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THESIS OF BACHELOR



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Paper Title: A Study of Discourse Translation
in the Light of Thematic Progression Theory

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从主位推进理论看英汉语篇翻译

摘要

语篇翻译一直是翻译中的重点与难点。因为在翻译语篇时，不仅要注意词汇和句子的翻译，更要关注整个语篇，要考虑语篇翻译中的逻辑合理和连贯衔接。在很多情况下，一篇文章，即使词汇与句子都得到了准确的翻译，也有可能让读者理解困难或模棱两可的情形。读者在读译本时发现逻辑断层而无法理解，但当其阅读相应的原文时便能一气呵成没有理解障碍。这就关系到译者对原文本的理解和处理。本文通过对布拉格学派的主位推进理论的运用，旨在从语篇的角度来比较英语篇章翻译成汉语时，逻辑和全文连贯性的再现与差异，借此对译文的逻辑性与连贯性进行评价，以此帮助译者译出更通顺连贯的译文。

本文发现，英语与汉语在主语的选择、插入语的运用、上下句的联系等方面都有不小的差别。英语句与句之间的联系非常紧密，使得语篇的主位推进非常严谨，因而主位推进模式用于分析英文语篇的自然逻辑比较恰当。而汉语讲究的是逻辑上的连贯，如时间、空间、因果、事理顺序，因此为了翻出符合汉语阅读习惯的译文，常常需要打破原文的主位推进模式。此外，英语习惯用大量长句，句子中的信息量非常大。而汉语短句较多，习惯将重点放在最后。这些差异使得译者在翻译时会部分或彻底改变原文的主位推进模式。

关键词：语篇翻译，连贯，衔接，主位，述位

A STUDY OF DISCOURSE TRANSLATION IN THE LIGHT OF THEMATIC PROGRESSION THEORY

Abstract

Discourse translation has been such a big headache in E-C translation that it has always been given great emphasis. Discourse translation is not only concerned about the equivalence on words and sentence levels, but also about the arrangement of the whole text, which means the natural flow and cohesion of the original work need to be re-represented clearly in the Chinese version. In some cases, target text readers have some difficulty in understanding the translated text even though the words and sentences are translated accurately. When these readers go back to the corresponding part of the English version, they don't have such understanding problem. This issue is related to the translator's understanding to the logic of the original work and how he reproduces the logic in the translation version. This paper uses the thematic progression theory proposed by the Prague School to evaluate the reproduction of the original work's cohesion and coherence in the target text, which will help to make the translation more coherent and smooth.

Through discussions in this paper, the author finds that the English language and the Chinese language have a few differences in following aspects: the choices of subjects, the usage of parenthesis and the use of cohesive devices. The English language uses more integrated thematic progression patterns than Chinese, for the connections among English sentences are closer in form. Compared with English, Chinese focuses more on the logical connections among sentences, which includes but not limited to the sequence of time, the arrangement of space, cause and effect, and so on. The English language uses a lot of long sentences that contain lots of information, while the Chinese language prefers short and loose sentences and puts the sentence focus at last. Consequently, in E-C translation, the thematic progression pattern of the original text may be changed partially or wholly to reproduce a more natural Chinese text.

Key words: discourse translation, cohesion, coherence, Theme, Rheme

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Chapter I Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Translation can be evaluated from three levels: word level, sentence level and text level. At the very beginning, the study of translation is limited to word level. Translators tended to think that finding the equivalent word in target language is all what translation is about. Later on, they find the sentence structure and grammar are different between these two languages, so they begin to consider translation at sentence level. However, even if every sentence of a text is translated accurately, that does not mean the whole text is translated perfectly. When it comes to the text level, the coherence and cohesion of the original work need to be reproduced precisely in translation version. Otherwise, readers can understand every sentence of a text, but they don't see any connections among them. In this sense, the thematic progression (TP) theory proposed by Danes (1970) and promoted by Halliday (1985) may shed some light, which will draw more attention to textual equivalence rather than lexical equivalence.

1.2 Purpose and Significance of the Study

The study of TP theory abroad is limited to English discourse. In China, though scholars have made great achievements on translation and comparison between English and Chinese, in most cases, translators are more concerned with the translation of words and sentences. They tend to favor a translation as long as the words are used accurately and translated text is beautiful. The cohesion and coherence of the original text and the target text are often not given enough attention; therefore an unnatural target text may be produced. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the importance of discourse translation and how to achieve a more natural translation in terms of cohesion and coherence.

