

# Examining “deceptive equivalence” in “suspension” translation from *Hard Times*: A case study of Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu’s translation

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## Abstract

This study delves into the Chinese translation strategies employed for rendering "suspensions" in Charles Dickens' novel "Hard Times," utilizing a combination of literary stylistic analysis and a corpus-based approach. The analysis reveals that translators Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu retained 73.74% of the "suspensions" from the original text, effectively capturing Dickens' distinctive literary style. However, they also employed merging and adjusting strategies, altering 26.24% of the "suspensions" found in the source material. These modifications resulted in weakened tension arising from retrospective pauses, a diminished synchronicity between movements and speech, disruption of the irony effect, challenges in character identification and traits, and a departure from the repetitive patterns of circumstantial information present in the original work. Moreover, these alterations disrupted the effect of dramatic conflict and misled the reader's focus, thereby influencing the thematic meaning, aesthetic value, and overall portrayal of characters' personalities. Consequently, a phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in translation emerges from a stylistic perspective.

**Keywords:** “deceptive equivalence”; “suspensions”; *Hard Times*; literary translation; literary stylistic analysis.

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## 1. Introduction

"Suspensions" are "interruptions by the narrator of a fictional character's discourse" in literature (Lambert, 1981: 41). For example, "Girl number twenty," said Mr. Gradgrind, squarely pointing with his square forefinger, "I don't know that girl. Who is that girl?" (Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu, 2008). The phrase "said Mr. Gradgrind, squarely pointing with his square forefinger," serves as an instance of "suspension", strategically employed to simulate the synchronicity of speech and bodily actions in real-life situations. This technique encapsulates a wealth of character information, incorporating nuances such as pitch, volume, pauses accompanying speech, as well as the character's posture and facial expressions. Its presence enhances both the individualized portrayal of characters and the organizational structure of discourse (Mahlberg & Smith, 2013: 36).

Dickens' typical writing style is characterized by the extensive and ingenious use of "suspensions" to highlight the character's personality (Newsom, 2000: 556; Mahlberg, 2015: 135).

From a stylistic perspective, literary translation demands meticulous attention to specific vocabulary, syntactic structures, and elements with special effects. If not executed judiciously, the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" is prone to manifest, resulting in the compromise of stylistic value (Shen Dan, 2002: 15).

Ruano San Segundo (2017) investigated the translation of "suspensions" in the Spanish version of "*Hard Times*", revealing that the translated text retained only 38% of the original "suspensions." The majority of the structures of the original "suspensions" were adjusted in the translation, either rendered as independent paragraphs or omitted/moved to positions before or after quotations. Such translation choices diluted the distinctive stylistic features of Dickens' original work, resulting in a loss of the literary value in the translated text. Specifically, the synchronicity between movements and speech, as well as the deliberately interrupted tension created by characters' discourse, were compromised in the translation process (Ruano San Segundo, 2017: 88-106), leading to the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in the translated text. Inspired by this research, this paper examines how the Chinese translation of "*Hard Times*" handles the "suspensions" found in the English original and initiates a discussion on the occurrence of "deceptive equivalence" in literary translation.

## **2. The Phenomenon of "Deceptive Equivalence" in Literary Translation**

"Deceptive equivalence" is a translation phenomenon that refers to the situation where the translated text appears roughly similar to the original, but the literary value or stylistic significance differs significantly (Shen Dan, 2002: 11). According to Shen Dan (2002), "deceptive equivalence" in literary translation primarily manifests in three forms. Firstly, the objectification of ideas, where the translator transforms narratives focused on internal perspectives in the original text into external descriptions, often failing to capture the vivid portrayal of characters as presented in the original. Secondly, a shift in person, wherein the translator alters the original text's person, leading to an inability in the translated text to convey the dynamic changes in person as present in the original, thereby, losing the conveyance of thematic meaning. Thirdly, change in the expression of modality, where the translator makes rational adjustments in sentence structures, such as translating interrogative sentences or free indirect speech in the original into declarative sentences, hindering the comprehensive representation of characters' emotions and personalities.

The phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" has garnered attention in the field of translation studies. For instance, Shen Yingli and Sun Zhili (2004) engaged in a discussion on the narrative perspective in the translation of the novel "*Ulysses*," contending that the original language form not only holds value in terms of literary function but also carries a unique narrative perspective, such as character viewpoints and omniscient perspectives. They emphasized the translator's responsibility to accurately convey the adjustments in narrative perspective from the original text, suggesting an incorporation of the traditional Chinese literary theory of "comprehension" – a method involving genuine immersion in characters' roles to understand the narrator's emotions and situations. Shu Yuntong (2011) provided examples that illustrate three manifestations of "deceptive equivalence": rationalization modifications to content, overlooking the stylistic significance of language forms, and the loss of literary value resulting from the interaction between fictional facts and expressive forms. She argued that the root cause of "deceptive equivalence" in translations lies in the translator's neglect of anticipating cultural factors for the target language audience or insufficient appreciation for specific linguistic expressions associated with the original text.

Zhang Tongtong (2017) used the translation of "*Animal Farm*" as an example to explore various strategies for foregrounding language in novel translation, including quantity foregrounding, grammatical foregrounding, lexical foregrounding, writing foregrounding, sentence structure foregrounding, and stylistic foregrounding. She discussed whether there is a loss of the aesthetic value of novelty and unfamiliarity. Zhang pointed out the translator's need to prioritize foregrounded language forms and maintain a high level of sensitivity to the linguistic forms and stylistic elements of the work, ensuring the transmission and reconstruction of highly literary and artistically significant foregrounding language in the translated text. Xu Xiaomei (2012), from a literary stylistic perspective, analyzed the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in translations of "*A Farewell to Arms*" by focusing on Lin Yijin, Zhou Ye, and Sun Zhili's versions. The study identified that the translators lacked a comprehensive understanding of the correlation between linguistic components and thematic significance in the text, exploring the application of literary stylistics in novel translation.

However, overall, research on the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in literary translation works is relatively limited, especially in terms of a quantitative approach using corpus statistics. This paper concentrates on the distinctive stylistic feature of Dickens' novels—"suspensions" (Mahlberg, 2015), to investigate the occurrence of "deceptive equivalence" in the translation. The study aims to address two research questions:

1) How does the Chinese translation of "Hard Times" handle the "suspensions" in the original text?

2) How do modifications to the structure of "suspensions" in the Chinese translation of "*Hard Times*" contribute to the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in translation?

### **3. Research Methodology**

The present study employs a corpus-based approach, utilizing the CLiC Literary Online Corpus, created by Professor Michaela Mahlberg's team at the University of Birmingham, which integrates a corpus and search software (Mu Congjun, Zhang Wenjie, 2022: 71). The CLiC online corpus has annotated all instances of "suspensions" in Dickens' complete works. In the specific sub-corpus for "Hard Times", a search for "suspensions" yielded a total of 183 results. After excluding four instances that did not align with the criteria for "suspensions," the remaining 179 instances were exported to an Excel spreadsheet, thereby constituting the source text corpus for "suspensions" in "*Hard Times*".

The first Chinese translation of "*Hard Times*" is titled "劳苦世界" (The World of Labor) and is a partial translation by Wu Guangjian. There are three complete translation versions in total: the translation by Ma Jianhua and Zhou Qi (1999) published by Nanfang Press, the translation by Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu (2008) published by Shanghai Translation Publishing House, and the translation by Chen Caiyu (2014) published by Shanghai Sanlian Publishing House. This study selects the translation by Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu (2008) as the research corpus for two reasons: Firstly, this translation has gained substantial readership; Secondly, it holds a pivotal position among the three complete translations based on its publication year. Since the CLiC online corpus allows seamless navigation between search results and the actual text, locating the 179 instances of "suspensions" in the original work is relatively straightforward. By identifying the positions of these "suspensions" in the English novel, the translation of these instances in the Chinese version can be determined. The Chinese translations corresponding to the 179 English "suspensions" are compiled into an Excel spreadsheet, establishing an English-Chinese parallel corpus. Manual comparison is then conducted to analyze how the English "suspensions" are translated into Chinese. This corpus-based translation study method, utilizing parallel corpora as research material and relying on corpus tools, allows for a systematic analysis of translation phenomena (Hu Kaibao, 2011: 1).

