

(who is taking part in and the relationship between people) and mode (how the text is made and what role is being played by language). These three dimensions influence our language choices precisely because they reflect three main functions of language: ideational (further divided into experiential and logical), interpersonal and textual, providing a systematic interpretation of a text and the language in actual use. These three metafunctions have been separately studied in many literary works and translations (Halliday, 1971; Toolan, 1988; Simpson, 1993; Huang, 2002; Yu & Wu, 2017), while a multi-functional approach to analyzing the literary works is relatively less (Lin, 2015; Yu & Wu, 2016a).

Therefore, it is worthwhile to explore how these three metafunctions work together to realize the theme of literary works and translations, and to reveal the organization of authorial creation, especially in a narrative-oriented poem. Drawing on SFL, the aim of this study is to explore the presentation of poetic themes and the recreation of the image of the “chaste wife” in two English translations of Li Po’s *Changgan Xing*: Ezra Pound’s *The River-merchant’s Wife: a Letter* (1915), and Arthur Waley’s *Ch’ang-gan* (1919). Due to cultural and linguistic differences, some readers get to know a character and the theme of a non-native text through the translation, so the understanding of the source text, including the image of a person established becomes a challenge to translators (Carballeira, 2003), and it deserves asking why “the translation has been shaped in such a way that it comes to mean what it does” (Malmkjær, 2003: 39). There are two questions to be answered in this study: (1) How is the image of a “chaste wife” shaped in two translations? (2) What are the contextual factors that might influence the translator’s choices?

SFL FRAMEWORK

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) approach to language analysis is a model of linguistics established and developed by M.A.K Halliday (1925-2018) in the 1960s. As noted by Munday (2016: 142), when “discourse analysis came to prominence in translation studies” in the 1990s, it is particularly the SFL model that “had the greatest influence”. Since translation has been on the SFL research agenda “for a long time”, SFL has made major contributions to translation studies in linguistic-based approaches (Matthiessen, 2009: 41). It has been recognized that in translation studies, the reproduction of meaning, instead of wording, should be put at the

central place (Newmark, 1988; Nida & Taber, 2003). The meaning in SFL, according to *Introduction to Functional Grammar* (Halliday, 2014), can be analyzed and discussed from three perspectives: ideational (including experiential and logical), interpersonal and textual, and each aspect of meaning is respectively realized through the selections from the lexico-grammar, such as transitivity and text complexity, mood and modality, theme and rheme.

In SFL, ideational metafunction serves as the “field” and talks about our experience of the outer and inner world. It has two components, the experiential and the logical. The experiential metafunction represents the happenings and events of the world, like “who does what to whom under what circumstances?” (Hasan, 1988: 63). In transitivity system, it has three constituents: participant (nominal groups), process (verbal groups) and circumstance (adverbial or prepositional groups). Different options of the participant and process (or transitivity pattern) in language can reveal the certain worldview “framed by the authorial ideology” in a literary text (Fowler, 1986: 138). There are six process types (Halliday, 2014: 214): material (process of doing and happening), mental (process of sensing), relational (process of being and having), behavioral (process of physiological and psychological behaving), verbal (process of saying) and existential (process of existing), and the participants involved in each type have different names or functions as shown in Table 1.

Logical metafunction refers to “how clauses are linked to one another by means of some kind of logico-semantic relation to form clause complexes representing sequences of figures (or moves) that are presented as textually related message” (Halliday, 2014: 428). A speaker or writer can either use a sentence that contains one clause only (a clause simplex), or a sentence that contains more than one clause (a clause complex) (Matthiessen, 1995: 127). In a clause complex, one clause is related to another through two basic systems: taxis and logico-semantic relation. Taxis describes the type of interdependency between clauses in the clause complex: parataxis (where clauses have equal status) and hypotaxis (where clauses have unequal status) (Yu & Wu, 2017: 182). The hypotactic structures are represented by the Greek letter α , β , γ , while the paratactic structures 1, 2, 3; and the logico-semantic relation between clauses falls into projection and expansion as presented in Table 2.

