A Contrastive Study of Textual Cohesion and Coherence in the Translations of *Call Me By Your Name*

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Abstract

Cohesion and coherence are the two basic concepts in discourse analysis from the angle of pragmatic dimension. Analyzing cohesion and coherence is of great importance in interpreting the source text and producing the target text. This paper, taking the two translation versions of *Call Me By Your Name* as the study case, uses contrastive analysis as the approach to explore textual differences between the two translation versions based on cohesive and coherence theory. This essay firstly reviews cohesion and coherence theory from the level of linguistics. Then it compares two translation versions of *Call Me By Your Name* based on cohesion and coherence theoretical framework. The main findings of this paper show that the version of Quanjing focuses more on literal or semantic translation in the text whereas Wu Yanrong`s version is more communicative in terms of cohesive shift and coherence linkage. This paper is aimed to reveal the importance and significance of analyzing cohesion and coherence in the source text to the translation of the target text, clarifying the textual cohesion and coherence linkage of the text to achieve the communication and effectiveness of translation.

Keywords

Cohesive devices, Coherence relations, Contrastive analysis, Communicative translation.

1. Introduction

According to Hatim and Mason`s[1]categorization of context level in discourse analysis and translation, cohesion and coherence in the third level are categorized into pragmatic dimension [2]. Pragmatically speaking, cohesion and coherence tie a text semantically and non-structurally, forming the text or discourse cohesively and coherently. Analyzing how a text is connected means exploring the stretch of and linkage of one language. In discourse analysis and translation analysis, figuring out cohesive patterns and coherence relations in one language is very necessary and important to deliver a communicative translation. When it comes to translating text from one language to the other language, Cohesion and coherence in discourse analysis and translation entail the exploration of textual connection, semantic structure, and pragmatic analysis of two languages.

With regard to cohesion, it is a surface relation that links different parts of a text. This kind of link is the explicit connection, forming relations and revealing the external and contextual meaning of the text. Coherence, unlike cohesion, is not explicit but implicit relation in communicating and conveying meaning in a text. Coherence is the network of conceptual relations that underlies the surface text [3]. Cohesion and coherence are essential elements in understanding and analyzing a text or discourse. When translating texts of different languages, analyzing the source text from cohesion and coherence perspective can help to grasp the text as a whole, reaching the communication and coherence of the target text. In addition, translation, serving as the communicator, needs the natural and coherent transition of information in the source text to ensure that target receivers or readers can make sense of the

target text. And a communicative translation undoubtedly can deliver a similar effect for both source readers and target readers. The novel, *Call Me by Your Name*, was published in 2007 and had its two translation versions respectively published in 2012 and in 2018. This article, by comparing the two versions of *Call Me by Your Name*, is aimed to find the shift of cohesion and coherence in the source text and its translation version, and explore the importance of cohesion and coherence in affecting the source text and its target text.

2. Review of *Call Me by Your Name*

Call Me by Your Name is a novel written by American writer André Aciman in 2007[4]. The story narrates a blossoming romantic relationship between an intellectually precocious 17-year-old Italian boy named Elio and a visiting 24-year-old American Jewish scholar named Oliver in the 1980s in Italy[5]. This book is a book of love, desire, and affection. The author portrays a sincere, gorgeous, touching, and romantic relationship in a very delicate and subtle writing style. A large amount of detailed description of dialogues and internal monologues of Elio in the book all reflects the author`s subtlety and candor in depicting characters. Thus, when translating the text, its translator should deliver the tenderness and straightforwardness of the relationship to the target readers as the source readers can feel, and relay the writing style of the original author to target readers.

The book has two translation versions, one of which is translated by Quanjing[6] and published by China Friendship Press in 8, 2012; and the other is translated by Wu Yanrong[7] and published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press in 2018[8]. This paper selects five excerpts from both versions as a case study.

3. Cohesion

The concept of cohesion was advanced by the famous linguist Halliday in 1962[9]. Cohesion is the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations that provide links between various parts of a text [3]. This kind of network ties a text in the form of cohesive devices or cohesive markers which explicitly express the external and textual meaning of a text. And this explicitness in a text formation makes it possible for readers to interpret what the text means through the overt cohesive devices. Halliday and Hasan [10] identify five main cohesive devices in English: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Also, from the perspective of linguistics, these linguistic devices are mainly two types. One type depends on grammar or is called grammatical cohesion, and the other type depends more on the meaning of words, which is called lexical cohesion [11].

