Translation Competence from Chinese into English:
Differences in Tense-Aspect Choices between
Native and Non-native English Speaking Translators

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Statement of Authentication

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

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(Signature)
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Abbreviations

A: Argumentation
AI: Addressing an issue
AP: Articulating a position
BI: Providing background information
CA: Closure of argumentation
CC: Contextual configuration

Chen: Development in Chinese editorials to initiate an argument

EFL: English as a foreign language
ET: Event time
ESP: English for specific purposes
F: Follow up
GSP: Generic structural potential
H: Headline to establish the theme

He: Recommendation in Chinese editorials to articulate a position
I: Initiation
IA: Initiation of argumentation
IELTS: the International English Language Testing System
L: Lead
L1: The first language
L2: The second language

NAATI: National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
NNS: Non-native English speakers
NS: Native English speakers
Qi: Introduction in Chinese editorials to address an issue
R: Response
RP: Reference point
RST: Rhetorical structure theory
RT: Reference time
SLA: Second language acquisition
ST: Speech time
TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language
T₀: Temporal zero-point
V: Valuate

Zhuan: Development in Chinese editorials to make an argumentation
Abstract

This study examines verb tense and aspect choices in Chinese-into-English translation and compares the choices made by native Chinese-speaking translators with those made by native English-speaking translators. The study used a data-driven approach based on a parallel Chinese into English translation corpus to evaluate the relative importance of the factors affecting tense-aspect choices by three groups of translators: native Chinese-speaking novice translators, native Chinese-speaking professional translators, and native English-speaking professional translators. The factors that were examined to evaluate their effect on tense-aspect choices included: the tense and aspect used in the Chinese source text; the lexical aspect of the English verb; the rhetorical structure of the Chinese source text; and the translator’s language background and competence level.

The study has found that the factors having the greatest influence on tense-aspect choices in Chinese-to-English translation are the tense and aspect of the verb in the source text, the lexical aspect of the verb, and temporal expressions in the source text. The two groups of Chinese-speaking translators (novice versus professional) differ in a statistically-significant way in their English tense and aspect choices, but both groups exhibit gaps in their understanding of some of the most important English tense and aspect forms, such as the present perfect and past simple tenses. Significant differences have also been found between professional native Chinese-speaking and native English-speaking translators in their choice of tense and aspect forms, most importantly at the discourse level. In addition, native English-speaking professional translators are found to have difficulty understanding Chinese tense forms expressed through context.

This study suggests that native Chinese-speaking translators should become
more native-like in their English tense and aspect choices at the grammatical level and at the discourse level particularly in complex sentences. It is hoped that the findings will help native Chinese-speaking translators improve the quality of their Chinese-into-English translations and provide insights that can be used to improve translator training programs.

Keywords: Tense and Aspect; Chinese into English Translation; Translation into the second language; Interlanguage; Lexical Aspect; Chinese-English Corpus; Editorial
Chapter 1  Introduction

1.1 Translation into the Second Language as an Emerging Research Field

Translation is an important task in the multicultural society of Australia. Although normal practice among translators is to translate into their mother tongue, in translating some languages, including Chinese, into English, many translators are frequently asked to translate into their second language (e.g., native Chinese speakers translating into English) due to the lack of native English-speaking translators (Campbell, 1998; Grosman, 2000). According to Campbell, however, the historical assumption in translation studies has been that translators always translate into their mother tongue. This assumption has resulted in inadequate scholarly attention paid to the field of translating into the second language, a further consequence of which is the failure to provide help for those who translate into a second language from time to time. There have been calls for translation researchers to recognise the fact that translators are often required to do inverse translation (translating into their second language), particularly in non-English speaking countries, and to “build up a body of documentation which would help the inverse translator” (Lonsdale, 2001: 67). The present study contributes to the field of translation studies by addressing this issue.

Translating into the mother tongue has long been regarded as superior to translating into the second language by translation researchers and practitioners (Baker, 1992; Kelly, 1979; Newmark, 1981, 1988; Nida, 1975; Picken, 1989). This view of native supremacy, however, has been challenged increasingly by studies in translation as well as in closely related fields, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) and writing in the Second Language (Alptekin, 2002; Bowker, 2000; Kramsch, 1997; Widdowson, 1994; Zaid, 1999). In addition, a growing number of researchers
have realised the potential damage of pursuing nativeness at the expense of non-nativeness (Campbell, 1998, 2000; Grosman, 2000; Lonsdale, 2001; Snell-Hornby, 2000). Although these authors indicate the need to study the differences between translations of native and non-native speakers of the target language, studies of the differences between native and non-native translators’ translations, based on a preliminary literature search, are mainly qualitative with few exceptions, such as Campbell (1998). There is, moreover, no substantial work that has been done to examine these two groups of translators. Therefore, the comparison of translating into the mother tongue and into the second language undertaken in this study will help further our understanding of the practice of translating into the second language.

In summary, the study of translation into the second language is facing an increasingly urgent need to provide a framework for individuals, translation instructors, and the industry to improve translator competence when translating into the second language. To do this, researchers need to use the findings of studies from related disciplines. Understanding how native speaking translators differ from non-native speaking translators will provide a new perspective that will improve translation competence.

1.2 Translation Competence into the Second Language

In addition to understanding the differences between translations of native English-speaking and native Chinese-speaking translators, it is of practical and pedagogical significance for this current study to develop a framework capable of determining translation competence. In contemporary translation studies, there is a consensus among experts that translation is a complex activity and in order to fulfil
their task, translators need to have a variety of skill sets, specialised knowledge and expertise. Translation competence includes “at least knowledge of the languages, knowledge of the cultures and domain-specific knowledge” (Schäffner & Adab, 2000: ix), and translation researchers have proposed many ways to define translation competence (Bell, 1991; Neubert, 2000). Translation competence into the second language has been less well examined than translation competence into the first language (L1), and there has been little empirical research into such competence, except for Campbell (1998).

This study includes two groups of native Chinese-speaking translators of different language background and competence levels. A comparison of the translation work by these two groups may provide new knowledge of translation competence into the second language as well as the evaluation of such competence. Additionally, the inclusion of native English-speaking translators in this study will provide an objective benchmark to the study of the native Chinese-speaking translators’ translation competence from Chinese into English.

1.3 Non-Native Speaking Translation as an Interlanguage

Some scholars have considered translators into the second language as learners of the language (Harley, 1995; Swain, 1985). Anyone who does not speak or write a second language as a native speaker of that language does can be put into the broad category of second language learners. This includes both students all over the world learning English as a foreign language (EFL) as beginner or intermediate learners, and advanced learners like professional translators who are yet to achieve native-like fluency in English. The language produced by non-native English speakers of this broad category is regarded as a kind of “interlanguage” (Selinker, 1969), and
researchers (Corder, 1978; Ellis, 1985; Selinker, 1969) have made different proposals about what factors influence the interlanguage and how it develops. Underlying the current study is the premise that translators translating into the second language are carrying out two kinds of activities that cannot be considered separately: learning the second language (L2) and translating into the L2. Thus their translation may share some characteristics with the interlanguage produced in second language writing (Campbell, 1998). With this in mind, the current study makes use of findings from studies of second language acquisition (SLA), English as a foreign language (EFL), and interlanguage in its examination of translation competence into the second language.

Interlanguage texts differ from authentic English texts in many grammatical features, such as the choice of tense and aspect (Andersen & Shirai, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig, 2000), the article (Butler, 2002; Master, 2002), and the pronoun (Martinez, 2005; Woodall, 2002). These studies have all revealed the differences between native and non-native English speakers in their writing and have offered some explanations of how and why they differ. Since previous studies have indicated the need for further studies to examine tense and aspect choices, this study focuses on the choice of tense and aspect in translation from Chinese into English.

1.4 Tense and Aspect Choice: A language related difficulty in NNS translation into the second language

Tense and aspect in English relate to the verb. In simple terms, tense is the linguistic indication of the time of an action. In fact, tense establishes a relation: it indicates the time of all events in respect to the moment of speaking. According to Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, and Svartvik (1985), English has two basic tenses: present
and past. Future time is denoted by means of auxiliaries or by present simple or progressive forms.

Aspect can be defined as the view taken of the action of a verb, basically whether the action is seen as complete and whole or as incomplete and ongoing (Brinton, 2000). English has two sets of aspectual contrasts: perfective/non-perfective and progressive/non-progress (Quirk, et al., 1985). The past simple tense in English is perfective in aspect since it views events as complete and whole, for example: Yesterday, I drove to town and visited my friends. The progressive, consisting of be + the present participle, presents actions as in progress, ongoing or incomplete. It thus expresses imperfective aspect. It is the usual way to express a situation happening at the very moment of speaking, which is by definition incomplete.

In Chinese, temporal reference is not expressed through verbal morphology. Chinese expresses its temporal reference through temporal adverbs (tense markers) such as qu nian (last year), ming nian (next year), and zuo tian (yesterday), or through aspectual markers such as le (了) and guo (过), or through context (Lin, 2006; Wong, Li, Yuan, & Zhu, 2002).

There is observational evidence that Chinese learners of English experience immense difficulty in acquiring English tense and aspect. This coincides with what has been found in the literature. Many EFL teachers report that tense and aspect are among the most problematic areas in non-native English speakers’ English writing and translation, and it takes a long time for them to acquire the proper usage of English tense and aspect (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995; El-Dash & Busnardo, 2003; Guiora, 1983; Hawes & Thomas, 1995, 1997; Hinkel, 1992; Lackstrom, Selinker, & Trimble, 1973, 1988; McCarthy, 1991; Oster, 1981; Schramm, 1996; Yang & Huang, 2004;
Zydatiss, 1986). Even advanced EFL learners or learners who have acquired near-native-like proficiency find it difficult to use English tense and aspect accurately (Coppieters, 1987). Advanced Chinese learners of English are no exception. In an exploratory study, Wu (1995) finds that translations by professional Chinese legal translators were seriously misleading in terms of their use of English tense and aspect. Much could be gained by further examining the use of tense and aspect by Chinese translators who have achieved advanced English proficiency levels.

As to why non-native English speakers have difficulty using English tense and aspect, research has shown that their difficulty is related to a lack of understanding of the semantic meaning of English verbs (Andersen, 1991; Bardovi-Harlig, 1997; Dowty, 1982, 1986; Schramm, 1996; Smith, 1986). Vendler (1967) suggests that English verbs can be classified into four groups, namely state, activity, accomplishment, and achievement, based on some semantic categories including whether a verb denotes a situation that is dynamic or stative, telic or atelic, or durative or punctual. State verbs persist over time without change and include verbs such as *seem*, *know*, *want*, and *be*. Activity verbs have inherent duration in that they involve a span of time, such as *sleep*, *snow*, *play*, and *rain*. Accomplishment verbs have inherent duration, too, but have an endpoint. In *build a house*, the endpoint is the completion of the house, for example. Achievement verbs have the beginning or the end of an action as in *The race began*. Examples of achievements include *arrive*, *leave*, *notice*, and *recognise*. Vendler uses the term “lexical aspect” to describe this lexical classification of verbs.

Numerous studies have found that the distribution of English tense and aspect is closely related to the lexical aspect of verbs in the writing of ESL writers.
For example, it has been found that non-native English learners tend to choose past simple tense most often for achievement verbs, followed by accomplishment verbs, activity verbs, and state verbs, while there is no such tendency with native English speakers (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig & Bergstrom, 1996; Hinkel, 1992, 1997, 2004). The same phenomenon has also been found to apply to advanced EFL learners (Coppieters, 1987; Hinkel, 1992, 1997) and native Chinese speakers (Cai, 2004; Wong, et al., 2002). Whether or not the same pattern of associating certain tense/aspect with the lexical aspects of verbs occurs in translation, and if so, how the occurrence is related with translation competence, has not been sufficiently examined.

1.5 Tense and Aspect Choice: A translation related difficulty in NNS translation into the second language

It has long been noticed that there is in translation a certain element referred to as “thirdness.” It is a feature inherent in all translation and is universal in all translations (Frawley, 1984; Mauranen, 2005; Schäffner & Adab, 2001; Trosborg, 1997a). According to Mauranen (2005: 80), thirdness is partly the result of translators’ tendency to follow the source text, which involves not only following the tense and aspect of the source text but also its pragma-discoursal features, such as its information structure and communication emphasis. In studies of translation into the second language, the situation is more complicated when the source text is the translator’s L1 and the translator is under the influence of L1 and the source text at the same time. Therefore, this study will examine whether and how the L1 and the
source text influence the translator’s choice of tense and aspect.

There are conventional patterns of tense and aspect usage in discourse, and English tense and aspect choices at the discourse level override those at the sentence level (Bolivar, 1994; Hinkel, 2004; Jordan, 1997; McCarthy, 1991; Oster, 1981; Swales, 1990; Zydatiss, 1986). The importance for translators of understanding such tense and aspect conventions has been pointed out from time to time (Adab, 2000; Hale, 2004; Hatim & Mason, 1990). According to Chen (2005: 87), however, native Chinese-speaking English learners have difficulty understanding how “tense conventions at the discourse level override tense decisions at the sentence level.” Similar problems may be expected from native Chinese-speaking translators. Therefore, a comparison of native Chinese-speaking translators and native English-speaking translators in their observance of tense and aspect conventions when translating press editorials from Chinese into English may reveal how the two groups differ and provide useful suggestions for native Chinese-speaking translators on how they can become more native-like in tense-aspect choices.

1.6 Aims of the Study

There are many constraints on the choice of English tense and aspect when native Chinese translators translate from Chinese into English. The major ones include English language competence, the tense and aspect in the source text, the lexical aspect of the verb chosen, and the rhetorical purposes of the structural units in a text. In order to gain a better understanding of the process through which the translator chooses tense and aspect, it is necessary to look at not only the frequency of tense and aspect forms in the text but also the details of the translator’s rhetorical purposes when choosing a verb and its morphology. The above constraints have been
identified as having potential to provide new information on the choice of the verb and its tense and aspect in translation. Therefore, the aims of this research are to describe and profile the differences between native Chinese-speaking and native English-speaking translators in their choices of verb tense and aspect when translating Chinese editorial articles into English.

1.7 Research Questions

In order to achieve these aims, the following research questions have been addressed:

1. Do translators of different language background and competence levels make different choices of tense and aspect when translating from Chinese into English? And if so, what are they?

2. What influences do tense and aspect in the Chinese source text have on translators of different language background and competence levels when they choose tense and aspect in translation?

   2.1. What influences do marked tense and aspect in the Chinese source text have on the translator’s choice of tense and aspect?

   2.2. What influences do unmarked Chinese tense and aspect in the source have on the translator’s choice of tense and aspect?

3. What influences do the lexical aspects of English verbs have on translators of different language background and competence levels when they choose the tense and aspect in translation?

4. What influences does the rhetorical structure of the Chinese editorials have on translators of different language background and competence levels when they choose the tense and aspect in translation?
1.8 Significance of the Study

This study is important for the following reasons. First, it concerns translation into English by native Chinese-speaking translators, which has been insufficiently investigated by translation researchers. It has the potential to produce new knowledge which can uncover some of the key factors that affect translation competence when translators translate into their second language. It also has the potential to provide a supplementary performance model to Campbell’s (1998) translator performance model with a focus on a different language pair and translation direction — Chinese into English. In addition, this study investigates the rhetorical and communicative purposes that translators of different language background and competence levels may take into account in their translation. The resulting patterns may help translation researchers gain a deeper understanding of the development from novice translators to professional and skilled translators.

Second, a new understanding of the difference between native Chinese-speaking translators and native English-speaking translators in tense and aspect choice has pedagogical implications: it will help the former group improve the quality of their translations into English. This may also assist translation instructors to understand better the nature and needs of the translators when translating out of their mother tongue by comparing and examining the translation produced by native English-speaking translators and native Chinese-speaking translators.

Finally, the results and suggestions offered by the current study may be a general reference for those who are interested in teaching Chinese into English translation. The findings, moreover, serve as a source for planning and organising materials to facilitate Chinese students’ translation learning.
1.9 Structure of the Thesis

While this chapter introduces the thesis, the rest of the thesis expands on the ideas explained in this chapter as follows.

Chapter Two explores the issue of translators as second language learners in more depth. It also considers the distinctiveness of and relationship between linguistic competence and translation competence and their pedagogical implications. It provides a literature review of the theories and findings on translation and English writing, in particular on English tense and aspect.

Chapter Three introduces and describes the theoretical framework under which the present study is conducted. It includes the key theories in the field of translation studies and in the related fields on the choice of tense and aspect.

Chapter Four explains the methodology used by this study with detailed descriptions of data collection, corpora building, data processing and analysis.

Chapter Five presents the differences in tense and aspect choices between native Chinese-speaking and native English-speaking translators.

Chapter Six presents the discussion of the relationship between choices of tense and aspect and the tense and aspect in the source text.

Chapter Seven presents the discussion of the relationship between choices of tense and aspect and the lexical aspect of the verb.

Chapter Eight presents the discussion of the differences in tense and aspect choices between native Chinese-speaking translators of two competence levels and the differences between native Chinese-speaking and native English-speaking translators.

Chapter Nine concludes the study by making suggestions and recommendations for future research.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

The review will commence with the study of translation competence and be extended to translation competence into the second language. Views and studies on the tense-aspect systems of both English and Chinese are specifically introduced, and the complexity of the tense-aspect and its influence on translation is also presented. The choice of English tense-aspect is raised as an unsettled issue in translation from Chinese into English.

2.1 Language Competence and Translation Competence

This section first discusses the relatively well-explored notion of competence in single language first. It then examines translation competence, which involves two languages. It establishes some connections or overlapping areas between these two so that a specific linguistic competence can be narrowed down as the focus of my study.

2.1.1 Linguistic Competence

Language competence has been thought to be strongly related to performance issues. In Spolsky’s (1972) opinion, competence is more about how someone uses a language (performance) than what he or she knows about it, and the performance only comes from experience. Hymes (1972) proposes a formulation of “communicative competence” and argued that in addition to linguistic competence the native speaker has another rule system. That is, “he knows intuitively what is socially appropriate or inappropriate and can adjust his language use to such factors as the topic, situation, and human relations involved” (Stern, 1992: 73), which is
called pragmatic competence. Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) expand Hymes’s communicative competence to form a model of language competence in which the communicative competence consists of four parts: grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence includes phonology, vocabulary, syntax and semantics. Sociolinguistic competence consists of the sociocultural rules of language use. Discourse competence refers to rules of discourse like cohesion and coherence. Strategic competence is the ability “to compensate for breakdowns in communication” and “to enhance the rhetorical effect of utterances” (Canale, 1983: 339).

The addition of communicative competence, however, does not tell us more about how a language is used. Widdowson (1989: 134) raises questions about the nature of the “ability to use language” in language competence since “[a]s soon as you talk about competence as ability, or what people can actually do with their language, you get into all kinds of difficulty” because “there is so much you have to allow for in the way of individual differences, varying circumstances, attitude, and so on that specification becomes impossible.” Widdowson’s position is that “grammar needs to be in its place” and that we should “allow for the rightful claims of lexis” since, as he believed, the actual use of language may depend more on stocks of lexical items than the analysis of structures. The implication is that so-called grammatical competence may have very little to do with the actual use of language and it may be wise to keep competence in form and competence in use apart.

Lyons (1996: 16) discusses linguistic competence on the basis of the assumption that there is a psychological difference between propositional (or declarative) knowledge (“knowing that something is or is not so”) and performative
(or procedural) knowledge ("knowing how to do something"). Lyons points out that "linguistic competence is the knowledge of particular languages, by virtue of which knowledge those who have it are able to produce and understand text in those languages" (Lyons, 1996: 16). It seems that Lyons considers the ability to use language as a kind of procedural knowledge, like being able to ride a bicycle without being able to write down the rules of muscle movements. Apparently, Lyons disagrees with the idea that one consciously "knows" the language internalised in its acquisition and then consciously "applies" some kinds of rules when using the language in specific situations.

Brown (1996: 202) offers a more positive definition of language competence. She envisages that "the use of a language (performance) modifies and restructures competence in the first language as well as in the second language." In other words, Brown seems to think that the basic language acquisition mechanisms of the first language and the second language work on the same principles. According to Brown, competence is an undifferentiated language faculty permanently residing in the human brain, though it keeps being added to and subtracted from by performance factors brought about by the production and comprehension of language. While this is a useful insight into the relationship between language competence and performance, particularly in the study of second language learning, a more specific model is still needed, as Stern (1992) has observed.

Bachman (1990) offers a hierarchical model of language competence. In this model, language competence is first distinguished into two broad categories: organisational competence and pragmatic competence. Organisational competence consists of grammatical and textual competence; whereas pragmatic competence contains illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence, which are listed as follows:
Grammatical competence. This refers to “the knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and phonology/graphology” (Bachman, 1990: 87);

Textual competence. This “includes the knowledge of the conventions for joining utterances together to form a text” (Bachman, 1990: 88);

Illocutionary competence. According to Bachman, this could be explained either by the speech act theory (Austin, 1962) or in terms of language functions (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). These are all concerned with how we use words to do things in the world; and,

Sociolinguistic competence. Any language function is carried out in a specific context with its unique socio-cultural and discursive features. Sociolinguistic competence “enables us to perform language functions in ways that are appropriate to that context” (Bachman, 1990: 94).

Bachman’s model covers the aspects of second language competence well. Therefore, this current study uses it as one of two frameworks to conceptualise the competence of translation into the second language. The second framework is translation competence.

2.1.2 Translation Competence

Translation competence, which involves two languages, is relatively less well explored than competence in one language. One could say it is both easier and more difficult to define. It is easier to define because the tasks of translation are a very small subset of the whole range of tasks involving language, so that competence is easier to isolate and study. It is more difficult to define, on the other hand, because it involves two languages and the problem of defining translation competence becomes the union of the problems of defining the linguistic competence of each language
involved from certain aspects.

In contemporary translation studies, there is consensus among experts that translation is a complex activity and in order to fulfil their task, translators need to have various sets of knowledge, skills, and expertise. Translation competence has been understood to include “at least knowledge of the languages, knowledge of the cultures and domain-specific knowledge” (Schäffner & Adab, 2000: ix). For example, Bell (1991: 36) defines translation competence in terms of five types of knowledge: target language knowledge, text-type knowledge, source language knowledge, real world knowledge, and contrastive knowledge. A more popular definition of translation competence has been proposed by Neubert (2000) and includes five sub-competencies: language competence, textual competence, subject competence, cultural competence, and transfer competence. Language competence refers to near-perfect knowledge of the niceties of the grammatical and lexical systems of the source and target languages, including knowledge of the terminologies for special purposes and of the preferred syntactic and morphological conventions in both languages. Textual competence refers to the ability to sense and identify textual features as well as to follow significant patterns when they feature in texts as genres. Subject competence is the familiarity with what constitutes the body of knowledge of the area a text concerns. Cultural competence refers to the ability to mediate between the culture of the source and target texts. Transfer competence refers to the tactics and strategies of translating the source text into the target text. The following Table 2-1 shows the different competencies as proposed by the two authors.
There seems to be, however, a tendency to add more and more components to the definition of translation competence by many authors, which renders it into a summation of linguistic competencies, “something else,” or a “multicomponential” idea (Pym, 2003: 484-485). Furthermore, the translation competence assessment methods proposed by most authors are often based on measuring the performance (e.g., the target text against catalogues of criteria) (Beeby, 2000). Such “catalogues” of criteria for a “good” translation are often arbitrary and problematic (Bowker, 2000), and fail to provide help for practical quality assessment because they do not account for the reality of translation and lack universal applicability (Lauscher, 2000; McAlester, 2000). Above all, most of them have not been sufficiently validated by empirical experimental research (Melis & Albir, 2001; Widdowson, 2001). Therefore, translation competence and assessment criteria that are not based on empirical studies will not be discussed further in this literature review.

2.2 Translation into the Second Language

People often mistake bilingual ability with translation competence, assuming that native speakers automatically have excellent translation competence when translating into their native language (Bowker, 2000: 185). Bilingual competence, however, is different from translation competence. This section will first look at the conceptions of and differences between native and non-native English speakers.
From there, we will review some major studies on translation competence into the second language. Then we will look at how researchers view unnaturalness in translation.

2.2.1 Differences between Native and Non-Native English Speakers

Native speakers (NS) have been described as “people who have special control over a language and insider knowledge about ‘their’ language.” Usually a native English speaker acquires the language from birth or early childhood, in an English-speaking family and environment where he or she gains an intuitive knowledge of the language, is able to distinguish right from wrong forms of language usage, produce fluent and spontaneous discourse, exhibits a wide range of communicative competence, and uses the language creatively (Davies, 1991; Ellis, 1997; Selinker, 1969).

Some researchers question the differences between native and non-native speakers. For example, Medgyes (1994: 11) argues that the degree of special control over the language of even the most educated native speaker is “highly variable and inconsistent” and that attempts to define native competence or proficiency are to a large extent inconclusive. Some have thought that the NS’s English-speaking environment is difficult to define because English has become a global language, which has resulted in a growing number of highly proficient non-native speakers and different sets of English norms (Kachru, 1992). Others have suggested that the concept is artificial because native speakers do not always follow the standards and rules of the language and they often display “regional, occupational, generational, class-related ways of talking” (Kramsch, 1997: 359). Some have even argued that a distinction between native and non-native English speakers is implicitly racist.
There are calls for less emphasis on NS norms and values (Alptekin & Alptekin, 1984) or just abandonment of the concept of nativeness (Kachru, 1992).

However, arguments for the existence of a distinction between NS and NNS are equally strong. Quirk and Widdowson (1985), for example, state that the “fuzzy edges” of the concept are insufficient reason to dismiss its “essential validity.” The concept of nativeness has also been thought useful (Halliday, McIntosh, & Strevens, 1964), and “a convenient reference to a kind of prototype” (Carroll in Paikeday, 1985: 74). A study worth returning to is that of Johnson & Newport (1989). Johnson and Newport use a grammaticality judgement task involving 276 sentences, some grammatical and others ungrammatical, covering a variety of properties from grammatical morphology to selectional (subcategorisation) restrictions (e.g., *They let me *let me leave, *They allowed me to/* leave), to the word order of declaratives and interrogatives. The informants were all native speakers of Korean or Chinese, and they were all regarded as having had long immersion (at least 3 years) and to be using English regularly (they were all students or faculty members at an American University, hence using English on a daily basis). Yet the subjects who were first immersed at the age of 17 or later were clearly more native-like in their intuitions about some properties than others. Word order properties and progressive -ing elicited few divergent judgements, but determiners and number marking on nouns elicited high divergence. In another empirical study of whether competence differences exist between NSs and NNSs who have acquired high levels of proficiency as adults from a variety of L1 backgrounds, Coppieters (1987) finds that NSs differ dramatically from NNSs in judgment of aspects of syntax and contrasts of grammar, leading him to conclude that nativeness does exist. His study was criticised,
however, because the informants were selected impressionistically by his colleagues and students on the basis of the absence of non-native features in their daily interactions with them, and their capacity for using appropriate vocabulary across a range of contexts (Birdsong, 1992). In an improved replication of his study, Birdsong (1992) found that near-native speakers did not diverge dramatically from native speakers (and several fell within the native speaker range) and that divergences between native and near-native speakers did not fall into neat universal versus language-specific patterns.

Native English speakers are considered to enjoy some advantages over non-native English speakers in writing (Bhela, 1999; Matsuda, 1997; Muraanen, 1996; Reid, 1992; Ventola & Muraanen, 1991; Wang, L., 2004; Wang, W., 2004; Wang & Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002). For example, Muraanen (1996) and Ventola & Muraanen (1991) find that in addition to surface errors, non-native speakers tend to make textual mistakes which leads to an incoherent text or one that is difficult to understand. W. Wang (2004) finds that the organisation of text and use of cohesion devices are different between native Chinese and native English speakers in their letters to the editor. Non-native speakers are found to produce inappropriate syntactic structures that are invented or borrowed from their first language (Bhela, 1999). These problems are not easily identifiable, and explanations usually include the interference of the first language, the influence of the culture of the first language, and educational and didactic factors (Matsuda, 1997), although none of them is the sole reason (Connor, 1996: 83). Again, this depends on their level of competence.

In translation studies, the preference for translators to translate into their mother tongue reflects the same mentality of authority or supremacy of native speakers’ language competence. Researchers and practitioners of translation (Baker, 1992;
Kelly, 1979; Newmark, 1981, 1988; Nida, 1975; Picken, 1989) have long regarded translating into the mother tongue as the more, if not the only, acceptable working mode of translation. For example, Newmark (1988) thinks that “naturalness” in translation is essential and therefore translators should always work into their native language because it is impossible for them to ever have the same feeling for any other language, even if the translator has been living in a country other than his/her native land for a long time. Newmark (1981) argues:

A foreigner appears to go on making collocational mistakes however long he lives in his adopted country, possibly because he has never distinguished between grammar and lexicology. An educated native will also make mistakes in collocation, particularly if he is under the influence of interference, but he will correct himself intuitively. (p. 180)

Baker (1992: 64) partly supports this point by stating that:

a person’s competence in actively using the idioms and fixed expressions of a foreign language hardly ever matches that of a native speaker. The majority of translators working into a foreign language cannot hope to achieve the same sensitivity that native speakers seem to have for judging when and how an idiom can be manipulated. (p. 64)

These views have been challenged increasingly by studies in translation as well as in closely related fields, such as English as a second language (ESL) and writing in the second language. These studies have revealed that native supremacy (native English speakers write better in English than non-native English speakers) is conceptually vague, unrealistic and should not be blindly pursued (Alptekin, 2002; Bowker, 2000; Canagarajah, 1999; Kramsch, 1997; Widdowson, 1994; Zaid, 1999). Bowker (2000), for example, proves that it is wrong to assume that native speakers
automatically possess an excellent command of their native language. He pointed out that therefore “even when translating into their mother tongue, translators do not always have the specialised linguistic knowledge (e.g., vocabulary, syntax, phraseology) required to express the subject matter in the appropriate way” (p. 185). Canagarajah (1999: 79) argues that “the very label of native speaker is questionable” as with the development of English as a global language many people have acquired English simultaneously with one of more other languages and have developed balanced multilingual competence since their early days of language development.

