amy Lowell	I list up my head and look at the full moon, the dazzling moon.	Behavioural process: look at	Behaver: [I] Phenomenon: the full moon, the dazzling moon	
		Material process: raised	Actor: I Goal: my head	
Tr. S. Obata	I raised my head and looked out on the mountain noon,	Behavioural process: look out on	Behaver: [I] Phenomenon: the mountain moon	

The source text covers the material and behavioural processes. Related to specifically human physiological processes, behavioural processes are intermediate between mental and material processes. Xu Zhongjie, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata keep the original processes, so their translations are the congruent form. The rest are ideational metaphors. Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang replace the behavioural process with the mental process, while Xu Yuanhong replaces the material process with the mental process. Witter Bynner adds mental and relational processes, while Herbert A. Giles omits the behavioural process.

Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang, Xu Yuanchong, and Witter Bynner all employ the mental process. Unlike “望”, “watch”, “look at”, or “look out on” expressing a conscious physical act involved in perception, they make use of “see” or “find” in purely mental perceptive processes. Witter Bynner adds “moonlight” as the identifier, which is not consistent with “明月” in the source text. Herbert A. Giles skips “望” in the behavioural process, whose translation is not accurate enough. In a nutshell, the congruent form is more equivalent to the source text than the metaphorical form.

5.1.4 Transitivity in “低头思故乡” and its Translations

Table 4 shows transitivity in “低头思故乡” and its translations.

Table 4. Transitivity in “低头思故乡” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Processes	Participants	Circumstances
Li Bai	低头思故乡	Material process: 低	Actor: [我] Goal: 头 Senser: [我]	
		Mental process: 思	Phenomenon : 故乡	
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	I bend my head and think of home.	Material process: bend	Actor: I Goal: my head Senser: [I] Phenomenon : home	
		Mental process: think of		
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I yearn, while stooping, for my homeland more.	Mental process: yearn for	Senser: I Phenomenon : my homeland	Location: while stooping Manner: more
		Material process: stooping	Actor: [I]	
		Material process: bowing	Actor: [I]	
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Bowing, in homesickness I'm drowned.	Mental process: 'm drowned	Senser: I Phenomenon : in homesicknes s	
Tr. Witter Bynner	Sinking back again,	Material process:	Actor: [I]	Location: again

	I thought suddenly of home.	sinking back Mental process: thought of	Senser: I Phenomenon : home	Manner: suddenly
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Then lay me down—and thoughts of home arise.	Material process: lay down Material process: arise	Actor: [I] Goal: me Actor: thoughts of home	Location: then
Tr. Amy Lowell	I drop my head, and think of the home of old days.	Material process: drop Mental process: think of	Actor: I Goal: my head Senser: [I] Phenomenon : the home of old days	
Tr. S. Obata	I bowed my head and thought of my far-off home.	Material process: bowed Mental process: thought of	Actor: I Goal: my head Senser: [I] Phenomenon : my far-off home	

The source text is composed of the material and mental processes. Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, Witter Bynner, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata keep in line with the source text, while Herbert A. Giles leaves out the mental process.

From an objective angle, Herbert A. Giles uses “thoughts” instead of “I” to function as the subject in the material process, enabling readers to infer “whose” thoughts in the context. This ideational metaphor obscures the senser in the mental process and is more implicit than the congruent form in conveying the meaning.

5.2 Interpersonal Metaphors in the C-E Translation of *Jing Ye Si*

Interpersonal metaphors stem from interpersonal metafunction. Since interpersonal metafunction is realized by the mood system and modality system, interpersonal metaphors can be divided into mood metaphors and modality metaphors. They can be identified in the expression of mood and modality meanings.

Mood is associated with four speech roles: giving information (statement), demanding information (question), giving goods-&-services (offer), and demanding goods-&-services (command). Naturally, statements are expressed by declarative mood; questions by interrogative mood; commands by imperative mood. A mood metaphor emerges when there is a mismatch between mood and speech roles.

