"Leda and the Swan"'s Revisions: A Cognitive Stylistic Analysis

Hua Guo[1]

[1] College of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Fudan University, Shanghai, China

Correspondence: Hua Guo, College of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Fudan University, Shanghai, China. E-mail: guohua@fudan.edu.cn

Abstract

Previous literary studies on the revision of "Leda and the Swan" by William B. Yeats are mainly concerned with its psychological, social and historical implications conveyed by the relationship between Leda and the swan, and seldom explain the realization of this relationship in linguistic terms and its reception by the readership. Stylistic studies can furnish linguistic evidence for literary interpretation. Building on previous literary criticism and stylistic analysis, this study takes the first stanza as an example and conducts a cognitive stylistic analysis of the poem's three versions by means of Langacker's reference point model and dynamic discourse analysis framework. The poet's aspiration to achieve subtle balance in the relationship through syntactic and semantic alteration is thus better understood and the possibility of applying Langacker's cognitive grammar to stylistic analysis of poetry is tentatively explored.

Keywords: "Leda and the Swan", revision, cognitive stylistics, cognitive grammar, reference point

1. Introduction

W. B. Yeats (1865–1939) is a well-acclaimed Irish poet, whose poems are widely praised for their vivid mental and emotional imagery. This is not unrelated to Yeats's lifelong pursuit of perfection in his artistic creation. Compared with the first printing, almost each of his poems received repeated and elaborate revision. The reasons for Yeats's revision can be broadly divided into two categories, namely, changes in the overall concept of a poem caused by changes in the poet's ideological and philosophical beliefs, and technical modifications. The early works are usually revised in terms of poetic concept, and the later works are mostly revised in diction, syntax and rhyme (Witt, 1949, p. 41). One of his masterpieces, "Leda and the Swan", is no exception. Between the completion of the first draft in 1923 and its final appearance in his poetry collection *The Tower* in 1928, Yeats did at least two important rewrites, and the resultant three versions formed the focus of the present study. The poem retells the story of Zeus's appearance to, and assault on, Leda in the form of a swan, which triggers a train of momentous consequences including the Trojan War and the death of Agamemnon.

The multiple revisions of the poem have been attributable to Yeats's experimentation of the Greek myth for a metaphorical discussion on political turbulence, self-therapy, gender equality and historical transformation. According to the poet's recollection, the original intention was to create a political allegory about the then Irish situation, but in the end the meditation on politics was lost in the scene of bird and lady (Jeffares, 1984). From the perspective of psychoanalysis, the revisions can be interpreted as the poet's self-healing process, that is, through Leda's resistance and reluctance in the first draft to her being not unwilling to respond in the final version, the poet expresses his expectation for the final consummation with his long-adored Maud Gonne (Holstad, 1995). From a feminist point of view, the revised versions attempt to empower the woman, that is, to affirms Leda's agency and potential independence, and narrate the story from her perspective. Admittedly, in Ireland, which advocated a pure relationship between man and woman at the time, it was difficult for the poet to depict female sexuality with a proper degree, and the literary efforts to liberate women and combat censorship of so-called evil literature could easily fall into the trap of pornographic and violent propaganda (Cullingford, 1994). From a historical perspective, as Neigh (2006) notes, "through the character of Leda, one can interpret Yeats negotiating his political investments in Western civilization as an Irish colonial subject symbolically raped by England" (p. 147), the revision suggests the poet's concern with the inextricability of conflict and violence, though undesired, in historical change and cultural advancement.

Noteworthy is the attention this poem receives in stylistics (e.g. Burke, 2000; Gavins, 2012; Halliday, 1966;

Widdowson, 1975). Halliday (1966) might be the first to attempt a linguistic analysis of the poem, but his major objective is to demonstrate that literary language can be analyzed in the same manner as any other type of language and does not relate linguistic facts to literary interpretation. Drawing upon Halliday's identification and description of nominal groups, Widdowson (1975) explores the literary meaning underlying the linguistic pattern, and points out the picturesque nature of the poem as manifested in the preponderant use of definite reference, which points to "a definite 'model'—defined clearly in reality or in his mind" (p. 12). Burke's (2000) contextualized analysis of the poem is concerned with the multiple voices or different transcendental states of a speaker and variation of deictic centers in the poem, such as the shift of an eyewitness account in the first quatrain to a self-reflective mode in the second quatrain as is reflected in the use of articles and demonstrative pronouns. Gavin (2012) applies the text world theory to the reading of the poem, where only by combining an analysis of textual structures and an understanding of the author's self-projection into the text world along with his personal, historical, and political context can the reader gain conceptual access to the metaphors, Zeus for the swan and the colonizing England and Leda the fallen Troy and colonized Ireland.