The potential damage of pursuing nativeness in translation studies has been realised by an increasing number of researchers (Campbell, 1998, 2000; Grosman, 2000; Lonsdale, 2001; Snell-Hornby, 2000). Snell-Hornby (2000: 37), for example, has argues that the need for global communication in a universally understood language has led to a situation where “translation into English as a non-mother tongue has become a fact of modern life for which we need to train our future professional.” Grosman (2000: 23) has pointed out that theories which favour translation into the native or first language tend to neglect the importance of the translator’s strength in comprehension of the source text and culture in his or her second language. Similarly, Lonsdale (2001) thinks that the directionality of translation is determined by many factors such as the status of a language, the volume of translations into it, the availability of translators and institutional controls. He further argued that:

those who stress the importance of native speaker competence in the culture and language of the target text often do no attach enough importance to understanding the culture and language of the source text, particularly when discourse patterns differ greatly from one culture to another. (p.67)
The above literature shows that views for or against the existence of nativeness have strong theoretical bases. The above literature also shows that the pursuit of native supremacy in English writing as well as in translation is questionable and detrimental. Since this research is not aimed at making contributions to the debate of the concept of nativeness, it will accept that native English-speaking translators are superior to native Chinese-speaking translators where the choice of English tense and aspect is concerned, and that the native Chinese-speaking translators can improve by trying to make their English tense-aspect choices more native-like.

Therefore, terms such as “nativeness” or “native speakers” used in this research only refer to the physical environment in which English is acquired. This research will borrow the objective description of native speakers cited at the beginning of this section (Davies, 1991; Ellis, 1997; Selinker, 1969) and define native English speakers as a group of people who acquire the language from birth or early childhood in an English-speaking family and environment.

Children who grew up in families in which two languages were spoken may develop bilingual competence. According to Roberts et al. (2002) there are, however, significant differences between bilinguals and native speakers of English in terms of their English proficiency and the way their language develops remains unknown to researchers. In order to control the variables, the definition of native English-speaking translators in this research only refers to those who grew up in a family where English was the only communication language and who have acquired Chinese later in school.

As to the English speaking environment, Kachru & Nelson (2001: 15) categorise English speaking countries into inner, outer, and expanding circles and English speakers in countries of the three circles are consequently defined as native
English speakers, English as second language speakers, and English as foreign language speakers. In their opinion, inner circle countries are those with a Judeo-Christian tradition such as the US, the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, while in outer circle countries, such as India for example, English is “no one’s first language and thus confers no real or imagined advantage to one group over another.” To this end, the definition of native English-speaking translators in my study is further refined to include only those who were born or grew up from the age of 10 in inner circle English speaking countries.

2.2.2 Translation Competence into the Second Language

Revisiting translation competence into the second language has demonstrated that the skills required are broader than those required for translating into the mother tongue (Campbell, 1998). In addition, some studies have shown that bilinguals are not necessarily competent translators and knowledge of two languages is only part of the knowledge necessary for translating well (Faber, 1998; Presas, 2000). According to Presas (2000: 19), “the abundance of bad translations and the problems highlighted in the [translation] studies by Krings (1986), Lorscher (1991), Kussmaul (1995) and many others have shown bilingual competence, while a necessary condition, is not in itself sufficient to guarantee translation competence.”

There are views that translators into the second language are learners of the language (Harley, 1995; Swain, 1985). Anyone who does not speak or write a second language as a native speaker of that language does can be put into the broad category of second language learners. This includes both students all over the world learning EFL as beginner or intermediate learners, and advanced learners such as professional translators who are not native speakers of English. According to Selinker (1969), a
learner’s knowledge of the second language is an intermediate system located somewhere between the learner’s native language and the target language, but governed by its own unique and coherent internalised rule system that rarely becomes totally congruent with the system of the second language. He characterised this intermediate system as “interlanguage,” in which certain items, rules, or subsystems that are not fully congruent with the target language can become a permanent part of the learner’s interlanguage (fossilisation), resistant to further instruction or explanation. This means the target language produced by the learner is often “defective,” or incomplete in some way; that is, it does not correspond to the language normally used by adult native speakers and deviates in the area of syntax, lexis, phraseology, text structure, semantics or pragmatics. This does not apply, however, to all non-native speakers as pointed out by Corder (1967). Although Corder also thinks of interlanguage as a continuum, he suggests that learner systems are constantly changing and there may be various types of continua. This may explain why some non-native English speakers can speak and write much better than many L1 speakers of English.

According to Ellis (1994: 66-67), non-native speakers, when asked to judge the quality of learners’ English, are more inclined to notice the irregularities with respect to “form.” Native speakers, on the other hand, tend to pay more attention to the errors which interfere with the communication of meaning. It needs to be noted here that the non-native speakers Ellis discussed are less competent than their English instructors, who must have achieved native or near-native proficiency. Thus, if the EFL learners can achieve the same proficiency as the instructors, theoretically there should be no intrinsic hindrance for them to produce English translations acceptable to native speakers.
It must be noted, however, that there is a significant disadvantage, which makes translation into the second language even more difficult than plainly communicating (in speech or writing) in the second language for translators who have not achieved native or near-native proficiency in the second language. In translating, the translator, as a learner of the target language, is further restricted by the source text language and cannot adopt the “avoidance” strategy for uncertain expressions which is available when speaking and writing. The source texts fix the raw materials so that the translator’s task is to “match” rather than to “choose.” Such difficulties for translators as learners have been noted by Harley (1995: 244), who pointed out from a pedagogical perspective that language production may be more difficult to manage than language comprehension. Swain (1985) notes that, in methodologies which emphasise comprehensible input, it is possible for a second language learner to comprehend input without a syntactic analysis, but such learners often produce only limited utterances, because comprehensible output cannot be generated without syntactic analysis, in which the student has little expertise. More specifically, when learning to read and write in L2, it is relatively easy to comprehend a text in L2 as long as the learner has the correct aids and tools. But when it comes to writing in L2, although the discourse produced by the learner may be comprehensible, few learners achieve the native-like proficiency in terms of writing throughout their L2 learning career: they tend to produce interlanguage at various stages of approximation of the norm of L2, which shows an inadequacy in grammar or lexis or both. Again, the L2 learners or non-native English-speaking translators discussed here refer to those who have yet to achieve native or near-native proficiency.

This view is also held by Campbell (1998), who proposes a model of translation competence based on the linguistic features of the interlanguage produced by
translators into the second language. It consists of three parts:

(1) Textual competence – the extent to which the translation output of translators has the structural features of formal, written English;

(2) Disposition competence – the strategies used to choose words in constructing target texts; and,

(3) Monitoring competence – the translator’s self-awareness and ability to edit to produce quality output.

He argues that “translators demonstrate textual competence when their target texts have the structural features of formal, written English; they fail to demonstrate textual competence when their output resembles informal spoken English” (Campbell, 1998: 73). Textual competence, moreover, can be represented by features presented in the target text such as nominalisation, average word length, diversity of vocabulary (e.g., type/token ratio), agentless passives, and prepositional phrases. Relating these features to translation into the second language, Campbell (1998: 84-101) finds that:

1. Nominalisation represents an ability to “convey high abstract information” and “pack information into fewer words.” Although the occurrence of nominalisation does not necessarily demonstrate the ability to use a formal written genre, its use may be an indicator of textual competence;

2. Diversity of vocabulary (type/token ratio) is another important indicator of the formality of a text, which demonstrates the translator’s capacity to package information in longer and fewer words. However, subjects with high and low textual competence alike may have high type/token ratios. Therefore, caution must be exercised when interpreting this ratio;

3. Average word length is an indicator closely related to the type/token ratio;
4. The agentless passive is considered as one of the most important surface markers of a de-contextualised or detached style of writing. In translation, however, the use of the agentless passive is motivated by a number of factors among which textual competence may be just one; and,

5. Prepositional phrases have been confirmed as an important device for packing high amounts of information into a text, and the use of more prepositional phrases reflects more nominalisations in the discourse, which is characteristic of a formal written genre.

Campbell (1998: 59) views textual competence as reflecting the translator’s writing proficiency in the target language (the translator’s second language), although it needs to be noted that while his concept of textual competence reflects writing proficiency, it is not necessarily equivalent to it. Writing proficiency is a wider-ranging term involving more variables, which are potentially measurable. For example, Chafe and Tennan (1987), in their study of the differences between written and spoken language, find that proficiency in written English can be represented by some special features, such as greater diversity of vocabulary, more nouns, more adjectival constructions, more passives, and denser text, which make it different from spoken English. After analysing 67 linguistic features of some 481 spoken and written texts across 23 genres, Biber (1988) finds that written English varies from spoken English in seven clusters of linguistic features, which he defines as “dimensions.” Each cluster includes different linguistic features that vary from genre to genre.

According to Campbell (1998), the output of translation into English as a second language as a special kind of interlanguage varies with the translator’s competence, which is capable of moving towards native speaker competence.
Therefore, he suggested that translation into the second language competence can be approached in stages rather than fixed points. Consequently, competence can be measured in terms of continual progress in improved language processing, which needs to be considered in translator training when translation into the second language is practiced. However, in Campbell’s study all the subjects were advanced but non-native speakers of English who translated from Arabic into English, and he did not make any comparison of native and non-native translators’ work. Inspired by the textual competence framework defined in Campbell’s model, Dong and Lan (2010) analyse the textual competence of native Chinese-speaking and native English-speaking translators based on their control of some “special features” in their translation of Chinese press editorials into English. These features include the proportions of nominalisations, agentless passives, and prepositional phrases, as well as certain type/token ratios and average word length. Their study produced a formula to differentiate translators of different language background and competence levels. As Campbell (1998) and Dong and Lan (2010) point out, however, the textual features they have used are wide ranging measures of writing proficiency, and a more specific examination of each of these features would be required to understand translation competence. In my study, I have targeted tense and aspect in translation as they have been considered a great difficulty contributing to the unnaturalness of translation from Chinese into English.

2.2.3 The Problem of “Unnaturalness” in Translation into the Second Language

Non-native English speaking writers or translators often produce writings or translations that “read foreign,” and this “unnaturalness” of interlanguage has been a major concern in language acquisition studies (Ferris, 2004; Fontaine & Kodratoff,
2003; Reid, 1992, 1996) and translation studies (Baker, 1992; Hatim & Mason, 1990; Newmark, 1988). In her explanation of the unnaturalness of translation, Baker (1992: 112) states that each linguistic community has preferred ways of organising its discourse, and “this is why target readers can often identify what appears to be lexically and grammatically ‘normal’ text as a translation, or as ‘foreign’.” In her opinion, to be accepted as a text in its own right, translation must conform to target-language norms. “Accepted collocational patterns and grammatical structures can only enhance the readability of individual sentences, but they do not in themselves ensure that sentences and paragraphs add up to a readable or coherent text” (Baker, 1992: 112). As “different societies, and indeed different individuals and groups of individuals within the same society, have different experiences of the world and different views on the way events and situations are organized or related to each other” (1992: 219), she points out that translators must adjust certain features of the source text organisation in line with preferred ways of organising discourse in the target language. Similar statements have been made by other researchers (Adab, 2000; Bex, 1996; Hatim & Mason, 1990).

Although the overwhelming opinion of mainstream translation theories holds that native English-speaking translators produce better translation work than non-native English speakers, there is a lack of detailed studies of the difference between native and non-native English speakers when they translate into English. This lack calls for further studies to examine the competence of advanced non-native and native translators.

English tense-aspect is widely believed to be one of the most problematic areas in interlanguage, which includes non-native English speakers’ English writing and translation (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995; El-Dash & Busnardo, 2003; Guiora, 1983; Hawes

To understand the acquisition of English tense-aspect by non-native English speakers, researchers have looked at the relationship between the use of tense and aspect and non-native speakers’ English proficiency (Andersen, 1991; Bardovi-Harlig, 1995, 1998; Cai, 2004; El-Dash & Busnardo, 2003; Schramm, 1996; Vlach, 1993; Yang & Huang, 2004). The correlation has been found to be so strong that the distribution of tenses in the writing of ESL learners could be used as an assessment criterion of their English proficiency based on the exhibition of a sequence from pragmatic to lexical to grammatical devices (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995, 1998). In other words, low competence learners tend to rely on discourse principles, such as chronological order and scaffolding, to express temporality. On a higher competence level, they rely more on adverbial expressions (e.g., yesterday, today) and connectives (e.g., and, therefore). On an even higher competence level, they rely more on verbal morphology to express temporal reference. On the one hand, it is suggested that with improved English proficiency, the distribution of tense and aspect in a learner’s writing could gradually match that of a native English speaker (Chen, 2005). On the other hand, some studies have found that some learners, particularly adult learners, may only reach the stage of using adverbial expressions to denote time but never reach the next stage of verb morphology (Dietrich, Klein, & Noyau, 1995).
Since the subjects of these studies are either students of university intensive English programs (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995, 1998) or university students not doing a major in English (Cai, 2004; Chen, 2005), there is a missing population of non-native English speakers with higher English competence, such as translators or professionals who can speak and write English better than many native English speakers, probably because of the difficulty of accessing this group of English speakers. Therefore, the use of research subjects with high English proficiency may provide new information on their use of tense and aspect.

Some studies have found that the tense and aspect choice is directly correlated with translation competence. El-Dash and Busnardo (2003: 1823) examine the translation of verb tense-aspects from English into Portuguese. They find that over 70% of the inflected English verb forms require careful interpretation, “despite the superficial similarity of verb tense forms” in the two languages. They further conclude that the verb tense-aspect choice is part of the translator’s pragmatic competence, which is “an important part of a general competence in translation” (El-Dash & Busnardo, 2003: 1838). But the study does not provide further explanation of the exact place of the pragmatic competence of choosing verb tense and aspect in translation competence.

In the following section 2.3, I will introduce the tense-aspect related theories and concepts in general and then the usage of tense and aspect in English and Chinese respectively.

### 2.3 Tense and Aspect in English and Chinese

#### 2.3.1 Tense and Grammatical Aspect

Tense and aspect are two important grammatical systems for expressing
temporality in natural languages; both tense and aspect are concerned with time, but they express time in different ways (Comrie 1985:8). Tense is a deictic category typically adopted to locate a situation chronologically; there are three temporal notions in tense: past, present, and future. It places a time talked about in the past, present, or future in relation to the moment of the utterance and thus enables the reader/hearer to reconstruct the time order of the different time points in a text (Comrie, 1976, 1985). Lee (2001: 593) points out that “the two most important considerations in tense systems are the selection of the tense locus (i.e., a particular reference time) and the nature of the relationship between the tense locus and the event frame (i.e., the interval of time in which the predicate occurs).” For instance, future tense is used when the event is posterior to the tense locus.

Grammatical aspect, on the other hand, is defined by Comrie (1976:3) as “different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation.” Grammatical aspect does not locate an event or situation on the time line, nor does it relate the time of a situation to any other particular time point. The speaker may view the temporal course of some event, action, process, and so forth as completed, on-going, or imminent, and this “view” is independent of the time which the event, action, or process occupies on the time axis (Klein, 1994).

Both tense and grammatical aspect are concerned with time, but they express time in different ways, and one could state the difference between tense and grammatical aspect as one between situational-internal time (grammatical aspect) and situational-external time (tense) (Comrie 1976: 5). For example:

(1) John sings.

(2) John sang.

(3) John was singing.
Examples (1) and (2) show a difference in tense. Example (1) occurs at the time of speaking, and (2) prior to the time of speaking. Examples (2) and (3) show a contrast in aspect. Both sentences occur prior to the speech time. Example (2) is a finished action while Example (3) describes an action which continued at a specified time reference in the past.

According to Andersen (1991), two of the most basic aspectual categories are “perfective” and “imperfective.” His terminology is taken from Comrie (1976: 16) and is widely accepted among researchers. Perfective aspect treats a situation as a whole (external view), whereas imperfective aspect presents a situation from within (internal view). For example, when describing an action such as writing a letter a speaker may say:

(4) John wrote a letter.

(5) John was writing a letter.

In Examples (4) and (5) only the grammatical aspect has changed, not the event itself or the linguistic expression (write a letter) used to refer to it. Perfective aspect, as shown in Example (4), depicts the situation in its entirety, with its beginning and end points presented. By contrast, imperfective aspect, as in Example (5), refers only to an internal portion of John was writing a letter without regard to its initial and end points. This is the distinction between perfective and imperfective meaning.

Comrie (1976) further concludes that:

perfective looks at the situation from outside, without necessarily distinguishing any of the internal structure of the situation, whereas the imperfective looks at the situation from the inside, and as such is crucially concerned with the internal structure of the situation, and looks forward to the end of the situation, and indeed is equally appropriate if the situation is one
that lasts through all time, without any beginning and without any end. (p. 4)

Figure 2-1 shows his summary of the classification of aspectual oppositions:

![Figure 2-1: Classification of Aspectual Oppositions (Comrie, 1976: 25)](image)

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), the basic or characteristic meaning of tense is to locate the situation, or part of it, at some point or in some period of time, and the basic meanings of aspect have to do with the internal temporal constituency of the situation. The features of tense and aspect are interrelated and cannot be separated, so discussions of tense, such as the present and past tenses, cannot be made without reference to the progressive and perfective aspects.

2.3.2 *Lexical Aspect*

Aspect “concerns the different perspectives which a speaker can take and express with regard to the temporal course of some event, action, process, etc.” (Klein, 1994: 16). Aspect can be expressed lexically by the inherent lexical semantics of the verb and its interaction with direct and indirect arguments and adjuncts or morpho-syntactically through verbal endings or periphrastic constructions (Dowty,
The former is called lexical aspect, also known as inherent aspect, lexical aspect, or Aktionsart, and refers to the “semantic characteristics inherent in the lexical content of words, usually verb phrases, that are defined in terms of the temporal properties of given situations that the verbs describe” (Li & Shirai, 2000: 14). The latter is traditionally called grammatical aspect. To avoid possible confusion between the lexical aspect and grammatical aspect, a contrast is made between the two concepts of aspect.

Grammatical aspect, also called viewpoint aspect by Smith (1986), is represented overtly by auxiliaries and inflections. It is a fully grammaticised, obligatory, systematic category of languages (Binnick, 1991). For example, the progressive aspect in English is realised by the auxiliary be and followed by a verb with an inflectional ending –ing. Lexical aspect, called lexical aspect by Smith (1986), is not morphologically marked and thus is non-grammatical and unsystematic. It is purely lexical and refers to the inherent semantic temporal features of the lexical items which form the predicate. For example, verbs such as run and read describe actions with inherent duration, while run a mile and read a book are both durative. The lexical aspectual meaning of the predicate is not affected by the tense the verb takes.

Smith (1986) informs us that the process of the writer’s choice of a verb and its morphology involves two considerations which she defined as situation aspect (lexical aspect) and viewpoint aspect. The lexical aspect refers to the writer’s choice among some basic verbal classes to convey his or her perception of an actual situation. For example, Lackstrome et al. (1973) use the following sentence to illustrate how the writer’s choice of a verbal class may vary with different perceptions of a situation:
The plant to convert cellulose of pine sawdust into fermentable sugar and that into ethyl alcohol **failed** because a sawmill couldn’t sell as much lumber as plans called for, and thereby curtailed the alcohol plant’s raw material supply. (p. 135)

The verb “failed” is not the only possible word or phrase to express the event in the sentence. The writer could have chosen another verb phrase such as “was not successful.” However, the rhetorical impression would be different if it were chosen. The writer’s preference of the verb “failed” over “was not successful” has shown his or her perception of the event to be a dynamic rather than stative event.

According to Smith (1986), after determining the, the writer chooses the viewpoint aspect – perfective or imperfective aspects. In English grammar they correspond to two grammatical aspects, simple or progressive, to represent the viewpoint aspect. Simple aspect presents a situation from a perfective viewpoint; progressive aspect presents an imperfective view (Smith, 1986: 100). If Lackstrome *et al.’s* (1973) example is used again here, “Alcohol plants failed” would be a simple aspect that represents a perfective viewpoint, and “Alcohol plants were failing” would be a progressive aspect that represents an imperfective viewpoint. The first sentence refers to the whole event rather than any part of it (beginning point, process phase, and end point), while the second sentence, refers only to a part of the whole event (the process phase, eg. the “failing” phase): the beginning and end points of the event (fail) are not part of the second assertion. In English, viewpoint aspect is dependent on lexical aspect: the progressive viewpoint, for example, is not used with stative verbs such as “want” or “know.”

Based on the above account of the process through which the writer chooses a verb and its morphology, it seems that rhetorical considerations influence the
semantic choice (the choice of lexical aspect and viewpoint aspect) of a verb, and the semantic choice, in turn, influences the grammatical choices of verbs and their morphology. As Lackstrome et al. (1988: 62) put it: “the choice of tenses in the written medium is dependent not on ‘time lines’, […] but on rhetorical and subject-matter considerations.”

2.3.3 Categories of Grammatical Tense in English

Temporality is one of the central concepts of language and all human languages have ways of locating events in time (Comrie, 1985: 7). For the purpose of understanding these ways of locating events in time we need to refer to models that provide tools to analyse the tense system. Tense is an important but controversial grammatical category in Modern English grammar. The following are several influential works that deal with this issue. As tense and aspect are closely related, these works also refer to the concept of aspect from time to time in their analyses and use different sets of terminology such as present simple, past simple, and present perfect. The definitions of these terms are general and widely used in English grammar textbooks, so I will use their terminology in this and the next section until a unified set of terminology is defined in Section 2.3.5.

2.3.3.1 Reichenbach’s speech time, reference time, and event time

In Reichenbach’s (1947) view, there are three notions of time involved in temporal specification: speech time, reference time, and event time. Speech time (ST) is the moment of utterance, referring to the time at which a given sentence is spoken. Reference time (RT) is the time indicated by a sentence, which need not be the same as ST but is oriented to it. Event time (ET) refers to the moment at which the relevant
event or state occurs. Again it need not be the same as RT but is oriented to RT. With these three temporal concepts, Reichenbach (1947) defines the temporal relationships as follows and depicted English tense devices on a timeline as shown in Figure 2-2.

1. Simultaneity (=): when RT is simultaneous with ST, RT indicates present time;
2. Anteriority (←): when RT precedes ST, RT indicates past time; and,
3. Posteriority (→): when RT follows ST, RT indicates future time.

Reichenbach then goes on to claim that these three notions of time are sufficient to explain all the uses of English tense devices. In this conception, temporal relationships in discourse may be specified by “extracting” one of the tenses from each sentence, asserting the appropriate relations among E, R and S, and appropriately relating these times to times introduced previously. For Reichenbach (1947):

We see that we need three points even for the distinction of tenses which, in a superficial consideration, seem to concern only two time points. The
difficulties which grammar books have in explaining the meanings of the different tenses originate from the fact that they do not recognize the three-place structure of the time determination given in the tenses. (p. 290)

The classification of these three temporal points makes it possible for an analysis of the tense system. The following examples demonstrate some of the many possible configurations of temporal relationships that form different tense-aspect combinations:

1. The monk is drinking water now. (RT=ET=ST; present progressive)
2. The monk found a mouse in the temple last night. (RT=ET←ST; past simple)
3. The monk had looked for the mouse yesterday. (ET←RT←ST; past perfect)
4. The monk will be in the temple after 10 tomorrow. (ET→RT→ST; simple future).

While there is much that is right and insightful about Reichenbach’s model, viewing English tense just in terms of timelines generates some problems. As pointed out by Declerck (1991: 227), the major weakness of Reichenbach’s model lies in not being able to handle more complicated tenses, such as the past or future perfect where at least two “points of reference” are necessary. Comrie (1976) pointed out that another problem in Reichenbach’s model is the exclusion of aspect because some tenses could barely be explained without taking aspect into account. For example, I have travelled to many countries (ET←RT=ST) and I travel to many countries (ET→RT=ST) differ from each other not in their timelines but in a sense that the former is perfective because the event is being viewed as a whole, while the latter is a habitual event that takes place regularly. Therefore, Comrie (1976) suggests that it is the aspectual contrast, or how the event was viewed, that can interpret the difference between the two. In addition, Declerck (1991: 231) uses the following
example to illustrate that the ST does not necessarily appear in every tense structure as suggested by Reichenbach’s theory:

5. John told us a minute ago that Bill was in the kitchen.

The past form was only indicates that the that-clause situation is simultaneous with the head-clause situation, and there is no ST in the that-clause. Thus, Declerck (1991: 232) further argues that this problem could only be solved by giving up Reichenbach’s claim that all three time points need to be present in every tense structure.

2.3.3.2 Comrie’s time of speech (S), time of event (E) and reference point (R)

According to Comrie (1985), there are only three tenses directly related to the time of utterance – (1) present tense (simultaneous with the present moment); (2) past tense (anterior to the present moment); and, (3) future tense (posterior to the present moment). He used the term “absolute tenses” to define these three tenses that take the present moment as a deictic centre (i.e., the time of utterance), and ”relative tenses” to define those that do not necessarily correspond with the moment of utterance (p. 36; pp. 122-125).

Comrie has adopted Reichenbach’s (1947) two time elements, “time of speech (ST)” and “time of event (ET),” to represent the three absolute tenses. As to the temporal relationships, he used three different terms: “simul,” “before” and “after” (Comrie 1985:122). Thus temporal relationships of the absolute tenses can be represented as in Table 2-2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>ET simul ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past tense</td>
<td>ET before ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future tense</td>
<td>ET after ST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-2: Comrie’s (1985) Absolute Tense
As for relative tenses, Comrie (1985: 125) suggests that one more temporal element ‘reference point (RP)’ is necessary. By adding more RPs, more complicated instances of location in time may be represented as well. For example: conditional perfect can be represented as “E before RP1 after RP2 before S”. If instances where a second RP are disregarded, Comrie’s model provides the following four representations of the relative tenses in Table 2-3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past perfect</td>
<td>ET before RP</td>
<td>before ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future perfect</td>
<td>ET before RP</td>
<td>after ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future in the past</td>
<td>ET after RP</td>
<td>before ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future in the future</td>
<td>ET after RP</td>
<td>after ST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-3: Comrie (1985) Relative Tenses

As pointed out by Declerck (1991), Comrie’s (1985) model reduces the number of possible tense representation schemata from Reichenbach’s no fewer than thirteen to seven, but the major criticism of his model is that the abolition of RT in its description of the absolute tenses is unwarranted. The distinction between present perfect and past simple is a case in point: in Comrie’s model, the past simple tense is an absolute tense which locates an event in time prior to the present moment (ET before ST), while the present perfect, as a relative tense, has a reference point that is simultaneous with the present moment (ET before ST simul RP). This leads to the conclusion that there is no difference between the present perfect and the past simple in terms of time reference (1985: 78). In Declerck’s (1991: 234) words, this analysis “would render it impossible for Comrie to offer separate analyses for the past tense and the present perfect.”
2.3.3.3 Declerck’s theory

Declerck (1991) proposes a different way of analysing tense from the morphological ones. He first claimes that there exists a temporal zero-point (T₀) which is the ultimate “origin” of all the temporal relations expressed in the sentence (i.e., the time to which all the situations referred to in the sentence are directly or indirectly related; p. 14). The T₀ is the ultimate starting point of all the temporal relations expressed by a tense. It is the only time that is given (“assumed known”) whenever a sentence is uttered. Thus in *He had left when I arrived*, the T₀ is the time when the sentence is uttered, the past tense *arrived* denotes that the event *arriving* takes place before the utterance time, and the past perfect *had left* tells us that the leaving is prior to the time of the arriving. It needs to be emphasised that, according to Declerck (1991), although English tends to use encoding time (i.e., the time when the sentence is uttered or written as the temporal zero-point), the choice of encoding time as T₀ is not obligatory, and in certain circumstances T₀ can be the decoding time (i.e., the time when the sentence is read or heard). Declerck (1991: 15) lists several examples where the decoding time, rather than encoding time, is used as T₀:

1. A note on an office door may read: *I am in room 2114*.

2. Road signs may state: *You are now leaving West Berlin*.

3. A travel itinerary may read: *Today the train takes us to London. We visit the British Museum*....

4. A Christmas card may read: *I hope you had a nice Christmas*.

Declerck (1991) then claimes that the tense system divides time into the past and the present time-sphere. The present time-sphere consists of three sectors: the sector anterior to T₀ (pre-present sector), the sector simultaneous with T₀ (present sector) and the sector posterior to T₀ (post-present sector). In his model (pp.16-19)
there are two sets of tenses: those that locate a situation in the past time-sphere and those that locate it in the present time-sphere. It is characteristic for the present time-sphere to include T₀, whereas the past time-sphere lies wholly before T₀. The past time-sphere is treated as a single sector. In summary, Declerck (p.19) has made the following claims:

1. T₀ lies in the present time-sphere and automatically divides present time-sphere into three sectors: present, pre-present, and post-present. Past time-sphere is not subdivided into sectors as long as no situation has been located in it;

2. Three present time-sphere sectors and one past time-sphere sector constitute the set of four “absolute” sectors; English uses the absolute tenses past simple, present perfect, present and future to locate a situation in the past, pre-present, present, and post-present, respectively. The other tenses can only relate a situation to a T₀ and only be used as “relative” tenses; and,

3. The tense system provides special means of locating a situation in each of the sectors.

Based on his definition of the four absolute tenses and relative tenses, Declerck (1991) has identified three important concepts in the tense system (domain, shift of perspective and shift of focus), which explain the normal and abnormal grammatical use of tense in complex or compound sentences that involve more than one situation. Temporal domain is the “time taken up by a situation or by a number of situations which are temporally related to each other by means of special tense forms” (p. 20). In the sentence \textit{John said he was tired because he had worked hard and that he would go to sleep early}, the four situations referred to (said, was tired, had worked,
and would go to sleep) all fall into the past time-sphere and are related to each other in terms of simultaneity, anteriority and posteriority. Thus the temporal reference is said to lie in a past-domain. Each of the four absolute sectors has its own tense to establish a domain in the sector. The pre-present, present and post-present sectors use the present perfect, present tense and future tense respectively, for the same purpose. Once a domain has been established, other situations can be introduced. Each new situation is related (bound) to one of the situations that are already part of the domain in a process called “temporal subordination” (p. 25). Thus the normal and typical uses of the tense can be explained, as in Table 2-4, which illustrates the uses of tense in English (Declerck 1991: 26-41).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>absolute tense</th>
<th>past time-sphere</th>
<th>pre-present sector</th>
<th>present sector</th>
<th>post-present sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To establish a simultaneous relation</td>
<td>Past simple/past progressive He said that he was feeling hungry. He said he would do it when he had time.</td>
<td>present perfect I have often cried when I have felt lonely. 2. continuative perfect: present perfect/progressive perfect Every since this morning I have been working while you have been doing nothing. Jim has known for some time that Joy has been/is in Rome.</td>
<td>present simple I am working while he is doing nothing. I am just saying to the others that I think John does not mean what he is saying.</td>
<td>future simple present /present progressive They will believe that Jack is back in town. You will be met by a man who is wearing a red tie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To establish an anterior relation</td>
<td>past perfect He thought I had been living there for some time. He had said he had done it all by himself.</td>
<td>1. indefinite (existential) meaning: past simple/past perfect I have tried doing it differently, but I didn't like the result. I have never denied that I had used that money. 2. continuative perfect: present perfect/past simple I have known for some time that Jim has</td>
<td>past simple or the present perfect I am just explaining that I did it last night. I am just explaining that I have not been able to do it.</td>
<td>1. shift to past time-sphere: past tense The police will believe that he was killed yesterday. 2. shift to pre-present: present perfect He will soon find out that you have been following him. What will happen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sprained his ankle. I have known for some time that he did not do it.

when others have left?
3. shift to present: past tense The police will find out that you were staying here today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To establish a posterior relation</th>
<th>Future simple I thought he would help me. He said there was going to be a storm in a minute.</th>
<th>1. indefinite (existential) meaning: present perfect The doctor has already confirmed that Bill will be unable to walk to school because he has sprained his ankle. 2. continuative perfect: future tense Ever since this morning he has repeated that he will move to London.</th>
<th>future simple I know John will be in London. I think it's going to rain.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. shift to past time-sphere: past simple She will think that John will tell the others that he was here today. 2. shift to pre-present: present perfect She will think that John will tell the others that he has not told them the truth yet. 3. shift to present She will think that John will tell the others that he is dissatisfied with their behaviour. 4. shift to post-present future tense He will say that he will never leave her.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-4: The Use of Tense (Declerck, 1991)

Declerck (1991) further proposes that the abnormal use of tense often results from shifts of temporal domain, perspective and focus. A shift of domain occurs when a domain has been established and a new situation is introduced as a new domain. For example, in the sentences John became ill. He died two weeks later., the first sentence establishes a past domain (became), but the tense form (died) in the second sentence does not provide the information that the second domain is posterior to the first. The explanation for the shift of domain rather than keeping it constant is that such shifts are often based on pragmatic considerations or “motivated by a desire to use less complex tense structures wherever possible” (p. 46).
As can be seen, the shift of domain occurs within the same temporal absolute sector. When a shift occurs across sectors, it is called shift of perspective, such as when a speaker treats a situation from a particular sector as if it belonged to another sector (Declerck 1991: 24). For example, in the sentence *John says that the train will arrive at 5pm.*, the use of the future sector tense (*will*) to relate the situation (*arrive*) to a situation (*says*) that has been established in the present sector is a shift of perspective. Declerck (1991: 66-68) suggests the following reasons for the shift of perspective:

1. Some cases of shifting temporal perspective are inherent in the English tense system to achieve a particular semantic effect of dragging the situation into the present.
   a. The train arrives at 5 – (present tense to report the future)
   b. John is leaving tomorrow – (present tense to report the future)
   c. The Book of Genesis speaks of the terrible fate of Sodom and Gomorrah – (present tense to report the past)

2. The speaker/writer wishes to describe a situation without bothering to locate it in time so that the present tense is used as the “default tense”.
   a. newspaper headlines: Trade unions seek assurance.
   b. photographic captions: Roman soldiers nail Jesus to the cross.