3.1. Reference

Reference generally refers to the word which has appeared somewhere in a text. Simply speaking, reference is to use some words to refer to another word. Hadley, I.L. [12]points out that reference is concerned with the identification of a thing, or specific group of things, by the use of certain reference items, such as personal pronouns. As these items appear in the text for the second or more times, they establish a network of meaning between the various sections of the discourse. In most cases, a pronoun is used to refer to some part of a sentence or a clause. This is rather common in the English language due to its language characteristics. More specifically, in textual analysis, pronoun is usually used to retrieve the identity of the participant in an event.

Reference can be divided into three kinds of reference:

Anaphoric reference: use a pronoun to point back to the participant or things that readers have read in the text. Pronouns are used to identify the participant or things that have been mentioned before. In the first case, for example, "the girl I met this morning is called Amanda,

she seemed to be our new classmate". In this sentence, "she" in the second sentence is the reference to "the girl" in the first sentence. In the second case, for instance, "I don`t know how hard life is because I have never experienced this before". In this example, "this" refers back to"how hard life is" in the previous part.

Cataphoric reference: use a pronoun to point forward to the participant or things that readers have not read in the text. For example, "I do not believe it. You `ve divorced since a week ago". "it" in this example refers to "You `ve divorced since a week ago".

Exophoric reference: use a pronoun to refer to the participant or things outside the text. For example, "if you want to eliminate distractions, you can either move the noise from your family or move to another quiet place". In this sentence, "your family", separated from the speaker and the listener, is not the participant in the text.

3.2.   Substitution

Substitution, unlike reference, refers to the use of words to replace some word or some part of the sentence[13]. Substitution is used to avoid the repetition of a lexical item through grammatical resources of the language [14]. In the following sentence, "it" replaces "to wear masks and take body temperature" to serve as the subject of this sentence.

The example:

It is important and necessary for us to wear masks and take temperature during the pandemic.

3.3.   Ellipsis

Ellipsis also constitutes cohesion devices. It refers to the intentional omission of some words, phrases, or some part of a sentence without affecting the meaning of a text. Halliday and Hasan[10] claim that ellipsis can be seen as a special form of substitution, that is zero substitution. Ellipsis is based on the expectation or the assumption that readers can understand the text by connecting the information. In the example below, though "are you" before kidding was left out, it is understandable for readers to grasp the meaning of the joke and the relationship between the two participants.

The conversational example:

--I want to be your girlfriend.

--(Are you)Kidding?

3.4.   Conjunction

Conjunction refers to the use of various "connecting words" to join together clauses and sentences[11]. These cohesive markers like "and, however, therefore" link different parts of a text. Conjunctions generally have two types: one is conjunctions like "and, but, and or", and the other is conjunctive adverbs like "therefore, furthermore". More specifically, conjunctions can be divided into different kinds according to the relationship between two clauses. According to Halliday and Hasan[10], conjunctions can be divided into four types:

Additive conjunctions: and, moreover, furthermore, in addition

Contrastive conjunctions: but, however, while, whereas

Causative conjunctions: because, so, therefore, thus

Sequential conjunctions: firstly, then, finally, eventually

All connectives make the reader look back to a previous clause to understand the subsequent clause[11]. Also, these kinds of conjunctions, as overt forms connect sentences to guide readers understand the relationship and logic between two clauses. When the relationship between two clauses is not signaled explicitly, the reader must make an inference from his/her knowledge of the situation and the context[15]. In the examples below, the first sentence uses contrastive conjunction to connect two clauses whereas the second sentence uses causative conjunction.

The relationship and logic between two clauses in these sentences are different, and readers can make sense via understanding different conjunctions.

The Example:

Tina is very generous but her husband is very mean.

Women should be paid equally because women are as capable as men.

3.5. Lexical cohesion

Lexical cohesion, also called non-structural connection without cohesion markers, generally refers to the conceptual and textual connection created between lexical units. Lexical units or items create a semantic network that is composed of sub-units of lexical semantics like compound words and affixes. The semantic relation achieved by lexical items is also overt and this explicitness mainly reflects in actual words chosen in a text. Word choosing and considering connections between words catalogue in this aspect is rather important in contributing to expressing the meaning of a text. According to Halliday & Hasan[10], lexical cohesion can be divided into repetition, hyponymy, synonymy, antonymy, meronymy, and collocation. Repetition refers to reiteration; hyponymy is included in superordinate and refers to a specific and whole relationship between lexical items. For example, cats are animals. Cats refer to hyponymy while animals represent superordinate. Meronymy is also connected with superordinate, but differently, meronymy is a part of superordinate. Meronymy refers to the part-whole relationship between lexical units. For example, apples are fruit. the relationship between apple and fruit reflects the relationship between meronymy and superordinate.