A survey of previous studies reveals that the non-linguistic studies offer profound insights into the myriads facts of the literary interpretation of the relationship between Leda and the swan, but they fail to explain how the relationship itself is realized at the linguistic level and perceived by the reader. The stylistic studies, though not directly addressing the motivation behind Yeats's revision of the poem, furnish linguistic evidence for those studies that focus on the psychological, social, and historical aspects in interpreting the relationship between Leda and the swan. Building on these studies, this article draws insights from Langacker's (1987, 1991, 2008, 2013) cognitive grammar, especially reference point model and discourse analysis framework, to provide a systematic and dynamic analysis of the revisions and the corresponding effects of the poem, and elaborates on the evolving process of the relationship to better understand the changes in the poet's mindset and the reader's cognitive reception.

2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 Overview of Cognitive Stylistics and Cognitive Grammar

Cognitive stylistics is a very recent and rapidly developing field of study at the interface of linguistics, literary criticism and cognitive science, and "combines the detailed analysis of linguistic choices and patterns in texts with a systematic consideration of the mental processes and representations that are involved in the process of interpretation" (Semino, 10 July 2012, quoted in Freeman, 2014, p. 313). Cognitive stylistics builds on the "linguistic-analytic rigor" of traditional stylistics, and considers conscious and unconscious conceptual and aesthetic processes that "underpin and channel aspects of meaning making" (Burke, 2006, p. 218). Despite its preoccupation with the mental processes in the construction and interpretation of literary texts, cognitive stylistics does not adopt a unifying methodology and instead draws inspiration from various fields, such as cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence and neuroscience. The most frequently discussed studies are those using cognitive linguistics, and topics include cognitive metaphor (e.g. Crisp, 2003; Freeman, 1995); mental spaces (e.g. Dancygier& Vandelanotte, 2009; Semino, 2003); cognitive grammar (e.g. Hamilton, 2003; Harrison et al., 2014); figures and grounds (e.g. Stockwell, 2003).

To some extent, cognitive linguistics and stylistics are natural allies, for they have a shared interest in "the felt quality of mental life" as opposed to mere processing of linguistic symbols (Brône& Vandaele, 2009, p. 2). In fact, cognitive linguistics is a very broad field of study and develops a variety of theories and methodologies. One of its most prominent theoretical frameworks, cognitive grammar (Langacker, 1987, 2008, 2013), is adopted in the present study. Cognitive grammar contends that any grammatical structure is symbolic in nature, and each symbolic unit is a paired combination of phonological pole and semantic pole. Any specific semantic pole consists of conceptual content and the manner the content is construed. To use the visual metaphor as Langacker always does, content can be compared to the scene one perceives and construal the way it is perceived. To account for the many facets in the process of visual perception, a series of elements are considered such as the point of view from which the perceiver stands (perspective), the specific scene as contrasts with any other scene perceivable(prominence), the aspects of the scene the perceiver directs the most attention to(focusing) and the degree of detail with which the scene is perceived(specificity). With a change of any of these elements, a different image is formed, resulting in a different linguistic expression. Therefore, cognitive grammar might be in a best position to analyze and interpret poetry whose beauty essentially resides in the manipulation of images.

2.2 Langacker's Reference Point Model and Dynamic Discourse Analysis Framework

For the present purpose, the emphasis is on the cognitive process of image construction, and reference point model (Langacker, 1991, 1993, 2007, 2008, 2013), is employed to facilitate the investigation into the focus of

attention in the poem "Leda and the Swan". Cognitive grammar assumes that language structures are formed on the basis of fundamental cognitive abilities and recurrent patterns of experience, and reference point model is proposed to capture the human capacity to "invoke the conception of one entity in order to establish 'mental contact' with another" (Langacker, 2013, p. 83). As schematically sketched in Figure 1, the conceptualizer (C, the speaker/hearer) traces a mental path (indicated by the dashed arrow) to a non-salient entity, the target (T), through the mediation of a salient entity, the reference point (R). The realm of knowledge evoked by the reference point, the primary focus, is called dominion (D), where the target, the secondary focus is identified.
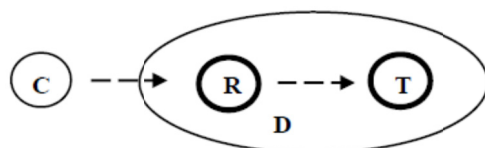