3. The speaker/writer aims to create the illusion that the story is authentic and thus represents fictional situations as if they had really happened in the past. Even in science fiction, where the happenings are claimed to take place in the post-present sector, the temporal perspective usually remains that of the past sector.
   a. In the year 2132 man finally reached Mars.
Declerck (1991: 80) has also identified another kind of tense shift where a situation that no longer holds at T₀ is represented by using a tense in a sector other than that of T₀. He defined such a shift as a “shift of focus.” For example:

1. (a) The Eiffel Tower stands in Paris. (b) The Eiffel Tower stood/had stood/ will stand/etc. in Paris.

2. (a) Bill told his children yesterday that the Eiffel Tower stood in Paris. (b) Bill told his children yesterday that the Eiffel Tower had stood in Paris.

In sentence 1(a) the tense locates the situation in the present sector which corresponds with the situation’s actual location in time (the Eiffel Tower does stand in Paris at the moment). In sentence 2(a) the tense of the verb in the subordinate clause (stood) corresponds with that in the head clause (told), locating both situations in the same sector (past sector). Therefore, both 1(a) and 2(a) are normal sentences. But 1(b) and 2(b) are different: the tense used in 1(b) locates the situation in a sector other than the present; and the tenses used by the verbs in the main and subordinate clauses in 2(b) locate the situations in different sectors. Therefore, these two sentences suggest respectively that the Eiffel Tower did not stand in Paris (1b) and that The Eiffel Tower stands in Paris was not true when Bill spoke to his children (2b).

From the above accounts of tense, we can see that tense is considered to be a grammatical category that expresses the temporal relations of all events in respect to T₀, the moment of speaking in most cases. In many cases, however, tense in English does not correspond with the time concept. The present tense can indicate the past and the future. The past tense can indicate the present and the future.

As to the number of the English tenses, there have been a lot of claims, ranging from only two (past and present) by Quirk et al. (1985) to as many as twelve by
Alexander (1998). In between, Curme (1931: 354) held that English has six tenses, among which four were absolute tenses (present, past, present perfect and future) and two were relative tenses (past perfect and future perfect). One of the major arguments is whether English has future tense. According to Quirk et al. (1985), English has only two basic tenses: present and past, and future time is denoted by means of auxiliaries or by present simple or progressive forms. On the other hand, some tend to treat future as a tense in English (Brinton, 2000; Declerck, 1991). A discussion of the number of tenses, however, is beyond the scope of my study, and we will adopt future as a tense for analytical purposes in this research.

2.3.4 Grammatical Aspect in English

Grammatical aspect is represented differently in different languages. There are various views concerning the type of grammatical aspects in English. Some grammarians distinguish between two main types of aspect (Comrie, 1976; Quirk, et al., 1985; Smith, 1991). For example, Quirk et al. (1985) states that:

the two aspect constructions of English, the perfective and the progressive […] , can be seen as realiseing a basic contrast of aspect between the action viewed as complete (perfective), and the action viewed as incomplete, i.e. in progress (imperfective or progressive). (p. 188)

In their view English has two sets of aspectual contrasts: perfective/imperfective and progressive/non-progressive. The perfective aspect provides an external perspective to a situation, whereas the imperfective aspect presents an internal perspective. Perfective views a situation as a total bounded whole, including the beginning point and the end point of the situation (Comrie, 1976; Smith, 1991). As Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1998: 61) point out, however, “[o]ver the years
English teachers and some traditional grammarians have blurred the formal
distinctions between time, tense, and aspect.” Many hold that there are four aspects
in English (i.e., simple, perfect, progressive and perfect progressive), and many
ESL/EFL teaching materials and grammar books refer to the twelve traditional
“tenses” in English, which are in fact combinations of three English tenses and the
different aspects. Thus for the practical purpose of helping native Chinese-speaking
translators, who have learned English using traditional grammar books and materials,
to become more native-like in tense-aspect choices, it is necessary to adopt the view
that there are four types of grammatical aspect in English, as Celce-Murcia and
Larsen-Freeman (1998) have done. The following is a description of these four
aspects:

1. Simple aspect. The core meaning of this aspect is to refer to events that
are viewed as complete wholes.
   a. John writes a letter.
   b. John wrote a letter.

2. Perfect aspect. The core meaning of this aspect is to relate to some other
points in time.
   a. John has written a letter.
   b. John had written a letter when his mother came back.

3. Progressive aspect. The core meaning of this type of aspect is to refer to
the imperfectiveness of an event in such a way that allows for it to be
incomplete or somehow limited.
   a. John is writing a letter.
   b. John was writing a letter.

4. Perfect progressive aspect. The core meaning of this aspect is to combine
the sense of perfectiveness with incompleteness.

a. John has been writing a letter for two hours.

b. John had been writing a letter last week.

It is necessary to mention that each of the exemplary pairs above is identical in the aspect but different in the tense. It also must be noted that although the basic functions of each of these categories have been recognised, it is still not an easy task to classify them clearly. As Li and Shirai (2000) point out, a linguistic form can often perform more than one of these functions. For example, a perfect marking in English is itself intermediate between tense and aspect.

2.3.5 Definition of English Tense-Aspect in this Study

In distinguishing between the above four English aspect forms, Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1998) point out that there are three grammatically marked aspects in English which are realised by inflectional morphemes (perfect, progressive and perfect progressive aspects), whereas the unmarked aspect refers to those determined by the simple aspect. For example:

(a) He plays tennis.

(b) He played tennis.

(c) He has played tennis.

(d) He is playing tennis.

(e) He has been playing tennis for two hours.

In (a) and (b), the aspect is not marked, and it is marked by (have + V-ed) in (c), by (be + V-ing) in (d), and by (have + been +V-ing) in (e).

English present, past, and future tenses interact with simple, perfect, progressive, and perfect progressive aspects, so theoretically we can get twelve combinations as
shown in Table 2-5. Although, according to Comrie (1976), no more than four combinations would actually occur to convey the notion of time reference. For practical purposes, my study adopts the terminology as outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Simple</th>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Progressive</th>
<th>Perfect progressive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present</strong></td>
<td><em>Present Simple</em></td>
<td><em>Present perfect</em></td>
<td><em>Present progressive</em></td>
<td><em>Present perfect progressive</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-s</td>
<td>-has/have + pp</td>
<td>- is/am/are +playing</td>
<td>-has/have been playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past</strong></td>
<td><em>Past Simple</em></td>
<td><em>Past perfect</em></td>
<td><em>Past progressive</em></td>
<td><em>Past perfect progressive</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-ed</td>
<td>-had + pp</td>
<td>- was/were playing</td>
<td>- had been playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future</strong></td>
<td><em>Future Simple</em></td>
<td><em>Future perfect</em></td>
<td><em>Future progressive</em></td>
<td><em>Future perfect progressive</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-will; be going to</td>
<td>- will have +pp</td>
<td>- will be playing</td>
<td>-will have been playing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2-5: Twelve tense-aspect combinations

Table 2-6 compares the quaternary classification of English aspect (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998) with the binary classification proposed by other linguists (Comrie, 1976; Quirk *et al.* 1985).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quaternary Aspect</th>
<th>Binary Aspect</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simple</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Simple</td>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>John walked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Simple</td>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>John walk(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Simple</td>
<td>imperfective</td>
<td>John will (be + -going to) walk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perfect</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>John had walked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>John has walked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future perfect</td>
<td>imperfective</td>
<td>John will have walked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Progressive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>John was walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present progressive</td>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>John is walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future progressive</td>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>John will be walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perfect progressive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>John had been walking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It shows that in English:

1. A combination of simple and perfect with past tense carries the perfective meaning;

2. A combination of progressive with any tense (past, present, and future) carries the imperfective meaning; and,

3. Combinations other than those in 1 and 2 could carry either the perfective or the imperfective meaning.

2.3.6 The Uses of English Tense and Grammatical Aspect

In English, tense whether present, past or future is used mainly although not necessarily to express time, and aspect is used to express implicative meanings of continuousness or completeness. The following description of the uses of the twelve English tense-aspect forms mainly refers to Quirk et al. (1985) and Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1998), and examples are taken from their grammar books. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman suggest that of the twelve tense-aspect forms, eight forms (i.e., present simple, present progressive, past simple, past progressive, future simple, future progressive, present perfect, present perfect progressive) are more frequently used and important to the ESL/EFL learner than the other four forms (i.e. past perfect, past perfect progressive, future perfect, and future perfect progressive). They further suggest that of the eight more important forms, five forms (i.e., present simple, present progressive, past simple, future simple, and present perfect) are particularly important and “can be viewed as the core system” (1998: 62). Therefore, the tense-aspect forms are listed below by the order of their importance from the most important to the least important.
1. Present simple

   a. Habitual actions or events in the present (e.g., John usually goes to school by bus.);

   b. General timeless facts (e.g., The sun rises in the east.);

   c. With BE and other stative verbs that occur at the present moment (e.g., I see a huge dog in the corner / I don’t know him.);

   d. In the subordinate clause to express future time (e.g., After he finishes work, he’ll go.);

   e. In the subordinate clause of a future conditional sentence (e.g., If it rains tomorrow, I won’t go to school.);

   f. To express events scheduled in the future (e.g., The flight departs at 9:00 tomorrow.);

   g. Present event/action or speech act (e.g., Here comes the bus. / I owe you an apology.); and,

   h. Conversational historical present to refer to past events in narration (e.g., [in narration] Once upon a time, there were two fools. One day one of the fools comes home and tells the other...);

2. Present progressive

   a. Event/action in progress (e.g., He is attending a meeting now.);

   b. Temporary activity/action that will end and therefore lacks the permanence of the present simple tense (e.g., I’m studying geology at the University of Colorado.);

   c. Repetition or iteration in a series of similar ongoing actions (e.g., Henry is kicking the soccer ball around the backyard.);

   d. Express future usually with a future time adverbial when an event is planned
(e.g., She’s coming tomorrow.); and

e. Emotional comment on present habit usually co-occurring with always or forever (e.g., He’s always acting up at these affairs.).

3. Past simple

a. A definite single completed event/action in the past (e.g., I attended a meeting last week.);

b. Habitual or repeated action/event in the past which suggests some change in this habit/event has taken place (e.g., Sam walked his dog every day last year.);

c. An event with duration that applied in the past with the implication that it no longer applies in the present (e.g., Prof. Nelson taught at Yale for 30 years.);

d. With stative verbs in the past time (e.g., I knew that John was a teacher.);

e. Past conditional or hypothetical events in the subordinate clause (e.g., If he took better care of himself, he wouldn’t be absent so often.); and,

f. Attitudinal past to show politeness (e.g., Did you want to see me now?).

4. Future simple

a. An action to take place at some definite future time (e.g., He will walk to school tomorrow.);

b. A future habitual action or future state (e.g., John will take the bus to work next year);

c. A situation that may obtain in the present and will obtain in the future but with some future termination in sight (e.g., Nora will live in Caracas until she finishes school.);

d. Future conditionals (main clause) (e.g., If you go, you’ll be sorry.).

5. Present perfect (often used to express the speaker’s relevance to what is being
talked about).

a. A state leading up to the present (e.g., I have been a teacher since 1972.);
b. A past experience with current relevance (e.g., I have already seen that movie.);
c. A very recently completed action (e.g., Mort has just finished his homework.);
d. A recurrent action that is completed with the moment of speaking (e.g., The value of the Johnsons’ house has doubled in the last 4 years.);
e. With verbs in subordinate clauses or time or condition (e.g., She won’t be satisfied until she has finished another chapter.).

6. Past progressive

a. An action in progress at a specific point of time in the past (e.g., He was walking to school at 8:30 this morning.);
b. Past action simultaneous with some other event (e.g., Karen was washing her hair when the phone rang.);
c. Repetition or iteration in some ongoing past action (e.g., Jake was coughing all night long.); and,
e. Attitudinal past progressive to refer to a present attitude (e.g., I was wondering if you could help me.)

7. Future progressive

a. An action that will be in progress at a specific time in the near future (e.g., He will be walking to school at 8 a.m. tomorrow.); and,
b. Duration of some specific future action (e.g., Mavis will be working on her thesis for the next ten years.).

8. Present perfect progressive
a. A situation or habit that began in the past (recent or distant) and that continues until the present (e.g., I have been living in Seattle for 7 years now.); and,

b. The incompleteness of an action in progress (e.g., I have been reading a book.).

9. Past perfect
   a. An action completed in the past prior to some other past event (e.g., He had already walked to school before I could offer him a ride.); and,
   b. In the subordinate clause of past conditional or imagined events (e.g., If Sally had studied harder, she would have passed the exam.).

10. Past perfective progressive
    a. An action or habit taking place over a period of time in the past prior to some other past event (e.g., He had been walking to school before his father bought him a bicycle.); and,
    b. A past action that is in progress gets interrupted by another past action (e.g., We had been planning to vacation in Pennsylvania but changed our minds when so much of it got badly flooded.).

11. Future perfect
    a. A future action that will be completed prior to a specific future time (e.g., I will have finished all this typing by 5 pm.); and,
    b. A state or action that will be completed in the future prior to some other future time or event (near or distant) (e.g., He will have walked to school before you finish your breakfast.)

12. Future perfect progressive
    a. Durative or habitual action that is taking place in the present and that will
continue into the future up until or through a specific future time (e.g., He will have been riding his bike to school for two years by the time he graduates in June).

2.3.7 The Uses of Chinese Tense and Grammatical Aspect

The concept of time exists in all languages, but every language has its own linguistic devices to locate events in time. The expression of tense and aspect in Chinese is remarkably distinct from that of English. Some linguists (Levinson, 1983; Li & Thompson, 1981) have argued that Chinese is tenseless as the temporal reference is not expressed through verbal morphology. The following sentences are exemplary:

1. (a). 我 昨天 晚上 熬夜.  
   I last night stay up late.  
   (b). 他 從來不 熬夜.  
   He never stay up late.

The Chinese verb “熬夜” does not inflect to show any time reference, so it is difficult to determine when the events took place without the temporal adverbials “昨天” (yesterday) or frequency adverbs “從來不” (never). In this case, Chinese basically relies on temporal adverbials to express time relevance. For this reason, some linguists claim that Chinese is tenseless.

On the other hand, in English verb inflection *per se* can locate the event in time, as in:

2. (a) Dr. Zhang regularly went to the conference.  
   (b) Dr. Zhang regularly goes to the conference.  
   (c) Dr. Zhang has been regularly going to the conference.
From 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c), it is observed that the time concept is indeed conveyed without referring to any temporal adverbials. If we translate the sentence into Chinese 張博士常去那個研討會 (Dr. Zhang regularly go to the conference.), we can see that the time element is dropped. We cannot determine when the Chinese verb takes place if we do not attach the temporal adverbials 以前 (in the past), 現在 (now), or 到目前為止 (so far). Chinese has its language-specific devices to express temporal concepts, which are basically expressed by means of, as has been mentioned, temporal adverbials, context, or aspectual markers (i.e., -le, -guo, -zai, -zhe).

Although tenseless, Chinese is regarded as a language with rich and complex aspectual markers (i.e., perfective –le and –guo, and imperfective –zai and –zhe). Yet, its aspectual grammaticisation is unique (Zhang, 1995). Chinese expresses its temporal reference through temporal adverbs (tense markers) such as qu nian (last year), ming nian (next year), and zuo tian (yesterday), or through aspectual markers such as le and guo, or through context (Lin, 2006; Wong, et al., 2002). From their forms to the meanings and functions carried by the perfective and imperfective linguistic devices, we can see it is fairly different from English. For example, the function of the experiential marker –guo is not completely the same as its English counterpart “have+pp.”


(b). I have been in love with him.

It is apparent that the Chinese sentence with experiential marker –guo is not equal to 3(b) with experiential present perfect “have been.” The event in 3(a) does not persist in the present, while 3(b) does. As Zhang (1995: 208) has argued, “on the whole Chinese has language-specific conventions to reflect aspektual relationships
between verbs and other elements.” Yang & Huang (2004) provide a more detailed analysis of Chinese tense and listed the various ways they can be expressed:

1. Temporal adverbials, including deictic temporal markers such as long ago, yesterday, etc.;
2. Anaphoric adverbials such as then, after, before, at that time, on that day, the next day, etc.;
3. Calendric temporal phrases such as in 1993; last Sunday, etc.;
4. Temporal adverbial clauses introduced by when, after, before, while, etc.;
5. Other temporal markers such as in my primary school years, etc.; and,
6. Frequency adverbials such as always, often.

While tense and aspectual markers provide a very useful cue for us to identify the temporality of a Chinese sentence, according Yang and Xu (2007), the temporal boundary of a Chinese temporal marker does not necessarily end at the end of a sentence. It can end before the sentence ends, and sometimes it can extend to several following sentences or even the entire paragraph. Therefore, Yang and Xu (2007) argue that the meaning in the context is more important than tense-aspect forms in understanding Chinese tense. They further propose several indicators to define the ending of the temporal boundaries in Chinese sentences, and the most relevant to my study are set out below.

(1) The introduction of a new tense marker. For example:

Realized himself is a genius after, he harder work
is from subconscious struggle to have purposeful effort,

since future even more unlimited, or say unable predict

(p. 77)
The sentence consists of five clauses separated by the Chinese comma (，). The introduction of the second temporal adverb 此後 (after this) in the fourth clause automatically ends the temporal boundary of the first temporal adverb 後 (after) in the first clause. Therefore the fourth and fifth clauses are temporally covered by the boundary of the second temporal adverb.

(2) The introduction of a new verb of a different class from the anterior one.

For example:

我 到時 連本帶利 一起 還 你 ， 我 知道 你的
I when the time comes principal and interest together pay you I know your

錢 來之不易。
money come not easy.

(p. 73)

The first clause of this sentence carries a temporal adverbial phrase 到時 (when the time comes) to define the tense of the verb 還 (return money), and the second clause does not carry any tense markers. The temporal boundary of the adverbial phrase, however, ends at the first clause because of the introduction of 知道 (know), a verb describing a perception, which is different from 還 (return money), a verb describing changes of possession.¹ This example shows that even if these two clauses belong to the same sentence, the introduction of a new verb of a different class effectuates the end of the previous temporal boundary.

(3) The change of the text mode such as from narrative to argumentative, from descriptive to declarative, and so forth. For example:

¹ Levin (1993) proposed a semantic classification of verbs into 48 broad classes or 192 smaller classes such as manner of motion verbs, directed motion verbs, sound verbs, change of possession, perception verbs, sending and carrying verbs, verbs of gestures and sign, weather verbs.
The above text consists of two sentences marked by the Chinese full stop (。).

Only the first sentence carries a temporal adverbial 某一天 (one day). The first sentence is a narration of a story about a teacher’s involvement in a trouble. The second sentence starts with some evaluative clauses 爲了生存，他自然要掙扎 (To survive, he has to struggle.), which is the author’s opinion. Since this expression of the author’s opinion shifts the text mode from narrative to evaluative, the tense boundary of the temporal adverbial 某一天 ends at the end of the first sentence, marked by the first Chinese full stop (。).

In summary, time-related adverbials/phrases (temporal adverbials, anaphoric adverbials, calendric temporal phrases, frequency adverbials, etc.) provide explicit reference to time in Chinese sentences, while aspectual markers only provide implicit reference to time and require the assistance of contextual clues to determine the exact tense of a Chinese sentence. When neither time-related adverbials/phrases nor aspectual markers are present, the tense of a Chinese sentence is purely determined by contextual clues. Thus the temporal meaning of the context is more important than tense-aspect forms in understanding Chinese tense. When contextual clues to the temporal meaning in Chinese sentences need to be interpreted, Yang and Xu’s (2007)
examination of contextual indicators provides us with an effective tool to analyse the temporality of Chinese sentences and discourse. For consistency, my study will use “expressed/expression through context” to refer to tenses of Chinese sentences that are determined by contextual clues, and “tense markers” and “aspectual markers” to refer to the time-related adverbials/phrases and aspectual markers in Chinese sentences respectively.

2.4 The Difficulty Influencing Non-native Speakers’ Choice of Tense-Aspect

In this section I will look at the difficulties faced by non-native English speakers in acquiring and using English tense and aspect which may influence their choice of tense and aspect in translation. I will first look at the difficulties understanding the communicative meaning of English tense-aspect in Section 2.4.1, followed by a review of the difficulties arising from the complexity of English tense-aspect system in Section 2.4.2. I will then explore difficulties related to tense-aspect choices for compound and complex sentences in Section 2.4.3, and, finally, tense-aspect choices beyond the sentence level in Section 2.4.4.

2.4.1 Communicative Meaning of English Tense and Temporal Semantics

Tense and aspect is chosen for communicative purposes; the author’s or the translator’s intention to communicate effectively with the reader may play a role in the choice of tense and aspect. For example, Oster (1981), in his study of the use of tense-aspect in the literature review section of English research papers, finds that the present perfect is used to mention past literature when the intention of the author is to claim generality about the literature. In another study, Riddle (1986) uses the following examples to explain that the choice of tense-aspect is related to
communicative purpose:

*Leaving a movie theatre*] That was a great movie. (p. 268)

The speaker’s perception of the movie as finished and complete causes him or her to use the past simple even though the movie continues to be great. On the other hand, if the speaker in the following situation wishes to describe some aspect of a current relationship, the present tense would be more appropriate:

*Jane said that her ex-husband was a pathological gambler and that’s why she divorced him.* (p. 276)

A past marker (was) is used, but not because of a need to achieve tense harmony with the verb tense in the main clause. The event may still be true now (her husband remains a gambler), but it is no longer of Jane’s interest and the relationship is considered remote and finished from her point of view. Therefore, the event is marked with a past tense marker.

In general, there is consensus among researchers that “tense choices are determined by a variety of factors rather than simply by time” (Hawes & Thomas, 1997: 395). Nevertheless, studies have found that in learning English, Chinese speakers, like speakers of other languages, come across the morphological inflections of English verbs first, which causes them not to pay enough attention to the meaning of tense-aspects (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995; Hinkel, 1992, 2004). This lack of attention may result in their misunderstanding of the meaning of all English tenses, such as present tense (Chen, 2005; Hinkel, 2004), future tense (Hinkel, 2004), and past tense (Hinkel, 1992, 2004). Therefore, according to Hinkel (1992), their writing reads as “unnatural” because such misunderstandings exclude them from the English speech community, the members of which share mutual beliefs and perceptions of the linguistic meanings of tense with which non-members are unfamiliar.
Researchers have looked why non-native speakers have difficulty understanding communicative meaning of tense and aspect, and they have claimed that non-native speakers’ choices of tense and aspect were influenced by lexical aspect on tense-aspect marking (Andersen, 1991; Bardovi-Harlig, 1997; Dowty, 1982, 1986; Schramm, 1996; Smith, 1986). For example, Bardovi-Harlig (1992) uses the instrument of a cloze passage to test the learners’ use of tenses/aspects. By further scrutinising the responses for the cloze, she finds that learners tend to use past simple for more punctual verbs while progressive for more durative verbs. In other studies of the writing of non-native English speakers, it has been found that past simple is most often used with achievement verbs, followed by accomplishment, activity and state verbs, while in the writing of native English speakers there is no such tendency (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Bergstrom, 1996). There have been a few studies focused on Chinese ESL learners. Cai (2004) finds that their use of past simple was influenced by lexical aspect of the verb. Fan and Lin (2002) find the lack of lexical aspect knowledge to be capable of explaining some incorrect use of English tense and aspect by native Chinese-speaking ESL learners, such as the use of achievement verbs with duration phrases. More importantly, Collins (2005) and Coppieters (1987) have observed the incorrect use of tense and aspect in the writing of English learners with advanced and near-native English proficiency, irrespective of their first language, and that the errors tended to result from a lack of awareness of the semantic categories of verbal morphology.

In addition, a number of studies have been found that as the learners’ proficiency develops, the influence of lexical aspect on tense-aspect marking becomes less powerful; and when the learners move toward a target-like use of the tense and aspect, they move toward marking the tense and aspect uniformly across
all lexical aspectual classes instead of favouring one more than another (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995)

These studies looked at English tense and aspect only from the perspective of language acquisition and dealt with tense and aspect errors in writing. When translating into English, the situation is different: translators may have different interpretations of the same source sentence and they all could be correct. For example, both “Alcohol plants failed” and “Alcohol plants were failing” could be correct. Therefore, the presence of the pattern of associating certain tense-aspect with lexical aspect in translation may not necessarily indicate poor translation competence. My study will include lexical aspect in the analysis because it may provide a better account of translation competence.

2.4.2 The Complexity of English Grammatical Tense-aspect System

As many linguists have stated, to choose English tense system is complex and presents great difficulties for learners. For example, Declerck (1991:114) lists nine considerations, each with two possibilities that the speaker/writer may take into account of in order to use correct English tense-aspect:

1. Choice of the time of utterance or the time of decoding as \( T_0 \);
2. Choice of time-sphere – a situation that took place before \( T_0 \) can be represented as lying in the present time-sphere (he has done it) or as lying in the past time-sphere (he did it);
3. Choice of sector – a situation that has started before \( T_0 \) and is still holding at \( T_0 \) can often be located either in the pre-present sector (I have been waiting for you) or in present sector (I am waiting for you);
4. Choice of temporal domain – when two situations belong to the past
time-sphere, the speaker may represent them as lying in the same domain (He left and would never come back) or as lying in two different domains (He left and never came back);

5. Choice of temporal relation – when two situations follow each other in time, the first may sometimes be represented either as anterior to the other (When the bell had rung we left the room) or as simultaneous with it (When the bell rung we left the room);

6. Choice of temporal perspective – the speaker may or may not use the historical present in clauses that form part of a past narrative;

7. Choice of temporal focus – the speaker may use either He went to Florence, which lay in a wide valley or He went to Florence, which lies in a wide valley, depending on whether or not he wishes to represent the situation as it was experienced by the relevant participant in the situation;

8. Choice between the present perspective system and the future perspective system – the speaker can say either The newspaper will publish everything that is said tomorrow or The newspaper will publish everything that will be said tomorrow; and,

9. Choice between direct and indirect binding – the speaker may say either I had been reading while I was waiting or (though less usually) I had been reading while I had been waiting.

As Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1998) point out, the difficulty of choosing the correct tense-aspect form is that the learner would not only have to know each form, but also need to understand why one tense is used in a certain situation while another is not. Based on Dekeyser’s analysis (2005) of what makes learning grammar difficult, sources of learning difficulty include the difficulty of
understanding meanings, the difficulty of mastering forms, and the difficulty of mapping forms with meanings. He argued that English tense-aspect is difficult in many ways because it has diverse forms and each tense is endowed with diverse meanings. The present tense can be used not only to indicate events in the present, but also to indicate a future event, as in *The flight departs at 7:00 tomorrow*. Such cases must be confusing for many learners because present tense does not refer to “present time.”