As for interpersonal metafunction, it serves as “tenor” and consists of two important elements, mood and modality,

Table 1. Process types and participants in transitivity system (cited from Halliday, 2014: 311)

Process type	Participants, directly involved	Participants, obliquely involved
Material	Actor, Goal	Recipient, Client; Scope; Initiator; Attribute
Behavioral	Behavior	Behavior
Mental	Senser, Phenomenon	Inducer
Verbal	Sayer, Target	Receiver; Verbiage
Relational	Attributing: Carrier, Attribute; Identifying: Identified, identifier	Attributor; Beneficiary Assigner
Existential	Existent	

tion is 67%, and the total amount is the highest as 9, while Pound's is 5, the lowest. It suggests that Waley attempts to express the wife's expectation (even uncertainty of the approval from her husband) on the love proclamation and the response on longings for meeting in a tactful way; while the attitudes and emotions in Pound's translation are relatively weak. Therefore, by using less modality elements, Pound tends to create a bashful chaste wife who abides by ethics and awaits her husband silently; Waley, in comparison, tries to present a more thoughtful and courageous wife who makes requests to her husband and waits for his response or approval by adopting more median values of modality.

Choices of Theme and Rheme: How does the Wife Unfold her Concerns?

In SFL, "it is the Theme that is the prominent element" (Halliday, 2014: 133), and it serves as the point of departure for the speaker to guide the addressee in developing an interpretation of the message, which unfolds from thematic prominence – the part that the speaker has chosen to highlight as the starting point for the addressee – to thematic non-prominence (Halliday, 2014: 89). Therefore, anything put in the initial position should be what the speaker wants to foreground, and the thematic progression of a text enables us to gain an insight into its texture and better understand how the speaker (or the writer) organizes it and makes clear about his or her underlying concerns. Table 11 presents the initial theme in each line of the original poem and two translations.

Taken together, the initial themes in Li Po's poem are almost verbal groups of processes and nominal groups of participants, and they are all unmarked topical themes; while some adverbial groups of circumstances functioning as time (the age of the wife, the season of the year), place or location are marked themes as they are unusual in practical use and

Table 10. Modality value in Li Po's poem and two translations

	High (%)	Median (%)	Low (%)	Total
Li	6 (75)	2 (25)	0 (0)	8
Pound	2 (40)	3 (60)	0 (0)	5
Waley	2 (22)	6 (67)	1 (11)	9

Table 11. Initial theme divisions in Li Po's poem and two translations

Line	Li	Pound	Waley
1-6	妾发，折，郎，绕，同居，两小	while, I, you, you, and, two small people	soon after, I, when, along the trellis, we, two children
7-12	十四，羞颜，低头，千唤，十五，愿	at fourteen, I, lowing my head, called to, at fifteen, I desired	at fourteen, I, I, called, at fifteen, and
13-18	常存，岂上，十六，瞿塘，五月，猿声	Forever, why, at sixteen, you, and, the monkeys	I thought, not guessing, but, to Ch'ü-t'ang, in the fifth month, where
19-24	门前，一一，苔深，落叶，八月，双飞	you, by the gate, too deep to, the leaves, the paired butterflies, over the grass	In the front of the door, one, moss, and, yellow, in the western garden
25-30	感此，坐愁，早晚，预将，相迎，直至	they, I, if you, please let me, and, as far as	the sight, As, send, when, I, even to...

should be paid attention to because of the way they stand out and give signals to audience. Thus, it can be clearly seen that the poem narrates from age and season.

The words about the wife's age "十四" (*shisi*, fourteen), "十五" (*shiwu*, fifteen) and "十六" (*shiliu*, sixteen) highlight the wife's unchangeable loyal heart with age after marriage; the seasons of the year, from "五月" (*wuyue*, May) in spring to "八月" (*bayue*, August) in summer, foreground the emotional changes of the wife, including her worries about the husband and her loneliness and sorrows; the last "time" word "早晚" (*zaowan*, someday) and the adverbial group "直至" (*zhizhi*, even to) serve as an indicator to express the determination of waiting for husband. From this perspective, an image of a chaste wife is pictured, as in Chinese traditional culture, Confucianism advocates a woman should "be faithful to one's husband unto death" and "always take his husband as the center" (Tao, 2019: 1435). Besides, the marked themes of two places "瞿塘" (*Qutang*, the gorge)⁴ where the dangerous river runs and "门前" (*menqian*, in front of the gate) where the wild grass covers also play a significant role. Among them, one describes the dangerous place on husband's road, while the other pictures the wife's terrible living environment. From the perspective of the poet, this possibly sheds lights on the danger of the emperor as the corruption among officials that time is rampant and a new imperial crisis is to start⁵, thus emphasizing the poet's worries about the emperor since he can do nothing due to his current terrible situation.