C- Conceptualizer   R- Reference point   T- Target   D- Dominion   — — ➤- Mental path

Figure 1. Reference point model

(adapted from Langacker, 1999, p. 174)

Reference point relationship can account for a range of linguistic phenomena, and four of the most important categories that will be discussed in the present study are as follows, (1) the definite article "the", i.e., when the noun phrase qualified by "the" is the only one instance of the specified type accessible in the current discourse space, the noun phrase constitutes the reference point for the following stretch of discourse; (2) the pronoun-antecedent relation, i.e., the pronoun takes its corresponding noun antecedent as the reference point; (3) the possessive construction, i.e., the possessor functions as the reference point of the possessed entity; and (4) the topic construction, i.e., the topic is the reference point of the subsequent discourse. The relationship between the two entities in question are asymmetrical and has directionality. Given a specific context, an entity needs to be salient enough to serve as access point for the less salient entity. Any inverted relationship, therefore, deserves special attention.

Despite his major concern with linguistic structures at lexical and sentence levels, Langacker (2008) tends to devote more attention to the application of cognitive grammar at the discourse level, and points out that "discourse is the very basis for language structure and is thus essential for understanding grammar" (p. 457). Accordingly, an important conceptual substrate is proposed for linguistic expressions, the viewing arrangement, which captures the relationship between the conceptualizer and the conceptualized. This relationship is typically manifested by the dialogic situation with two interlocutors in a fixed position from which they observe and describe an actual event (see Figure 2). Different forms of discourse can be regarded as variations of the face-to-face conversation.
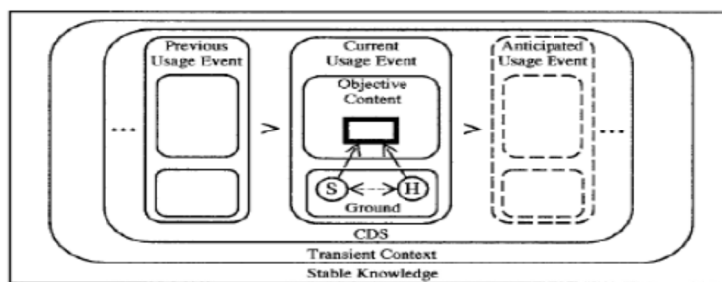
Figure 2. Current Discourse Space (CDS)

（Langacker, 2008, p. 466）

The speaker (S) and the hearer (H) take the same position (ground, G), obtain approximately the same conceptualization of the objective content and focus their attention on the same components of the linguistic expression. Noteworthy is that the two parties may not be at the same time or space, and the event may not actually happen. Current discourse space (CDS) forms the basis of communication between the two parties, which includes previous and expected usage events and some temporary context, and prior knowledge required

or triggered by understanding the current conversation. Langacker (2008) takes a certain discourse space as an attentional frame, and with the progression of attentional frames, CDS is constantly updated and evolves into a continuous developing text. In speech attentional frame corresponds to a coherent phonological group; in semantics a complete semantic group; and in grammar, it typically coincides with a clause, separated by commas.

3. A Comparative Analysis of the Three Versions of "Leda and the Swan"

Although the poem has been steadily revised, the last six lines have remained unchanged. Revisions were made in the first eight lines, especially in the first stanza, as shown below.

1)   First version:

(I)Now can the swooping godhead have his will

Yet hovers, (II) though her helpless thighs are pressed

By the webbed toes; (III)and that all powerful bill

Has suddenly bowed her face upon his breast.

2)   Second version:

(I)A rush, (II) a sudden wheel, (III) and hovering still

The bird descends, (IV) and her frail thighs are pressed

By the webbed toes, (V)and that all-powerful bill

Has laid her helpless face upon his breast.