4. Coherence

Coherence is the implicit network of a text and the network is based on the implied meaning underneath the text and the situation where participants are involved.

Completely different from cohesion which links words and phrases to connect text, coherence creates information via an interpretive framework based on readers. The coherence of a text, related to cohesion, depends on the hearer`s or receiver`s expectations and experience of the world[3]. Coherence is based on the expectations, cultural knowledge, and experiences of readers. That means the result of coherence varies from different readers. "On the basis of the variety of language used in the original, you attempt to characterize the readership of the original and then of the translation, and to decide how much attention you have to pay to the target readers" [16]. Therefore, in the process of translation, a translator should take the available knowledge, cultural background, and expectations of the target readers into consideration to decide whether he or she can make sense of the text.

However, in actual conversation or spoken discourse, speakers do not always say what she or he means or mean what he or she says. In these cases, readers have to observe implicature implied in the text. Grice[17] uses the term implicature to refer to what the speaker means or implies rather than what he or she literally says. In the example below, speaker A`s question means that he expects an answer by saying yes or no, but B`s response is not as expected as A`s. If the readers can not interpret the implied meaning that B is unwilling to tell her personal affair to A or B does not like A very much, there will be some misunderstandings, and readers can not make sense of the text.

Example 4:

A: Do you have a boyfriend?

B: Oh, I have to leave.

Thus, for a translator, taking account of the underlined meaning or implicature of the source text can help to contribute to produce a coherent and communicative translation, and convey the same effect to the target readers as the original readers can feel.

5. Case Analysis

This part analyzes two translation versions of *Call Me by Your Name* to compare the strengths and weaknesses of each version based on cohesion and coherence theory discussed above. In the following case study, ST represents source text; TT1 means the version translated by Quanjing, and TT2 refers to the version of Wu Yanrong.

Case 1

ST: This, the very person whose photo on the application form months earlier had leapt out with promises of instant affinities.

TT1: 正是他，几个月前照片还贴在申请表的人， 带着让人不由得喜欢的亲和力，活脱脱出现我眼前。

TT2: 正是他，几个月前相片还贴在申请表上的人，活脱脱地出现了，而且让人一见倾心。

The cohesion and coherence in ST: The excerpt from the first chapter of this book, narrates Oliver`s first impression on Elio, along with its previous part. Here, "the very person" refers to Oliver; the verb "leapt out"and "instant affinities" can reflect Elio was looking forward to meeting this new guest before Oliver came. In addition, the author uses"leapt out" to describe Elio`s implicit delight and "instant affinities" to express his liking for Oliver. Thus, the author selects "affinities" to tell readers that Elio was taking a liking to Oliver the first time they met.

The cohesion and coherence in TT: In TT1(Quanjing`s version), "instant affinities" is translated into "不由得喜欢的亲和力", and in TT2, the version is "让人一见倾心". Both of them convey the basic meaning of the ST, but the version of TT1 is less expressive than the one of TT2. "一见倾心" in Chinese has the meaning of a favorable impression whereas "不由得喜欢的亲和力" is less communicative in conveying the same meaning. And for Chinese readers, the expression of four characters is more readable to understand the meaning of ST.

Case 2

ST: Sometimes we'd even open our dining room to the occasional tourist couple who'd heard of the old villa and simply wanted to come by and take a peek and were totally enchanted when asked to eat with us and tell us all about themselves, while Mafalda, informed at the last minute, dished out her usual fare.

TT1: 有时候我们甚至开放餐厅给偶尔来访的夫妻或情侣旅客，他们因耳闻这栋老别墅，单纯想来一窥究竟。这些人受邀与我们共餐时，简直心醉神迷，然后热情地闲聊关于自己的一切。总在最后一分钟才接到这种临时通知的玛法尔达则会端上她的拿手菜。

TT2: 有时候我们甚至向偶尔来访的夫妻开放自己的餐室，他们耳闻这栋老别墅，纯粹想来一窥究竟。受邀与我们共餐时，他们完全像着了魔一样，跟我们聊很多自己的事情。而这时，总在最后一分钟才接到通知的马法尔达则端出她的家常菜。

The cohesion and coherence in ST: In ST, the author uses several conjunctions such as "who", several "and", and "while" to connect lexical items and create text. For the translator, the first step is to figure out logical and conceptual meaning underneath the grammatical connections in the text. For example, in the ST " ..and simply wanted to come by and take a peek and ..", the author uses several "and" to link different actions, thus in translating these sentences, the translator should know which two verbs are connected with "and" with regard to action sequence.