Cohesion and coherence are considered as key points in discourse translation, especially for science articles and novels. Thematic progression provides a good way for translators to understand the logic of the author of the original work, which helps the translator to reproduce cohesion and coherence in translated texts. This paper discusses three most common ways in discourse translation: Translating TP with Simple Linear Progression, Translating TP with a constant Theme, and Translating TP with Derived Themes. Through example analyses and modification, the paper aims at finding the best way to reproduce the natural logic of the original text.

1.3 Structure of the Dissertation

The paper consists of five chapters.

Chapter One is an introduction of the dissertation, including the background, the purpose and the structure of the paper.

In Chapter Two, Literature Review, the main concepts in the paper will be explained. Definitions and patterns of Theme & Rheme and Thematic Progression will be discussed in this

part.

Chapter Three is the most important part, which is mainly about text analysis. The different strategies of arranging thematic progression in translation version will be analyzed and evaluated.

Chapter Four involves summary and implications from the study.

Chapter II Literature Review

2.1 Discourse and Translation

The term discourse is used differently by different scholars. Some may take only spoken English as discourse, and written English as text. However, mostly, discourse is regarded as a term in both senses. Richards et al defined discourse as “a general term for examples of language use, i.e. language which has been produced as the result of an act of communication. Whereas grammar refers to the rules a language uses to form grammatical units such as clause, phrase and sentence, discourse refers to larger units of language such as paragraphs, conversations and interviews” (1992/2000: 138-139). This paper tends to regard discourse as a concept covering both spoken and written language.

Halliday has contributed a lot in the study of discourse in his book *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*:

“We have identified the following features as those which combine to make up the ‘textual’ component in the grammar of English:

(A) Structure

1. Thematic structure: Theme & Rheme
2. Information structure and focus: Given & New

(B) Cohesive

1. Reference
2. ellipsis and substitution
3. conjunction
4. lexical cohesion

These are the resources that give ‘texture’ to a piece of discourse, without which it would not be discourse” (Halliday 1985: 313-314).

Although former scholars have made a great contribution in the study of the cohesion and coherence in discourse, they paid very little attention in the translation part, especially in E-C translation. Therefore, the study of discourse translation by using thematic progression is important and necessary.

2.2 Definition of Theme and Rheme

Linguists of the Prague School firstly initiated two terms “Theme” and “Rheme” and used them to replace the “subject” and “predicate” in the traditional grammar. Mathesius defines Theme as “the starting-point of the utterance, that which is known or at least obvious in the given situation, and from which the speaker proceeds”, and Rheme as “what the speaker says about, or in regard to the starting point of the utterance” (Mathesius 1939: 171). When it comes to Halliday, he proposes “the Theme as the element which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that with which the clause is concerned. The remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed, is called in Prague school terminology the Rheme” (Halliday 1985:38).

Here are some examples of Theme & Rheme structure:

my brother	has given me a birthday gift
I	have been given a birthday gift from my brother
a birthday gift	my brother has given to me
Theme	Rheme

Figure 2-1 Theme & Rheme structure

The Theme is not necessarily a nominal group. It may also be an adverbial group or prepositional phrase. Let's look at some examples:

on Sunday morning	I get up very late
very slowly	mom opens the door
recently	Jack becomes strange
Theme	Rheme

Figure 2-2 Themes other than nominal groups

2.3 Patterns of Theme in English

Halliday classifies Theme into three types: Simple Theme, Multiple Theme and Clauses as Themes.

2.3.1 Simple Themes

A simple Theme consists of just one element, which can be nominal groups or others like adverbial group or prepositional phrase. As we discussed above, Themes in Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2 are all simple Themes. However, a simple Theme may also consist of more than one constituent. For instance, “two nominal groups joined by *and*, like the Walrus and the Carpenter, make up a nominal group complex. This is just one element in the clause, and therefore constitutes a simple Theme” (Halliday 1985:41). When it comes to a WH- interrogative, the WH- part, which can be a single word or a phrase, is the Theme of the sentence.

with sobs and tears	she told me the story
after lunch	will you play basketball with me?
what	makes you unhappy?
Theme	Rheme

Figure 2-3 more examples of simple Themes

2.3.2 Multiple Themes

According to Halliday, the notion of multiple Themes can be introduced “if the initial element in the clause does not function as Subject or Complement or CIRCUMSTANTIAL Adjunct, then the Subject, Complement or Adjunct next following is still part of the Theme”(Halliday 1985: 53).