3)   Final version:

(I)A sudden blow: (II) the great wings beating still

Above the staggering girl, (III) her thighs caressed

By the dark webs, (IV) her nape caught in his bill,

(V)He holds her helpless breast upon his breast.

Below I mainly take the attentional frame as a unit, use the reference point systems of the definite article, the pronoun-antecedent relationship, the possessive construction and the topic construction to compare and analyze the first stanza of the three versions of "Leda and the Swan", and explore the role of different syntactic structures in embodying the starting point and focus of the poet's attention and in guiding readers ' cognitive process, so as to better understand the images of Leda and the swan and the rich implications of their relationship.

The first stanza in the three versions has the same number of words, i.e., 33 words, but the number of attentional frames in each version is different. Commas are used as the main segmentation marker, and the number of attentional frames in the three versions can be determined: three for the first version, five for the second version and five for the third version. Attentional frames have been numbered in each version as shown above. As can be seen that the three versions differ in speech, grammar and semantic structure, the information conveyed and the imagery created may also differ.

3.1 Reference Point System Involving the Definite Article, Pronoun-Antecedent Relation and Possessive Construction in "Leda And The Swan"

In the reference point system, in terms of the definite article, a general noun modified by an indefinite article "a(n)" tends to precede a specific noun qualified by the definite article "the", such as "a house" and "the house"; a specific noun may precede another specific noun that is qualified by "the" and indicates its part, such as "this house" and "the roof"; or a noun that is modified by the definite article, is used to refer to an entity known to both sides of communication (Langacker, 2007, pp. 183-187). As for the pronoun-antecedent relation, it is self-explanatory, that is, a concrete noun is often followed by a corresponding pronoun, and the possessive construction is usually preceded by a corresponding concrete noun or pronoun(ibid.). According to Langacker (2008), "the entity first invoked is called a reference point, and one accessed via a reference point is referred to as a target" (p. 83), the conceptualizer usually takes the former in the three relations as the reference point and the latter as the target. In the case of any reversal, special attention is needed in identifying its specific effects in the reader's cognitive process.

The number of reference points and that of targets that appear in the current attentional frame in each version are shown in Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3. A reference point enclosed by square brackets indicates that it does not

appear in the current attentional frame. For instance, "[the sweeping godhead(I)]" indicates the presence of the reference point in the attentional frame I.

Table 1. Reference point system involving "the", pronoun-antecedent relation, and possession in 1st version

Attentional Frame	I		II	III		
Character	the swan	Leda	the swan	the swan		Leda
Reference Point	the swooping godhead		[the sweeping godhead(I)]	[the sweeping godhead(I)]	[the sweeping godhead(I)]	
Target	his will	her helpless thighs	the webbed toes	that all powerful bill	his breast	her face

In the first stanza of the first version, as shown in Table 1, the poet uses the regular reference point system to portray the image of the swan, and the attentional frame proceeds from the point of reference to the target, and in depicting Leda's image, the poet seems to follow no reference point system, and attentional frames merely focus on the target.

In the description of the swan, the poem introduces the "The swooping Godhead" in the first attentional frame, and the targets determined by the reference point are presented in the following attentional frames, that is, the possessive construction "his will" in attentional frame I, the noun phrase "the webbed toes" qualified by "the" in attentional frame II, and the noun phrase "that all powerful bill" qualified by the demonstrative pronoun "that" and the possessive construction "his breast" in attentional frame III. On the contrary, regarding Leda's description, the stanza merely presents the targets in a regular reference point system, that is, the possessive construction "her helpless thighs" in attentional frame II, and "her face" in attentional frame III, without any mentioning of their corresponding reference point such as "the lady" or "she".

The two reference point systems form a sharp contrast. The poet places the image of the swan in the center of the poem, with its overall image as the starting point, subsequently invoking the images of its spirit ("his will") and its body parts ("the webbed toes", "that powerful bills", "his face"), and thus the reader can form a clear image of the swan with the advance of the attentional frames. Leda's image is marginalized, and the attentional frames only cover the body parts ("her helpless thighs", "her face"), and the reader has no way of knowing its overall image. Furthermore, the swan is first presented in its entirety and then with its body parts, while Leda's image is largely partial and in no sense integral. To a certain extent, the impression given to the reader is that the swan occupies the dominant position of the whole event, has control over Leda's behavior as well as its own, and reduces Leda to complete passiveness and submissiveness.