#### 4. Chinese Translation Strategies for "Suspensions" in Hard Times

The translation by Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu (2008) of "Hard Times" effectively addresses all 179 instances of "suspensions" present in the original work, maintaining a commitment to completeness without resorting to any instances of omission. Their employed translation strategies predominantly fall into three categories: 1) retaining the structural form of "suspensions" from the original text; 2) consolidating the quotation following "suspensions" into the preceding quotation; 3) reordering or inversely adjusting the portion of the quotation following "suspensions" into the preceding quotation. The frequency and percentage distribution of these three translation strategies for "suspensions" are detailed in the table below:

**Table 1:** The frequency and percentage distribution of translation strategies

Translation strategy	frequency	percentage
Direct translation (retaining suspensions)	132	73.74
Omitting Suspensions	38	21.23
Adjusting the order of words	9	5.03
Total	179	100

##### 1) Direct translation (retaining suspensions)

In the translation by Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu, 132 instances adhere to the strategy of preserving the original structural form of "suspensions," constituting 73.74% of the total. This approach not only retains the linguistic format of "suspensions" but also preserves the content and meaning of the original text, demonstrating fidelity to the source material. By adhering to this strategy, the translators effectively safeguard the stylistic value inherent in the original work. For instance:

(1) "I hope, Bounderby," said Mr. Gradgrind, in a conciliatory voice, "that this was merely an oversight."

译文: "我想, 庞得贝, "葛擂硬先生用打圆场的口吻说, "这只是由于疏忽。"

In this instance, the translator has preserved the original word order and punctuation, specifically by separating the address in the first half of the quotation from the latter half. Regarding content, the translator has faithfully reproduced the intended meaning of the original vocabulary, demonstrating a commitment to faithfulness to the source text. This meticulous approach ensures that the entire translation conveys the

original meaning, tone, and intonation, thereby preserving the stylistic nuances of the original work.

## 2) Omitting suspensions

This strategy constitutes 21.23% of the total. The translator consolidates the preceding and following quotations of the original "suspensions," ensuring a smooth and coherent expression of the intended meaning. However, this amalgamation disrupts the structural integrity of the "suspensions." For instance:

(2) "What does this unmannerly boy mean," asked Mr. Gradgrind, eyeing him in a sort of desperation, "by Tight-Jeff?"

译文: "这个没礼貌的孩子是什么意思, 紧索不紧索的?" 葛擂硬先生无可奈何地看了他一眼问。

In order to maintain the coherence of the intended meaning, the translator combines the quotations preceding and following the original "suspensions." However, this translation strategy undermines the structural expression of the original "suspensions," thereby compromising the synchronicity between characters' speech and body actions. Specifically, it fails to linguistically convey the characteristic feature of Mr. Gradgrind's facial expressions changing during the process of speaking.

## 3) Adjusting the order of words

This strategy accounts for 5.03% of the total. The translator opts to rearrange the order of the quotations preceding or following the original "suspensions." While this approach retains the formal structure of "suspensions," it introduces alterations in the organization of discourse. For example:

(3) "And what," said Mrs. Sparsit, pouring out her tea, "is the news of the day? Anything?"

译文: "今天有什么新闻?" 斯巴塞太太一面倒茶一面说, "有什么事吗?"

The original meaning of the preceding quotation before the "suspensions" is incomplete. By adjusting the sentence structure, the translator divides the original fragmented interrogative structure into two concise questions, ensuring the completeness and independence of the preceding and following quotations. This adjustment aligns more closely with the expressive habits of Chinese interrogative sentences. While serving as a housekeeper in the Bounderby family, Mrs. Sparsit is perceived by Mr. Bounderby as a tool to satisfy his vanity. She, in turn, leverages her own background, masquerading as a person of noble status. The insertion of the original "suspensions" prompts readers to pay attention to the pouring of tea, a symbolic gesture reflecting Victorian-era societal etiquette and status. The translator's modifications, in interrupting the character's speech through the use of "suspensions,"

draw attention to specific details, disrupting the original author's intention to showcase Mrs. Sparsit's characteristics of vanity and cultivated sophistication.

## **5. "Deceptive Equivalence" Caused By Omitting Suspensions and Adjusting the Order of Words**

The utilization of "suspensions" constitutes a distinctive literary style in the works of Charles Dickens (Mahlberg, 2015). Although the use of "suspensions" may interrupt the narrative flow of characters' discourse, impacting the seamless reading experience for the audience, Dickens employs this technique at a frequency far surpassing that of other writers in the Victorian era (Caserio, 1983: 342). This departure from conventional expressive forms creates a unique stylistic effect, contributing to tension, portraying the synchronicity between body language and speech, and fostering dramatic conflict (Leech & Short, 2007: 128). Ruano San Segundo (2017) observed that the Spanish translation of "*Hard Times*" retained only 38% of the original "suspensions" structure, resulting in a significant loss of stylistic value. This aligns with Shen Dan's (2002) assertion that literary translation often neglects specific linguistic expressions associated with the thematic ideas of the original text. The lack of strong translator stylistic awareness undermines the aesthetic value of the original work, contributing to the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in translation.