Some tense-aspect forms in English even share overlapping usages, which causes great difficulties for learners. For example, Suh (1992) suggests that the present perfect and the past simple share the feature [+anterior], but differ on the feature [current relevance] with the present perfect carrying [+current relevance] and the past simple [-current relevance], for instance, “*Shelia has joined the Sierra Club.*” and “*Shelia joined the Sierra Club.*” The two sentences share the feature [+anterior], so that the event time of both is in the past, but the first sentence has some current relevance while the second one does not. Leech (1971: 30) also regards the present perfect as “past-time-related-to-present-time.” Suh (1992: 82) states that by using the present perfect the “speaker brings what happened in the past to the realm of the present.” McCoard (1978: 19) describes the invariant meaning of the present perfect as “an identification of prior events with the ‘extended now’.” The shared feature of anteriority has led many researchers to argue that the past simple and present perfect are identical, so it causes considerable difficulties for learners (Haegeman, 1989; Inoue, 1979; Smith, 1981). Therefore, some non-native English speaking learners may choose to avoid past simple, as Svalberg and Chuchu (1998) find.
2.4.3 English Compound and Complex Sentences

Complex, compound, and reporting sentences are frequently used in English. When combining clauses, the writer/speaker must decide the tense-aspect form for the involved clauses: whether they are to have the tense in one clause refer to a time established by the other clauses or to take the coding time or some other time as the $T_0$ for all clauses. The difficulty involved in the decision has long been recognised by researchers (Celce-Murcia & Diane, 1998; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Declerck, 1991; Hocking, 1974). Many grammar books, however, explain the tense choice in subordinate clauses in an oversimplified way of “tense harmony,” and instruct learners to change the tense of the subordinate clause according to the tense of the main clause (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998). For example, Meg: I have a new car. -> Meg said that she had a new car.

While many native English speakers often violate the so called “tense harmony” rule (e.g., Shirley told me that she has a swimming pool.), non-native learners are confused because they have not been taught the exceptions to tense harmony (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998). In her study of ESL learners of advanced levels, Riddle (1986) suggests that the cause of improper use of tense by the learners is their failure to recognise that tense harmony is not the only rule governing tense choices, and the choice of tense by native speakers involves considerations of a speaker’s point of view and the purpose, meaning and function of the discourse.

2.4.4 Tense-aspect Choices beyond the Sentence Level

Understanding the meanings of each tense-aspect type is demanding, and, in many situations, requires considerations at the discourse level. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), the use or choice of tense-aspect can be categorised as a form of conjunctive cohesion, which includes both coordinate and subordinate conjunctions
that identify additive, adversative, causal, and temporal relationships between and within sentences. They further inform us, however, that a text does not consist of sentences but that it is realised by sentences. As Kaplan and Grabe (2002: 193) point out, “a text is a stretch of language whose structure is constituted along linguistic lines, so that the textuality results from internal cohesion and coherence of textual units; that is, a focus on regularities of intersentential links” as well as distribution of information within texts – old/new, theme/rheme, topic/comment. A text “has features of organization which distinguish it from non-text” (Baker, 1992: 112). These features of organisation, defined as texture, help make a text coherent and easier to understand (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Very often, when surface mistakes (lexical and grammatical) have been corrected, the textual problems remain and may lead to an incoherent text that is difficult to understand (Mauranen, 1996).

This view is shared by Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1998; 67), who use the following examples to illustrate how insufficient awareness of tense-aspect at the discourse level results in non-native speakers of English producing ungrammatical and unnatural texts.

(1) I have a splitting headache that I’ve had for 2 hours. I think I am going to take a couple of aspirin tablets.

(2) The little girl cried her heart out. She had lost her Teddy Bear and was convinced she wasn’t ever going to find him.

As we can see, (1) is given from the point of view of present time, and the tense of all the clauses (have, have had, think, am going to) remain in present. In (2) all tenses (cried, had lost, was convinced, wasn’t going to) remain in past. These two texts are grammatical and read natural. However, many non-native speakers tend to change the tense sequence arbitrarily and produce texts as follows:
(3) I have a splitting headache that I had for 2 hours. I think I am going to take a couple of aspirin tablets.

(4) The little girl cries her heart out. She lost her Teddy Bear and is convinced she won’t ever find him.

As Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1998: 67) point out, such shifts of tense from present to past as in text (3) or from past to present as in text (4) are ungrammatical and make the texts sound “somewhat disjointed and awkward when compared with the original.” In order to avoid this problem, they suggested that learners be taught that once a tense or time has been established in a discourse it can only be shifted under two circumstances. First, when a “generic” tense (i.e., present simple) temporarily suspends the requirement to continue the use of the same tense. Second, when a new explicit time marker introduced into the discourse terminates the old tense and replaces it with another. They further provided the following piece of discourse to illustrate how a generic present simple (i.e., You don’t hear that very often.) and time marker (i.e., Next Friday) warrant the shift of tense, the former from past to present, and the latter from past to future. “I went to a concert last night. They played Beethoven’s Second. You don’t hear that very often. I enjoyed it. Next Friday I’m going to another concert. They’re playing something by Stravinsky” (1998: 68).

Hinkel (1997) holds that the conventions and regularities of tense-aspect choice can be seen as a linguistic event within discourse frames. He describes discourse frames as the referential contexts in which the contextual and marked (or unmarked) linguistic features of an event, such as choosing the tense-aspect, take place. He argued that discourse frames are culturally determined, which means that the linguistic features of an event, such as tense-aspect choices, are framed within a particular culture and may be interpreted differently by members of different cultures.
Therefore, serious problems may result in the choice of tense-aspect if the writer does not pay attention to the conventions of tense-aspect in discourse frames (Hinkel, 1997: 289). In relation to the problem of tense-aspect choice by native Chinese learners of English writing, Chen (2005) found that the Chinese speakers in her study, who were either graduate students or had received Masters and Doctoral degrees in the USA, seemed to understand the meaning and the use of tense-aspect at the sentence level but not at the discourse level. They tended to lack an understanding of how “tense conventions at the discourse level override tense decisions at the sentence level” (Chen, 2005: 87). The study also found that the Chinese speakers, in addition to making tense errors, shifted tense frequently in a context, and presented unclear time frames and sequences of events in their writing.

Linguists have argued that all language should be thought of as discourse. McCarthy and Carter (1994), for example, having focused on the role of tense-aspect in different genres, argue that if students are to use tense-aspect correctly, then they should be made aware of the ways that tense-aspect changes with specific genres.

Although studies of tense-aspect choice in translation are rare, the importance of a translator’s understanding of tense-aspect conventions in the translation of different genres has been pointed out (Adab, 2000; Hale, 2004; Hatim & Mason, 1990). It is necessary, therefore, that my study includes the discourse as a variable in the analysis of translators’ choice of tense-aspect. The source texts are chosen from the press editorial genre because this genre has been regarded as difficult in translation training. In addition, the investigation of discourse as it relates to both native and non-native use of tense-aspect morphology has been criticised for over-emphasising narratives and leaving other genres uninvestigated (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998). The choice of the press editorial genre will also help native Chinese-speaking
translators into English understand more about this genre.

### 2.5 The Influence of the First Language

In addition to the difficulties and influence mentioned in Section 2.4, learners face other difficulties of various natures in their choice of tense and aspect, one of which is the influence of their first language (Svalberg & Chuchu, 1998).

With respect to native Chinese learners, the differences between English and Chinese in marking temporal reference has been found to exert profound influence on their use of English tense-aspect, and as a result it takes a long time for them to acquire the proper usage of English tense-aspect. For example, having studied five groups of a total 453 Chinese ESL learners in Hong Kong ranging from Grade 5 (10 years old) to first year university (19 years old), Yang and Huang (2004) have found that these learners have shown a very slow shift from depending more on the Chinese way of expressing temporal reference (using more pragmatic and lexical devices in writing) to depending more on the English way (using more grammatical devices in writing). Similar results have been found in studies of ESL learners with different first languages (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig & Bergstrom, 1996; Collins, 2005; Coppieters, 1987; Guiora, 1983; Hinkel, 1992, 1997; Liszka, 2004), and it is particularly important to note that the same pattern applies to learners who have acquired near-native like proficiency (Coppieters, 1987). The different grammaticisation could result in learners avoiding the use of the target’s linguistic features or slower rates of acquisition. These studies seem to suggest that, with regard to the context of this current study, no matter how advanced is the English proficiency of a native Chinese-speaking translator, he or she may still be influenced by the Chinese language tense system when choosing English tense-aspect forms.
2.6 Other Issues Influencing Tense and Aspect Choices

It has long been noticed that there exists a certain element in translation referred to as “thirdness”. It is an inherent feature of all translation and a natural state of translation similar to translation universal (Frawley, 1984; Mauranen, 2005; Schäffner & Adab, 2001; Trosborg, 1997b). According to Mauranen (2005: 80), thirdness results in part from the translators’ tendency to follow the source text, which involves not only following the tense-aspect of the source text but also the “logic” of the text, such as its information structure and communication emphasis. How thirdness is formed, however, remains an open question and “it seems that cognitive and socio-historical analyses will be helpful in untangling the issues” (Mauranen, 2005: 78). Therefore, my study will also analyse whether this tendency applies to both native Chinese speaking and English speaking translators in their tense choices.

In my study, the situation is more complicated when the source text is the translator’s L1 and the translator is under the influence of L1 and the source text at the same time. Therefore, my study will focus on how the L1 and the source text influence the translator when he or she chooses the tense-aspect and whether they play a role in the translator’s decision not to follow the tense of the source sentence.

Translator competence is defined by Pym (2011) as “the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become a translator” (p.78). According to him, the competence consists of two components: declarative knowledge (knowing that) and operational knowledge (knowing how). He also states that the term can be substituted by more specific expressions: “skill, knowledge, and disposition, with degrees of expertise operative within all three” (Pym, 2011: 78). Linguistics, on the other hand, usually
defines the competence as a set of rules that underlie performance. To provide another example, Stansfield, Scott, and Kenyon (1992) say that competence should be divided into two different skills: accuracy (of the transfer of ST content into the TT) and expression (quality of translator’s expression). Other theories concerning translator competence include various components, for instance knowledge of language, knowledge of translation technologies, ability to apply translation strategies, confidence, speed, etc.

In the present analysis, the translation competence of individual translators was not explored. The texts were translated by three different groups of translators described hereinbefore (Ch. 2.1). The reason for not exploring the translator competence in the thesis is that the competence within a group is regarded as equal, and all of the translators are thought to have almost the same chance to translate a text correctly. The professional translators then should, in all probability, have more experience in translating. Moreover, translation studies is a relatively new field of study, still developing, without any strict borders separating it from other disciplines. The problem of assessing translation quality objectively does not seem to have any clear cut solution. As Hatim and Mason (1997) state, “The assessment of translation performance is an activity which, despite being widespread, is under-researched and under-discussed” (p. 199).

2.7 Summary
Translation competence into the second language differs from that into the native tongue. However, there is a lack of studies on the difference between the native and non-native English speaking translators when they translate into English. The choice of English tense-aspect in translation from Chinese into English has been identified
as a potential area to unveil the difference and help non-native English speaking translators overcome the problem of unnaturalness in their translation. This chapter provides a thorough investigation of the various ways of encoding temporality in English and Chinese, and the most notably discussed are the grammatical tense, grammatical aspect, and lexical aspect. The complexity of the English and Chinese tense-aspect systems, the influence of lexical aspect on the choice of verbs, and the differences between tense and aspect and their markings in English and Chinese are believed to present difficulties in the choice of English tense and aspect when native Chinese speaking translators translate from Chinese into English. The work under review allows us to see more clearly the distinctive features of the tense-aspect system in the two languages, which will greatly facilitate the study on the tense-aspect choice in translation into both first and second language.
Chapter 3  Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework within which a unified analysis of tense-aspect choices in translation from Chinese into English is appropriately accommodated. Theories on semantic meaning of tense-aspect and different tense-aspect marking between Chinese and English are examined to provide the theoretical basis on which hypotheses about the choice of tense-aspect in translation into the second language are made.

Section 3.2 of this chapter establishes that tense-aspect acquisition theories provide a sound theoretical basis to analyse tense-aspect choices in translation. It also explicates the view toward tense-aspect choices in translation into the second language as a systematic phenomenon of interlanguage development. Section 3.3 explains the rationale to choose lexical aspect theory to address the semantic purpose of tense-aspect in the present study, and outlines the hypotheses on tense-aspect choices in translation. In Section 3.4, the concepts and analytic models on text structure have been examined to establish Rhetorical Structure Theory as an analytic framework for the analysis of tense-aspect choices beyond the sentence level. Section 3.5 summarizes the whole chapter.

3.2 Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory to Tense-aspect Choices

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is a theory that has been used to characterise the development process of the learner to acquire a language. It provides a mechanism to explain SLA development. Taking an interlanguage perspective, SLA research has been used to identify the nature and sources of the underlying L2
knowledge system, and has provided explanations on the L2 learner’s state of mind and knowledge representation about the second language as well as the structural features of the learner’s interlanguage (Doughty & Long, 2008; Gass, 1988; Gregg, 1989). In my study, I have adopted an interlanguage perspective on tense and aspect choices in translation and maintained that the translator’s choice of tense and aspect varies systematically with their translation competence.

First, interlanguage theory covers a broad spectrum of second-language phenomena including tense and aspect acquisition in the learner language, the question of how the learner develops the new system and the principles that govern the process of learning tense and aspect (Ellis, 1994). Second, interlanguage theory is seen to be justified as the theoretical framework for investigating tense-aspect choices in translation as it meets both criteria of the SLA theory. According to Selinker, Swain, and Dumas (1975) and Ellis (1994), interlanguage is systematic in nature, which is predictable based on hypothesized rules. The systematic feature of interlanguage was identified in a series of studies. The representative one is the work of Andersen's (1978), who employs implicational scaling techniques to look at the variability and uniformity of interlanguage. His study shows that the second-language acquisition is systematic and follows a developmental sequence despite some variation. Huebner (1979) also finds that learners' interlanguage is systematic in nature although variation may occur in the process of learning. Third, as presented in Section 2.2.2, translation into the second language is seen to be a special form of interlanguage, and thus it conforms to universal linguistic rules and show internal consistency. Our view is partially supported by the findings of a number of studies related to tense-aspect acquisition that the tense-aspect choices in the interlanguage follow a particular order that moves from a pragmatic to a lexical
and finally a grammatical expression of temporality (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000). That is, learners progress from using discourse principles such as chronological order, to using adverbials and then verbal morphological markings (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998, 2001; Dietrich, et al., 1995). Furthermore, our view is consistent with that of Ellis’ (1994: 121) that the learners undergo an acquisition process in which they overuse a new form to serve certain functions and then come to discover which of the functions can actually be covered by the form. In this process, this kind of variation presents itself at an early stage of development and when learners proceed to higher proficiency levels, such variation may disappear.

Ellis (1985) points out that interlanguage can be studied from a longitudinal or vertical dimension and a cross-sectional or horizontal dimension. A longitudinal study "refers to the developmental stages through which the learner passes over time" (Ellis, 1985: 118), whereas a cross-sectional study investigates a learner's interlanguage demonstrated at a specific point of time. A pseudo-longitudinal interlanguage study focuses on interlanguage change, "with data being collected at a single point of time, but with different proficiency levels represented" (Gass, 2013: 36). On this premise, we will conduct a pseudo-longitudinal study to evaluate the tense choice by translators of different language background and competence levels.

My study, therefore, will select translators of three different language competence levels: native Chinese-speaking novice translators (lower English competence), native Chinese-speaking professional translators (higher English competence), and native English-speaking professional translators (highest English competence). By comparing the characteristics of their tense distribution in translation, my study may shed light on how tense choice differs among translators of different language background and competence levels and provide guidelines to
help translators of lower competence levels become more native-like in tense-aspect choices.

According to Ellis (1994: 670), the learner’s development in the acquisition of linguistic features is a mental process and thus cannot be observed directly. Therefore it has to be examined through the product, i.e. learner performance data. He distinguishes three main data types: (1) language use data, which show how learners endeavor to use the L2 in either comprehension or production; Language use data is regarded as ‘elicited’ if it is obtained from a controlled experiment, and ‘natural’ if not; (2) metalingual judgments, which concern learners' intuitions about the L2, for instance by asking them to judge whether the given sentences are grammatical or not; and (3) self-report data, which investigate learners' strategies through questionnaires or think-aloud tasks. Previous interlanguage research on tense-aspect mainly adopts introspective data (i.e. Ellis’s type 2 and 3 data) and elicited language data. However, these types of data have their disadvantages. In particular the use of elicited data has been seriously questioned because in an experimental language situation, learners may use language which is greatly different from the language they would use in a natural situation(Granger, 1998). In my study, I use translation texts as data. It belongs to type (1) natural data, which avoids the disadvantages of elicited data and types (2) and (3) data, and makes the generalisability of the findings more reliable.

3.3 Lexical Aspect Theory and Tense-Aspect Choice in Translation

3.3.1 Lexical Aspect and Tense-aspect Acquisition

As presented in Section 2.4.1, SLA studies on tense-aspect acquisition have found that non-native English speakers acquiring the tense are influenced by the
inherent semantic aspect affixed to the verbs (Andersen & Shirai, 1994; Andersen & Shirai, 1996; Shirai & Andersen, 1995). According to the studies reviewed in Section 2.4.1 (Bardovi-Harlig, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Bergstrom, 1996; Cai, 2004; Collins, 2005; Coppieters, 1987; Fan & Lin, 2002; Hawes & Thomas, 1997; Hinkel, 1992, 2004), L2 speakers from a wide variety of L1 backgrounds and target languages first use perfective past marking on Achievement and Accomplishment verbs, only later extending this to Activity verbs, State verbs, habitual or iterative past verbs, and counterfactual (e.g. if I were you) or pragmatic softeners (could you help me?). Similarly, for progressive morphology, marking begins with Activity verbs and extends slowly thereafter to Accomplishment and Achievement verbs, and for imperfective grammatical aspect across verb classes the marking follows the order of State, Activity, Accomplishment and Achievement verbs (Andersen & Shirai, 1996, p. 557).

Based on these empirical studies, there are two related theoretical hypotheses formulated in interlanguage research. The first is the defective tense hypothesis (Andersen 1991) and the second is the “primacy of aspect hypothesis” (Robison, 1990). The defective tense hypothesis states: “[i]n beginning stages of language acquisition only inherent aspectual [emphasis original] distinctions are encoded by verbal morphology, not tense or grammatical aspect” (Andersen, 1991: 307). Andersen shows that children learning Spanish as a second language use the imperfect and preterite (past simple in Spanish) inflections to mark lexical aspect redundantly. Robison (1990) proposes the “primacy of aspect hypothesis,” in which he explained that “aspect is primary in the sense not that morphemes that denote aspect in the target language are acquired first, but that target language verbal morphemes, independent of their function in the target language are first used by the
learner to mark aspect” (Robison, 1990: 316). He shows that the learner’s use of –ing tended to mark durative verbs and PAST/ed tended to mark punctual verbs. The prediction supported is that, although the exact pattern will vary depending on L1, L2, and individual differences between learners, verbal morphology correlates with lexical aspect at least during some stage in the development of interlanguage. Bardovi-Harlig (2000) further breaks down the aspect hypothesis into four separate claims:

1. Learners first use perfective tense marking on achievement and accomplishment verbs, eventually extending use to activity and stative verbs;

2. In languages that encode the perfective/imperfective distinction, imperfective appears later than perfective, and imperfective marking begins with stative verbs, extending next to activity verbs, then to accomplishment, and finally to achievement verbs;

3. In languages that have progressive aspect (such as English), progressive marking begins with activity verbs, then extends to accomplishment and achievement verbs; and

4. Progressive markings are not incorrectly overextended to stative verbs by learners.

The distributional bias of tense marking toward lexical aspect has been further studied and accounted for by the interaction between semantic prototypes and the relevance, congruence, and one-to-one principles. The prototype theory has been developed by cognitive psychologists to explain human categorisation (Mervis & Rosch, 1981; Rosch, 1973). According to the prototype theory, “a category has its best exemplars, the prototypes, which share many characteristic features with
members of the category; it also has the peripheral members, the non-prototypes, which share fewer features with other members” (Li & Shirai, 2000: 66). The application of prototype theory in the explanation of the acquisition of lexical semantics and morphology holds that when acquiring a linguistic category, learners may start with the prototype of the category, and then gradually acquire less prototypical members (Taylor, 1993).

The relevance principle offers another explanation of the acquisition of tense-aspect. As Bybee & Slobin (cited in Bardovi-Harlig, 1995: 119) point out, the tense morphological inflections “are more naturally attached to a lexical item if the meaning of the inflection has direct relevance to the meaning of the lexical item.” According to the relevance principle, learners will use morphology that is relevant to the verb, and additionally, the most relevant morphology will be acquired first (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000). The congruence principle states that learners will use tense-aspect morphology whose meaning is most consistent with that of the verb (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000). This principle suggests that learners put together features in their tense-aspect acquisition that are semantically congruent such as telicity, perfectivity, and pastness. The one-to-one principle proposes that learners associate one meaning with one form, and they assume a prototypical meaning for each tense-aspect form (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995). Therefore, the original meaning will be more limited than the final association.

These theories explain the acquisition of tense-aspect morphology well. According to the prototype theory, learners assume a prototypical meaning of “complete action” for the perfective forms, which can be characterised as [+dynamic, +result state, +punctual, +telic]. Being influenced by the one-to-one principle, learners may first link an inflection with its prototypical meaning, and then use that
inflection with verbs that most closely share its meaning under the constraint of the relevance principle and congruence principle.

As they share common features [+dynamic, +result state, +punctual, +telic] with the perfective aspect, achievement verbs combine naturally with the past simple, present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect. With the perfective aspect, these tenses demonstrate a situation as a self-contained whole, and achievement verbs also encode events as punctual and instantaneous. Therefore, achievement verbs closely share the meaning of past simple, present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect but differ greatest with imperfective tense-aspects such as present simple, present progressive, past progressive and future progressive.

Accomplishment verbs involve an endpoint and bring about obligatory results. Therefore they are also naturally associated with the perfective tense-aspects. Accomplishment verbs, however, lack the feature of [+punctual], hence they appear to be less congruent with the central meaning of the perfective tense-aspect than achievement verbs.

Activity verbs present events or situations which do not have any endpoint. Their combination with the perfective tense-aspect does not denote the completion of an event or situation. Thus, they are characterised as [-result state, -telic]. For this reason, activity verbs share less features of the prototypical meaning of the perfective tense-aspect compared to achievement and accomplishment verbs, yet they share more features with the imperfective tense-aspect than accomplishment verbs.

State verbs have the fewest opportunities to combine with the perfective tense-aspect since they do not share features with the perfective aspect. State verbs do not assume either a beginning point or an endpoint in their temporal structure whereas the perfective aspect includes both the beginning and endpoints of a
situation. Thus they are least likely to be combined with perfective tense-aspect. State verbs, however, share most features with the imperfective tense-aspect.

Comrie (1976) explains the interaction between lexical and grammatical aspects with the “naturalness of combination” principle. In his perspective, the perfective aspect encodes a situation as a single whole lacking an internal structure whereas the imperfective aspect presents one as having an internal structure. Thus, the perfective aspect is naturally associated with punctual verbs, which depict events as single points without internal structure. On the other hand, activity verbs have a natural combination with the imperfective aspect because they present events with inherent duration. According to Li and Shirai (2000), when an event ends with a definite result or a specific endpoint, it may have already become a post situation, so the perfective aspect can be used to present it with an external view.

Previous studies on acquisition of perfect aspect have provided evidence to the aspect hypothesis that the use of perfect aspect is correlated with the lexical aspect of verbs. Youssef’s (1990) study of the L1 acquisition of the perfect aspect is a two-year longitudinal study investigating the use of the perfect aspect by three Trinidadian children. She finds that all three subjects apply the perfect aspect only to the verbs of their L1 language that characterise a result state, such as done, gone and finish. Second language acquisition of the perfect aspect has been investigated by Salaberry (1998). He analyses 39 college-level learners of French and indicates that the learners tend to use past or the present perfect with perfective events (which correspond roughly to achievements and accomplishments). Learners also seem to associate the characteristic of an end point with the perfect. Bybee, Perkins, and Pagliuca (1994) and Li and Shirai (2000) examine the grammaticisation of aspectual markers and explored the development and change of the grammatical aspect. They
claim that completive and resultative aspectual markers grammaticise into perfect markers. Completive markers denote an action performed completely and thoroughly, and resultative denotes a state that has been brought about by a prior action. The evolitional perspective of the markers of the perfect aspect show that it has an originally close relationship with the result state in the verb property.

These studies have suggested that the learner’s selection of verbal morphology is related to the inherent lexical semantics of the verb phrase: telic events (achievement and accomplishment), simultaneous processes (activities), and states. The acquisitional sequence is: the perfective forms emerge with achievement verbs, then with accomplishment verbs, followed by activity verbs, and finally with state verbs. The imperfective forms, by contrast, emerge with state verbs, then with activity verbs, followed by accomplishment verbs, and finally with achievement verbs. As far as my study is concerned, the following patterns have been hypothesised:

1) Since perfective is marked in English as past simple and past perfect, NNS translators first use past simple and past perfect on achievement and accomplishment verbs, eventually extending to activity and state verbs;

2) Since imperfective is marked in English as progressive, NNS translators tend first to use present progressive, past progressive, and future progressive with activity verbs, and then with accomplishment and achievement verbs; and,

3) Since tense-aspect combinations such as present simple, present perfect, and so forth can carry either perfective or imperfective meanings, NNS translators tend either to begin using the tense-aspect combinations with state verbs, extending next to activity verbs, then to accomplishment, and
finally to achievement verbs, or to begin with achievement verbs, extending next to accomplishment verbs, then to activity verbs, and finally to state verbs.

3.3.2 Classification of Lexical Aspect

Different ways have been proposed to classify lexical aspect of verbs (Andersen, 1991; Comrie, 1976; Dowty, 1977; Smith, 1978, 1986; Vendler, 1967; Verkuyl, 1996), among which Vendler’s (1967) has been widely accepted. Vendler (1967) suggests that English verbs can be classified into four groups, namely state, activity, accomplishment, and achievement, based on some semantic categories including whether a verb denotes a situation that is dynamic or stative, telic or atelic, or durative or punctual. State verbs persist over time without change and include verbs such as seem, know, want, and be. Activity verbs have inherent duration in that they involve a span of time, like sleep, snow, play, and rain. Accomplishment verbs have inherent duration, too, but they have an endpoint. In build a house, the endpoint is the completion of the house, for example. Achievement verbs have the beginning or the end of an action as in The race began. Examples of achievements include arrive, leave, notice, and recognise. Vendler uses the term “situation aspect” to describe this lexical classification of verbs, based on the above semantic categories such as [±telic] (whether a situation has an inherent end point), [±punctual] (whether a situation has inherent duration), [±stative] (whether a situation persists over time without change) (Vendler, 1967: 99-107). Table 3-1 shows the relationship between the lexical aspect and the semantic categories.
Table 3-1: Relationship between lexical aspect and semantic categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>State (eg. know, want)</th>
<th>Activity (eg. dance, sing)</th>
<th>Accomplishment (eg. discover, finish)</th>
<th>Achievement (eg. begin, end)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stative</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telic</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lexical aspect categorization used in my study as well as in most other recent studies is based on Vendler's four-class pattern (Vendler 1967, Dowty 1979). Verbs are classified according to two pairs of semantic features (± duration, ± telicity), thus yielding four verb or predicate classes: states (+durative, -telic: be, want, love), achievements (-durative, telic: touch, win, catch), accomplishments (+durative, telic: write a book, run 10 miles, grow up), activities (+durative, -telic: write, run, sleep). It is noted here that the domain of lexical aspect is not the isolated verb, but rather the entire predicate. Specific classification rules will be detailed in the Methodology chapter of this thesis.

3.4 Analytic Framework for Tense-Aspect Choices beyond Sentence Level

As we mentioned in Section 2.4.4, the translator’s choice of tense and aspect needs to be examined beyond the sentence level, and a number of studies on the acquisition of tense and aspect by learners of a second language have pointed to the hypothesis that discourse organisation influences the distribution of tense-aspect forms in interlanguage. In this section, I will first introduce rhetorical structure theory (RST) as my theoretical framework for analysing tense and aspect beyond the sentence level, and then explain why it is chosen in my study to propose my hypotheses on the choice of tense-aspect beyond the sentence level.
3.4.1 Rhetorical Structure Theory

Rhetorical structure theory is a school of macrostructural analysis (Mann & Thompson, 1987), a framework that accounts for text structure above the sentence level. It views the so called 'rhetorical relations' between sentences such as "background," "purpose," "elaboration," "evidence," and "summary" as critical in text organisation. Using the rhetorical relations RST provides a systematic way for analysing the text, and a RST analysis of the text structure usually involves reading the text and constructing 'rhetorical units' using the relations. For example, Ansary and Babaii (2005) find that English editorials consist of four structural units, namely: 'addressing an issue,' 'initiating an argument', 'argumentation,' and 'articulating a position.'

Researchers in this school hold that the language features of the rhetorical unit plays a role in creating the problem of unnaturalness for translators and ESL writers. For example, citing many studies in the reading-writing connection (Allison, 1995; Blanton, 1994; Carrell & Monroe, 1993; Eskey, 1993; Ferris, 1994; Johns, 1993, 1995; Silva, 1993), Reid (1996: 129) points out that "more global differences in situational and rhetorical background knowledge may form the basis for ineffective ESL academic prose and/or reader misunderstanding." When reading a text, readers predict meaning from the context, the framework of a text, and the rhetorical shape and purpose of a text. They form a mental representation of the text, anticipating the classification and ordering of ideas, and this mental representation is based on background knowledge and expectations of the writing conventions shared by the readers' 'discourse community'. "When those conventions are violated linguistically, contextually, or rhetorically, NES readers in the discourse community may be puzzled, irritated, or perhaps unwilling to continue reading" (Reid, 1996: 130).
3.4.2 *Rationale for Using RST as Analytic Framework*

The reasons for my study to adopt Rhetorical Structure Theory as an analytic framework are as follows. First, the relations in RST are defined functionally, in terms of what their intended effect on the reader is. Depending on which text type is to be analysed, these relations can be easily grouped into functions, and comparisons of the functions of texts allow for different texts to be compared, i.e., Chinese and English editorials.

There are different ways to analyse linguistic features beyond the sentence level. For example, Hopper (1979) and Dry (1981, 1983) propose that discourse includes two groundings: the foreground and the background. The foreground relates to events belonging to the skeletal structure of the discourse and consists of clauses that move time forward, while the background elaborates or evaluates the events in the foreground. The main function of the background is to provide supportive material in the discourse. Kumpf (1984) and Flashner (1989) using the background and foreground framework have found that there is a relationship between the grounding of the discourse and the use of verbal morphology. Some studies also find that the perfect, especially the past perfect, is mostly used in the background of the learner’s discourses (Hopper, 1979; Bardovi-Harlig 1992). Although the distinction of foreground and background is good for analysing narrative texts and student compositions, it is regarded as too general for my study of editorials which are more complex.