Modality is usually realized by modal verbs, expressing the speaker's attitude to the necessity or likelihood of the proposition. There are four types of modality, namely, probability, usuality, obligation, and inclination. (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 182) The principal categories of probability are explicit subjective modality, implicit subjective modality, implicit objective modality, and explicit objective modality. Modality metaphor includes explicit subjective modality and explicit objective modality.

5.2.1 Mood and Modality in “床前明月光” and its Translations

Table 5 shows mood and modality in “床前明月光” and its translations.

Table 5. Mood and Modality in “床前明月光” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Mood	Modality
Li Bai	床前明月光	declarative	
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	Beside my bed a pool of light—	declarative	
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I descry bright moonlight in front of my bed.	declarative	
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Abed, I see a silver light,	declarative	
Tr. Witter Bynner	So bright a gleam on the foot of my bed—	declarative	
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	I wake, and moonbeams play around my bed,	declarative	
Tr. Amy Lowell	In front of my bed the moonlight is very bright.	declarative	
Tr. S. Obata	I saw the moonlight before my couch,	declarative	

The source text and target texts all apply the declarative mood. Therefore, no mood metaphor exists in “床前明月光” and its translations. In the meantime, there is no modality metaphor in “床前明月光” and its translations. As a result, all translations belong to the congruent form, remaining in conformity with the interpersonal metafunction of the source text.

5.2.2 Mood and Modality in “疑是地上霜” and its Translations

Table 6 shows mood and modality in “疑是地上霜” and its translations.

Table 6. Mood and Modality in “疑是地上霜” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Mood	Modality
Li Bai	疑是地上霜	declarative	probability
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	Is it hoarfrost on the ground?	interrogative	
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I suspect it to be hoary frost on the floor.	declarative	probability
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	I wonder if it's frost aground.	declarative	probability
Tr. Witter Bynner	Could there have been a frost already?	interrogative	probability
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Glittering like hoar-frost to my wandering eyes;	declarative	probability
Tr. Amy Lowell	I wonder if that can be frost on the floor?	declarative	probability
Tr. S. Obata	And wondered if it were not the frost on the ground.	declarative	probability

The mood and modality are relatively complex in “疑是地上霜” and its translations. Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, Herbert A. Giles, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata adopt the same mood in the congruent form. On the contrary, Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, and Witter Bynner adopt a different mood—the interrogative mood, thereby leading to mood metaphors. As the interrogative mood can express questions, “疑” doesn’t need to be translated.

Probability in modality occurs in the source text. Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, Witter Bynner, Herbert A. Giles, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata take the congruent form and transplant the modality of the source text, whereas Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang take the metaphorical form and delete the modality. As mentioned above, there are four categories of probability. In spite of the same form, translations vary in the category of probability. In the source text and translations of Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, and S. Obata, there is explicit subjective modality. Implicit subjective modality occurs in Witter Bynner’s translation, and implicit objective modality emerges in Herbert A. Giles’s translation. Amy Lowell’s translation includes both explicit subjective modality and implicit subjective modality. Even if translations of Witter Bynner and Amy Lowell have implicit subjective modality, “could” and “can” differ in the degree of probability.

When it comes to interpersonal metafunction in translations of “疑是地上霜”, the congruent form and the metaphorical form have respective advantages. The former usually appears in writing, while the latter is more colloquial, concise, and clear. It can be seen that diversified mood and modality systems can be tapped into to express the same meaning.

5.2.3 Mood and Modality in “举头望明月” and its Translations

Table 7 shows mood and modality in “举头望明月” and its translations.

Table 7. Mood and Modality in “举头望明月” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Mood	Modality
Li Bai	举头望明月	declarative	
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	I lift my eyes and see the moon,	declarative	
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I watch the bright moon, as I tilt back my head.	declarative	
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Looking up, I find the moon bright;	declarative	
Tr. Witter Bynner	Lifting my head to look, I found that it was moonlight.	declarative	
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Up towards the glorious moon I raise my head,	declarative	
Tr. Amy Lowell	I list up my head and look at the full moon, the dazzling moon.	declarative	
Tr. S. Obata	I raised my head and looked out on the mountain noon,	declarative	

The source text and target texts all apply the declarative mood. Therefore, no mood metaphor exists in “举头望明月” and its translations. In the meantime, there is no modality metaphor in “举头望明月” and its translations. As a result, all translations belong to the congruent form, remaining in conformity with the interpersonal metafunction of the source text.