We do not have explicit information on whether Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu, during the translation process of "*Hard Times*," were attentive to the distinctive stylistic features inherent in Dickens' works. However, they preserved 73.74% of the original "suspensions" structure, a comparison with the Spanish translation of "*Hard Times*", suggesting that the Chinese translation more effectively captures the stylistic effects characteristic of Dickens' works. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that 26.24% of the "suspensions" structure in the translation by Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu (2008) underwent consolidation and adjustment. Thus, it raises the question of how these modifications impact the stylistic effects of the translated work. Using the translation by Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu (2008) as an example, we will explore the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in literary translation.

### **5.1 "Deceptive Equivalence" Due to the Omitting Strategy**

Quan Zenggu and Hu Wenshu (2008) employ the strategy of merging preceding and following quotations, reorganizing the suspended structure by relocating the "suspensions" originally positioned between two quotations to either after or before the quotation in the translation. Through this approach, the translators achieve equivalence and fluency in both content and form between the translation and the original text.

However, this strategy overlooks the unique linguistic form of the original work and its associated aesthetic and thematic functions, consequently giving rise to the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence." The ensuing analysis delves into five specific aspects to assess the damage incurred in terms of aesthetic value and thematic significance resulting from the omitting strategy.

### **5.1.1 Undermining the Tension Created by Retrospective Pauses in the Original Text**

(4) "I'll explain to you, then," said the gentleman, after another and a dismal pause, "why you wouldn't paper a room with representations of horses. Do you ever see horses walking up and down the sides of rooms in reality - in fact? Do you?"

译文：经过一段相当沉闷的停顿时间，那位绅士就说：“那么，我来告诉你们吧，为什么你们不应该用画着马的花纸来糊房间。事实上，在现实生活中，你们看见过马会在房里的墙上走来走去吗？现实你们看见过吗？”

In Example 4, the original function of "suspensions" is to signify a pause or silence. In fact, the original text "after another and a dismal pause" occurs before the quotation, but in terms of narrative sequence, it is presented after the quotation. The character's speech is interrupted, creating a pause where there was none in the actual events of the novel, resulting in "retrospective narration." This retrospective pause allows readers to experience a tense atmosphere (Lambert, 1981: 68). The translation, by restoring the narrative order to the chronological sequence of events, effectively overlooks this function of the original "suspensions."

### **5.1.2 Weakening Synchronicity between Speech and Body Language**

(5) "And what," asked Mr. Gradgrind, in a still lower voice, "did you read to your father, Jupe?"

译文：“你念什么给你父亲听，朱浦？”葛播硬先生更加放低了声音问道。

At this juncture, the original text vividly illustrates the stylistic effect of "suspensions" in portraying the synchronicity of character actions and speech. The action of Mr. Gradgrind "in a still lower voice" is challenging to convey and emphasize effectively if presented in the form of a reported clause placed at the end of the sentence following the quotation. Korte (1997) notes that compared to the time occupied by body language in the real world, descriptions of body language in literary works may appear lengthy, making it difficult to create an impression of immediacy. However, the use of "suspensions" to interrupt character speech can intuitively highlight that Mr. Gradgrind "in a still lower voice" is happening simultaneously with his speech. The translation, by merging preceding and following quotations, eliminates the "suspensions" structure, thereby dissipating this effect of synchronicity in the stylistic representation.

### 5.1.3 Undermining the Ironic Effect

(6) "No, Loo; I wouldn't hurt you. I made an exception of you at first. I don't know what this - jolly old - Jaundiced Jail," Tom had paused to find a sufficiently complimentary and expressive name for the parental roof, and seemed to relieve his mind for a moment by the strong alliteration of this one, "would be without you."