Some researchers have made a distinction between four “discourse form”, later substituted by “discourse mode”, as argumentation, exposition, description and narration. Although the study of “discourse modes” can be traced back to the
rhetoric of the late nineteenth century, such as Bain (1877) and Genung (1900), it is still retained in relatively recent works of translation studies (Hatim & Mason, 1990) and discourse studies (Smith, 2003). The discourse mode theory has been used as a theoretical framework for studies of tense-aspect choice. For example, Matthiessen (1995: 740-745) points out that narratives usually invite a default tense-aspect choice (i.e., the past simple), that reports may use different basic tense-aspect choices for different segments, and that travel itineraries will refer to temporal frames indicated by temporal circumstances for tense-aspect choice as the discourse unfolds. He (2008) has conducted a qualitative study of tense-aspect choices in different modes of discourse. She finds that different modes are characterised by different tense-aspect selections: narrative and description usually involve a default tense-aspect (e.g., the past simple, present or even future); report, information and argument enjoy much freedom in the choice of basic tense-aspect, and the shifting of tense is not uncommon in these modes, which differs from narrative and description.

This framework somehow explains tense-aspect choices in different modes of text. However, few studies have adopt the framework to elaborate on tense-aspect choices in texts that involve different mode such as editorials in my study. As pointed out by many researchers, editorials contain different discourse modes and it is not necessary for all four discourse modes to appear in one editorial (Hatim & Mason, 1990). The results of my study would be compromised if any one of the discourse mode were not represented in the data. Therefore, the framework of discourse mode is not considered appropriate for my study. In contrast, RST “provides a general way to describe the relations among clauses in a text, whether or not they are grammatically or lexically signalled” (Mann & Thompson, 1988: 244). Unlike the aforementioned theories of grounding and discourse mode, RST is pragmatically
uncomplicated, and thus stands out as more suitable for my study.

Second, as mentioned in Section 3.2, my study is to use natural language text as data. RST theory has been proved successful as a tool for analysing the structure of natural language text, the differences between languages (e.g., Chinese and English writings) as well as the difference between English writings of a particular genre produced by native Chinese and native English writers (Liu, 2005; Ramsay, 2001; Scollon, 2000; Scollon & Scollon, 1997; Wang, W., 2004; Zhu, 2000). Ramsay (2001), for example, has studied the variation of rhetorical styles across Chinese and English news texts in Chinese and Australian newspapers. W. Wang (2004) has studied 20 letters to the editor in Chinese and English (10 in each language) and found that Chinese letters to the editor differ from English letters to the editor. As an analytic tool, RST has proven flexible and powerful, and have gained a certain pre-eminence in the field.

3.4.3 The Hypotheses on Choice of Tense-aspect beyond the Sentence Level

Tense-aspect choices have been studied extensively using the RST framework (Bolivar, 1994; Hinkel, 2004; Jordan, 1997; McCarthy, 1991; Oster, 1981; Swales, 1990; Zydatiss, 1986). Some of the most important studies include Swales’s (1990) study of the research paper genre, in which different tense-aspects have been found to predominate in different sections. Similar findings have been discussed by Oster (1981), who uses the framework to analyse the use of tense-aspect in citations of English academic essays, and Zydatiss (1986), who examines tense-aspect used in English news.

Among these studies, Bolivar (1994), who analyses 23 editorials published in The Guardian in the first three months of 1981, has first identified the major
macrostructures of press editorials. She finds that the distribution of tense-aspect is very sensitive to the macrostructure, and the present simple is predominantly used in press editorials. She also finds that the use of tense-aspect in each macrostructure tends to be consistent (p287). This is similar to the findings of other studies using the framework, in which the writer’s choices of tense-aspect and voice in academic genres have been found to be governed by conventions (Hinkel, 1992, 1997) and to follow the regularities of formal academic writing (Jordan, 1997).

Although there is not much research in comparing macrostructural differences between Chinese and English editorials and even fewer in the comparing English translation of Chinese editorials with English editorials, the rhetorical structure theory on macrostructural analysis is applicable to the current study. Based on the findings of previous studies (Bolivar, 1994; Hinkel, 1992, 1997; Ramsay, 2001; Wang 2004b), my study hypothesizes that the tense-aspect consistency in the translation of each editorial rhetoric structure varies with translators’ language competence. The native English-speaking translators are hypothesized to exhibit the highest tense-aspect consistency in their translation of each rhetorical structure of an editorial, followed by the native Chinese-speaking professional translators, and then the novice translators.

3.5 Summary

In this chapter, we have established a unified theoretical framework that combines lexical aspect theory on tense and aspect acquisition and rhetorical structure theory. The former addresses the semantic meaning in tense-aspect choices, and the latter, the tense-aspect conventions that govern tense-aspect choices beyond the sentence level. Under this framework, tense and aspect choices in translation are
viewed as following a systematic development path that is predictable — the distribution of tense-aspect choices are hypothesized to be biased toward the lexical aspect of the predicate verbs. Tense and aspect choices in translation are also viewed as serving the function of maintaining temporal coherence of rhetorical units and thus depending on the translator’s awareness of tense-aspect conventions beyond the sentence level — translators with higher language proficiency levels are hypothesized to observe the conventions better than those with lower proficiency levels. This theoretical framework has targeted the influences in the choice of English tense and aspect when native Chinese translators translate from Chinese into English as presented in the previous literature review chapter.
Chapter 4  Methodology

Existing research has established that the choice of tense and aspect forms in Chinese into English translation is influenced by a number of factors arising from the different tense and aspect forms of each language, the semantic meaning of tense and aspect, as well as from translation-related issues, such as translation competence, communicative purpose, and tense-aspect conventions at the discourse level. The present study is a multi-layered empirical investigation designed to specifically investigate these factors and their influence in the choice of English tense and aspect form in translation. The present study has adopted a data-driven comparative approach.

This chapter describes the methodology employed in this study. 4.1 introduces the participants of the study and the criteria that categorise the subjects into three language background and competence levels. 4.2 focuses on the selection and validation of the source texts. 4.3 describes the procedure of obtaining translations from the participants, and 4.4 describes the instructions given to the translators. 4.5 details the process of coding and extracting data from both the source texts and the translations to enable the alignment of source sentences with translation sentences. 4.6 describes the statistical analyses used to answer each research question.

4.1  The Participants

The translators participating in this study were postgraduate translation students from University of Western Sydney, three other universities in southern Taiwan, and professional translators who had worked in Australia or Taiwan for at least five years.

All participants in the postgraduate student translator group (novice group) had
studied translation, mainly through classroom instruction. These learners were admitted to the programs after successfully completing authoritative tests, which ensured that they were at a similar level of English proficiency. The pre-requisite for the University of Western Sydney was IETLS (the International English Language Testing System) 7.0 and those of the Taiwanese universities were TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) 580 plus a major in English literature or language related undergraduate courses.

According to the syllabi of the translation and interpreting programs issued by those universities, the training aims to give the students advanced knowledge and skills of translation and interpreting with lessons focusing on both translation and interpreting theories and practice. We chose postgraduate students as one of the sample populations because they were the earliest translation learners we could find who possessed reasonably sufficient translation skills and could supply reasonably good translations, from which we could easily find abundant use of tense-aspect morphology. At the time of data collection, the participants could also be characterised as advanced learners of English as a foreign language in the Chinese context with relatively more knowledge of the language rules and vocabulary of both English and Chinese and significant experience of English outside the classroom. Furthermore, this group of participants represented a more advanced stage of the EFL temporal acquisition, seldom sampled in translation studies.

Native Chinese-speaking professional translators were recruited as participants under the assumption that they had acquired most of the Chinese and English language skills, as all of them had received more than 10 years of formal English instruction and an average of 1.5 to 2 years of translation training in addition to an undergraduate degree in any discipline. All Australian subjects were qualified
translators with NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) accreditation. As there were no equivalent accreditation systems in Taiwan, from where most participants were recruited, the criterion of qualification for this study was working as a professional translator for a minimum of three years after graduating from a translation or interpreting degree. Subjects of this group were, however, slightly biased towards those of greater ability, as they were approached first during data collection.

Native English-speaking professional translators were also judged by their translation training and experience. The Australian subjects were either NAATI accredited translators, or had worked as a translator for at least three years, or had received translation training after graduating from their undergraduate degree. All the subjects in this group had learned Chinese for more than 10 years in school. Subjects in this group had acquired English from birth or early childhood (from at least the age of 10) in inner circle English-speaking countries (e.g., the US, the UK, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand) where English was the only communication language in their family and schools.

4.2 Materials

The source texts were abridged authentic Chinese editorials published in newspapers. In order to ensure the authenticity of the source texts, this study followed a cautious procedure to choose the source texts, which included:

1. Collecting a variety of source texts of the same text type;

2. Submitting a short list (of about 10 passages) to a panel of Chinese linguists to evaluate their authenticity. These Chinese linguists were full-time lecturers at the Language Centre of Chang Jung Christian
University, where the author worked;

3. Making a final choice of four texts from the short list; and

4. Editing or rewriting the source text as necessary.

The four Chinese editorials on political and economic issues were selected from three mainstream newspapers in Taiwan published between 2007 and 2008 (see Appendices).

Other considerations given to the source text material included:

1. Source text type. The rationale for choosing political articles has been discussed in the introduction of this study and will not be repeated here;

2. The source texts were written by native Chinese speakers. Chinese texts that are back translated or simply translated from other languages were regarded as unsuitable for this research because they are potentially “contaminated” by the linguistic features of the language from which they were translated. All articles were published in Chinese newspapers and regarded as authentic by the assessment of the Chinese linguists; and,

3. The level of difficulty of the different source texts was deemed equivalent. The difficulty of the source text was considered an important variable in relation to translation quality and in its own right warranted further studies (Hale & Campbell, 2002). Since what constitutes equivalency is beyond the scope of this research, it will not be further discussed here.

4.3 Data and Data Collection

The data for this present research consists of translations from Chinese into English by native Chinese and native English-speaking professional translators and
student translators. Thirteen translators were recruited for each group, amounting to 39 translators. Each translator was given the four Chinese editorial texts to translate into English, producing a total of 156 texts. Since professional translators were estimated to require approximately four hours to produce quality translations of the four texts, using such a text length avoided discouraging them from participating in this research. In addition, such a text length, which has been used in NAATI tests, was used in Campbell’s (1998) study of translating into the second language and has achieved good results. The details of the data collected from each group are as follows:

1. Four translations of about 350 words each from 13 student translators of targeted universities in Taiwan, which offer undergraduate and postgraduate translation courses. These novice translators had limited translation experience;

2. Four translations of about 350 words each from 13 non-native English-speaking professional translators, which were collected through personal connections in Australia and Taiwan. Among these translators, four were recruited from Australia, and nine from Taiwan; and

3. Four translations of about 350 words each from 13 native English-speaking translators in Australia and Taiwan. Only one was recruited from Australia, and the rest were expatriates in Taiwan from the USA (7) and the UK (5).

4.4 Instructions to the Translator

There are different translation strategies, such as source oriented or target oriented strategies. The current study set the rules to ensure the consistency of
translation strategies adopted by the translators. As this study investigates the translation from Chinese into English of native Chinese-speaking translators, the target language was obviously a more important issue than the source language and a target oriented strategy was considered to serve the interests of this study better. The participants were not given a fixed length of time to complete the translation and were encouraged to take as much time as possible to produce fluent translations. Instructions were mailed to the translators together with the source texts. The instructions were:

1. We would like you to translate this passage into English as accurately and fluently as you can. The translation of each passage is untimed;
2. Translations should read as if they were editorials originally written in English;
3. You may use dictionaries or any other aids;
4. We want you to read the text all the way through before you start translating;
5. We want a revised version, so when you have finished one passage, go back and revise the translation; and
6. We will read through your translations after receiving them focusing on their fluency.

4.5 Data Coding

First, the researcher entered all sample translations into the computer with each sentence as a separate entry. Complex and compound sentences were subdivided into clauses according to the finite verbs. The sentences/clauses were aligned to their counterpart in the Chinese source text using WinAlign, an alignment tool provided
by Trados, a computer aided translation software package.

Second, structural units of the Chinese editorial articles together with their corresponding English editorial structural units were identified and then assigned to each sentence/clause. After that the sentences/clauses under each structural unit were coded respectively according to the following measurements:

1. Their grammatical tense and aspect in English, namely, past, present, or future;
2. The temporal interpretation of their Chinese counterpart sentences/clauses in the Chinese source text, namely, past, present, or future;
3. How the tense of their Chinese counterpart sentences/clauses was expressed in the Chinese source text. Through, for example, contextual clues, chronological orders, tense markers (yesterday, last year, etc.), or aspectual markers (le, guo, etc.); and,
4. The four Vendlerian categories of lexical aspect of their main verbs (e.g., state, activity, accomplishment, or achievement).

4.5.1 Identification of Chinese Editorial Structural Units

In order to relate the choice of tense to the functional value of the text in which the choice occurred, the traditional Chinese discourse pattern was applied to divide the source text into four structural units, namely: Qi (introduction: addressing an issue), Chen (development: initiating an argument), Zhuan (development: argumentation), and He (recommendation: articulating a position). This four-part classification of Chinese text patterns was similar to the analytical framework of English editorials proposed by Ansary and Babaii (2005), and I have related each
Chinese pattern to Ansary and Babaii’s pattern in the brackets above. The principles used to identify structural units of Chinese editorial articles were as follows:

1) *Qi*: the introduction section, which describes an event or a critical state of affairs;

2) *Chen*: the development section, which provides background information of the event and initiates analysis and argument;

3) *Zhuan*: another development section, which proposes arguments or counterarguments; and

4) *He*: the conclusion section, which articulates a position and closes the text.

The structural units of one of the source texts are identified in Table 4-1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HEADLINE:</th>
<th>米酒的省思</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Qi</strong>: describing an event: Rice wine is getting more expensive</td>
<td>酒越來越貴，不但造成大量缺貨，還惹出駭人的「假米酒」毒死人風波，對於這一點，相信許多人和我一樣，都有不吐不快的義憤。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chen</strong>: providing background information and initiating argument: It does not make sense to levy heavy taxes on rice wine. Powerful countries impose their standards on others.</td>
<td>酒本來是千百年來中國人傳統的強身補品，是日常料理的必需品，只因它是用蒸餾方式做的，就必須比照國外進口的XO、威士忌，課上重稅，實在沒有道理。這也顯示這些掌控國際經貿組織的強權國家，在進行所謂的貿易談判時，根本不尊重個別國家的歷史文化與民情風俗，硬要將自己的一套標準強加於人。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zhuan</strong>: proposing another argument: In fact, other domestic products are facing price drops.</td>
<td>實不僅是米酒，台灣多項農產品及肉類、水果等，也都出現了價格大跌的現象，讓辛勤終年的農民叫苦連天，不知道未來要何去何從。</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>He</strong>: articulating a position: Perhaps we should rethink globalisation.</td>
<td>這種時候，或許我們應該開始思考，「全球化」難道只是經濟強權向外延伸獲利觸角而提出的美好卻虛假的幻景嗎？希望在全球反戰氣氛日益高漲之際，也能帶動反對經濟霸權的思維，讓類似假米酒毒死人的悲劇事件不再發生。</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-1: Sample structure units of Chinese Editorials
One reason for adopting the typical four-part pattern was because it was thought capable of representing most Chinese essays, although other patterns such as eight-part and three-part have been used by some researchers (Cahill, 2003; Chou, 1989). Another reason for adopting Qi, Chen, Zhuan, He was to differentiate Chinese editorial structural units from English ones.

4.5.2 Identification of English Editorial Structural Units

Ansary & Babaii’s (2005) generic structural potential (GSP) model was used as the analytical framework for identifying the structural units of the English editorials in my study. The contextual configuration (CC) of editorials was given as follows:

\[ H^*[(BI).AI]^*(IA)^*A_1^*A_2^*A^*\ldots^*(CA)\}_{m}^* \{AP_1^*AP_2^*AP^*\}_{n}^* \]

- **H** = Headline: establishing the theme around which the editorial is centred
- **BI** = providing background information;
- **AI** = addressing an issue;
- **IA** = initiation of argumentation
- **A** = argumentation;
- **AP** = articulating a position;
- **CA** = closure of argumentation.

In this GSP, the caret sign indicates sequence. The round brackets enclose elements that are optional. The dot between elements indicates that more than one option in the sequence is possible. That is, BI may either precede or follow AI. The square brackets specify the restraint on sequence and indicate that neither BI nor AI might follow A process and AP. The braces with an arrow indicate the degree of iteration. Finally, the subscripts \((n)\) and \((m)\) refer to the iteration of sets, which means
that both A process and its follow-up AP may be repeated.

The GSP suggests that an English editorial typically carries a headline (H) and addresses an issue (AI) which may require some background information (BI) occurring either before or after it. It then starts off an argument for or against the addressed issue by an initiation statement (IA), which is optional. It makes the arguments (A), and finally takes a position about the issue discussed (AP). This latter process may recur. This is to say, a process of argumentation begins with a series of arguments and ends with the articulation of a position. This process can then be repeated until the planned conclusion (CA) is drawn. Since IA is optional, it was combined with AI in my study.

One reason for adopting this model was that it was developed from the analysis of editorials, and it included all the GSP identified in editorials. In Ansary & Babaii’s (2005) study, thirty randomly selected editorials were coded by two coders, yielding a high inter-coder reliability rate of 81% and a coding reliability rate of 87%. Another reason for adopting this model was that the labels of the structural units were more meaningful than those developed in other studies. Although this top-down approach, which is based mainly on content or function rather than through the asking of questions, was criticised for its subjectivity (Paltridge, 1994), the level of subjectivity was manageable (Ansary & Babaii, 2005), and an acceptable degree of agreement was obtained among the coders and between the coding of editorials.

4.5.3 Classification of Grammatical Tense and Aspect in English Translations

Since English tense and aspect is morphologically marked, it was straightforward to identify tense and aspect in the sentences/clauses. In English grammar Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1998) distinguished three types of
English tense – past, present, and future – and four types of English aspect – simple, perfect, progressive, and perfect progressive – which produce twelve combinations. A close examination of our data showed that perfect progressive aspect was used neither in translations nor in the authentic English editorials. Therefore only nine tense-aspect combinations are coded in my study. These tense-aspect combinations are: present simple, present perfect, present progressive, past simple, past perfect, past progressive, future simple, future perfect, and future progressive. In the process, the following cases were not considered in this study and thus excluded:

1) Titles;

2) Modal auxiliary verbs, which cannot distinguish the indication of past, present, or future time (e.g., Many people would like to vent their anger); and,

3) Verbs which have the same form for past and base (e.g., read, put, hit, cut, let, etc.).

4.5.4 Temporal Interpretation and Temporal Markers in the Chinese Source Text

As Chinese is a tenseless language, the expression of tense in Chinese is based on information of two kinds: the semantic meaning conveyed by aspectual, lexical and adverbial forms, and pragmatic principles of interpretation (Smith & Erbaugh, 2005). Specifically, temporal interpretation of Chinese sentences/clauses in this current study was based on the presence of the tense and aspectual markers and contextual clues identified by previous studies (Lin, 2003, 2006; Wong, et al., 2002):

1. Tense markers – spatio-temporal nouns, temporal phrases, location phrases, prepositional phrases with reference to time such as zuo tian (yesterday), qu nian (last year), ming nian (next year), and so forth;
2. Aspectual markers – adverbs with reference to a specific state or situation during which an event occurs, such as le, yijing, zai; and,

3. Context – contextual clues, chronological order, and so forth.

When coding a sentence/clause for the temporal interpretation of its Chinese counterpart, we used Trados Concordance Tool to display the source text and carried out the following steps:

1. If tense markers were present, identify the temporal interpretation of the Chinese sentence/clause according to the past, present, or future of the tense markers;

2. If tense markers were not present, identify the temporal interpretation of the Chinese sentence/clause according to aspectual markers;

3. If neither tense markers nor aspectual markers were present, identify the temporal interpretation of the Chinese sentence/clause according to contextual clues, which involved examining the tense markers and aspectual markers of the previous sentences/clauses.

Although computational linguistic researchers have tried to use contextual clues to automatically infer time in Chinese texts, the results were far from accurate (Xue, 2008). Therefore, in the current study, when tense markers and aspectual markers were absent, the researcher, as a native Chinese speaker and professional translator, made a judgment of the temporal interpretation based on contextual clues and cross checked it with another Chinese linguist, who had taught Chinese in a Taiwanese university for over 10 years.

4.5.5 Coding for Lexical Aspectual Categories of Main Verbs in Translation

The aspectual categories of the verbs in translation followed the conventional
Vendlerian aspectual classification. Arguments and/or adjuncts of the finite verbs were also taken into consideration because they are important parts of the inherent semantic meaning of the predicate, for example, the contrast between *run* (activity) and *run to the house* (accomplishment).

Three steps were involved in the coding for inherent aspect:

1. The rater read a small subset of translation to familiarise himself with the interpretation of the finite clause being coded by its contextual information;

2. The grammatical aspect/tense was removed from the clause. The verb in the predicate was left in the base form, for the presence of inflections could bias the assessment of lexical aspect (Shirai & Andersen, 1995); and,

3. Diagnostic tests were applied to determine the inherent aspect of the main verb.

To determine the aspectual category of the verbs in the translations, the verbs in the passages were checked by a diagnostic test of lexical aspectuality developed by Andersen and Shirai (1994). Each predicate was run through the diagnostic test as shown in Table 4-2 to make certain that there was no ambiguous interpretation of the aspectual category of a target verb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Does it have a habitual interpretation in present simple?</th>
<th>State or non-state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No =&gt; state</td>
<td>Yes =&gt; non-state =&gt; step 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Does ‘X is V-ing’ entails ‘X has V-ed’ without an iterative/habitual meaning? If you stop in the middle of V-ing, have you done that act of V?</th>
<th>Activity or non-activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes =&gt; activity</td>
<td>Non =&gt; non-activity =&gt; step 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Step 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplishment</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IF ‘X Ved in Y time’, THEN ‘X was Ving during that time’.</td>
<td>Yes=&gt; accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there ambiguity with the insertion of “almost”?</td>
<td>No=&gt; achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“X will VP in Y time” = “X will VP after Y time”</td>
<td>Yes=&gt; accomplishment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplishment</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes=&gt; accomplishment</td>
<td>No=&gt; achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes=&gt; accomplishment</td>
<td>No=&gt; achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No=&gt; accomplishment</td>
<td>Yes=&gt; achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No=&gt; accomplishment</td>
<td>Yes=&gt; achievement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2: Diagnostic Test of Verb Aspectuality (adapted from Andersen & Shirai, 1994)

For example, to determine the lexical aspectuality of the verb write, a present simple sentence as *John writes a book* does not have a habitual interpretation in Step 1. Then, the sentence *John is writing a book* does not entail that *John has written a book*. Also, if *John wrote the book in one month*, it certainly implies that *John was writing a book during that month*. Besides, there is some ambiguity in the sentence *John almost wrote a book*. The sentence could be interpreted as *John’s effort to the completion of a book is quite close* or *a book that John did not successfully produce*. As a result, the verb write is categorised as an accomplishment after going through the diagnostic test.

To further reduce possible influence of subjectivity and chances of mistakes in the classification of lexical aspect, two raters (the researcher and his assistant) carried out the classification work independently after achieving a good understanding of the semantic properties of each of the aspectual classes and the classification tests. They both applied the classification tests on the verbs twice (with an interval of one month between the two tests). After necessary adjustments was made, the two raters then compared the results of the classification to look for any differences. The disagreements between the two raters were then discussed and finally resolved.

The decision to adopt Vendler’s aspectual classification was based on the wide adoption of Vendler’s aspectual classification in the tense-aspect studies of second language acquisition (Andersen & Shirai, 1994; Bardovi-Harlig, 1992;
4.6 Data Spreadsheet

After the coding process, all nominal codes were converted into numerical values for quantitative data analysis. All seven variables used in the current study are listed below; the numbers used to convert codes into values for each variable are also listed.

1. Translator language background and competence levels: 1 = native English-speaking professional translators; 2 = native Chinese-speaking professional translators; 3 = native Chinese-speaking novice translators;
2. Tense and aspect in translation: 1 = present simple; 2 = present perfect; 3 = present progressive; 4 = past simple; 5 = past perfect; 6 = past progressive; 7 = future simple; 8 = future perfect; 9 = future progressive;
3. Tense and aspect in source text: 1 = present; 2 = past; 3 = future;
4. Temporal expression in source text: 1 = tense marker; 2 = aspectual marker; 3 = context;
5. Lexical aspect; 1 = state; 2 = activity; 3 = accomplishment; 4 = achievement;
6. Chinese editorial structure; 1 = H: headline; 2 = Qi: providing background information and addressing an issue; 3 = Chen: initiation of argumentation; 4 = argumentation; 5 = He: articulating a position; and,
7. English editorial structure; 1 = H: headline; 2 = BI: providing background information; 3 = AI: addressing an issue; 4 = A: arguments and counter-arguments; 5 = AP: articulating a position; 6 = CA: closure of
4.7 Data Analysis

A number of statistical methods were used to answer the research questions posited in Chapter 1. The first research question pertaining to choice of tense, aspect and lexical aspect of verbs by translators was addressed by examining the translation data. Descriptive statistics were used to characterise the use of the tense, aspect and lexical aspect of the verbs. In addition, a comparison of percentages of the use was conducted through a crosstabulation procedure, which provided insights into the differences between translators of different language background and competence levels. No inferential statistics were used.

The second research question with 2 sub-questions addresses the effect of tense and aspect in the source text on the choice of tense, aspect and lexical aspect of verbs. To answer research questions 2.1 and 2.2, categorical regression was applied. Categorical regression is a special kind of regression analysis\(^2\) that deals with categorical data. In research question 2.1, for example, the variable, translator language background and competence levels, was a categorical variable with three categories: native English-speaking professional translators, native Chinese-speaking professional translators, and native Chinese-speaking novice translators. Once the categories were assigned a numerical value, 1, 2, 3 respectively (as shown in Section 4.6), the regression analysis then treated quantified categorical variables in the same way as numerical variables to estimate the strength of the relationships among variables.\(^2\)

\(^2\) Regression analysis is a statistical process for estimating the relationships among variables. More specifically, regression analysis helps one understand how the typical value of the dependent variable changes when any one of the independent variables is varied, while the other independent variables are held fixed.(Wikipedia, 2014)
variables.

In our categorical regression, the nonparametric test\(^3\) was chosen in the process because we did not assume that the data were drawn from a normal distribution pool. To answer research question 2.1, the independent variable “Tense and Aspect in the Source” was made to operate as a three-level variable (present, past and future). Two dependent variables were used: “Choice of Tense, Aspect” and “Lexical aspect of Verbs.” The analysis addressing research question 2.2 was similar to that of research question 2.1, in that the independent variable was replaced by “Expression of Chinese Tenses and Aspect,” a two-level variable (through tense-aspect markers or context).

Categorical regression with nonparamatic test was also used to address the third and fourth research questions. The analyses for research question 3 explored the correlation between “Rhetorical Structure of the Chinese Source Text,” “Choice of Tense and Aspect,” and “Tense, Aspect and Lexical aspect of Verbs.” The output was arranged for each group. The analyses for research question 4 described the relationship between “Tense and Aspect in Translation” and “Competence level,” “Tense and aspect in Source,” and “Source Structure”

Although the categorical regression offers several measures of association and tests of association but cannot graphically represent any relationships between the variables. Thus my study employed correspondence analysis as a complementary tool to categorical regression when answering research questions 2, 3, and 4. Correspondence analysis is an exploratory technique that reveals frequency-based associations in corpus data (Glynn, 2012). The main goal of correspondence analysis

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\(^3\) Nonparamatic test is an option in regression analysis which refers to our underlying assumption of the data distribution. (Hettmansperger & McKean, 1998)
is to plot the relationships between the variables in a two-dimension graph. For each variable, the distances between category points in the plot reflect the relationships between the categories with similar categories plotted close to each other. According to Glynn (2012: 133), “[L]inguists often wish to find relations between given linguistic forms, between their meanings and in what situations those forms and meanings are used. Correspondence analysis is especially designed for identifying such usage patterning”.

### 4.8 Summary

A multi-layer empirical research model has been designed for the present study to investigate the influencing factors in the choice of tense and aspect among translators of three language background and competence levels. These factors are tense and aspect forms in both Chinese and English, the semantic meaning of tense and aspect, translation competence, the communicative purpose, and tense-aspect conventions at the discourse level. In the beginning part of this chapter, descriptions of the participants and research materials were given. 39 participants were assigned to three groups of different language background and translation competence levels based on the criteria of language background and translation competence levels, English proficiency levels, and translation work experience. The research materials to be used in the study were carefully selected through a procedure that included four steps: collection of Chinese editorials, authenticity analyses by Chinese linguists, short listing of the source text, and editing and re-writing of the source text when necessary.

The data to be used in the analysis were then obtained from the translators and amounted to a total of 156 pieces of texts. Several steps were involved in coding the
data: translator language background and competence levels, tense and aspect used in translation, tense in the source text, the expression of time in the source text, lexical aspect of the English verb used in translation, and the rhetorical structure of Chinese and English editorials. Data processing procedures were described in detail in Section 4.7.
Chapter 5  Results and Findings

In this chapter, I present the results from the data collected to investigate the multiple factors influencing the choice of tense and aspect made by translators of different language background and competence levels. In order to collect the information on the participants’ use of tense-aspect, translation materials consisted of translations of four Chinese editorials from each translator.

In 5.1, the results from the data analysis of the translator’s overall choice of tense-aspect are presented on the group level. In 5.2, I perform a detailed analysis to investigate the influence of the tense-aspect type in the source text on the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in translation. In 5.3, I examine the influence of the tense-aspect in the source text and the temporal expression of the source text on the translator’s choice of tense-aspect in translation. In 5.4, I present the results from the analysis of the relationship between the translator’s choice of tense-aspect and the lexical aspect of the verbs. In 5.5, I report the results of the correlation analysis to explore the relationships between the rhetorical structure of the Chinese editorial and translator’s choice of tense-aspect. Categorical regression analyses were carried out in answering research questions in 5.2-5.5.

5.6 further reveals the relative importance of factors that influence the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in translation, and a summary is given in 5.7.

5.1 Findings for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Do translators of different language background and competence levels make different choices of tense and aspect when translating from Chinese into English? And if so, what are they?
The results show that significant differences exist in the occurrence rates of their use of all tense-aspect forms, though the use of present simple, past simple, and present perfect across the three groups of translators follow similar descending orders. Among these differences, the major ones lie in their use of present simple, past simple, and present perfect, the three most frequently used forms. In addition, the results show that the uses of the other tense and aspect forms by the two native Chinese-speaking translator groups follow a similar descending order of future simple, present progressive, past perfect, past progressive, future progressive, and future perfect. The native English-speaking translators use them following a different descending order of present progressive, future simple, past perfect, past progressive, future progressive, and future perfect.