The cohesion and coherence in TT: The first difference between the two versions is "夫妻或情侣旅客"(The literal meaning: married and unmarried couple) and "夫妻"(The literal meaning: married couple). The source text is "occasional tourist couple", but the couple does not always

refer to married people. The ST does not point to which kind of couple, so TT1 is more faithful than TT2 in translating this lexical item. The second difference lies in "..were totally enchanted when asked to eat with us and tell us all about themselves..". Here "to eat and tell" shows the action sequence and the "to" before "tell" is left out, and "were totally enchanted" is used to describe the tourist couple mentioned before who were very delighted for being invited to have a meal in the beautiful villa they longed for a visit to. When translating this sentence, different language features must be considered. English puts great importance on the cohesive devices to connect sentence components together; Chinese is usually considered a predominantly paratactic language which relies more on semantic meaning rather than cohesive devices to achieve coherence[18]. In the study of linguistics, English is hypotactic language or so-called form language while Chinese is paratactic language. Specifically speaking, form language means English always uses conjunctions to convey the information of a text. Connectives can be said to be a hypotactic device for explicitly showing the structural and semantic interrelationship between the components that are joined together[19]. In contrast, the Chinese language or paratactic language refers to the hidden logic between sentences or a kind of implicit expression of logic. Cohesive markers are dispensed with in the case of parataxis, where the structural and semantic interrelationship between the joined components is understood through the flow of meanings[19]. Thus, when translating from English into Chinese, some form words should be reduced or omitted for the purpose of making it readable and understandable to target readers. Therefore, in TT1, in this sentence"..这些人受邀与我们共餐时，简直心醉神迷，然后..", "...时and ...然后" should be left out because the Chinese language generally does not use these cohesive markers. In addition, this translation version is less readable to understand because it does not conform to the norms of the Chinese language. All factors considered, TT2 is more communicative and effective in conveying the meaning of ST.

Case 3

ST: He must have hit on something, though God knows what. Perhaps he was trying not to seem taken aback.

"What things that matter?"

Was he being disingenuous?

"You know what things. By now you of all people should know."

Silence.

"Why are you telling me all this?"

TT1: 他一定想到了点什么——天晓得是什么。或许他不想露出太惊讶的神色。

"有什么重要的事？"

他在装傻吗？

"你明明知道。到了这一步，就数你最该知道。"

一阵沉默。"你为什么要告诉我这一切？"

TT2: 他必定偶然发现了什么——天晓得是什么。或许他在试着不表现得太过震惊。

"什么是重要的事？"

他是在装傻吗？

"你明明知道。到了这个节骨眼，就数你最该知道。"

沉默。"你为什么要告诉我这一切？"

The cohesion and coherence in ST: In the ST, the author used "what" to replace "something" in the first sentence, and in the following part, the author repeated "what things" twice to refer to implicit feelings between Elio and Oliver. Specifically, "something" "what thing" "what things that matter" "what" and "all this" all refer to the same thing that Oliver realized Elio`s love

confession. The author used different pronouns to substitute "something" and these different substitutions mean Elio`s admission of his affection. These pronouns and other lexical and grammatical parts form the cohesion network of this text. The surface relation of the text conveys the connotation of the text. Therefore, the connotation of these words translated in TT should be consistent with what the author implies in the text. The translator should consider the TR-oriented purpose and make a generous transfer of ST elements into TL culture when necessary [17]. That means the translator should take account of the lexical cohesion and coherence of the text so that target readers can make sense of the underlying information of the ST.

The cohesion and coherence in TT: Both the two versions consider the connotation of the ST, "什么"(The literal meaning: though God knows what) "什么重要的事"(The literal meaning: what things that matter?) and"这一切"(The literal meaning: all this) in TT mean something only known between Elio and Oliver, target readers can make sense of this love confession between two characters. In TT1 and TT2, both the translator translated "something" and "what" into "什么" since they refer to the same thing. In addition, in the ST, "You know what things." "what things" was repeated to serve as the explicit feature of the English language while in the TT, both two translators did not translate this phrase. Semantically speaking, "你明明知道"(The literal meaning: you know what things.) is the same as "你明明知道是什么"(The literal meaning: you know what thing it is.). Nevertheless, in light of the language features of Chinese, a short sentence is preferable. Here the translators omitted "what things" in this way to reach the cultural coherence of the TT.

Case 4

ST: "I know books, and I know how to string words together—it doesn't mean I know how to speak about the things that matter most to me."