A multiple Theme can be divided into three parts: Ideational Theme, Interpersonal Theme and Textual Theme. “An ideational_element always exists in multiple Themes, and when the ideational element functions as Subject, Complement or circumstantial Adjunct, we shall refer to it as Topical Theme. The Interpersonal Theme can be made up by vocative, modal (Adjunct), finite (verb) or

WH-(interrogative). Textual meaning is relevance to the context. The components of the Textual Theme are continuative, structural (conjunction or WH- relative) and conjunctive (Adjunct). There are may be Interpersonal and Textual elements in a multiple Theme, but not necessary. For the sequences of these three elements, the Ideational element is always the final one. The first one can be either an Interpersonal element or a Textual element” (Halliday, 1985: 53). Let’s see some examples of multiple Themes:

(a)

girls and boys	come out	to play
Interpersonal	topical	Rheme
Theme		

(b)

on the other hand	perhaps	she	wouldn't agree
textual	interpersonal	topical	Rheme
Theme			

Figure 2-4 Examples of multiple Themes

2.3.3 Clauses as Themes

In some cases, a clause itself can be a Theme, which always happens in a clause complex. Usually, the Head clause is followed by a Modifying clause, thus the former is the Theme and the latter is the Rheme. However, sometimes the order may be reversed, and the Modifying becomes the Theme. Here are some examples:

If winter comes	can spring be far behind
What he received in his birthday	is a basketball
Theme	Rheme

Figure 2-5 Examples of clause Themes

2.4 Thematic Progression in English

Since Theme is the starting-point of the utterance, which is the information both the speaker and the listener know, and the Rheme is the new information that the speaker is going to tell. There are many Themes and Rhemes in a whole discourse, hence the author need to put them in a reasonable order to make it easier for the readers to understand. The process to build logical and coherent relationship among those Themes and Rhemes is so called Thematic Progression (TP).

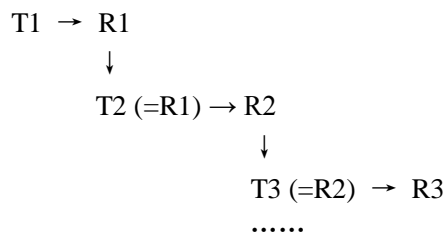
The concept of Thematic Progression was firstly proposed by a Czech linguist, F. Danes, who defines TP as “the choice and ordering of utterance themes, their mutual concatenation and hierarchy, as

well as their relationship to hyper themes of the superior text units (such as the paragraph, chapter...), to the whole text and to the situation and the rhetorical purpose” (1974: 114). Danes also proposes three types of Thematic Progression, which will be discussed next.

The three main types of Thematic Progression proposed by Danes are: Simple Linear Progression, TP with a Constant Theme and TP with Derived Themes.

2.4.1 Simple Linear Progression

The simple linear progression, also known as chained pattern, means every Rheme of the previous clause become the Theme of the next sentence. Let me give a better illustration through the following diagram:

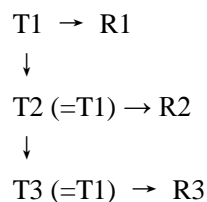


As shown in the diagram, there are three Themes and three Rhemes in this discourse. In fact, every new Rheme becomes a new Theme of the next sentence: R1 becomes T2 and R2 becomes T3. This pattern is called simple linear progression. Here is an example:

Boys (T1) enjoy playing basketball (R1). Basketball (T2) is a sport played by two teams of five players on a court (R2). The basketball court (T3) consists of a rectangular floor with tiles at either end (R3).

2.4.2 TP with a Constant Theme

TP with a constant Theme means Rhemes in the discourse are different, but they share the Theme of the first sentence or a part of the Theme. Let's see the diagram:

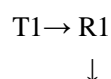


According to the diagram, there are three Themes and Three Rhemes in the discourse. However, T2 and T3 are actually the same as T1, or they are a part of T1. For example:

Basketball (T1) is very popular among boys (R1). It (T2) is a sport played by two teams of five players (R2). Playing basketball (T3) needs a court that consists of a rectangular floor with tiles at either end (R3).