In order to determine the pattern of using tense and aspect by translators of different language background and competence levels, this study marked the tense and aspect of 2353 sentences/clauses produced by translators of three language background and translation competence levels. The crosstabulation (Table 5-1) shows the count and percentage of each tense-aspect form at each language background and translation competence level.
Table 5-1: Translation competence * tense and aspect distribution in translation

Note: Since the occurrence count of the future perfect is 0, it is not shown in the table.

At each language background and competence level, the present simple was the most frequently used tense and aspectual marker in the translation. It accounted for 56.5%, 61%, and 60.7% of the total tense-aspect forms used by native Chinese-speaking novice translators, native Chinese-speaking professional translators, and native English-speaking professional translators respectively. The past simple and present perfect were the second and third most frequently used tense-aspect forms across the three groups of translators. The past simple accounted for 23.9%, 20.5%, and 17.5% of the total tense-aspect forms respectively in the translations by the three groups of translators, while the present perfect accounted for 9.1%, 10.6%, and 12.8% of the total tense-aspect forms respectively. These three
tense-aspect forms constitute the majority of tense and aspect choices made by all translators: 89.5% (56.5%+23.9% + 9.1%) for the native Chinese-speaking novice translators; 92.1% (61% + 20.5% + 10.6%) for the native Chinese-speaking professional translators; and 90.9% (60.7%+17.5% + 12.8%) for the native English-speaking professional translators. Table 5-1 also shows that the future perfect was not used by any translator.

The native Chinese-speaking novice and professional translators resemble each other in their pattern of choosing the other seven tense-aspect forms; the count of these forms follows a descending order from future simple, to present progressive, past perfect, past progressive, future progressive, and future perfect. For the novice translators, these seven forms accounted for 5.1%, 2.9%, 2.4%, 0.2%, 0% and 0% of the total occurrence count of tense-aspect forms respectively. For the professional translators, they account for 3.5%, 2.6%, 1.6%, 0.1%, 0% and 0% respectively. The native English-speaking professional translators differ from both native Chinese-speaking groups in the pattern of choosing these seven tense-aspect forms. The occurrence counts of these tense-aspect forms in the translations of native English-speaking translators follow a descending order from present progressive (4.1%), to future simple (3.6%), past perfect (0.8%), past progressive (0.4%), future progressive (0.1%), and future perfect (0%).

The occurrence pattern of tense-aspect forms has shown both similarities and differences among the three groups of translators. From the crosstabulation (Table 5-1) alone, it is impossible to tell whether these similarities or differences are real or due to chance variation. Therefore, the study used Chi-square to test whether translations of each of the language background and competence levels followed a similar distribution of tense and aspect. The hypothesis being tested was whether the
distributions of tense and aspect were constant across different language background and competence levels. The chi-square test measures the discrepancy between the observed cell counts (the use of tense-aspect forms by three groups of translators in my study) and what would be expected if the rows and columns were unrelated. If there is no relationship between the distribution of tense-aspect forms and the language background and competence level, the observed and expected counts of tense-aspect forms across the three language background and competence levels will be the same. To do this we must look at the two-sided asymptotic significance in the last box of the Chi-square output window to see if the relationship is legitimate or if it is due to sampling error.

The output of our Chi-square test (Table 5-2) show that the two-sided asymptotic significance of the Pearson Chi-square value ($p$) of the test for distribution of tense and aspect in the translation is 0.007. Since this value is less than the default value of 0.05, it is safe to conclude that the difference in tense and aspect distribution among three groups of translators observed in the crosstabulation is real and not due to chance.

The note under Table 5-2 indicates that in this dataset, there are six cells (accounting for 25% of the total cell number) that have an expected count less than five. As Chi-square tests require the number of cells with less than five expected counts not to exceed 25% of the total number of cells, the Chi-square tests of this study meet the requirement and thus produce valid results.
From the results presented above, it is concluded that the three groups of translators in this study differ in a statistically-significant way in their use of English tense-aspect forms. Major differences lie in their use of present simple, past simple and present perfect, the three most frequently used tense-aspect forms.

5.2 Findings for Research Question 2.1

Research Question 2.1: What influences do marked tense and aspect in the Chinese source text have on the translator’s choice of tense and aspect?

The results presented in this section show that tense and aspect in the source text are an important factor affecting the translator’s choice of tense-aspect forms, and the choices of past, present, and future in translation are correlated with the tense of the source text among translators of all three language background and competence levels.

Firstly we conducted a correspondence analysis to take a graphical view of the relationships between the variables “Translation competence level,” “tense and aspect in source text,” and “tense and aspect in translation”. Figure 5-1 is a two-dimension graph generated from the correspondence analysis that provides an interpretation in terms of the distances between these variables. Table 5-3 shows that
this is a fairly good solution with 100% (highlighted inertia values) of the variance in the data being accounted for by the solution, with 54% by the first dimension and 46% by the second dimension. The Cronbach’s alpha value in the table is the most common measure of reliability of the correspondence analysis. According to Tavakol & Dennick (2011), it is mandatory that researchers should report the Cronbach’s alpha value when conducting correspondence analysis; however, the value is not reported properly in some uncritical research. They point out that for research that requires high accuracy, such as medical research, the acceptable alpha value ranges from 0.70 to 0.95. The low alpha values in my study could be due to relatively fewer samples compared with research in medical or other natural scientific fields.

Table 5-3: Research Question 2 Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Variance Accounted For</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total (Eigenvalue)</td>
<td>Inertia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.566</td>
<td>1.606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.427</td>
<td>1.398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.004</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.501</td>
<td>1.502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This research question concerns the influence that tense and aspect in the source may have on the tense and aspect choice in the translation. Figure 5-1 shows that, at the right top corner, category “present” of variable “tense and aspect in source text” is close to categories “present progressive” and “present simple” of variable “tense and aspect in translation.” This indicates that the use of the present simple and the

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4 Inertia is a term used in correspondence analysis to evaluate the degree of variation between the variables. The inertia is calculated on observed and expected frequencies of co-occurrence of the variables. The higher the inertia is obtained, the better the two-dimension graph explains the relationship between the variables (Glynn, 2012).
present progressive in translation is related to the present tense in the source text across the three groups of translators.

Figure 5-1 also shows that, at the left top, category “past” of variable “tense and aspect in source text” is close to categories “past progressive,” “past simple” and “past perfect” of variable “tense and aspect in translation.” This indicates that the use of the past simple, the past progressive, and the past perfect in translation is related to the past tense in the source text. Category “present perfect” of variable “tense and aspect in translation” appears to sit between categories “present” and “past” of variable “tense and aspect in source text,” which indicates that the use of present
perfect in translation is influenced by both past and present tense in the source text. Category “future” of variable “tense and aspect in source text” appears to be far from categories “future simple” and “future progressive” of variable “tense and aspect in translation,” although it is closer to these categories than categories “present” and “past” of variable “tense and aspect in source text.” This indicates that the use of the future simple and the future progressive in translation may correlate with the use of the future tense in the source text.

The categories of the “competence level” variable are closer to the categories “present simple,” “present progressive,” and “present perfect” than to the categories “past simple,” “past perfect,” and “past progressive,” which indicates that translators of all language background and competence levels tend to use more present tense than past tense in translation. In particular, category “NS_professional” is even closer to the three present categories of variable “tense and aspect in translation,” which means that native English-speaking professional translators tend to use more present tense in translation than native Chinese-speaking translators.

In order to test the hypothesis that tense and aspect in the source text affect the translator’s choice of tense and aspect, this study also employed categorical regression to predict the use of tense and aspect in translation based on the tense and aspect in the source text. This analysis used “Tense and Aspect in Translation” as the response variable and “Tense and Aspect in Source Text” and “Competence Levels” as the predicting variables. As highlighted in Table 5-5, “Tense and Aspect in Source Text”, with an importance value of 0.991, is a factor more important than “Competence Levels” in influencing the translator’s choice of tense-aspect forms. The table also contains additional correlational measures for each variable, such as
the zero-order correlations, partial correlations, and part correlations\(^5\) to interpret the contributions of the predicting variables to the regression. The absolute correlation values of “Tense and Aspect in Source Text” are greater than those of “Competence Levels”, confirming that the “Tense and Aspect in Source Text” is a better predicting variable than “Competence Levels”. Tolerance reflects how much the predicting variables are linearly related to one another, and a very low tolerance means that the variable contributes little information to a model and can cause computational problems (Pratt, 1987). A tolerance value of 1 in Table 5.5 for both predicting variables indicates that they cannot be predicted by one another and that they contribute meaningful information to the regression model.

The categorical regression procedure also yielded a model fit and coefficients table (Table 5-4) to measure how the data fit the regression line. The R-square\(^6\) of 0.368 in the table indicates that 36.8% of the variance in choice of tense and aspect in translation is explained by the regression on the tense and aspect in the source and the language background and competence level of the translator. Although a high R-square value is desirable, it is not uncommon in social studies to accept lower R-square values. For example, some studies accept R-square value of 0.41 and 0.27 (Beliveau, Cottrill, & O’Neill, 1994; Messner, 1982).

\(^5\) zero-order correlations, partial correlations, and part correlations are alternative statistics used to fully explore predictor effects (Pratt, 1987).

\(^6\) R-squared is between 0 and 100%. 0% indicates that the model explains none of the variability of the data around its mean. 100% indicates that the model explains all the variability of the data around its mean. In general, the higher the R-squared, the better the model fits the data.
As stated in the literature review, Chinese does not have tense and aspect inflections and it is difficult to make a tense-to-tense or aspect-to-aspect comparison of the translation and the source text. In order to conduct a detail analysis, a total occurrence count of the tense-aspect forms in both source and translation was conducted, and the correlation between the occurrences of tense forms in the source and the tense-aspect forms in translation was tested. Figure 5-2 and Figure 5-3 show that the counts of present, past, and future in the source texts are 1427, 731, and 193 respectively, and the counts in the translations are 1721 (1395+254+75), 530 (487+37+6), and 97 (96+1) respectively. When the nine tense and aspect forms of the translation are condensed into three tenses, present, past, and future, the correlation test shows that the choice of tense-aspect forms in translation is significantly correlated with the tense forms in the source text as shown in Table 5-6 (sig.=0.00 <0.01).
Figure 5-2: Tense and Aspect Count in Source

Figure 5-3: Tense and Aspect Count in Translation
In summary, the categorical regression analysis has shown that the tense and aspect in the source text exerts a great deal of influence on the choice of tense-aspect forms in translation. When the nine tense and aspect forms of the translation are condensed into three tenses, present, past, and future, the correlation test shows that the choice of tense-aspect forms in translation is significantly correlated with the tense forms in the source text, supporting the hypothesis that tense and aspect in the source text influence the tense-aspect choices in translation.

### 5.3 Findings for Research Question 2.2

Research Question 2.2: What influences do unmarked Chinese tense and aspect in the source have on the translator’s choice of tense and aspect?

The results of a categorical regression analysis presented in this section show that both NNS translator groups tend rely on Chinese tense and aspectual markers when choosing English tense and aspect forms, which does not sufficiently reflect the intended temporal meaning of the source text. NS translators tend to choose present simple and present progressive when the present tense of the source text is expressed through context. In addition, the results of the categorical regression in this section show that the Chinese expression of tense and aspect has less influence on
tense-aspect choice in translation than the tense and aspect in the source text.

An additional variable was added to the analysis of research question 2.1, making four in total: “Translation Competence level,” “Tense and Aspect in Source Text,” “Temporal Expression in Source Text,” and “Tense and Aspect in Translation.” Figure 5-4 is a two-dimensional graph that provides an interpretation in terms of distances between these four variables. Table 5-7 shows that this is a fairly good solution with 80.6% (inertia values highlighted) of the variance in the data being accounted for by the solution, 45.1% by the first dimension and 35.6% by the second dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Variance Accounted For Total (Eigenvalue)</th>
<th>Inertia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.594</td>
<td>1.803</td>
<td>.451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>1.422</td>
<td>.356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.226</td>
<td>.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.507a</td>
<td>1.613</td>
<td>.403</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Mean Cronbach's Alpha is based on the mean Eigenvalue.

Table 5-7: Research Question 3 Model Summary
This research question concerns the influence of tense and aspect in the source as well as Chinese temporal expressions may have on the tense and aspect choice in the translation. Figure 5-4 shows that the distances between the categories of the variables “Competence Level,” “Tense and Aspect in Source Text,” and “Tense and Aspect in Translation” have not changed from those plotted in Figure 5-1. However, the categories “Tense Markers” and “Aspectual markers” of the newly added variable “Temporal Expression in Source Text” are close to the categories “NNS_professional” and “NNS_novice” of the variable “Competence Level.” This indicates that native Chinese-speaking translators, both professional and novice, tend to rely on tense markers and aspectual markers in Chinese when they choose tense and aspect in translation. However, no categories of the variable “Tense and Aspect
in Source Text” are close to categories “Tense Markers” and “Aspectual markers” of variable “Temporal Expression in Source Text.” It appears that tense and aspectual markers in the Chinese source text do not necessarily indicate the same temporal meaning of the source text as interpreted by the researcher and the Chinese linguist in this study. Therefore, the NNS translator’s choice of English tense and aspect based on Chinese tense and aspectual markers may not reflect the intended temporal meaning of the source text.

In addition, Figure 5-4 shows that category “Context” of variable “Temporal Expression in Source Text” is close to category “NS_professional” of variable “Competence Level,” which indicates that native English-speaking translators tend to rely on contextual clues in the source text when they choose tense and aspect in translation. The category “Context” of variable “Temporal Expression in Source Text” is also close to the categories “present simple” and “present progressive” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Translation,” as shown in Figure 5-4. It appears that NS professional translators tend to choose present simple and present progressive when the present tense in the source text is expressed through context. Furthermore, the category “Context” of variable “Temporal Expression in Source Text” is close to category “Present” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Source Text,” which indicates that the Chinese present tense expressed through context matches the interpretation of the researcher and the Chinese linguist. Therefore, the NS translator’s choice of present simple and present progressive based on the present context of the source text reflects the intended temporal meaning of the source text.

Again, a categorical regression with optimal scaling was carried out to describe the relationship between the use of tense and aspect in translation and the three factors that may have affected the translator’s choice of tense and aspect, using
“Tense and Aspect in Translation” as the response variable and “Temporal Expression in Source Text”, “Competence Level”, and “Temporal Expression in Source” as the predicting variables. The model fit and coefficients table (Table 5-8) shows an $R^2$ of 0.389. This indicates that 38.9% of the variance in choice of tense and aspect in translation is explained by the regression on the tense and aspect in the source, the expressions of Chinese tense and aspect, and the language background and competence level of the translator.

The importance value of the variable “Tense and Aspect in Source Text” (0.875), highlighted in Table 5-9, confirms that “Tense and Aspect in Source” is relatively greater influence than the other two variables “Competence Level” and “Temporal Expression in Source Text” on the translator’s choice of tense and aspect. The
absolute values of “Tense and Aspect in Source Text” in zero-order, partial and part correlations are greater than those of “Competence Levels” and “Temporal Expression in Source Text”, confirming that the former is a better predicting variable than the latter two. The high tolerance values in Table 5.9 for all three predicting variables indicate that they contribute meaningful information to the regression model.

In summary, the categorical regression analysis in this section has shown that tense and aspect in the source texts and the Chinese expression of tense and aspect jointly influenced the tense-aspect choices in translation. Native Chinese-speaking novice and professional translators have been found to rely on Chinese tense and asceptual markers in their choices of English tense and aspect forms. However, their reliance on Chinese tense and asceptual markers does not lead to correct interpretation of Chinese tense in the source text. Native English-speaking translators, on the other hand, have been found to choose present simple and present progressive and to rely on the present context of the source text, and such choices based on the contextual clue have been found to be correct. The results presented in this section further reveal that the factor “Temporal Expression in Source Text” has less influence than the factor “Tense and Aspect in Source Text” on the choice of tense-aspect forms in translation.

5.4 Findings for Research Question 3

Research Question 3: What influences do the lexical aspects of English verbs have on translators of different language background and competence levels when they choose the tense and aspect in translation?

The categorical regression analysis in this section shows that the lexical aspect
of English verbs is an important factor influencing the choice of tense and aspect among translators of different language background and competence levels. Since this research question concerns the influence the lexical aspect of English verbs may have on the tense and aspect choice in the translation, three analysis variables were used: “Translation Competence level,” “Lexical Aspect,” and “Tense and Aspect in Translation.” Figure 5-5 is the two-dimensional graph produced by the analysis, and it provides an interpretation in terms of distances between these variables. Table 5-10 shows that this is a fairly good solution with 87.6% (inertia values highlighted) of the variance in the data being accounted for by the solution, 47.5% by the first dimension and 40.1% by the second dimension. Figure 5-5 shows that the category “NS_professional” of the variable “Competence Level” is close to the category “State” of the variable “Lexical Aspect”, and that the category “State” almost overlaps the category “Present Simple” of the variable “Tense and Aspect in Translation.” This means that native English-speaking translators tend to use more present simple stative verbs in translation than native Chinese-speaking translators. In addition, the categories “NNS_novice” and “NNS_professional” of variable “Competence Level” are close to the categories “Future Simple,” “Past Simple,” and “Past Perfect” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Translation,” and the categories “Accomplishment” and “Achievement” of variable “Lexical Aspect.” This indicates that native Chinese-speaking translators of both novice and professional groups tend to relate accomplishment and achievement verbs with future simple, past simple, and past perfect in translation. In particular, the novice group tends to relate more accomplishment and achievement verbs with future simple than the professional group.
Figure 5-5 also shows that category “Activity” of variable “Lexical Aspect” is not close to any categories, which indicates that activity verbs have little effect on translators when they choose tense and aspect in translation. Moreover, the categories “Past Progressive” and “Present Progressive” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Translation” are not close to any categories. This means that when using past progressive and present progressive in translation, translators are not influenced by the lexical aspect of verbs.
Similarly, a categorical regression was conducted to describe the relationship between the use of tense and aspect in translation and the language background and competence level and lexical aspect of verbs, using “Tense and Aspect in Translation” as the response variable and “Competence level” and “Lexical Aspect” as predicting variables. The model fit and coefficients table (Table 5-11) shows an R2 of 0.177. This indicates that 17.7% of the variance in choosing of tense and aspect in translation is explained by the regression on the language background and competence level of the translator and the lexical aspect of verbs. The importance value of variable “Lexical Aspect” (0.998), highlighted in Table 5-12, shows that lexical aspect is a relatively important factor influencing the translator’s choice of tense and aspect. The absolute values of “Lexical Aspect” in zero-order, partial and part correlations are greater than those of “Competence Levels”, confirming that the former is a better predicting variable than the latter. The high tolerance values in Table 5.12 for both predicting variables indicate that they contribute meaningful information to the regression model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.421</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5-11: Research Question 4 Model Fit and Coefficients
Table 5-12: Research Question 4 Correlation and Tolerance

| Correlations and Tolerance | Correlations | Importance | Tolerance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zero-Order</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical Aspect Competence Level</td>
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<td>.420</td>
<td>.420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variable: Tense and Aspect in Translation</td>
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<td>-.013</td>
<td>-.012</td>
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</table>

The results in this section have identified the lexical aspect of English verbs as an important factor influencing the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in translation. Native Chinese-speaking translators, both novices and professionals alike, relate accomplishment and achievement verbs to certain tense-aspect forms, such as future simple, past simple, and past perfect. Native English-speaking translators relate present simple with state verbs in translation.

5.5 Findings for Research Question 4

Research Question 4: What influences does the rhetorical structure of the Chinese editorials have on translators of different language background and competence levels when they choose the tense and aspect in translation?

The results presented in this section show that the Chinese editorial rhetorical structure has little influence on the tense and aspect choices of native Chinese-speaking translators, but some influence on those of the native English-speaking translators in translation. A further Pratt’s measure of importance has found that the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials has a weaker influence on the translator’s choice of tense and aspect than the tense and aspect in the source text. Nevertheless, it has been found that Native English-speaking translators tend to use more present perfect in their translation of Chinese sentences in the second and third
rhetorical units of Chinese editorials, namely *Chen* (initiating an argument) and *Zhuan* (making an argument). No pattern of tense use has been found in the translation of the final rhetorical unit of Chinese editorials *He*, which articulates a position and closes an argument.

This research question explores whether or not the choice of tense and aspect in translation is influenced by the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials and the tense and aspect used in each rhetorical structure. Four analysis variables were used: “Competence Level,” “Tense and Aspect in Source,” “Tense and Aspect in Translation,” and “Source Structure.” Figure 5-6 is the two-dimensional graph produced by the analysis, and it provides an interpretation in terms of distances between the four variables. Table 5-13 shows that this is a very good solution with 83.8% (inertia value highlighted) of the variance in the data being accounted for, 46.5% by the first dimension and 37.3% by the second dimension.

![Joint Plot of Category Points](image)

**Figure 5-6: Research Question 5 Plot**
### Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Variance Accounted For</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>.538*</td>
<td>1.676</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mean Cronbach’s Alpha is based on the mean Eigenvalue.

Table 5-13: Research Question 5 Model Summary

Figure 5-6 shows that category “Qi” of variable “Source Structure” is close to category “NS_professional” of variable “Competence Level,” category “Present” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Source,” and categories “Present Simple,” “Present Perfect,” and “Present Progressive,” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Translation.” This indicates that native English-speaking translators tend to use the three forms of present tense when translating the present tense in qi sections of a Chinese editorial. Category “NS_professional” of variable “Competence Level” is also close to category “Present Perfect” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Translation” and category “Zhuan” of variable “Source Structure,” which suggests that native English-speaking translators tend to use relatively more present perfect in their translations of zhu an sections of Chinese editorials. Since the overlapping categories of “NNS_professional” and “NNS_novice” of variable “Competence Level” are distant from the other categories, the hypothesis that the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials influenced native Chinese-speaking translators’ choice of tense and aspect in translation is not supported by the results.

In addition, Figure 5-6 shows that categories “Chen” and “Zhuan” of variable “Source Structure” sit between categories “Past” and “Present” of variable “Tense and Aspect in Source” and that category “Qi” is closer to category “Present.” This
suggests that Chinese present tense is predominant in the “Qi” section of Chinese editorials and that a more even distribution of past and present tense could be expected in the *chen* and *zhuan* sections of Chinese editorials. Since category “He” of variable “Source Structure” is distant from all other categories, it indicates that tense and aspect patterns are not identifiable for either the source text or the translation in this rhetorical unit.

Finally, a categorical regression was carried out to describe the relationship between “Tense and Aspect in Translation” and “Competence level,” “Tense and aspect in Source,” and “Source Structure”. It used “Tense and Aspect in Translation” as the response variable and “Competence level,” and “Tense and aspect in Source,” and “Source Structure” as predicting variables. The model fit and coefficients table (Table 5-14) shows an $R^2$ of 0.378. This indicates that only 37.8% of the variance in the choice of tense and aspect in translation is explained by the regression on the language background and competence level of the translator, tense and aspect in the source text, and the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials. The importance value of the variable “Source Structure”(0.964), highlighted in Table 5-15, shows that tense and aspect in the source text is a more important factor influencing the translator’s choice of tense and aspect than the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials and the language background and competence level. The absolute values of “Tense and Aspect in Source Text” in zero-order, partial and part correlations are greater than those of “Competence Levels” and “Source Structure”, confirming that the former is a better predicting variable than the latter two. The high tolerance values in Table 5.15 for all three predicting variables indicate that they contribute meaningful information to the regression model.
In summary, based on the results presented above, the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials only has a limited influence on the tense and aspect choices in translation, whereas tense and aspect in the source can better predict the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in translation.

5.6 Summary of Findings for Research Questions 2-4

The findings for research questions 2 to 4 have identified tense and aspect in the source text, temporal expression in the source text, the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials, and the lexical aspect of English verbs as factors that influence the translator’s choice of tense and aspect. In order to understand the relative importance of these factors, they were subject to a categorical regression analysis, using “Tense and Aspect in Translation” as the response variable and the following variables as predicting variables:
1. Tense and Aspect in Source Text

2. Temporal Expression in Source Text

3. Lexical Aspect

4. Source Structure

The model fit and coefficients table (Table 5-16) produced shows an $R^2$ of 0.425. This indicates that 42.5% of the variance in choice of tense and aspect in translation is explained by the regression on the predicting variables. Although this is not a satisfactory model – ideally $R^2$ is greater than 70% – it provides some explanation of the factors that influence the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in the translation of Chinese editorials. The standardised coefficient values highlighted in Table 5-17 indicate how much the predicted response (tense and aspect in translation) may vary when each predicting variable changes while the other predicting variables remain constant. The coefficient values of this analysis show that a variation of tense and aspect in the source could cause the greatest impact (0.496) on tense and aspect in translation, followed by variations of the lexical aspect of the verb (0.204), temporal expression in the source text (-0.156), and the rhetorical structure of the source text (-0.085). The importance values, highlighted in Table 5-18, confirm that among the four variables hypothesised in this research to influence the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in translation, tense and aspect in the source text is the factor of greatest influence, followed by the lexical aspect of the verb, and temporal expression in the source text. The influence of the variable “Source Structure” is very small (0.032). The absolute values of the three predicting variables in zero-order, partial and part correlations follow the same descending order and are greater than those of “Source Structure”, confirming that the former three are better predicting variables than the latter. The high tolerance values in Table 5.18 for all four
predicting variables indicate that they contribute meaningful information to the regression model.

![Model Summary Table](image)

Table 5-16: Model Fit and Coefficients

![Coefficients Table](image)

Table 5-17: Coefficients

![Correlations and Tolerance Table](image)

Table 5-18: Correlations and Tolerance

The results of these findings to research questions 2 to 4 have identified four major factors that influenced the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in translation. Based on the categorical regression analysis presented in this section, we have obtained a deeper understanding of the relative importance of each factor’s influence.
5.7 Summary

The findings for research questions 1 to 4 confirm that the three groups of translators in this study differ in a statistically-significant way in their use of English tense-aspect forms, specifically present simple, past simple and present perfect. Their choices of tense and aspect in translation are influenced by several factors, among which the tense and aspect in the source text is the strongest, followed by the lexical aspect of the English verbs, the temporal expression in the source text, and the rhetorical structure of the source text.

In Chapter 6, we will focus our discussion on three of the factors: the tense and aspect in the source text, the temporal expression in the source text, and the rhetorical structure of the source text. The influence of the lexical aspect of English verbs will then be discussed in Chapter 7.
Chapter 6  The Influence of the Source Text on Tense and Aspect Choices

This chapter examines the influence of the source text on the choice of tense and aspect in the translation. 6.1 looks at how the tense and aspect of the source text affect the tense and aspect choice in the translation. It also discusses the influence of the expression of tense and aspect in the source text on the choice of tense and aspect in the translation. 6.2 explores the influence of the discourse structure of the source text on the choice of tense and aspect in the translation. 6.3 is a summary of the chapter. The discussion in this chapter focuses on the general trend of tense and aspect choices by all translators from three groups. A detailed discussion of the differences between the three groups will be provided in Chapter 8.

6.1  The Influence of the Source Tense on Tense Choices in Translation

This section analyses the influence of the tense and aspect of the source text on the choice of tense in the translation. It first describes how different ways of interpreting Chinese tense may affect the choice of tense in translation. It then discusses the why translators across the three language background and competence levels follow the tense in the source text when translating Chinese sentences with tense and aspectual markers, but vary their tense choices when the tense of the Chinese sentence is interpreted through context.

As indicated by previous studies, the Chinese tense is interpreted through tense markers, aspectual markers and the context (Lin, 2006; Wong, Li, Yuan & Zhu, 2002). The following are four typical categories of Chinese sentences where the tense is expressed through (1) tense markers only, (2) aspectual markers only, (3) tense and aspectual markers, and (4) contextual clues only. Examples were extracted from the
source texts to show different ways of expressing temporality in Chinese.

6.1.1 Examples of Chinese Sentences from the Source Texts

Chinese Sentences with Tense Markers Only

The time related adverbials/phrases (tense markers) contained in this type of sentences provide an explicit reference to the time, which is sufficient for the reader to locate it.

Example 6.1: Sentences with tense markers

Source Sentence 1

這種時候，或許我們應該開始思考，「全球化」難道
At such times, perhaps we should start thinking, "globalisation" isn’t
只是經濟強權向外延伸獲利觸角而提出的美好卻
just economic powers out reach profiting tentacles so proposed beautiful but
虛假的幻景嗎?
false illusion?

Source Sentence 2

1980年代，日本是美國的最大逆差來源國
1980’s, Japan be America’s biggest deficit country of origin
約四百多億美元。
about 40 billion U.S. dollar.

Source Sentence 3

government recently by all means lift stock market, nothing
是希望營造台灣經濟其實沒那麼糟的
is hope build Taiwan economy actually not so bad
data factual impression.

Source Sentence 4

去年一年，是台灣外匯存底增加最多的年
Last year a year, is Taiwan foreign reserves increase most a year,
The italicised words in the above sentences are tense markers. Sentences 1 and 3 are present time because “這個時候” in Sentence 1 and “這陣子” in Sentence 3 denote the present time. Sentences 2 and 4 are past time because “1980年代” in Sentence 2 and “去年” in Sentence 4 clearly denote the past time.

**Chinese Sentences with Aspectual Markers Only**

This type of sentences contains aspectual markers but no tense markers. According to Yang and Yu (2007), the interpretation of the tense is subject to the larger context because aspectual markers alone do not indicate tense.

**Example 6.2: Sentences with aspectual markers**

**Source Sentence 1**

```
其實 不僅 是 米酒 ， 台灣 多 項 農 產品 及 肉類 、
Actually not only is rice wine, Taiwan many item farm product and meat
水果 等 ， 也都 出現 了 價格 大跌的 現象 ，
fruit etc., also appear le price sharp fallen phenol-menon
```

**Source Sentence 2**

```
但 日本的 經濟 從而 停滯 了 十幾年 ，
but Japanese economy as a result of stagnate le more than ten years
```
Source Sentence 3
倘若蝕老本還不出貸款，社會不知又將發生多少慘案悲劇。

will happen how many tragedy.

Source Sentence 4
背後的意義，也代表台灣的景氣仍在低點，
behind meaning，also is represent Taiwan’s economy still at low point

In this example, the italicised words are aspectual markers contained in the sentences. In Sentence 1, the perfective aspectual marker le (了) itself carries the meaning of “past” or “past with current relevance.” When its following sentence: 讓辛勤終年的農民叫苦連天，不知道未來要何去何從 (a larger context) is taken into consideration, it appears that the author wishes to present background information in the argumentation. The researcher and the Chinese linguist agreed that the tense of the Chinese sentences is present.