5.2.4 Mood and Modality in “低头思故乡” and its Translations

Table 8 shows mood and modality in “低头思故乡” and its translations.

Table 8. Mood and Modality in “低头思故乡” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Mood	Modality
Li Bai	低头思故乡	declarative	
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	I bend my head and think of home.	declarative	
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I yearn, while stooping, for my homeland more.	declarative	
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Bowing, in homesickness I’m drowned.	declarative	
Tr. Witter Bynner	Sinking back again, I thought suddenly of home.	declarative	
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Then lay me down—and thoughts of home arise.	declarative	
Tr. Amy Lowell	I drop my head, and think of the home of old days.	declarative	
Tr. S. Obata	I bowed my head and thought of my far-off home.	declarative	

The source text and target texts all apply the declarative mood. Therefore, no mood metaphor exists in “低头思故乡” and its translations. In the meantime, there is no modality metaphor in “低头思故乡”

and its translations. As a result, all translations belong to the congruent form, remaining in conformity with the interpersonal metafunction of the source text.

5.3 Textual Metaphors in the C-E Translation of *Jing Ye Si*

Textual metaphors come from the textual metafunction. Since textual metafunction is realized by the system of thematic structure, textual metaphors can be noticed via Theme analysis. According to Thompson (2014, p. 147), the Theme is the first constituent of the clause, and all the rest of the clause is simply labelled the Rheme. Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 89) defines Theme as “the element that serves as the point of departure of the message” or “that which locates and orients the clause within its context”. The remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed, is called in Prague school terminology the Rheme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 89). As a message structure, a clause consists of a Theme accompanied by a Rheme; and the structure is expressed by the order—whatever is chosen as the Theme is put first (ibid.). The Theme is the starting point of discourse; the Rheme is what is said about the Theme and is often the core of the discourse (Hu et al., 2005, p. 162). Therefore, altering the order of the Theme and Rheme highlights different information, causing textual metaphors.

5.3.1 Theme and Rheme in “床前明月光” and its Translations

Table 9 shows the Theme and Rheme in “床前明月光” and its translations.

Table 9. Theme and Rheme in “床前明月光” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Theme	Rheme
Li Bai	床前明月光	床前	明月光
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	Beside my bed a pool of light—	Beside my bed	a pool of light—
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I descry bright moonlight in front of my bed.	I	descry bright moonlight in front of my bed.
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Abed, I see a silver light,	Abed,	I see a silver light,
Tr. Witter Bynner	So bright a gleam on the foot of my bed—	So bright a gleam	on the foot of my bed—
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	I wake, and moonbeams play around my bed,	I and moonbeams	wake, play around my bed,
Tr. Amy Lowell	In front of my bed the moonlight is very bright.	In front of my bed	the moonlight is very bright.
Tr. S. Obata	I saw the moonlight before my couch,	I	saw the moonlight before my couch,

As displayed in Table 9, the Theme is “床前” and the Rheme is “明月光” in the source text. The translations of Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Xu Yuanchong, and Amy Lowell are equivalent to the source text when it comes to the Theme and Rheme. They are the congruent form, while the rest are the metaphorical form. At the beginning of the sentence, Xu Zhongjie, Herbert A. Giles, and S. Obata place a subject, “I”, which then becomes the Theme. Witter Bynner reverses the order of “床前” and “明月光”, and “so bright a gleam” becomes the Theme, and “on the foot of my bed” becomes the Rheme. The modifier “so bright” adds weight to the Theme to emphasize “明月光” in the source text. To sum up, like the source text, all translations put emphasis on “明月光”.

5.3.2 Theme and Rheme in “疑是地上霜” and its Translations

Table 10 shows the Theme and Rheme in “疑是地上霜” and its translations.