译文：“不，露；我不会伤害你的。我一向把你当作例外。要是没有你，我真不知道我在这一多么古老的班房里，更会感到多么痛苦。”汤姆在中间停下来想了半天，才找到了一个恰到好处的名称来赞扬他父亲的房子，正由于此，他精神似乎也就暂时提起来一些。

Mr. Gradgrind believes that utilitarian philosophy is the optimal way to govern people's lifestyles. In his view, both fantasy and sensibility should be discarded. Dickens, through satirizing Gradgrind's house, conveys a critique of utilitarianism. In Example 6, the "suspensions" inserted after "jolly old - Jaundiced Jail" serve to hint to the reader just how ancient, monotonous, and rigid Gradgrind's house is, symbolizing its hardness and lack of emotion. Through the use of "suspensions," juxtaposing the ironic phrases like a sufficiently complimentary and expressive name" with "jolly old - Jaundiced Jail" expresses a profound satire aimed at both the house and its owner.

Additionally, Mahlberg (2012) asserts that the more information contained within "suspensions," the more effectively it can disrupt the flow of speech, consequently highlighting the information within the "suspensions" even more. In this instance, the original "suspensions" extends to 31 words, significantly interrupting the character's speech, thereby maximizing the emphasis on the highly ironic information of "seemed to relieve his mind for a moment by the strong alliteration of this one," "sufficiently complimentary," and "expressive." However, the disruption of the "suspensions" structure in the translation weakens the ironic effect.

### 5.1.4 Weakening Character Identification and Traits

(7) "It is much to be regretted," said Mrs. Sparsit, making her nose more Roman and her eyebrows more Coriolanian in the strength of her severity, "that the united masters allow of any such class-combinations."

译文：“这班联合一致的厂主竟容许这类的阶级团结，太令人遗憾了，”斯巴塞太太说。由于态度严肃，所以她的鼻子更显得罗马式，而眉毛也更显得像柯理奥蓝楼斯那样的眉毛了。

The original "suspensions" in the text serve to highlight the description of Mrs. Sparsit's physical features. On one hand, Dickens' portrayal of characters' external features is, in fact, a reflection of their internal lives, playing a role in character definition. The proud appearance depicted here reflects the character of the housekeeper: someone very proud, with a sense of superiority, and a self-righteous demeanor. On the other hand, the "Roman nose" and "Coriolanian eyebrows" serve as distinctive features of Mrs. Sparsit, highly recognizable and repeatedly appearing throughout the novel, especially in such a prominent position within the "suspensions."

This serves the purpose of character identification, signaling the presence of the housekeeper to the reader. However, the translation, by merging the preceding and following quotations, diminishes the emphasis on Mrs. Sparsit's prominent physical features, consequently affecting the roles of character definition and identification.

### **5.1.5 Departing from the Repetitive Patterns of Circumstantial Information**

(8) "What do I know, father," said Louisa in her quiet manner, "of tastes and fancies; of aspirations and affections; of all that part of my nature in which such light things might have been nourished? What escape have I had from problems that could be demonstrated, and realities that could be grasped?"

译文：露意莎用她那种文静的态度说：“爸爸，关于兴趣和幻想，希望和热情，关于可能滋生出这类轻浮情绪的我的这一部分的天性，我又知道些什么呢？我有什么方法逃避那些可以证明的问，和那些可以掌握的现实呢？”

The translator, in this instance, amalgamates the preceding and following quotations of the original "suspensions" and places them after the "suspensions," compromising the presentation form of circumstantial information in the original text. Circumstantial information typically serves to supplement the description of body language (Malhberg, 2013). Expressions such as "said Louisa in her quiet manner," functioning as circumstantial information, repeatedly appear in the original work in the form of "suspensions," creating a unique thread through this repetition.

Brook (1970) notes that part of Dickens' success lies in making those readers less accustomed to careful reading easily remembers the information he aims to convey through continuous repetition. Dickens deliberately arranges "suspensions" as circumstantial information, constituting his distinctive style. These repeated pieces of information, presented in a structured manner through the form of "suspensions," systematically construct a textual clue in the reader's mind, gradually forming the character's image.

## **5.2 "Deceptive Equivalence" Due to the Adjusting Strategies**

Adjusting the strategy appears to preserve the form of "suspensions" while conveying the meaning of the original text. However, in reality, it introduces a certain loss of literary style, resulting in "deceptive equivalence." This is primarily manifested in the disruption of the effect of dramatic conflict and the misplacement of the emphasis in guiding the reader's attention.

### 5.2.1 Disrupting the Effect of Dramatic Conflict

(9) "Mr. Bounderby," she went on in a steady, straight way, without regarding this, "asks me to marry him. The question I have to ask myself is, shall I marry him? That is so, father, is it not? You have told me so, father. Have you not?"