In Sentence 2, as in Sentence 1, the perfective aspectual marker le (了) carries the meaning of “past” or “past with current relevance.” When its precedent sentences 答案是逐年增加到750億美元！美日逆差反而擴大了50%！are considered, it appears that the author wishes to present the fact that Japan’s economy has stagnated for more than 10 years. Therefore, the researcher and the Chinese linguist agreed that the tense of this Chinese sentence is present.

In Sentence 3, the interpretation of tense needs to consider the perfective aspectual marker le (了) and the preceding sentences 更可怕的是，萬一他們以爲
既然政府掛保證，投資台股就是愛台灣，愛台灣必得新台幣，也掏出口袋裡最後的老本，甚至不惜借錢去籌措股本。The preceding sentences start with the clause 更可怕的是 (what is more terrible), indicating the author’s imaginative situation, and they should be interpreted as future tense. Both the researcher and the Chinese linguist agreed that the tense of this Chinese sentence is future.

In Sentence 4, the Chinese aspectual marker 仍 (乃) alone does not carry temporal meaning. Its precedent sentences are all opinions of the author: 何况央行買這麼多的外匯 最主要目的，是為維持具有出口競爭力的匯價. Both the researcher and the Chinese linguist agreed that the tense of this Chinese sentence is present.

Chinese Sentences with both Tense and Aspectual Markers

This type of sentence contains both tense and aspectual markers. As type 1 sentences, the presence of the tense markers provides an explicit reference to the time, and the tense of the sentences are not difficult to derive.

Example 6.3: Sentences with both tense and aspectual markers

Source Sentence 1

到 如今，對 美 而言， 雖然 過的 問題 完全
By now, to US in terms of, although deficit problem completely

沒 解決，但是 日本 爭競的 威脅 卻 完全 解除 了。
not solve, but Japan hegemony threat but completely solve le

Source Sentence 2

日 圓 升值 之後， 美 日 逆差 減少 了 多少 呢？
Yen appreciation after, US Japan deficit reduce le how much?
The italicised words in the above sentences are tense and aspectual markers. Both sentences contain the perfective aspectual marker “了”. However, it only reflects aspectual relationships. If there were no tense markers in the sentences, we would have to seek extra contextual clues beyond the sentences to determine their tense. In this example, Sentence 1 refers to present time because the tense marker “如今” denotes the present time. Sentence 2 refers to present time because the tense marker “之後” denotes a durative time that extends to the present.

**Chinese Sentences without tense or aspectual markers**

In this type of sentences neither tense nor aspectual markers are present. Consequently, the interpretation of tense is most difficult and translators must resort to the context. Some examples of this type sentences are listed in Example 6.4.

**Example 6.4: Sentences without tense or aspectual markers**

**Source Sentence 1**

Only because it is used distillation way made so must

compare foreign import XO, whiskey, impose heavy tax, really no sense
Source Sentence 2
答案 是 逐年 增加 到 750 億 美元 ！ 美 日
appears yearly increase to 750 100 million US dollar US Japan
逆差 反而 扩大 至 50% ！
deficit contrary expand To 50% ！

Source Sentence 3
股票 市场 内 当然 购的 是 梦 ， 不过 这个 梦
Stock market inside of course buy of is dream , however this dream
好歹 要 有 现实 为 基础 。
whatever need have reality is basis

Source Sentence 4
央行 解释 ， 进口 外汇 支出 萎缩 ， 是
central bank explain , import foreign exchange spend shrink , is
外汇 存底 增加的 另 一 大 原因 ， 这
foreign exchange reserve increased another one major reason , this
是 民间 投资 不振的 结果 。
is private investment sluggish result

The tense of the first three clauses of Sentence 1 may be interpreted as present tense because the sentence is presenting the author’s point of view on (opposition to) heavy taxes on rice wine. For example, “But just because it is distilled, it now has to be heavily taxed in the same way as imported whiskies and XO cognacs. This is totally unreasonable” (NS Professional). It appears that the majority of native
English-speaking and Chinese-speaking professional translators in this study have chosen the present tense, which is consistent with the judgement of the researcher and the Chinese linguist.

In Sentence 2, the tense of both clauses may be interpreted as present perfect since the author may wish to present the data of the past trade deficit between the US and Japan as a fact in his or her argument that forcing exchange rates to change will not help reduce deficit. Thus a translation reads: “The answer is that it has not: The trade deficit with Japan has instead increased by 50% to reach 75 billion US dollars” (NS Professional). However, both clauses may also be interpreted as part of the author’s narration of an event in the past. In this situation, a translation reads “But over the same period, the trade deficit with Japan ballooned to US$75 billion annually, an increase of over 50%” (NS Professional). Both ways of interpreting tense were adopted by translators in this study. Nevertheless, both the researcher and the Chinese linguist in this study preferred present tense to past tense.

In Sentence 3, the tense for both clauses can be interpreted as present tense because the whole sentence is a general statement made by the author about investing in stock markets. The majority of native English-speaking and Chinese-speaking professional translators chose present tense, and a typical translation reads: “What people are really buying into is a dream, albeit a dream that has some foundations in reality” (NS Professional). The choice of present tense is consistent with the judgement of the researcher and the Chinese linguist.

In Sentence 4, there is not enough context to establish a past or present time for the first clause, “央行解釋，進口外匯支出萎縮，是外匯存底增加的另一大原因.” As it starts with “央行解釋,” an event that happened before the writing of the article, it can be interpreted as past tense and thus the second clause of the sentence, “這是
The federal bank explained that the huge increase of foreign exchange reserve was also affected by the decrease in import spending, which was the result of investment decay in the private sectors” (NS Professional). However, the clauses may also be interpreted as present because they can be regarded as presenting a fact. In this case, a translation could read: “The central bank explains that the decline in import payment expenditures is another reason that the foreign reserves have increased, and is the result of low public investment” (NS Professional). Nevertheless, the researcher and the Chinese linguist preferred the past tense to present tense.

6.1.2 The Correlation between Tense in the Source Text and Tense Choice in Translation

The above examples show how the tense of Chinese sentences is interpreted. It needs to be noted that the interpretation of Chinese tense is not the only consideration in translation when choosing English tense-aspect forms. Other factors as identified in Chapter 2 also play important roles.

Now, let’s take a look at the correlation between the tense in the source text and the tense choice in the translation. The major findings of Research Question 2 in Chapter 5 are:

1. The use of “present simple” and “present progressive” in translation is related to “present” tense in the source text;
2. The use of “past simple”, “past progressive” and “past perfect” in translation is related with “past” tense in the source text;
3. The use of “present perfect” in translation is influenced by both “past” and
“present” tenses in the source text; and

4. The use of “future simple” and “future progressive” in translation is correlated with the use of “future” tense in the source text.

A descriptive analysis is carried out in this chapter to give a detailed account of the use of tense in the source text and in the translation. Figure 6-1 and Figure 6-2 show that the counts of present, past, and future in the four source texts are 1427, 731, and 193 respectively, and the counts in all the translations are 1721 (1395+254+75), 530(487+37+6), and 97 (96+1) respectively.

![Figure 6-1: Tense and Aspect Count in Source](chart.png)
As stated in the literature review, Chinese has no tense or aspect inflections and it is difficult to make a tense-to-tense or aspect-to-aspect comparison of the translation with the source text. Nevertheless, when the nine tense and aspect forms of the translation are condensed into three tenses, present, past, and future, a correlation test shows that the choice of tense in translation is significantly correlated to the tense in the source text (as shown in Table 6-1). These findings suggest that the translation tends to follow the source text in all three tenses.
We will now look at some examples of the tendencies observed in the translations, in which translators have followed the source text when making tense choices. In each of the following examples there is a clear tense marker in the source text, and the tense of the source text was observed in most translations by translators of all three groups.

**Present Tense into Present Tense**

Example 6.5

Excerpt from Source Text 1

在這種時候，或許我們應該開始思考，「全球化」難道只是經濟強權向外延伸獲利觸角而提出的美好卻虛假的幻景嗎？

Translation (1): Perhaps this is a moment for us to re-consider the meaning of “globalisation.” Is it only a term that the strong economic powers claim to be the perfect outcome for economy? (NNS novice)

Translation (2): Is globalization nothing more than a beautiful illusion promoted by economically powerful nations in order to extend their tentacles of interests? (NNS professional)
Translation (3): Perhaps now is the time for us to start thinking whether “globalization” is merely an illusion put forth by the world economic powers for the purpose of furthering their own self interests. (NS professional)

Past Tense into Past Tense

Example 6.6

Excerpt from Source Text 2:

1980年代，日本是美國的最大逆差來源國，約四百多億美元。

Translation (1): In the 1980s, Japan was once the largest portion of the US external shortfall, more than US $40 billion. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): In the 1980’s, America’s greatest trade deficit was with Japan, a deficit of about 40 billion US dollars. (NNS professional)

Translation (3): In the 1980s, America’s largest trade deficit was with Japan, at about US$40 billion annually. (NS professional)

Future Tense into Future Tense

Example 6.7

Excerpt from Source Text 3:

社會不知又將發生多少慘案悲劇，

Translation (1): there will be more tragedies in the society. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): more tragedies will be expected. (NNS professional)

Translation (3): who knows how many miserable tragedies will occur in society. (NS professional)
In the translation of the above sentences, most translations follow the tense of the source text (e.g., present, past and future tenses were translated into present, past and future tenses respectively). According to Mauranen (2005), this kind of tendency is a “translation universal,” that is, a feature which is hypothesised to be common to all translated texts regardless of text type and language pair. Some corpus-based translation studies have confirmed that translations tend to follow the source text in many aspects, which include not only the general words of the source text but also its structure and communication emphasis (Baker, 1995; Davies, 2000; Puurtinen, 2003). Therefore, the results of my study provide further support that the translation universal of following the source text may also apply to the choice of tense and aspect in translation from Chinese into English.

A further examination of the source sentences in my study where the tense is interpreted through context shows that the majority of them may be interpreted as present tense as shown in Example 6.4. This may be explained by the communicative purpose of the author. Previous studies have suggested that an important function of editorials is to introduce “facts” and “propositions.” Thus there is no default tense in editorials and all the tenses except for those that are dependent on their dominant ones are anchored to the author’s “now” (Smith, 2003). Therefore, it is to be expected that translations of Chinese sentences in which tense is interpreted through context, usually the author’s “now”, will generally use the present tense.

This proposition is supported by the results of Research Question 2, which show the pattern of using present tense in translation of Chinese source sentences in which tense is expressed through context. In other words, when the tense of a source sentence is expressed through context, its translation tends to use present tense. Figure 6-3 was produced by selecting from the dataset cases where the tense of the
source sentence is expressed through context. It shows that the majority of the sentences were translated into the present tense, including present simple, present perfect, and present progressive.

![Figure 6-3: Translation of tense expressed through context](image)

The following are some sample translations of the first three source sentences in the above Example 6.4. As explained above, although the tense of some of these sentences can be interpreted as past tense, the researcher, the Chinese linguist I consulted, and the majority of native Chinese-speaking and English-speaking professional translators prefer present tense to past tense in most cases.

**Present Tense. Into Present Tense and Past Tense**

Sentence 1:
只因為它是用蒸餾方式做的，就必須比照國外進口的 XO、威士忌，課上重稅，實在沒有道理。（Source Text 1）

Translation (1.1): It is unreasonable to levy the same heavy tax on rice wine as imported XO and Whiskey just because it’s made by distillation. (NNS Novice)

Translation (1.2): There really is no justification for it to be heavily taxed at the same rate as imported brandies and whiskies only because it happens to be made by distillation. (NNS professional)

Translation (1.3): But just because it is distilled, it now has to be heavily taxed in the same way as imported whiskies and XO cognacs. This is totally unreasonable and demonstrates the control that the major powers have over the WTO. (NS professional)

Sentence 2:

答案是逐年增加到 750 億美元！美日逆差反而擴大至 50%！（Source Text 2）

Translation (2.1): The answer is it’s been gradually climbing to 75 billion US Dollars! The US deficit has been raised by 50%! (NNS Novice)

Translation (2.2): The answer is the trade deficit went up gradually to $75 billion over the years! The America-Japan trade deficit actually increased by 50%! (NNS professional)

Translation (2.3): The answer is it increased annually reaching US$75 billion! On the contrary, the US—Japan trade deficit expanded by 50%. (NS professional)
Sentence 3:

股票市場裡固然買的是夢，不過這個夢好歹要有現實為基礎。(Source Text 3)

Translation (3.1): Investing in the stock market is no doubt buying a dream, but anyhow the dream should be based on an actual foundation. (NNS Novice)

Translation (3.2): Although buying stocks is like buying a dream, for good or evil, the dream should be based on reality. (NNS professional)

Translation (3.3): Although what is really being purchased in the stock market is a dream, this dream must still have a basis in reality. (NS professional)

Although the present tense is often chosen to translate the Chinese tense where no tense or aspectual markers are present, as shown in the above examples, there are still quite a number of cases, in which the sentence was translated into the past tense. When examining the tense used in the translation of Sentence 2, where the context (in brackets) indicates present tense, some translations have been identified from the dataset that choose the past tense across three groups of translators.

Sentence 2:

(日圓升值之後，美日逆差減少了多少呢？) 答案是逐年增加到750億美元！美日逆差反而擴大至50%！(Source Text 2)

Translation (2.4): But over the same period, the trade deficit with Japan ballooned to US$75 billion annually, an increase of over 50%. (NS professional)

7 The author proposed a question here and then provided an answer bringing the reader to the author’s “now.”
Translation (2.5): In the following year, the trade deficit increased by fifty percent to seventy five billion dollars! (NS professional)

Translation (2.6): And how helpful was that? It helped the trade deficit between the two gradually go up to USD 75 billion, a 50% increase! (NNS professional)

Translation (2.7): The answer was the deficit increased yearly to 75 billion dollars. America trade deficit against Japan expanded by 50% instead! (NNS professional)

Translation (2.8): The answer was that the trade deficit increased to 75 billion dollars and the trade deficit widened by 50%! (NNS novice)

Translation (2.9): The answer was the trade deficit gradually advanced to 75 billion dollars. Contrarily, the USA-Japan trade deficit was amplified by 50%. (NNS novice)

In this section, with the categorisation of four types of Chinese sentences according to different tense expressions, we have seen that it is not difficult to interpret the tense of a Chinese sentence when tense markers are present. However, in many situations, Chinese sentences contain no tense markers and the tense is expressed through aspectual markers or contextual clues. In these situations, their tense may be subject to different interpretations, which depend on contextual clues. Since the tense of Chinese sentences containing tense markers is easier to recognise than those without tense markers, translators from the three different competence groups in my study show a universal “tense-for-tense” tendency when translating Chinese sentences with tense markers. They differ within or between groups when translating Chinese sentences without tense markers. A detailed comparison of the
translators is necessary to identify the factors that play a role in their tense and aspect choices.

6.2 The Influence of Rhetorical Structure on Choice of Tense and Aspect

This section discusses the influence of rhetorical units in the source text on the choice of tense in the translation. The discussion focuses on why present perfect has been used predominantly in translation of the second and third rhetorical units of Chinese editorials, namely, the IA (initiation of an argument) and A (argument). It also discusses why no tense pattern is found in the translation of He (articulating a position and closing the argumentation), the final rhetorical unit of Chinese editorials.

In Chapter 5, it was found that present tense occurs most frequently in the translation of the first segment of Chinese editorials, which provides background information. Present perfect has been found to occur most frequently in the native English-speaking translator’s translation of the second and third segments of Chinese editorials, which initiate and make an argument. No pattern of tense use was found in the translation of the final segment of Chinese editorials, which serves to articulate a position and close the argument.

Previous studies have seldom looked at the influence of rhetorical units on translation. Among a few empirical studies of English editorials, Bolivar (1994) found that present simple was most often used in editorials and the use of tense in each segment of an editorial tends was consistent. The predominant presence of present tense in the translation of the first, second, and third editorial segments suggests that Chinese and English editorials may be similar in their use of tense. The discovery of this pattern may provide some help for translators when choosing
appropriate tense in their translation, particularly in situations where the Chinese source tense is expressed through context.

According to Smith (1991), perfect constructions generally express the following four meanings: (1) the event being talked about is prior to the reference time; (2) the resultant value of the event; (3) the structure reports the situation in its entirety with a perfective viewpoint; and, (4) a special property attributed to the subject, due to participation in the situation. Therefore, present perfect in English has both past and present components. Leech (1971: 30) interpreted the present perfect as “past-time-related-to-present-time”. Suh (1992: 82) maintained that with the use of the present perfect the “speaker brings what happened in the past to the realm of the present,” the extended “now”. This unique characteristic of present perfect may prove very useful in translation.

In the previous section, we have seen that “the author’s now” is a very common feature in editorials and the present is often the underlying tense when there are no clear tense and aspeetual markers. In Example 6.8, we can see the “author’s now” even where there is a past tense marker “去年” (last year).

Example 6.8

Source: 去年一年，是台灣外匯存底增加最多的一年 (the first clause), 快速累積的外匯存底，成為政府宣導「拚經濟」成效的最佳樣板 (the second clause). (Source Text 4)

Since the sentence is the opening sentence of the editorial, the author’s intention is by no means to take the reader back to last year, but instead to relate the first clause (the rapid increase of foreign reserve) with the event in the second clause (becoming
political propaganda). If the past simple were used for the first clause, as some novice translators did (as shown in Translations 1 and 2), then it would bring the reader to the past. Then, in order to avoid a tense shift, the past simple would need to be maintained in the second clause. Such a rendition would make the translation of the whole sentence contradictory to the author’s communicative purpose of bringing the reader’s attention to “now.”

Translation 1: Last year was the year in which foreign exchange reserve increased the most. It went up so fast that it became the best highlight of the government’s policy toward economics. (NNS novice)

Translation 2: Last year was the year that Taiwan’s foreign reserve increased the most. The rapidly-accumulated foreign reserve became the best advertisement for the government’s slogan “striving for a better economy.” (NNS novice)

The “conflict” between “the author’s now” and past tense markers are easily solved by the use of present perfect, which professional translators used in the Translations 3 and 4.

Translation 3: Last year has been the year in which Taiwan’s foreign reserve saw the largest increase. The fast accumulation of foreign reserve has become the poster child for the effectiveness of the government’s economic policies. (NS professional)

Translation 4: Over the past year, Taiwan’s foreign exchange reserves have grown significantly. The fast growing foreign exchange reserves seem to be
the best model for the government to promote “economic competitiveness”.

(NNS professional)

From this example, it appears that the present perfect provides a convenient means for translators to accommodate both “the author’s now” and past tense markers. This may explain to some degree the findings outlined at the beginning of this section (i.e., that the present perfect occurs most frequently in translations of the second and third segments of Chinese editorials, which initiate and make an argument).

As for the finding that there is no tense pattern in the translation of the final segment of Chinese editorials, which serves to articulate a position and close an argument (5.5), it is possible that the final segment of the editorials in my study contained too few sentences to derive a pattern from the data. Another possible explanation is that in this segment many translations used modal auxiliary verbs and thus were excluded from analysis. The large number of modal auxiliary verbs used in these sections, some of which are shown in Example 6.9, may partially explain the absence of a tense pattern in the translation of the final segment of editorials.

Example 6.9

Sentence 1

希望在全球反戰氣氛日益高漲之際，也能帶動反對經濟霸權的思維，讓類似假米酒毒死人的悲劇事件不再發生。(Source Text 1)

Translation (1): Hopefully, while the global anti-war atmosphere is upsurging, the thoughts against economic super powers can also be raised. Therefore, the fake-rice-wine tragedy would not reoccur. (NNS novice)
Translation (2): I hope the thought of the anti-economic power *can* be promoted, so that the tragedy like someone being poisoned by fake rice wines will not happen again. (NNS professional)

Translation (3): I hope that the current rise in anti-war sentiment worldwide *can also promote* opposition to economic hegemony, and so help prevent further tragedies like the deaths from bootleg rice liquor. (NS professional)

**Sentence 2**

政府拉抬股市，豈不形同另一個減刑殺人的「德政」？(Source Text 3)

Translation (1): *Wouldn’t* the government’s interference of the stock market be another "benevolent policy" like the pardon policy that led to many deaths? (NNS novice)

Translation (2): *Could it be said* that the government’s boosting stock market is likened to a “benevolent policy” in which people are killed thanks to commutation? (NNS professional)

Translation (3): The policy of boosting the stock market *may* end up being another “moral policy” not unlike that of the reduction of a jail term that kills people. (NS professional)

**Sentence 3**

看到這些，我們還能對「快速累積的外匯存底」，感到樂觀嗎? (Source Text 4)

Translation (1): Regarding to the above, *can we still be optimistic about* "a rapid accumulation of foreign exchange reserves"? (NNS novice)

Translation (2): *Can we still feel optimistic* towards the “rapid accumulating of foreign exchange reserves” after seeing all of these? (NNS professional)
Translation (3): In view of these, can we still be optimistic about rapid accumulations of foreign exchange reserves? (NS professional)

Sentences 1-3 in Example 6.9 all fall into the rhetorical unit of “He” (conclusion and closure of the argumentation). As we can see, many translators chose modal auxiliary verbs, such as can, may, would, could, and so forth (in italics), making it difficult for us to known if the translators have made any tense choices when dealing with these segments. Further research on the use of modal auxiliary verbs in translation may be needed to find the answer to this question.

In summary, the author’s present “now” is a very common feature and the default tense when there are no clear tense and aspectual markers in Chinese editorials. The characteristic of present perfect as “past-time-related-to-present-time” makes it a common tense-aspect choice when dealing with sentences in the rhetorical units that initiate and make an argument. As modal auxiliary verbs are extensively used in the rhetorical unit of conclusion and closure of an argument in Chinese editorials, it is not surprising that no tense-aspect patterns have been identified in this study.

6.3 Summary

Time is pervasive in all human activities and hence is represented in all languages. In Chinese the morphological tense does not exist, and the means to express time fall into two categories – tense and aspectual markers and temporal context. Since tense marking is a necessary part of English, the selection of English tense seems to be crucial in translation from Chinese into English. In this chapter the selection of English tense in translation from Chinese into English has been
addressed by looking at the influence of the original temporal meaning in and the influence of the rhetorical structure of the Chinese source text.

The discussion in this chapter on tense and aspect choices by translators of three language background and competence levels demonstrated that the tense and aspect in the source text are generally recognised by translators without much difficulty. The common trend of following the tense in the source text has been found to produce satisfactory tense choices in most situations. However, special attention may be given to the source sentence in which the tense is expressed through the context. In such sentences, it is important that translators be aware of the author’s “now,” the anchor for all tense choices in argumentative texts (He, 2008; Smith, 2003). With ample examples, this chapter further demonstrated how to avoid unnecessary tense shifts in translation of editorials, which, as argumentative texts, enjoy much freedom in the choice of tense varieties. The present perfect has been identified as an effective device to achieve this goal in the translation of Chinese editorials.
Chapter 7  The Influence English Lexical Aspect on Tense and Aspect Choices in Translation

This chapter discusses the results presented in answer to Research Question 3. This part of the study was carried out from the semantic perspective of the inherent aspect of English verbs. In 7.1, the results of the overall descriptive study of the data are presented, and discussion reveals the distributional pattern of the four Vendlerian categories (state, activities, accomplishments and achievements) in the perfective and imperfective marking. 7.2 discusses the distributional patterns in relation to the Aspect Hypothesis and the effect of lexical aspect on the tense and aspect variation in translation. 7.3 focuses on NNS translators, and 7.4 summarises the chapter.

7.1 Overall Description of Perfective and Imperfective Morphology Markings

Having carried out detailed analyses of the distribution of perfective and imperfective morphology across the four Vendlerian lexical aspects, this study has demonstrated that both NNS translator groups show similar patterns in the perfective and imperfective marking. Their marking of perfective meaning (past simple, present perfect, and past perfect) differs from what was predicted by the Aspect Hypothesis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995), but their marking of tense with imperfective meaning (present simple, present progressive) is consistent with the Aspect Hypothesis. NS translators have been found to exhibit similar patterns of perfective and imperfective marking. Based on the descriptive data, it is suggested that in order to improve translator quality, translators may consider: (1) substituting activity verbs for state verbs when using perfective morphology markings such as past simple, present perfect, and past perfect; (2) reducing their use
of state verbs for present simple tense marking and reducing activity verbs for present progressive marking by replacing them with accomplishment and achievement verbs.

### 7.1.1 The Distribution of Perfective Morphology by Lexical Aspect

In English past simple, present perfect, future perfect and past perfect are mostly of perfective aspect, and the learner tends to use them first with achievement verbs and then extends their use to accomplishment, activity and state verbs. Three analyses were carried out to study the distribution of past simple, present perfect and past perfect across the four Vendlerian categories of lexical aspect (state, activity, accomplishment and achievement). Future perfect was not analysed because there were no cases of it in the dataset.

A descriptive presentation of past simple morphology (Table 7-1) shows state verbs were the least marked for the past simple (75) across the NNS novice translators. The marking rose for accomplishment (84) and achievement verbs (96). Activity verbs (132) were the most frequently marked. The table also shows that state verbs were the least frequently marked for the past simple (48) across the NNS professional translators. The marking rose for accomplishment (72) and achievement (96) verbs. Activity verbs (122) were the most frequently marked. For the NS professional translators, the marking of past simple was most frequent for activity verbs (112), followed by achievement verbs (68), accomplishment verbs (57), and state verbs (45). Here, the observed frequency for each row is simply the average number of past simple morphology occurrences across the four categories. The expected value for each row, which is equal to the sum of the observed frequencies divided by the number of rows in the table, shows the mean occurrence number of
past simple in each category. In other words, if there were no bias towards each aspectual category, the observed frequencies of past simple would be equal to their expected values. For example, for the NNS novice group, there were 387 observed occurrence of past simple morphology, and if the group did not show any bias towards the four aspectual categories, the observed frequency number would be close to 96.8 (387/4) per lexical aspect category. The residual is equal to the observed frequency minus the expected value. In the case of the NNS novice group for example, the residual value for activity verbs is 41.5, indicating that the past simple morphology marking of activity verbs exceeded expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Aspect</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>-21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>-12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>96.8</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>387</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>-36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>-12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>338</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>-25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>-13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>282</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-1: Distribution of the Past Simple Morphology by Lexical Aspect

The Chi-square value was calculated by summing up the difference between the
observed and expected score. The result of the Chi-square test of the past simple distribution by lexical aspect produces three low significance values (0.000 shown in Table 7-2 for the three groups) suggesting that the distribution of past simple morphology really does differ by lexical aspect categories for translators of each language background and competence level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Lexical Aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b) 19.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b) 35.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b) 36.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-2: Chi-square Test of Past Simple Morphology Distribution by Lexical Aspect

According to the Aspect Hypothesis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995), as the L2 learners’ proficiency develops, the influence of lexical aspect on tense-aspect marking becomes less powerful; and when the learners move toward a target-like use of tense and aspect, they move towards marking the tense and aspect uniformly across all lexical aspectual classes instead of favouring one more than another. Thus, the use of past simple by L2 English learners was predicted to first appear on achievement and accomplishment verbs, and is eventually extended to activity and state verbs when their proficiency improve. The results, however, show that the observed frequency of past tense by both NNS groups, as advanced English learners, deviates from the expected number, except for the category of
achievement verbs. This result does not support the hypothesis. This could be due to the limited number of texts in my study, or the fact that translations, unlike free writing, are heavily influenced by other factors such as the source texts.

A similar analysis of the distribution of the marking of present perfect morphology was carried out. A descriptive presentation of present perfect morphology (Table 7-3) shows that state verbs were the least frequently marked for the present perfect across three groups (18 for the NNS novice group, 13 for the NNS professional group, and 23 for the NS professional group). Marking rose for achievement verbs (24 for both NNS groups and 52 for the NS professional group). For both NNS groups, the present perfect marking of accomplishment verbs was most frequent (60 for the NNS novice group and 75 for the NNS professional group), followed by activity verbs (58 for the NNS novice group, and 74 for the NNS professional group). For the NS professional group, the present perfect marking of activity verbs was most frequent (90), followed by accomplishment verbs (57).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>-22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>-16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>-33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>-22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>186</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>-32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>222</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-3: Distribution of the Present Perfect Morphology by Lexical Aspect
The result of the Chi-square test of the present perfect distribution by lexical aspect also produces three low significance values (0.000 shown in Table 7-4 for the three groups), which suggests that the distribution of present perfect morphology does differ by lexical aspect categories for all three groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS_professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b,c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-4: Chi-square Test of Present Perfect Morphology Distribution by Lexical Aspect

Further analysis of the distribution of past perfect morphology, presented in Table 7-5) shows that state verbs were the least frequently marked with past perfect by the NNS novice group (3), and that marking rose for achievement (8) and accomplishment verbs (9). Activity verbs (22) were most frequently marked. The table also shows that state verbs were also the least frequently marked with past perfect for the NNS professional group (1), and that marking rose to achievement (4) and activity verbs (10). Accomplishment verbs (15) were most frequently marked. For NS professional translators, only state, activity and accomplishment verbs were marked for past perfect morphology. State verbs (2) and activity verbs (2) were least frequently marked, and accomplishment verbs (9) were most frequently marked.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Aspect</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-5: Distribution of the Past Perfect Morphology by Lexical Aspect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Lexical Aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b,c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-6: Chi-square Test of Past Perfect Morphology Distribution by Lexical Aspect

The result of the Chi-square test of the present perfect distribution by lexical...
aspect produced three low significance values (0.000 for all three groups as shown in Table 7-6), which suggests that the distribution of past perfect morphology does differ by lexical aspect categories for translators of three language background and competence levels.