Table 10. Theme and Rheme in “疑是地上霜” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Theme	Rheme
Li Bai	疑是地上霜	疑是	地上霜
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	Is it hoarfrost on the ground?	Is it	hoarfrost on the ground?
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I suspect it to be hoary frost on the floor.	I	suspect it to be hoary frost on the floor.
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	I wonder if it's frost aground.	I	wonder if it's frost aground.
Tr. Witter Bynner	Could there have been a frost already?	Could there have been	a frost already?
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Glittering like hoar-frost to my wandering eyes;		Glittering like hoar-frost to my wandering eyes;
Tr. Amy Lowell	I wonder if that can be frost on the floor?	I	wonder if that can be frost on the floor?
Tr. S. Obata	And wondered if it were not the frost on the ground.	And (I)	wondered if it were not the frost on the ground.

As displayed in Table 10, the Theme is “疑是” and the Rheme is “地上霜” in the source text. The translations of Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, and Witter Bynner are in accordance with the source text in respect of the Theme and Rheme. They are the congruent form, while the rest are the metaphorical form. The implicit subject in “疑是地上霜” is the poet, “I”, which is the Theme in the translations of Xu Zhongjie, Xu Yuanchong, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata. There is no Theme in the translation of Herbert A. Giles. To sum up, like the source text, all translations put emphasis on “地上霜”.

5.3.3 Theme and Rheme in “举头望明月” and its Translations

Table 11 shows the Theme and Rheme in “举头望明月” and its translations.

Table 11. Theme and Rheme in “举头望明月” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Theme	Rheme
Li Bai	举头望明月	举头	望明月
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	I lift my eyes and see the moon,	I	lift my eyes and see the moon,
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I watch the bright moon, as I tilt back my head.	I	watch the bright moon, as I tilt back my head.
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Looking up, I find the moon bright;	Looking up,	I find the moon bright;
Tr. Witter	Lifting my head to look, I found	Lifting my	I found that it was moonlight.
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Up towards the glorious moon I raise my head,	Up towards the glorious moon	I raise my head,
Tr. Amy Lowell	I list up my head and look at the full moon, the dazzling moon.	I	list up my head and look at the full moon, the dazzling moon.
Tr. S. Obata	I raised my head and looked out on the mountain noon,	I	raised my head and looked out on the mountain noon,

As displayed in Table 11, “举头” and “望明月” serve as the Theme and Rheme respectively in the source text. The Theme and Rheme in the translations of Xu Yuanchong and Witter Bynner remain basically the same as those in the source text. These translations are the congruent form, while the rest are the metaphorical form. The subject “I” isn’t mentioned in the source text, but is treated as the Theme in the translations of Yang Xianyi and Gladys Yang, Xu Zhongjie, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata. Herbert A. Giles arranges the Theme and Rheme in the opposite order, achieving the effect of prominence. To sum up, like the source text, all translations put emphasis on “望明月”.

5.3.4 Theme and Rheme in “低头思故乡” and its Translations

Table 12 shows the Theme and Rheme in “低头思故乡” and its translations.

Table 12. Theme and Rheme in “低头思故乡” and its Translations

Poet/Translators	Lines of the Poem	Theme	Rheme
Li Bai	低头思故乡	低头	思故乡
Tr. Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang	I bend my head and think of home.	I	bend my head and think of home.
Tr. Xu Zhongjie	I yearn, while stooping, for my	I	yearn, while stooping, for my

	homeland more.		homeland more.
Tr. Xu Yuanchong	Bowing, in homesickness I'm drowned.	Bowing,	in homesickness I'm drowned.
Tr. Witter Bynner	Sinking back again, I thought suddenly of home.	Sinking back again,	I thought suddenly of home.
Tr. Herbert A. Giles	Then lay me down—and thoughts of home arise.	Then (I)	lay me down—and thoughts of home arise.
Tr. Amy Lowell	I drop my head, and think of the home of old days.	I	drop my head, and think of the home of old days.
Tr. S. Obata	I bowed my head and thought of my far-off home.	I	bowed my head and thought of my far-off home.