Table 2. Reference point system involving "the", pronoun-antecedent relation and possession in 2nd version

Attentional Frame	I	II	III	IV		V		
Character	the swan	the swan	the swan	Leda	the swan	the swan		Leda
Reference Point	a rush	a sudden wheel	the bird		[the bird(III)]	[the bird(III)]	[the bird(III)]	
Target				her frail thighs	the webbed toes	that all powerful bill	his breast	her helpless face

As shown in Table 2, in the first stanza of the second version, the reference point system starting from the third attentional frame is almost the same as that in the first version. The description of the swan follows the regular reference point system, i.e., the swan's overall image, "the bird", appears before its body parts including "the webbed toes", "that all powerful bill", and "his breast". Instead, the reader is merely presented the targets in Leda's reference point system, that is, attentional frames only cover its body parts including "her frail thighs" and "her helpless face" without making reference to its overall image. Therefore, the dominance and activeness in the swan's image and the submissiveness and passiveness in Leda's image almost remain unchanged.

It is worth noting that the regular reference point does not immediately appear in the first attentional frame as in

the first version and is postponed to the third attentional frame. In the first two attentional frames, the noun phrase "a rush" and "a sudden wheel" are both general nouns modified by the indefinite article "a", rather than the definite article "the" to denote some knowledge shared by the poet and the reader, and no target with which they are used as reference points is shown in the following frames. In this sense, these two structures, outside the reference point system, poses a certain challenge to the reader's cognitive process, thus creating a mysterious atmosphere at the beginning of the poem and endowing the swan with a deterrent force. However, since the agent of the two actions is made explicit by "the bird" in the third attentional frame, the mystery is quickly unraveled and the suspense does not last long.

Table 3. Reference point system involving "the", pronoun-antecedent relation and possession in 3rd version

Attentional Frame	I	II	III			IV		V	
Character	the swan	the swan	Leda	Leda	the swan	Leda	the swan	the swan	Leda
Reference Point	A sudden blow	[he (V)]	the stagger-ing girl	[the stagger-ing girl(II)]	[he(V)]	[the stagger-ing girl(II)]	[he (V)]	he	[the staggering girl(II)]
Target		the great wings		her thighs	the dark webs	her nape	his bill	his breast	her helpless breast

The first stanza of the final version, as shown in Table 3, resembles that of the second version in that the noun phrase "A sudden blow" in the first attentional frame qualified by the indefinite article "a" is still free from the reference point system, and it contributes to the mystery of the logical agent. And "rush", generally an intransitive verb, only entails the agent, and "blow", generally a transitive verb, implies both the agent and the patient, the two of whom are not revealed until the end of the stanza, that is, "He holds her helpless breast upon his breast". Suspense is thus raised and maintained, and the swan is rendered overbearing and intimidating.

However, the reference point system of the third version is different from that of the second version. The second version has a clear reference point system when depicting the swan, in line with the conventional cognitive process, and Leda's reference point system is relatively vague. The final version, in fact, adopts an inverted reference point system for the swan by portraying its body parts prior to the presentation of its overall image and a regular reference point system for Leda. Specifically, the poet presents in attentional frames II to IV merely the body parts of the swan ("the great wings", "the dark webs", "his bill", "his breast"), that is, the targets in the regular reference point system, and the reference point is deterred until the fifth attentional frame when "he" appears, and the use of the pronoun instead of a concrete noun like "the bird" greatly contributes to the mystery of the swan.

In the depiction of Leda, the reference point is seen early in the stanza, in the second attentional frame, that is, the concrete noun "the staggering girl". But as "the sudden blow" is already shown in the first attentional frame, which indicates the swan's unexpected attack and his ensuing control upon Leda, Leda does not gain a dominant position as "the sweeping godhead" and "the bird" in the first and second version respectively and is mostly presented as the patient of the "blow". The reader may as well use this reference point to proceed to the portrayal of her body parts like "her thighs", "her nape" and "her helpless breast" in the following attentional frames. It can be said that Leda's image has been clarified from the beginning, and exposed to the swan's attack. In this sense, the reference point system in the final version is most conducive to the depiction of the swan's deterrent and aggressive image and Leda's vulnerable and helpless image.