2.4.3 TP with Derived Themes

In this pattern, the Rheme or part of the Rheme in the first clause becomes the Theme of other clauses. The first Rheme plays a superordinate role, and then other clauses pick up it or part of it as their starting point of the utterance. Diagram illustration sees below:



$$T2 (R1) \rightarrow R2$$
$$\downarrow$$
$$T3 (R1) \rightarrow R3$$

As shown above, R1 becomes Themes of other clauses (T2 and T3). A very good example is shown below:

Studies (T1) serve for delight, for ornament and, for ability (R1). Their chief use for delight (T2) is in privateness; for ornament (T2), is in discourse (R2); and for ability (T3), is in the judgment and disposition (R3).

2.5 Text Development in Chinese

Unlike English, Chinese words usually have only one grammatical form, which means there are no declensions or inflexions in Chinese. Chinese describes things like number, case and tense in different ways. For example, the word “的” is used to denote the possessive case. Since the Chinese sentences are short and the structure is simple, the logical connects among them become more important. It is especially important to arrange the order of words and sentences. There are mainly three patterns in the Chinese text development: time sequence, spatial sequence and cause-effect sequence.

2.5.1 Time and spatial sequence

In a Chinese discourse, the events are usually arranged in a time sequence or a spatial sequence, which means what happens first, comes first. For instance, “他吃过午饭便去睡觉了” is a normal sentence in Chinese, but “他去睡觉了, 在他吃过午饭后” is not as natural as the former one. However, this sequence in English is quite more flexible. We can say “he went to sleep after finished the lunch” or “after finished the lunch, he went to sleep”; both of them are acceptable. Likely, the spatial sequence cannot be changed easily. For example, “我家外面有棵松树” is more natural than “有棵松树在我家外面”. But in English, both “there is a pine tree outside my house” and “outside my house, there is a pine tree” are acceptable.

2.5.2 Cause and effect sequence

The cause-effect sequence is another important pattern of text development in Chinese. As I mentioned above, in Chinese, what happens first comes first, hence the reason or cause or purpose always come before the results. To the contrary, the order of cause and effect is changeable in English. For example, both “he didn’t come because he was ill” and “because he was ill, he didn’t” are acceptable. But in Chinese, we usually say “他生病了, 所以不能来” rather than “他不能来, 因为他生病了”.

Chapter III Thematic Progression in E-C Discourse

Translation

To ensure a natural logic flow in the target text, coherence and cohesion are very important, which will influence the readers’ understanding of the original text. *The Economist* is an authoritative weekly

newspaper focusing on international politics and business news and opinions. The examples of this section are all taken from this newspaper, because its Chinese version has a large number of readers in China and its language is precise and vivid.

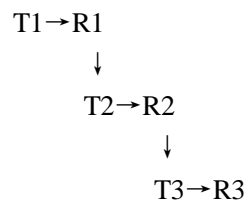
The discussion in this chapter will proceed following three most common TP patterns Translating TP with Simple Linear Progression, Translating TP with a constant Theme, and Translating TP with Derived Themes. Through example analyses and modification, the paper will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each translation strategy.

3.1 Translating TP with Simple Linear Progression

Usually, examples of TP with Simple Linear Progression cannot be very long, because if a person kept proposing new information and explaining it, others would not be able to get his point. When translating texts with this pattern, details need to be considered carefully.

(1) PROMETHEUS (T1), a Titan bound to a rock by Zeus, endured the daily torture of an eagle feasting on his liver, only to have the organ regrow each night (R1). Compared with this spectacle (T2), a video on the website of Nature this week seems decidedly dull (R2). It (T3) shows a collection of pink dots consolidating into a darker central glob (R3). (The Economist, 2013.7.6)

In this paragraph, the pattern of thematic progression is very obvious---simple linear progression. The author firstly described Prometheus and his story, and then brought up the video by comparing it with the story. At last, he introduced the video. The pattern can also be illustrated by following diagram:



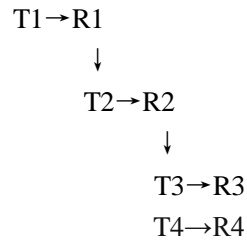
In the English version, the author used only one sentence to introduce the whole story of Prometheus. In order to make Chinese reader understand the story easily, the translator may firstly add the source of the story- Greek Mythology, and then divide the long sentence into several parts to make the Chinese version more natural. As the text is a simple linear progression and the key point is the last sentence, other parts may need no changes. Therefore, the translator can just follow the flow of the original text:

在希腊神话之中，普罗米修斯被宙斯束缚在一块巨石之上。白天他要忍受老鹰啄食他的肝脏，而晚上他的肝脏却又总会再次愈合。与这个生动的故事相比，本周《自然》网站上的一段视频就显得如此枯燥。这段视频向世人展示了无数粉红色的小点向中心聚拢，成为一个颜色更深的团状物的过程。(The Economist, 2013.7.6)

- (1) On its long journey south the water (T1) has scooped up nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, mainly from the fields of the Midwest (R1). The excess nutrients (T2) cause algae to bloom, consuming all the available oxygen in the sea, making it hostile to other forms of marine life (R2). Creatures that can swim away, such as shrimp and fish (T3), do so (R3); those that cannot (T4), die (R4). (The Economist, 2013.6)

This is another example of TP with simple linear progression. The author firstly introduced that the

water flew to the south and has scooped up nutrients (R1), and then talked about the influences of the excess nutrients (T2) to marine life (R2). Finally, he explained the endings of these marine creatures (R3). The pattern of thematic progression is:



In the Chinese version, the difficulty is how to translate the second sentence, for it is long and complex in structure. To solve the problem, the translator can divide it into several short sentences and add the subjects to each sentence, for there is no suffix of -ing in Chinese. In the sentence “those that cannot”, “swim away” is omitted. The translator has to complete the sentence to make the Chinese version more natural. In order to follow the cause-effect sequence and other rules of the Chinese language, the text can be translated as following:

密西西比河自北向南流去，在漫长的途中吸附了氮、磷等营养物质，这些营养物质主要来自美国中西部的田野。过量的营养物质导致藻类激增，这些藻类将海水中含有的氧气消耗殆尽，给其他海洋生物带来威胁。会游的生物如虾和鱼都游走了，那些不会游的就慢慢死去。(The Economist, 2013.6)

As we have discussed translating TP with simple linear progression above, we can find the basic pattern of thematic progression is not changed, because in this pattern, the focus of the paragraph is always at the end of the text, which follows the rules of the Chinese language. English tends to use long sentences and complicated structures; besides, it uses many omissions. Therefore, it is very important to complete these elements omitted in English when translate them into Chinese.

3.2 Translating TP with a constant theme

When translating discourses that share TP with a constant theme, it is important to understand the connections among sentences and translate them in a time & spatial sequence or cause-effect sequence.

(1) Some of this worry (T1) reflects problems beyond China's borders or the government's control (R1). Chinese sales to the European Union, for example (T2), plunged by 7.5% last month, their worst September drop since 1995 (R2). But in recent weeks China (T3) has become a net exporter of anxiety (R3). Inflation (T4) is falling (R4), but it (T5) has remained higher for longer than the authorities expected (R5). The property market (T6) is also slowing (R6). Sales have fallen sharply (T7), as developers wait in vain for demand to pick up rather than flogging their properties at a discount (R7). (*Economist*, 2011.10.22)

- a. 其中一些担忧反映出来的问题甚至超越了中国的边境问题以及政府的维稳问题。譬如，上月中国对欧盟出口贸易额下跌7.5%，是自1995年以来跌幅最大的九月。近几周中国已成为“焦虑”净出口国。通货膨胀率正在下降，但(通货膨胀率)仍比政府预期的更高、持续时间更长。房地产市场也在缩紧，当房地产商们仍旧徒劳地等待购房需求上升，而不将手中的房产打折贱卖时，房屋成交量却已经急剧下跌了。(Economist, 2011.10.22)
- b. 其中一些担忧反映出来的问题甚至超越了中国的边境问题以及政府的维稳问题。譬如，上月中国对欧盟出口贸易额下跌7.5%，是自1995年以来跌幅最大的九月。近几周来，通货膨胀率正在下降，但仍比政府预期的更高、持续时间更长。房地产市场也在缩紧，当房地产商们仍旧徒劳地等待购房需求上升，而不将手中的房产打折贱卖时，房屋成交量却已经急剧下跌了。这些使得中国成为了一个“焦虑”净出口国。(Modified by the author)