TT1: "我懂书，我懂怎么把字穿在一起，但这不表示我知道该怎么谈论对我最重要的事。"

TT2: "我会读书，知道如何去理解句子，**但这不意味着，我知道如何谈论对我来说最重要的事。**"

The cohesion and coherence in ST: In the ST, when source readers read "I know books", the interpretation or expectation is Elio knows how to read a book, understanding how to explore the underlying meanings and what a book wants to express. Rumelhart[21] pointed out that, in a similar way, texts like narratives also exhibit conventional structures based on predictable sequences of actions and information. Here in this example, "I know how to string words together" is the predictable sequence of the previous information. Therefore, the TT should consider this text sequence and semantic coherence to convey the same or similar effect so the source readers can make sense of the text.

The cohesion and coherence in TT: For TT1, in the sentence "我懂书，我懂怎么把字穿在一起", "懂书" and "穿在一起"(The literal meaning: i know books and i know how to tie words) are rather literal. It seems the translator adopted semantic translation or even a word-to-word translation strategy when dealing with the information, but this kind of literal translation does not conform to the Chinese language form and language feature. In contrast, in the case of TT2, "会读书，知道如何去理解句子"(The literal meaning: i know how to read books and know how to understand sentences) is much more readable, natural, and communicative to reach the thematic readability intended in the ST.

Case 5

ST: I became aware of this because, as he kept asking questions remotely approaching the subject, I began to sense that I was already applying evasive maneuvers well before what was awaiting us around the corner was even visible.

TT1: 我意识到这一点，是因为在他不断提出一些旁敲侧击的问题、甚至远早于在角落等着我们的东西进入视线范围之前，我就感觉到我不断回避他的问题。

TT2: 我意识到这一点，是因为当他不断提出一些旁敲侧击的问题时，甚至在即将降临在我们生命中的事情真的发生之前，我就开始感觉到自己在不断地回避他的问题。

The cohesion and coherence in ST: According to the dictionary, "around the corner" has two kinds of definitions, with one being in close proximity to another location, and the other being imminent or likely to happen very soon[22]. The coherence of a text is based on the readers` knowledge or experience to make the text coherent. In the ST, "what" refers to the upcoming conversation between Elio and his father. According to the text, this part mainly described Elio`s nervousness and dread of likeliness that his nice friendship with Oliver may be found by his father in the following talk. In light of this, the translator should interpret the meaning of this idiom accurately, and convey the underlying meaning mentioned in the source text.

The cohesion and coherence in TT: The main difference between the two versions lies in the translation of "around the corner". Considering the discourse analysis above, the translation of "around the corner" should be translated "即将来临，即将到来"(The literal meaning: something will happen in the near future). In this respect, TT2 is more accurate in understanding the ST whereas TT1 is more likely to be translated literally without taking account of the context. And when target readers interpret the version of TT1, "在角落等着我们的东西"(The literal meaning: something waits for us in the corner) may confuse them. They want to know what is there in the corner. This translation will mislead the target readers because this will make the text unrelated to what readers have made sense of from the text, and the discourse will be incoherent for target readers.

6. Conclusion

Cohesion and coherence in discourse analysis play a significant role in cross-linguistic communication. Cohesion, as the explicit connectedness of a text, is reached by grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. And coherence, the implicit connectedness in a text refers to the inherent and coherent link in a text. From the perspective of translation analysis, for the purpose of naturalness and communication, the textual cohesion and coherent relations in the source text should be maintained in the translation process. Therefore, when working on the translation, the translator should take account of various factors which influenced cohesion and coherence to help readers to interpret the information, semantic meanings, and implicature of the source text, making some adjustments to achieve the naturalness and communicative purpose in the target text. When it comes to analyzing the source text and the target text, a contrastive analysis based on this entails the comparison of cohesive structure, semantic patterns, and logical coherence between the source text and the target text or its various versions.

This study, through the contrastive analysis based on cohesion and coherence theory, finds that Quanjing`s version is more literal or semantic wholly while Wu Yanrong`s version is more expressive, coherent, and communicative. Specifically, Quanjing`s translation tends to follow the original sequence of a sentence when dealing with long sentences without restructuring word order, and even some idiom`s interpretation is literal. And this version in some case analysis only focuses on the interpretation of literal translation without considering the norms of Chinese language, lacking the naturalness and coherence. In contrast, Wu Yanrong`s version comparatively makes some necessary adjustments based on Chinese language features and restructures the cohesion structure, and coherence relations of the source text to achieve the coherence and communication of the target text.

From the perspective of discourse analysis and translation analysis, analyzing cohesion and coherence relations of the source text is essential to interpret original information and deliver the coherent communication. On the other hand, clarifying cohesion and coherence in the target text can help to judge whether translation versions manifest the naturalness and coherence of the source text so that target readers can make sense of it.

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