3.2 Reference Point System in the Topic Construction in "Leda and the Swan"

Langacker (2008) believes that the reference point relationship in the topic structure is different from those in the possessive construction and pronoun-antecedent relation, and the target with the topic as the reference point is not a thing, but a proposition. Understanding the proposition needs to rely on topic-triggered cognitive dominion. Langacker calls the representation of the topic in the proposition a pivot, shown in Figure 3 as the small circle in P. The topic structure can range from a clause to a discourse. Taking the case of proposition in the form of a clause as an example, the topic and the target proposition may not be in the same sentence, and if they are in the same sentence, the topic can be outside the clause or part of the clause. When the topic is inside the clause, the

topic is the pivot. The pivot can act as any component in the proposition, usually the subject of the clause and the object of the verb or the preposition.
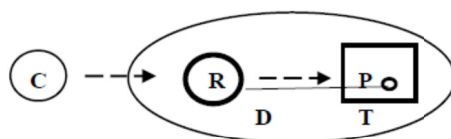
C- Conceptualizer   R- Reference point   D- Dominion   P-Proposition   — — ➔ -Mental path

Figure 3. Reference point relationship in topic construction

(Langacker, 2008, p. 513)

The poet adjusts the topic construction in the process of revising the poem, from a relatively balanced description of the swan and Leda, to a depiction focusing on the swan's behavior, and finally to a dynamic picture portraying the confrontation between the two parties and the swan's establishment of dominance in the relationship. The reference point system of topic construction in each version is shown in Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6 respectively.

Table 4. Reference point system of topic construction in the first version

Attentional Frame	I	II	III
Character		Leda, the swan	the swan, Leda
Reference Point	Now	her helpless thighs	that all powerful bill
Target	Now can the swooping godhead have his will/ Yet hovers	her helpless thighs are pressed/ By the webbed toes the webbed toes	that all powerful bill/Has suddenly bowed her face upon his breast

As shown in Table 4, each attentional frame in the first stanza of the first version can be regarded as an independent topic construction. Their reference point topics are all within the target clause, that is, the reference point coincides with the pivot, that is, the time adverbial "now" and the noun phrases "her helpless thighs" and "that all powerful bill", which highlight the time of the event and the two participants respectively.

Table 5. Reference point system of topic construction in the second version

Attentional Frame	I	II	III	IV	V
Character	the swan	the swan	the swan	Leda, the swan	the swan, Leda
Reference Point	a rush	a sudden wheel	hovering still	her frail thighs	that all-powerful bill
Target			hovering still/ The bird descends	her frail thighs are pressed/ By the webbed toes	that all-powerful bill/ Has laid her helpless face upon his breast

In comparison, as shown in Table 5, the attentional frames IV and V of the second version have quite similar topic construction with the attentional frames II and III of the first version, that is, both the reference point topic and the target clause are in the same attentional frame. However, attentional frame III of the second version uses the non-predicate verbal phrase "hovering still" as the reference point topic to emphasize the behavior of the swan. Attentional frame I and II merely present the reference point topic, "a rush" and "a sudden wheel", and the logical subject of these two actions, "the bird", does not appear until attentional frame III. That means, the reference point and the target are separated in two different attentional frames, further highlighting the image of a fast approaching swan.

Table 6. Reference point system of topic construction in the final version

Attentional Frame	I	II	III	IV	V
Character	the swan, Leda	the swan, Leda	Leda, the swan	Leda, the swan	the swan, Leda
Reference Point	A sudden blow	the great wings beating still/ Above the staggering girl	her thighs caressed By the dark webs	her nape caught in his bill	He
Target					He holds her helpless breast upon his breast

In the final version, as shown in Table 6, the separation of reference point and target in the topic construction is more salient. Only attentional frame V comprises a complete clause, which can be seen as a complete topic construction, with the subject "he" as the reference point topic. The rest of the attentional frames all consist of phrases, which act as reference point topics, pointing to the target clause in attentional frame V. The logical subject of "a sudden blow" in attentional frame I, the possessor of "the great wings" in II and "the dark webs" in III, and the possessive pronoun "his" all refer to the swan, as is signified by "he" in V; the logical object in attentional frame I, "the staggering girl" in II, and the possessive pronoun "her" in III and IV, by contrast, refer to Leda, as is signified by "her" in V. Therefore, "he" and "her" in attentional frame V act as the pivots for connecting these reference points and targets. Throughout these reference point topics, the attentional frames I and V respectively highlight the swan's action and his dominance over Leda, and the attentional frames II, III and IV in between portray in details the relationship between the swan and Leda. The swan is shown to take the initiative to launch an attack and trigger a fierce conflict between him and Leda, with the two intertwined, and finally the swan establishes a dominant position in the relationship between the two parties.