In this paragraph, there are two thematic progression patterns, The first one is simple linear thematic progression: T1→R1, T2 (=R1)→R2. The second one is TP with a constant Theme. Since the second one is more predominating, this paragraph is categorized as TP with a constant theme:

$$\begin{array}{l} T3 \rightarrow R3, \\ \downarrow \\ T4 (=T3) \rightarrow R4 \\ \downarrow \\ T5 (=T4=T3) \rightarrow R5 \\ \downarrow \\ T6 (=T3) \rightarrow R6 \\ \downarrow \\ T7 (=T6=T3) \rightarrow R7. \end{array}$$

The two Chinese versions basically follow the pattern of the original text. As we can see, the logic and coherence of the translation are quite good. The first sentence is the topic sentence, followed by three clauses with further explanations or examples. The only difference is that the second translation divides “But in recent weeks China has become a net exporter of anxiety” into two parts and put the second part at the final of the paragraph. We think the version b is better because the Chinese language tends to follow a natural cause-effect sequence. To make the Chinese version more coherent and natural,

the reasons---inflation and the property market need to be put before the result--- China has become a net exporter of anxiety.

- (2) WÜRTH, a German family firm (T1), makes the most basic products imaginable: screws, nuts and bolts (R1). No need for fancy salesmanship here (T2), you might think (R2). In fact, Würth (T3) has 30,000 sales reps (R3). It (T4) calls them its “beating heart” and strokes them deftly (R4): when one performs exceptionally (T5), the firm writes to congratulate his wife (R5). (*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

伍尔特是德国的一家家族式企业，生产的产品包括螺钉，螺帽和螺栓之类你能想到的再普通不过的东西。你可能会想，卖这些应该不需要精巧的推销之术了吧？事实上，伍尔特有三万名销售员。企业称他们为“搏动的核心”，并且以极其巧妙的方法激励着他们：如果哪一个销售员的业绩卓著，企业将会写祝贺信给他的妻子以兹鼓励。(*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

In this example, the English version, obviously, has two thematic progression patterns. The first one is TP with a constant Theme: T1→R1, T2(=T1)→R2, T3(=T1)→R3, T4(=T1)→R4. The second one is a simple linear thematic progression in the last two sentences: T4→R4, T5(=R4)→R5. When it comes to the Chinese version, basically, the patterns are not changed except the second sentence. ‘No need for fancy salesmanship here (T2), you might think (R2)’ is translated as ‘你可能会想(T3), 卖这些应该不需要精巧的推销之术了吧(R3)?’. This is because in Chinese, concrete concepts as nouns are more commonly used as subjects than abstract concepts like verbs or adjectives. In addition, if we are concern about the cause-effect sequence, we would get a better translation of this sentence. There is a hypothesis-possibility in the sentence: if the products are basic, salesmanship is not necessary. Therefore, we may get a better translation of the first two sentences

伍尔特是德国的一家家族式企业，生产的产品包括螺钉，螺帽和螺栓等。你可能会想，卖这些再普通不过的东西应该不需要精巧的推销之术了吧？(Modified by the author)

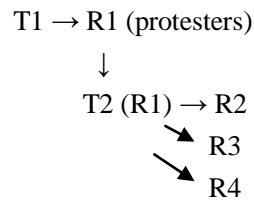
3.3 Translating TP with Derived Themes

When translating TP with Derived Themes, the key point is to understand R1 clearly. R1 usually contains lots of information, hence it is important to translate them separately and in an appropriate sequence that makes the Chinese version more coherent and natural.