As displayed in Table 12, “低头” and “思故乡” serve as the Theme and Rheme respectively in the source text. Xu Yuanchong and Witter Bynner follow the word order of the source text, maintaining the corresponding Theme and Rheme. They choose the congruent form, while the rest choose the metaphorical form. The subject “I” added to “低头思故乡” turns into the Theme in the translations of Yang Xianyi & Gladys Yang, Xu Zhongjie, Herbert A. Giles, Amy Lowell, and S. Obata. To sum up, like the source text, all translations put emphasis on “思故乡”.

5.4 Assessment of the Quality of the Seven Translations via Grammatical Metaphor

Hu et al. (2005, p. 366) claim that while seeking the equivalence of the two texts in ideational meaning, we must also seek the equivalence of the two texts in interpersonal meaning, e.g., the speaker's attitude, motivation, judgment, and role, as well as in textual meaning, e.g., the media, channels, rhetorical devices. Translation is actually the process of looking for the discourse that plays a similar role as far as possible in a similar context of the target language. In general, a good translation needs to be equivalent to the source text in all three kinds of meaning. In consequence, to assess the translation quality is to scrutinize to what extent the translation is equivalent to the source text with regard to the three kinds of meaning (metafunctions).

Given the above analysis of three kinds of grammatical metaphor, Xu Yuanchong and Amy Lowell prefer the congruent form, while Herbert A. Giles prefers the metaphorical form. If the seven translations are judged merely by functional equivalence in ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning, translations of Xu Yuanchong and Amy Lowell are superior to Herbert A. Giles' translation. The rest are mediocre.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Major Findings

In the hope of expanding the scope of poetry translation studies, the paper applies the grammatical

metaphor theory of Halliday (2014) and Thompson (2014) in systemic functional linguistics to *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations. In combination with Huang Guowen's theory on grammatical metaphor in translation, it refers to the translation different from the source text as grammatical metaphor in the C-E translation of *Jing Ye Si*. By recognizing three kinds of grammatical metaphor, i.e. ideational, interpersonal, and textual metaphors, in seven translations of *Jing Ye Si*, this article reveals some differences between the congruent and metaphorical form. Despite the differences, sometimes translations can convey the same meaning and fulfill the same metafunctions. After expounding the features of the seven translations, the study evaluates their overall translation quality, with functional equivalence to the source text as the criteria. In this sense, the translations of Xu Yuanchong and Amy Lowell usually in the congruent form have an edge over other translations. Under some circumstances, the most outstanding translation is not necessarily the congruent form but can innovate in transitivity, mood, modality, and thematic structure.

Having pored over *Jing Ye Si* and its seven translations, the author concludes that a transformation in verbs, participants, mood, modality, and Theme tends to produce distinctive effects. Translators are advised to choose between the congruent form and metaphorical form according to the context, original author, target readers, aesthetic value, translation purpose, and so on. Essentially, it is necessary to manipulate the transitivity system, mood system, modality system, and Theme system to realize the equivalence of the translations to the source text in terms of ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions.

6.2 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Though the author investigates the contribution of the grammatical metaphor theory in systemic functional linguistics to poetry translation studies, some limitations aren't avoided. The analysis of grammatical metaphor in the C-E Translation of *Jing Ye Si* is just preliminary and subjective. Besides, the judgment of the translation quality is inevitably influenced by personal preference. In addition, solely seven translations are touched on due to restricted time and energy.

To grapple with these limitations, it is proposed that future researchers can conduct an elaborated and incisive analysis of grammatical metaphor in the C-E Translation of *Jing Ye Si*. They can also judge the quality of translations from diverse viewpoints. Choosing more translations makes for a more convincing study. Apart from poetry, it is worth researching the value of the grammatical metaphor theory in other literary genres of translation studies, such as prose, novels, and plays. It is believed that further research on grammatical metaphor in translation has the potential to enrich and expand our understanding of language, culture, and the interaction of language with culture.

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