The subtlety of this version resides in the fact that attentional frames II, III and IV do not use free clauses as in the previous two versions. Instead, three absolute structures are adopted, with their logical subjects being "the great wings", "her thighs", and "the nape" respectively, thus mimicking the effect of three parallel subtopics. Taken locally, "her thighs" and "her nape" can be seen as detailing the topic of "the staggering girl" rather than simply being juxtaposed with "the great wings". The series of pseudo topic structures convey the rich connotations in the Swan-Leda relationship. Compared with the previous two versions, the exquisite topic construction of the final version is the most effective in depicting the confrontation between the swan and Leda. The swan's central position is reinforced and Leda's capacity for self-awareness is affirmed.

4. Conclusion

Poetry, in a broad sense, is a symbolic art, with words and sounds to shape the image and express emotions. Langacker's (1987, 1991, 2008, 2013) cognitive grammar emphasizes the symbolism of grammatical structure, a pairing of phonological pole and semantic pole, which is the expression of people constructing imagery that embodies the different construals of the same semantic content. Cognitive grammar analysis can therefore be aptly applied to interpreting poetic texts. Compared with previous studies on the reasons for the revision of the poem "Leda and the Swan", this article draws upon Langacker's reference point model and dynamic discourse analysis framework to effectively explain the linguistic manifestations underlying the images of Leda and the swan and their relationship in the first stanza of the three versions, and it is well understood that Yeats chose the third version for finalization.

To be specific, the number of total words being equal, the difference in the number of attentional frames indicates that the three versions differ in phonetic, grammatical and semantic structure, and thus convey different messages and shape different images. Regarding the reference point relations reflected in the use of the definite article, the pronoun-antecedent relation and the possessive construction, the regular reference point system in the first version is conducive to the depiction of the swan as dominant and potent. By contrast, the image of Leda is greatly fragmented with no regular reference point and an incomplete reference point system, thus contributing to a stark contrast between Leda and the swan. In the second version, the stanza opens with the nominalization preceded by the indefinite article, which stands outside the reference point system, so that the reader can not immediately determine its agent, thus enhancing the mysteriousness and deterrence of the logical subject – the swan. The final version synthesizes both the first and second versions. On the one hand, an inverted reference

point system is adopted for the swan and a regular system for Leda so that the relationship between the swan and Leda reaches a certain balance; on the other hand, the fronted nominalization still renders Leda in a logical patient position, and the reference point of the swan system appears as a pronoun rather than a concrete noun, which maintains the potency and mystery of the swan's image.

In terms of topic construction, while gradually revising the first version to the final version, the poet adjusts the topic construction, from a relatively balanced description of the behavior of Leda and the swan, to focus on the swan's behavior, and then to add the conflict between Leda and the swan and Leda's response to the swan-dominant story, thus instilling the relationship with rich connotations. Also noteworthy in the third version is that the use of absolute construction has apparently resulted in three sub topics, and the asymmetrical relationship between the swan and Leda has been reshaped into a partial equilibrium between the two, which still retains the swan in the dominant position, in other words, their relationship has been redefined.

In summary, the third version is finalized in showing the rich images of the swan and Leda and the subtle relationship between the two sides. Whereas the massive swan's violation is invincible, Leda demonstrates her ability to emerge as an individual with agency and the potential for self-awareness (McKenna, 2011). As Foster (2003) observes about Yeats's continued revision of the Leda myth and what he was trying to achieve, "The drafts show how the focus persistently shifts from the god to Leda, a balance which he was not satisfied with until the poem's third printing in *A Vision*" (p. 244). In fact, Yeats almost unremittingly reworked upon this poem. It is his competition for eternity that gives rise to various interpretations of the poem's profundity and complexity. To further test the validity in applying Langacker's cognitive grammar to poetic discourse analysis, more theoretical discussions and case studies are needed.

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