However, there are some different concerns in Pound's and Waley's translations. As can be seen, their translations have more nominal groups as the subject "I" omitted in the original poem is added. Look separately, Pound's translation fails to present the marked themes of seasons and the place *Qutang*, only laying stress on the wife's faithfulness of love ("forever", combined with the interpersonal theme "I desired") and her desolate living environment ("too deep to clear the moss"), just like a young wife grumbling or complaining to her husband. But, without the marked theme of "*Qutang*", the wife's worries about her husband seem to be lost. While in Waley's translation, the age of "sixteen" and the seasons are unmarked, but the place *Qutang* is marked and translated as "Ch'ü-t'ang". In addition, Waley uses one interpersonal theme "I thought..." to stress the loyalty, and

APPENDIX

**The River-merchant's Wife: a Letter
Ezra Pound**

妾发初覆额，
折花门前剧。
郎骑竹马来，
绕床弄青梅。
同居长干里，
两小无嫌猜，
十四为君妇，
羞颜未尝开。
低头向暗壁，
千唤不一回。
十五始展眉，
愿同尘与灰。
常存抱柱信，
岂上望夫台。
十六君远行，
瞿塘滟滪堆。
五月不可触，
猿声天上哀。
门前迟行迹，
一一生绿苔。
苔深不能扫，
落叶秋风早。
八月蝴蝶黄，
双飞西园草。
感此伤妾心，
坐愁红颜老。
早晚下三巴，
预将书报家。
相迎不道远，
直至长风沙。

While my hair was still cut straight across
my forehead
I played about the front gate, pulling
flowers.
You came by on bamboo stilts, playing
horse,
You walked about my seat, playing with
blue plums.
And we went on living in the village of
Chokan.
Two small people, without dislike or
suspicion.
At fourteen I married My Lord you.
I never laughed, being bashful.
Lowering my head, I looked at the wall.
Called to, a thousand times, I never looked
back.
At fifteen I stopped scowling,
I desired my dust to be mingled with
yours.
Forever and forever and forever.
Why should I climb the look out?
At sixteen you departed,
You went into far Ku-to-en, by the river of
swirling eddies,
And you have been gone five months.
The monkeys make sorrowful noise over-
head.
You dragged your feet when you went out.
By the gate now, the moss is grown, the
different mosses,
Too deep to clear them away!
The leaves fall early this autumn, in wind.
The paired butterflies are already yellow
with August
Over the grass in the West garden;
They hurt me. I grow older.
If you are coming down through the
narrows of the river Kiang,
Please let me know beforehand,
And I will come out to meet you
As far as Cho-fu-Sa.

Ch'ang-gan

Arthur Waley

Soon after I wore my hair covering my forehead,
I was plucking flowers and playing in front of the
gate, When you came by, walking on bamboo-stilts,
Along the trellis, [23] playing with green plums.
We both lived in the village of Changgan,
Two children, without hate or suspicion.
At fourteen I became your wife;
I was shame-faced and never dared smile.
I sank my head against the dark wall;
Called to a thousand times, I did not turn.
At fifteen I stopped wrinkling my brow
And desired my ashes to be mingled with your dust.
I thought you were like the man who clung to the bridge: [24]
Not guessing I should climb the Look-for-Husband Ter-
race, [25]
But next year you went far away,
To Ch'ü-t'ang and the Whirling Water Rocks.
In the fifth month "one should not venture there" [26]
Where wailing monkeys cluster in the cliffs above.
In front of the door, the tracks you once made
One by one have been covered by green moss—
Moss so thick that I cannot sweep it away,
And leaves are falling in the early autumn wind. Yellow
with August the pairing butterflies
In the western garden flit from grass to grass.
The sight of these wounds my heart with pain;
As I sit and sorrow, my red cheeks fade.
Send me a letter and let me know in time
When your boat will be going through the three gorges of
Pa. I will come to meet you as far as ever you please,
Even to the dangerous sands of Ch'ang-feng.
[23] It is hard to believe that "bed" or "chair" is meant, as
hitherto translated. "Trellis" is, however, only a guess.
[24] A man had promised to meet a girl under a bridge. She
did not come, but although the water began to rise, he
trusted so firmly in her word, that he clung to the pillars
of the bridge and waited till he was drowned.
[25] So called because a woman waited there so long for her
husband that she turned into stone.
[26] Quotation from the Yangtze boatman's song: "When
Yen-yu is as big as a man's hat, one should not venture
to make for Ch'u-t'ang."