译文：“庞得贝先生要我嫁给他，”她不顾他插话，镇定地、直截了当地说下去，“我要问自己的问题是：我要不要嫁给他？是那样，爸爸，对吗？您就是这样告诉我的，爸爸。不是吗？”

Placing the phrase "asks me to marry him" after "went on in a steady, straight way" enhances the dramatic effect and increases the impact. Through various foreshadowing in the preceding text, we know that Louisa is unwilling to marry Bounderby, yet, due to her education in harsh realities, she maintains a consistent demeanor of indifference and numbness towards everything. Therefore, when expressing her reluctance to the marriage, she remains composed. The original text emphasizes Louisa's calm attitude before revealing the information "asks me to marry him," intending to create suspense and intensify the impact within the conflict. In contrast, the translation, by not interrupting Louisa's speech, prematurely prepares the reader mentally, diminishing the role of "suspensions" in strengthening the dramatic conflict.

### 5.2.2 Misleading the Reader's Focus

(10) "But do you know," he asked, quite at a loss, "the extent of what you ask? You probably are not aware that I am here on a public kind of business, preposterous enough in itself, but which I have gone in for, and sworn by, and am supposed to be devoted to in quite a desperate manner? You probably are not aware of that, but I assure you it's the fact."

译文：“不过你知不知道，你出的题目多么大啊？”他没了主意地问道，“你或许不晓得我在这儿有公事要办，这些公事虽然够讨厌的，但是我已经搞了很久而且发誓要搞好，大家也都晓得我拼命地在搞，只不过或许你不晓得罢了；但是你要相信这是事实。”

In the original text, James Harthouse's words are intentionally interrupted halfway, a device Dickens employs to direct the reader's attention to key information. The "suspension" here highlights his state of confusion, reflecting Dickens's emphasis on the dependency of powerful individuals in 19th-century British society on their status and reputation. Originally a wealthy and influential politician, Harthouse faces expulsion due to his immoral affair with a married woman, illustrating the moral crises and challenges to values that individuals encounter in the pursuit of material and societal success—one of the central themes in *Hard Times*." Although the translation streamlines the sentence for better fluency, it overlooks Dickens's deliberate use of "suspensions" to engage reader attention, resulting in a misplacement of the focus of the reader's attention.

## **6. Conclusion**

Shen Dan (2002) advocates the use of literary stylistic analysis to address the issue of "deceptive equivalence" in novel translation, emphasizing the crucial role of linguistic expression in reinforcing the thematic significance of literary works. The "suspended structure" is the most typical stylistic feature in Dickens's novels (Mahlberg, 2015).

This paper analyzes the translation strategies employed in the translation of the "suspension" structure in the Chinese version of *"Hard Times"* by Quan Zenggeng and Hu Wenshu (2008). It is observed that this translation retains 73.74% of the "suspension" structures from the original text, effectively reflecting the stylistic features of Dickens's works. However, the translator also employs strategies such as omitting and adjusting, disrupting 26.24% of the "suspension" structures in the source text. These modifications result in the disruption of the tense atmosphere created by the retrospective narrative of the "suspension" in the original work, the synchronicity between body language and speech, the ironic effect, the character identification and definition, and the repetitive pattern of circumstantial information. Furthermore, it causes damage to the dramatic conflict effect and misplacement of readers' focus, thus influencing the overall portrayal of character personalities, the thematic significance and the aesthetic value. This contributes to the phenomenon of "deceptive equivalence" in literary translation. The literary stylistic analysis method holds valuable implications for both research and practical applications in the field of literary translation.

This paper's analysis of the "deceptive equivalence" phenomenon in the translation of "suspension" in *"Hard Times"* does not imply a quality issue with the translation. As Shen Dan (2002) notes, translators often possess a high level of translation proficiency, emphasizing accuracy and coherent expression in the translated content. However, their understanding of the connection between linguistic forms and thematic significance in the original work may be insufficient. Consequently, they might struggle to fully grasp the stylistic value of the source text. Therefore, it is imperative for literary translators to engage in stylistic analysis, delving deeply into the stylistic nuances of the original text. This approach ensures that while achieving faithfulness and elegance in the translation, the stylistic essence of the source text is maintained, thereby achieving a harmonious balance between content and form.

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