- (1) From Seattle to Sydney (T1), protesters have taken to the streets (R1). Whether they are inspired by the Occupy Wall Street movement in New York or by the indignados in Madrid, they (T2) burn with dissatisfaction about the state of the economy (R2), about the unfair way that the poor are paying for the sins of rich bankers (R3), and in some cases about capitalism itself (R4). (*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

从西雅图到悉尼，抗议者占据了所有的街道。不论他们是受到发生在纽约的“占领华尔街”运动的鼓舞，还是响应马德里的“愤青运动”，人们宣泄着心中对经济状况的不满，对穷人需要对富有的银行家的罪行买单的不满，甚至是对资本主义其本身的不满。(*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

In example 1, the pattern of thematic progression is not changed from the English version to the Chinese version. They are both TP with derived Themes:



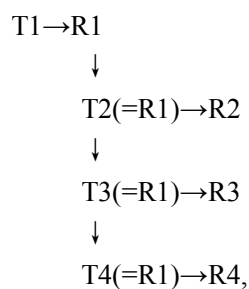
The translation above follows the same thematic progression pattern of the original text, but is not the most natural in term of Chinese text development. Since Chinese text emphasizes on natural logic flow such as cause-effect. The translation can be modified into the following version to make the Chinese readers feel most natural.

抗议者或许受到纽约“占领华尔街”运动的鼓舞，又或是在响应马德里的“愤青运动”，(cause)占据了从西雅图到悉尼所有的街道。他们宣泄着心中对经济状况的不满，对穷人需要对富有的银行家的罪行买单的不满，甚至是对资本主义其本身的不满。(effect)

- (2) Groupon (T1) created a new market (R1). This (T2) is a boon to consumers (R2), but (This) (T3) confers no lasting “first-mover” advantage on Groupon (R3). Its business model is unpatentable and simple to replicate (T4), so there are already more than 20 copycats. (R4) (*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

高朋网开拓了一个全新市场。这对消费者来说是种福利，但高朋网并未能因第一个登上山顶而占山为王。由于该模式无法获得专利权，易于模仿，目前已有 20 多家类似网站了。(*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

The English version obviously adapts TP with derived thematic progression:



The Chinese version basically follows the original pattern of the text except it changes the subject in translating ‘but confers no lasting “first-mover” advantage on Groupon’. In the Chinese version, concrete concept Groupon (高朋网) becomes the subject instead of abstract concept “creating a new market”. English speakers like using long sentences, thus connections among clauses become very important. However, Chinese people use more short and loose sentences, and they pay more attention to the logical connections of the whole discourse rather than forms. In this sense, the translation version may change some parts of the original version. In addition, there is a cause-effect event in this text; “the business model is unpatentable” is the cause of “no lasting ‘first-mover’ advantage”. Therefore, the Chinese version can be modified as following:

高朋网开拓了一个全新市场。但由于该模式无法获得专利权，易于模仿，目前已有20 多家类似网站。因此，

该市场对消费者来说是种福利，但高朋网并未能因第一个登上山顶而占山为王。

- (3) “THIS is a referendum on modern-day corporate Japan,” (T1) fumes Michael Woodford, a Brit cast down from the heights of Olympus, a Japanese camera maker (R1). Mr Woodford was ousted as the company’s president on October 14th (T2), after barely six months in the job (R2). Tsuyoshi Kikukawa, the 71-year-old chairman (T3), blasted him for failing to hew to Japanese cultural practices (R3). The board voted unanimously at a ten-minute meeting where (T4) Mr Woodford was not allowed to speak (R4). Take a bus to the airport (T5), he was told (R5). (*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

“这是一个现代日本企业的公投。”迈克尔伍德福德生气地说，他来自英国，被从奥林巴斯，日本相机制造商，的高层拉下马。伍德福德，在作为该公司的总裁后仅6个月的10月14日被强行解职。菊川刚，71岁的主席，抨击他未能顺应日本的文化习俗。在10分钟的会议上，董事会一致投票做出决定，在此期间，伍德福德被禁止发言。最后，他被告知，乘巴士去机场。(*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

This is a very complicated example. R1 has two parts: Michael Woodford and the company Olympus. T2 is about Woodford. T3 is about Tsuyoshi Kikukawa, who is the chairman of Olympus. Hence, T3 is about the company. T4, the board of the company is obviously about Olympus. Since T2, T3 and T4 are all about one part of R1, the thematic progression pattern is TP with derived Themes: T1→R1, T2(=R1)→R2, T3(=R1)→R3, T4(=R1)→R4. The Chinese version basically follows this pattern, which is not as coherent and cohesive as the English version. In the case, we may change the pattern in a large scale. To follow the time and spacial sequence in Chinese, the translation can be modified as following:

迈克尔伍德福德来自英国，是一家日本相机制造商奥林巴斯公司的总裁。然而在他作为公司总裁仅6个月的10月14日，他被公司高层拉下马。菊川刚，71岁的主席，抨击其未能顺应日本的文化习俗。而在10分钟的会议上，董事会一致投票做出决定将其解职，在此期间，他被禁止发言。最后，他被告知，乘巴士去机场。
“这就是一个现代日本企业的公投。”伍德福德愤怒地说道。(Modified by the author)

This translation firstly introduced Michael Woodford and he was ousted as Olympus’ president. Then, it introduces the process of how Woodford is ousted, which is the result of the vote. At last, it tells the ending of Woodford and how he judges his experience. English used to put the focus of a discourse at the beginning, while Chinese often put it in the final. In this paragraph, the first sentence is very long and has more than one key point. Therefore, we may put the most important one in the end of the discourse and introduce others separately. As I mentioned in last subchapter, Chinese use a lot of short and loose sentences. When we are translating a very long English sentence that has more than one key point, we may divide it into several parts and translate it separately, and the order may also need to be changed. Under this circumstance, the pattern of thematic progression may be changed completely.

Here is another example:

- (4) FORTY-TWO years after he took power in a coup as a handsome 27-year-old captain, (T1) Africa’s longest-serving dictator was finally brought to bay on October 20th in his home town of Sirte (R1). At first it was said that Muammar Qaddafi (T2) had been wounded (R2). Later reports, as *The Economist* went to press (T3), suggested he

had died (R3). (*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

The first sentence is a long sentence again. The thematic progression is quite obvious. T2 is about Qaddafi and T3 is about the later reports of the news, which is R1. Therefore, this is pattern of TP with derived Themes again. As I explain above, the Chinese version may change the pattern wholly and divide the first sentence into several parts. The following is the Chinese version:

42年前，卡扎菲发动政变取得政权，当时的他还只是个27岁的风华正茂的青年领袖。而现在，他已是非洲独裁统治持续时间最长的首领。终于，卡扎菲于今年10月20号在其家乡赛特尔被捕。起先报道其只被击伤，后来包括《经济学人》在内的消息来源证实卡扎菲已经被击毙。 (*The Economist*, 2011.10.22)

This translation firstly introduces the basic information of Munammar Qaddafi, and then highlights the news that he is arrested and dies. The Chinese wholly changes the thematic progression pattern; nevertheless, it describes the information logically and coherently. From all discussions above, when translating text with a pattern of derived Themes thematic progression, the pattern needs to be changed in a large scale; because in this patter, R1 is usually a very long sentence and conveys lots of information, and other clauses are used to introduce each point in R1 separately. Since Chinese is a logical language that follows time & spatial sequence or cause-effect sequence, the order of those clauses usually need to be rearranged.

Chapter IV Summary and Implications

In the preceding chapters the author has evaluated some translation samples in the light of Thematic Progression and the difference in text development in English and Chinese with a view to opening a new perspective on discourse translation. In this chapter, the author will summarize the main findings and implications in this dissertation.

By analyzing and contrasting a large number of translation samples from *the Economist*, the author has concluded the following findings and implications:

1. Generally speaking, the English language uses more integrated thematic progression patterns than Chinese; the connection among sentences in an English discourse is closer in form than that of Chinese.
2. In TP with simple linear progression, the basic pattern needs little change in translation, because in texts of this pattern, the focuses of the paragraph are always at the end, which follows the rules of the Chinese language.
3. English is quite flexible in choosing subjects, while Chinese tends to use concrete concepts as subjects, which makes TP with a constant Theme very common in Chinese.
4. In E-C translating, especially texts share a pattern of TP with derived Themes, the order of sentences are usually changed to follow the time & spatial sequence or cause & effect sequence in Chinese.
5. English used to put the theme of a discourse at the beginning, while Chinese often put it in the final. If the first sentence of English version is very long and has more than one key point, translators may divide it into several parts and translate them separately; sometimes, the order of translation needs to be changed, and the key point possibly has to be put at the end. In this sense, the pattern of thematic progression is completely changed in translation in order to make the Chinese version more logical and coherent.

The author also finds that one thematic progression pattern in English can be translated in different ways only if the translator totally understands the author's logic in the original discourse. In conclusion, thematic progression is very useful in discourse translation, for it helps translator understand the original work and reproduce its logic better; the study of it can greatly improve translation in discourse level.

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