The overall description of the marking of three perfective forms (past simple, present perfect, and past perfect) against the four lexical aspect categories appears inconsistent with the characteristics of the low proficiency learner’s perfective marking, as predicted by the Aspect Hypothesis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995). The hypothesis predicted that low proficiency learners first used perfective tense marking for achievement and accomplishment verbs, eventually extending use to activity and state verbs. The result of this study demonstrates that none of the markings of perfective verbs follows the above order. A comparison of the findings and the Aspect Hypothesis is illustrated in Table 7-7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Hypothesis</th>
<th>Perfective forms</th>
<th>Lexical Aspect Marking Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS Novice Group</td>
<td>Past Simple, Present Perfect, and Past Perfect</td>
<td>Achievement &gt; Accomplishment &gt; Activity &gt; State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past Simple</td>
<td>Activity (132) &gt; Achievement (96) &gt; Accomplishment (84) &gt; State (75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>Accomplishment (60) &gt; Activity (58) &gt; Achievement (24) &gt; State (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>Activity (22) &gt; Accomplishment (9) &gt; Achievement (8) &gt; State (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS Professional Group</td>
<td>Past Simple</td>
<td>Activity (122) &gt; Achievement (96) &gt; Accomplishment (72) &gt; State (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>Accomplishment (75) &gt; Activity (74) &gt; Achievement (24) &gt; State (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>Accomplishment (15) &gt; Activity (10) &gt; Achievement (4) &gt; State (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS Professional Group</td>
<td>Past Simple</td>
<td>Activity (112) &gt; Achievement (68) &gt; Accomplishment (57) &gt; State (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>Activity (90) &gt; Accomplishment (57) &gt; Achievement (52) &gt; State (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>Accomplishment (9) &gt; Activity (2) = State (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-7: Comparison of Lexical Aspect Markings
Nevertheless, Table 7-7 shows that state verbs were significantly under marked by all translators in the three forms of perfective tense morphology. It may be helpful for translators from Chinese into English to increase their use of state verbs for perfective tense marking. Among the verbs of other three aspectual classes, activity verbs were over represented in the perfective tense morphology; therefore, the distribution pattern of perfective tense marking across the four lexical aspect classes would likely improve if some of the activity verbs be replaced by state verbs in translation. From the following examples extracted from our data, we suggest that the substitution of activity verbs with state verbs may help their translation become more native-like.

Example 7.1

Source text (2): 但日本的經濟從而停滯了十幾年，
Translation: But Japan’s economy stagnated for 10 years as a result. (NNS professional)
Improved translation: But Japan’s economy has been in stagnation for 10 years as a result. (author)

Example 7.2

Source text (3): 要不是最近歐美股市劇烈波動，台北股市也隨著震盪，還真有不少人已經被洗腦得快要相信，只要愛台灣就有新台幣，只要買股票就一定有錢賺。
Translation: Without the instability in Taipei Stock Market, instigated by turbulent European and American stock markets, many people were still convinced that being a patriot equals to gaining money and purchasing stocks
equals to getting profit. (NNS novice)

Improved translation: Without the instability in Taipei Stock Market, instigated by turbulent European and American stock markets, many people still believed that being a patriot equals to gaining money and purchasing stocks equals to getting profit. (author)

In addition to replacing activity verbs with state verbs in perfective marking, the distributional pattern of state verbs could also be improved by replacing the imperfective marking of state verbs with perfective forms, as shown in Example 7.3, and by replacing accomplishment and achievement verbs with state verbs, as shown in Examples 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6.

7.1.1.1 Improvement by choosing perfective aspect

Example 7.3

Source text (1): 米酒本來是千百年來中國人傳統的強身補品，是日常料理的必需品

Translation: Rice wine has been a traditional health food for Chinese people over thousands of years, and it is a daily necessity for cooking. (NNS professional)

Improved translation: Rice has been a traditional health food and an important ingredient of daily cooking for Chinese people over thousands of years. (author)

In Example 7.3, the translator used the present simple is for the copula be (a state verb) in the second clause, while the present perfect been for the copula be was
used in the first clause. These two copula *be(s)* corresponded to two Chinese copula “是” (in italics) in the source text clauses. There was a durative tense marker “千百年來 (for thousands of years)” in the first clause only, which may explain why the translator used present perfect in the first clause and past simple in the second. To replace the present simple copula *is* in the second clause with the present perfect form *been* would produce a more accurate translation while increasing the number of perfective tense morphology of state verbs, which would ultimately improve their distribution pattern.

In Example 7.4, although the use of the past tense in the subordinate clause of the improved translation is debatable, replacing the accomplishment verb *produce* (in italic) with the state verb *be* would improve the distribution pattern of state verbs by increasing the number of perfective tense markings of state verbs. In Example 7.5, replacing the accomplishment predicate (*led the world*) with a state verb (*was a predominant world leader*) in its perfective form (past simple), as shown in the improved translation, would also improve the distribution of perfective marking of state verbs, as well as producing a better translation. Achievements could also be replaced by state verbs to increase the state verb count to improve the distribution of perfective marking of State verbs. As shown in Example 7.6, the achievement verb *originated* was replaced by a state predicate, *has been a result.*

### 7.1.1.2 Improvement by replacing accomplishment verbs with state verbs

#### Example 7.4

**Source text (1):** 只因爲它是用蒸餾方式做的，就必須比照國外進口的XO、威士忌，課上重稅，實在沒有道理。

**Translation:** It makes no sense at all that the rice wine is heavily taxed, like
those imported alcohol products such as XO and whiskey merely because it was produced by distillation (NNS novice).

Improved translation: It makes no sense at all that the rice wine is heavily taxed, like those imported alcohol products such as XO and whiskey merely because it was a product of distillation. (author)

Example 7.5
Source text (1): 那時在汽車、半導體、家電等領域，「日本第一」的威脅聲響遍雲霄。
Translation: At the same time, Japan’s production of cars, semiconductors and home appliances led the world and dominated the world markets in these fields. (NNS novice)
Improved translation: At the same time, Japan was a predominant world leader in the fields of cars, semiconductors and home appliances. (author)

7.1.1.3 Improvement by replacing Achievement verbs with State verbs
Example 7.6
Source text (4): 央行解釋，進口外匯支出萎縮，是外匯存底增加的另一大原因，這是民間投資不振的結果。
Translation: The central bank explicates that the shrinking of foreign exchange spending is another principal cause for the increasing foreign exchange reserves and all of which originated from slow private investments. (NNS novice)
Improved translation: The central bank explicated that the shrinking of foreign exchange spending was another principal cause for the increasing foreign
exchange reserves and this was the result of slow private investments. (author)

7.1.2 The Distribution of Imperfective Morphology by Lexical Aspect

In English present progressive, past progressive, future progressive and present simple are mostly of imperfective aspect. According to the Aspect Hypothesis, the low proficiency learner tends to first mark them with activity verbs, and then with accomplishment and achievement verbs (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995). Two analyses have been carried out to study the distribution of present simple and present progressive across the four Vendlerian categories of lexical aspects (state, activity, accomplishment and achievement). Past progressive and future perfect were not analysed because they were not sufficiently represented in our dataset, which contained only four cases of past progressive and one of future perfect.

The results based on the counts of present simple, as shown in Table 7-8, reveal a distributional pattern of present simple marking across the four lexical aspects. For NNS novice translators, achievement verbs were the least frequently marked for the present simple (108). The marking rose with accomplishment verbs (153) and activity verbs (158). State verbs were the most frequently marked (303). For the NNS professional group, the table shows a similar pattern, in which achievement verbs were the least frequently marked (84), then accomplishment verbs (99) and activity verbs (160). State verbs were also the most frequently marked (334). For the NS professional group, accomplishment verbs were the least frequently marked (54). Marking rose for achievement verbs (60) and activity verbs (186), and state verbs were the most frequently marked (352).
A further Chi-square test of the present simple distribution by lexical aspect produced three low significance values (0.000 shown in Table 7-9 for all three groups) suggesting that the distribution of present simple morphology does differ by lexical aspect categories for all three groups.

Table 7-8: Distribution of the Present Simple Morphology by Lexical Aspect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Aspect</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>180.5</td>
<td>122.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>180.5</td>
<td>-22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>180.5</td>
<td>-27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>180.5</td>
<td>-72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>722</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>169.3</td>
<td>164.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>169.3</td>
<td>-9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>169.3</td>
<td>-70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>169.3</td>
<td>-85.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>677</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td>state</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>163.0</td>
<td>189.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>163.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>163.0</td>
<td>-109.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>163.0</td>
<td>-103.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>652</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-9: Chi-square Test of Present Simple Morphology Distribution by Lexical Aspect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Lexical Aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS_novice</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b)</td>
<td>119.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b)</td>
<td>232.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td>Chi-Square(a,b,c)</td>
<td>360.368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The distribution of present progressive was analysed next and are shown in Table 7-10. All the present progressive markings of the NNS novice group fell into the lexical aspect category of activity verbs, indicating that the translators in this group only use present progressive for activity verbs. For the NNS professional group, the present progressive markings fell into two lexical aspect categories (achievement and activity) and rose from achievement (8) to activity (30). For the NS professional group, the present progressive marking rose from accomplishment verbs (3) to achievement verbs (13) to activity verbs (48).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS_novice activity</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS_professional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>-11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS_professional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>achievement</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>-9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accomplishment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>-18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-10: Distribution of the Present Progressive Morphology by Lexical Aspect

Since the markings of present progressive for the NNS novice group only fell into one category, there is no need for a Chi-square test. For the NNS and NS professional groups, a further Chi-square test produced two low significant values (0.000, as shown in Table 7-11) suggesting that the distribution of present progressive morphology differs across lexical aspect categories.
The overall description of the marking of two imperfective forms (present simple and present progressive) against the four lexical aspect categories is consistent with the Aspect Hypothesis’s prediction of low proficiency learner’s imperfective marking (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995). My study demonstrates that the tense with imperfective aspecual meaning (present simple) is most frequently marked with state verbs, followed by activity verbs, then accomplishment, and finally achievement verbs. It has also shown that progressive marking (present progressive) is most frequently marked with activity verbs, followed by achievement verbs. A comparison of these findings with the Aspect Hypothesis is illustrated in Table 7-12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Hypothesis</th>
<th>Imperfective forms</th>
<th>Lexical Aspect Marking Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS Novice Group</td>
<td>Present Simple, Present Progressive</td>
<td>State &gt; Activity &gt; Accomplishment &gt; Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Simple</td>
<td>State (303) &gt; Activity (158) &gt; Accomplishment (153) &gt; Achievement (108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Progressive</td>
<td>Activity verbs only (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNS Professional Group</td>
<td>Present Simple</td>
<td>State (334) &gt; Activity (160) &gt; Accomplishment (99) &gt; Achievement (84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Progressive</td>
<td>Activity (30) &gt; Achievement (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS Professional Group</td>
<td>Present Simple</td>
<td>State (352) &gt; Activity (186) &gt; Achievement (60) &gt; Accomplishment (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present Progressive</td>
<td>Activity (48) &gt; Achievement (12) &gt; Accomplishment (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-12: Comparison of Lexical Aspect Marking Pattern
Table 7-12 shows that the use of the present simple, which indicates continued existence, is congruent with states that encode inherent duration, hence its combination with state verbs. Dynamic verbs, (e.g., achievement, accomplishment and activity verbs) are obviously under marked with present simple by all translators. The table also shows that present progressive is mainly used with activity verbs, which encode inherent meaning of [-telic, -punctual, + dynamic]. Except for the marking of some achievement and accomplishment verbs with present progressive by NNS and NS professional translators, nearly all present progressive marking is of activity verbs. This indicates that the translators’ use of imperfective tense morphology is similar to that of low proficiency learners and is strongly influenced by lexical aspectual classes of English verbs. Since NS professional translators are definitely not of low proficiency, their tendency to associate imperfective tense morphological forms with verb aspectual categories is most likely due to the limited data in this study or the influence of the source text in translation.

In order to reduce the influence of verb aspectual classes, it may be helpful if translators could reduce their use of state verbs for present simple tense marking, and their use of activity verbs for present progressive marking. The distribution pattern of imperfective tense marking across the four lexical aspect classes would be most likely to become more native-like if some of the state verbs were replaced with dynamic verbs in present simple marking, and some activity verbs were replaced with accomplishment or achievement verbs in present progressive marking. The following translation examples extracted from our data, are used to illustrate how the distribution pattern of NNS translators’ imperfective marking and tense-aspect choice could be more native-like if such strategies were implemented in translation.

In Example 7.7, a state verb (in italics) was used in the original translation. In
the improved translation version, the state verbs were replaced with accomplishment verbs to reduce the count of present simple marking of state verbs.

7.1.2.1 Replacement of state verbs with dynamic verbs in present simple marking

Example 7.7

Source text (2): 美國催促人民幣升值的真正目的，絕對不是要解決其貿易赤字，
Translation (1): The U.S. kept requesting that the RMB should appreciate against USD to shorten the huge business deficit. However, the U.S.’s real intention is definitely not to solve the deficit, (NNS novice)
Improved translation: The U.S. keeps requesting that the RMB should appreciate against USD to shorten the huge business deficit. However, the U.S. does not intend to solve the deficit [problem]. (author)

Source text (3): 股票市場裡固然買的是夢，
Translation (2): People who invested in the stock market believe in a dream to be rich. (NNS novice)
Improved translation: People who invested in the stock market dream of to be rich. (author)

Source text (4): 背後的意義，也就代表台灣的景氣仍在低點，
Translation (3): This move actually means that the Taiwanese business environment is still at a negative situation. (NNS professional)
Improved translation: This signals that the Taiwanese business environment is still at a negative situation. (author)
7.1.2.2 Replacement of activity verbs with achievement or accomplishment verbs in present progressive marking

In Example 7.8, activity verbs (*in italics*) in the original translations were replaced by accomplishment verbs in the improved versions to reduce the count of present progressive marking of state verbs.

Example 6.8

Source text (1): 米酒越來越貴，不但造成大量缺貨，
Translation (1): The price of rice wine *is growing* thus causing a great shortage of supply. (NNS novice)
Improved translation: The price of rice wine *is going to new heights* thus causing a great shortage of supply. (author)

Source text (3): 政府這陣子用盡各種手段拉抬股市，無非是希望營造台灣經濟其實沒那麼糟的數據印象
Translation (2): Recently the government *are working* tirelessly to provide stimulus to the local stock market with the intention of creating a good statistical image of Taiwan’s economy. (NNS professional)
Improved Translation: Recently the government *are using every means* to provide stimulus to the local stock market with the intention of creating a good statistical image of Taiwan’s economy. (author)

7.1.2.3 Combining Present Progressive with Achievement or Accomplishment verbs

The distribution of imperfective tense marking could also be more native-like by adding more present progressive marking of achievement or accomplishment
verbs, as shown in Example 7.9. The accomplishment predicates in Translations (1) and (2) were originally marked with present simple by NNS translators. A shift from present simple to present progressive would generate two cases of accomplishment verbs combining with present progressive and thus help the distribution of imperfective tense marking across four lexical aspect classes without compromising the translation accuracy. Similarly, the present simple marking for the achievement verb kill in Translation (3) could well be replaced by the present progressive.

Example 7.9

Source text (1): 米酒越來越貴，不但造成大量缺貨，
Translation (1): The rising cost of rice wine creates a major shortage. (NNS professional)
Improved translation: The rising cost of rice wine is creating a major shortage. (author)

Source text (2): 快速累積的外匯存底，成為政府宣導「拚經濟」成效的最佳樣板。
Translation (2): The fast accumulating Foreign Exchange Reserve becomes the ideal model for the Government’s promotion on improvement of the economy. (NNS professional)
Improved translation: The fast accumulating Foreign Exchange Reserve is becoming the ideal model for the Government’s promotion on improvement of the economy. (author)

Source text (3): 政府拉抬股市，豈不形同另一個減刑殺人的「德政」？
Translation (3): Doesn’t the “benevolent policy” applied to boost Taiwan’s stock market kill the people in a certain sense? (NNS novice)

Improved translation: Isn’t the “benevolent policy” applied to boost Taiwan’s stock market killing the people in a certain sense? (author)

7.1.3 Summary of 7.1.1 and 7.1.2

The distributional patterns of the marking of tense with perfective meaning by the four lexical aspectual classes are reported in Tables 7-1 to 7-7. The patterns show the general tendency of translators of the three language background and competence levels to least frequently mark state verbs with perfective morphology such as past simple, present perfect, and past perfect. It also shows that their marking of achievement, accomplishment and activity verbs varies with the three perfective morphologies. The distributional patterns of the marking of tense with imperfective meaning by the four lexical aspectual classes are reported in Tables 7-8, 7-9, 7-10, and 7-11. The patterns show that state verbs were most frequently marked with present simple, one of the two imperfective tense forms, and activity verbs with present progressive. The patterns of perfective marking (past simple, present perfect, and past perfect) of translators from all three groups differs from those predicted by the Aspect Hypothesis for low proficiency learners (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995) (c.f. Table 7-7). Nevertheless, their imperfective marking (present simple, present progressive) is consistent with that of low proficiency learners as predicted by the Aspect Hypothesis (c.f. Table 7-12). A comparison of the two NNS groups of translators has found no distinct developmental differences in their perfective and imperfective marking.
7.2 The Effect of Lexical Aspect on Tense and Aspect Variation in Translation

This section discusses the effect of lexical aspect on tense-aspect choices in relation to the Lexical Hypothesis outlined in Section 3.3. The results show that the four Vendlerian categories of lexical aspect with their respective inherent semantic properties influenced the translator’s choice of imperfective morphology when translating Chinese editorials into English. However, the distributional patterns of their perfective morphology appear less influenced by lexical aspect of English verbs. For example, the Aspect Hypothesis predicts that low proficiency non-native English speakers favour perfective tense marking on achievements and accomplishments. The results of this study show that the native Chinese-speaking translators of both novice and professional groups tend to relate most past simple with activity verbs, and then with accomplishment and achievement verbs.

The results of my study also show that the two NNS translator groups display the similar distributional pattern of perfective and imperfective tense marking across the four categories of lexical aspect (Table 7-7). This result appears inconsistent with the prediction of Aspect Hypothesis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995) that high proficiency learners would be less influenced by the lexical aspect of English verbs and differ from low proficiency learners in the use of perfective and imperfective morphology. For example, the results from analysing both NNS novice and professional translators show that the past simple and present perfect marking of the two groups are similar: activity verbs have the highest occurrence rate of past simple marking, followed by achievement, accomplishment, and state verbs. Accomplishment verbs have the highest occurrence rate of present perfect marking, followed by activity, achievement, and state verbs. The situation is
the same in the marking of imperfective tenses (as shown in Table 7-12). All these may indicate that they have achieved a similar level of English proficiency.

On the other hand, according to the Aspect Hypothesis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995), as the learners’ proficiency develops, they move toward a target-like use of the tense and aspect by marking the tense and aspect uniformly across all lexical aspectual classes instead of favouring one more than another. In my study, both NNS group translators have shown such movements. For example, the Lexical Hypothesis predicts that the marking of past simple would move from achievement and accomplishment verbs to activity and state verbs when learner proficiency improves. Our data show that activity verbs and accomplishment verbs alternate as the most favoured (or biased, in the terminology of Robison, 1995) in perfective marking by both NNS translator groups. Activity verbs are used most frequently in past simple and past perfect marking and accomplishment verbs in present perfect (c.f. Table 7-7). These results suggest that the decreasing influence of lexical aspect on perfective tense marking is evident in both NNS translator groups.

The influence of lexical aspect, however, remains strong on the imperfective tense and aspect marking of both NNS translator groups. As shown in Table 7-12, the marking of present simple by both NNS translator groups follows the prediction of Lexical Hypothesis, which states that state verbs are most favoured, followed by activity, accomplishment, and achievement verbs. Translators of both NNS groups have been found to favour activity verbs in present progressive marking.

Therefore, it appears that the perfective marking of both NNS translator groups in translation carries little characteristics of the low proficiency non-native English learners, while the imperfective tense-aspect marking of both NNS translator groups still carries the developmental characteristics of low proficiency non-native English
learners. Based on these results, it appears that NNS translators may need to pay more attention to imperfective marking than to perfective marking in order to become more native-like in tense-aspect choices. Nevertheless, the results may also be attributed to other factors, such as the translation process itself, the teaching and learning of English grammatical tense and aspect in their past experience, or the limited data of my study.

My study has found that although translators of both NNS groups show few characteristics of low proficiency learners in their past simple and past perfect marking, accomplishment verbs were still most commonly marked with present perfect. Accomplishment verbs, as telic verbs, have the inherent meaning of *completed* or *finished*, which is very close to the meaning of the past inflection and can be conceptualised as referring to an event that is finished or over. Consequently, the bias for telicity (accomplishment and achievement verbs) in the perfective tense marking stated in the Aspect Hypothesis finds some support in the case of accomplishment verbs of this study. As a result, the overuse of present perfect marking for accomplishment verbs is another area that NNS translators need to learn to be more native-like.

As activity verbs present events or situations which do not have any endpoints, they share less features of the prototypical meaning of the perfective tense marking when compared with achievement and accomplishment verbs and they were hypothesised to be less favoured by NNS professional translators in their marking of perfective tense and aspect. In my study, however, the marking of activity verbs is higher in past simple, present perfect, and past perfect than achievement verbs across both NNS translator groups. My study echoes Cai’s (2002) study of 120 EFL Chinese college students, which found that dynamic verbs (activity, accomplishment, and
achievement verbs) showed significantly higher past tense marking rates than state verbs. However, the findings of my study differ from Cai’s, which found no significant differences between the dynamic verbs. The results of my study suggest that although there is a general influence of lexical aspect on the tense-aspect morphology in the translation of NNS translators, there also exist noteworthy variations. Again, this may be due to the limited data in my study, and thus calls on the researchers to explain these variations.

My analyses also show that the lexical aspect of English verbs affect the NS professional translator’s marking of imperfective and perfective tense-aspect morphology, a finding that is not consistent with previous studies (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Bergstrom, 1996), which suggested that native English speakers had no such tendency. Since previous studies comparing NS and NNS speakers all focused on English writing, this inconsistency could result from the fact that the research materials of my study were translations instead of writings. In addition, the limited data of my study may have contributed to its results: further studies of larger scale may be needed to compare the influence of lexical aspect of English verbs on native English-speakers in their tense-aspect choices when performing different tasks.

In summary, the influence of lexical aspect of English verbs on the NNS translator’s choice of tense-aspect is strong in imperfective marking, particularly the present progressive marking of activity verbs. The influence is less powerful in the NNS translator’s choice of perfective tense and aspect marking except for present perfect. In addition, little difference has been found between NNS novice and professional translators in their choice of perfective and imperfective tense and aspect marking, suggesting little differences between their English proficiency.
7.3 The Influence of Lexical Aspect on the NNS translator’s Choice of Tense and Aspect

As discussed above, lexical aspect affects the tense marking of NNS translators, and the Aspect Hypothesis is still in force even among translators of advanced English proficiency (both NNS professional and novice translators are advanced English learners). The present corpus shows that the Chinese translators may not have developed a native like system of English temporality even though they have reached high English proficiency levels. Our NNS participants have been categorised into professional and novice groups, judging from the English learning and translation experience. However, they have exhibited similar patterns of using the English tense aspect. As Collins (2005) and Coppieters (1987) point out, the similar patterns found in NNS translators may result from their lack of awareness of the semantic categories of verbal morphology. This may again be explained as the effect of the translation itself as well as the intensive attention paid on the grammar of verbal inflection during the teaching and learning process, as discussed in 7.2.

Another point that has drawn our attention is that the influence of the four lexical aspectual classes upon tense marking appears greater for imperfective tense-aspect forms such as Present Simple and Present Progressive than for perfective tense-aspect forms such as Past Simple, Present Perfect and Past Perfect (the distribution of the former shows a greater conformity with the Aspect Hypothesis). This finding reveals that the NNS translators are more sensitive to imperfective tense markers rather than perfective tense markers in their choice of tense-aspect forms.

Since NNS professional translators in my study have exhibited patterns of using the English tense similar to NNS novice translators, we would like to suggest that
classroom instructions on the English inflectional verbal system in defensive of the interference of the mother tongue may be needed to help facilitate the acquisition process, As evidenced by Ellis (1987: 241), formal instruction does facilitate more rapid development of second language acquisition. Intensive and massive practice in a Chinese English classroom may greatly promote the development of the English temporal system among NNS translators.

7.4 Summary

The above discussion has shown that lexical aspect is highly systematic and universal in the tense marking of the translators in the corpus of my study. The translators favour activity, achievement and accomplishment verbs more than state verbs for perfective tense forms, which does not support the Aspect Hypothesis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995). However, they relate more state and activity verbs than accomplishment and achievement verbs with imperfective forms, which supports the hypothesis.

The results also show that influence of lexical aspect has not decreases in force with the development of the NNS translator’s language background and competence level. It is also found that lexical aspect is a more powerful influence factor on the imperfective tense marking than on the perfective tense marking.

The results further demonstrate that our NNS participants appeared to have a similar temporal acquisition across two language background and competence levels. We associate this phenomenon with the effect of factors such as the influence of lexical aspect of verbs on the temporal acquisition, the common teaching methods, and resulting learning strategies.
Chapter 8  Major Differences Between NNS and NS Translators

In this chapter I discuss the differences between the translators of three language background and competence levels in their use of English tense and aspect. NNS professional translators are often regarded as able to produce better translations than the NNS novice translators, and NS professional translators are regarded as able to produce better translations than the NNS professional translators when they translate from Chinese into English. I will compare the two pairs, NNS novice group vs. NNS professional group and NNS professional group vs. NS professional group.

In 8.1 I will first discuss how the two NNS groups differ from each other in terms of the translator’s understanding of English tense and aspect forms with examples of how translators actually used tense and aspect forms in translation. I will also further discuss the results presented in Chapter 5 that relate to the overall differences between the groups in their use of tense and aspect. This discussion will focus on the translator’s understanding of English tense-aspect usages and their reliance on temporal markers in the source text when making tense-aspect choices.

In 8.2, I will discuss the differences between NNS professional and NS professional translators in their use of tense and aspect forms. The differences include their understanding of the tense in the source text, their use of English tense-aspect forms at the sentence level, and their maintenance of tense consistency at the discourse level. The influence of tense-aspect markers in the source text on NNS and NS translators will also be discussed.

In 8.3, I will discuss the universal translation practice of following the source text. I argue that tense choice in translation involves complex considerations of the communicative purpose of the author and tense convention of the discourse, rather
than simply following the tense-aspect marker in the source text. In 8.4, I will summarise the chapter. Findings from the results of Research Questions 2 to 4 have provided the general direction of my detailed analysis of the dataset. To bring the major differences into focus, at the beginnings of 8.1 and 8.2 I include the results of the Chi-square tests, which single out the sub-factors that will be the focus of the following discussion.

8.1 The Differences between NNS Novice and NNS Professional Translators

The Chi-square tests in 8.1.1 show that the NNS novice and professional translators exhibit no significant difference in the overall occurrence counts of English tense and aspect forms in translation. Further analysis in 8.1.2, however, finds that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way when translating Chinese present and future tenses, and that the major differences lie in their use of English present perfect and past simple forms. How their understanding of English present and past simple forms influenced their choice of tense and aspect in translation is discussed in 8.1.2.1; and the influence of the expression of temporality in Chinese is discussed in 8.1.2.2. The whole section is then summarised in 8.1.3.

8.1.1 Overall Differences in Use of Tense and Aspect

The NNS novice and professional translators were compared in terms of the occurrence counts of tense and aspect forms in the translation. The results indicate that there is no significant difference between the two groups, so it is necessary to look in detail at how the translators dealt with specific Chinese tenses. The crosstabulation (Table 8-1) shows the frequency and percentage of each tense and aspect form used by each group. If each group used a similar level of tense and
aspect, the pattern of tense and aspect forms would be similar across groups. In each group, the majority of tense and aspect forms were present simple (57.1%, 61.3%), past simple (23.9%, 20.5%), and present perfect (9.1%, 10.6%). It appears that NNS professional translators used more present simple and present perfect but less past simple than the NNS novice translators. Figure 8-1 shows the differences between the two groups in the use of tense and aspect. The use of present simple and present perfect slightly increases with the development of translation competence levels. The use of past simple and future simple slightly declines when translators improve their competence level from novice to professional. The use of the rest of the tense and aspect forms shows some, although not significant, differences between the two groups. In general, the two lines in the figure show little difference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Translation</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>NNS_novice</th>
<th>NNS_professional</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>929</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present simple</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>154</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future simple</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>1,571</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-1: Distribution of tense and aspect across NNS novice and professional groups

From the crosstabulation alone, it is impossible to tell whether these differences are real or due to chance variation. In order to test whether each of the translation
competence group used a similar level of tense and aspect, my study used the Crosstabulation procedure to test the null hypothesis that the levels of tense and aspect usage were constant across the two groups. The two-sided asymptotic significance of the Chi-square statistic (highlighted in Table 8-2) is 0.274 ($p > 0.10$), so it supports the null hypothesis that the two NNS groups do not differ in the use of tense and aspect in translation and the differences are due to chance variation. The result is shown graphically in Figure 8-1, in which the NNS_novice curve almost matches the NNS_professional curve.

![Figure 8-1: Use of tense and aspect by NNS novice and professional groups](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>7.533</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>0.274</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>7.569</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>6.248</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>1,571</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-2: Chi-square test of tense and aspect variation across NNS novice and professional groups
The results show that the average frequency count of each grammatical tense and aspect is similar across the two NNS groups. As we have mentioned before, the NNS translators had all received formal instruction on the English tense-aspect system from their graduate and post-graduate education and had achieved an advanced level of English proficiency. One of the major differences between NNS professional group and NNS novice group in our dataset was that the former had more translation experience than the latter. In addition, the source texts used by the subjects in this study were the same, therefore, the number of past, present, and future contexts in the source texts were the same. Thus, given the NNS subjects were all native Chinese speakers, their understanding of temporal context of NNS subjects may not differ in a statistically-significant way. As a result of their similar levels of English proficiency and understanding of the temporal context in the source texts, the translations produced by the two groups show similar frequency counts of tense and aspect.

8.1.2 Differences between the Translator’s Choice of Tense-Aspect Influenced by the Tense-Aspect of the Source Language

In the previous section only the occurrence counts of tense and aspect between the two groups were compared. In this section, further analyses were performed to scrutinise the differences between the two groups in their use of tense and aspect when dealing with different tense and aspect in the source language. The two groups of translators were found to differ in a statistically-significant way in their use of English present perfect and past simple when translating Chinese present and future tenses. The differences between their understandings of English present perfect and past simple are discussed in 8.1.2.1, and the differences related to Chinese present
and future tenses are discussed in 8.1.2.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Source Text</th>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Translation</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>NNS_novice</th>
<th>NNS_professional</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>present simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>74.9%</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>11.3%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>present progressive</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>0.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td>past progressive</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future simple</td>
<td>future simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>498</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>present simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>11.6%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>present progressive</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
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<td>267</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
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<td>future simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>246</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>present simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future simple</td>
<td>future simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-3: The use of tense and aspect by NNS novice and professional groups in translating different
Chinese tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Source</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>12.308</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>0.055</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>12.930</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>6.374</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>930</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>9.276</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>0.159</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>9.349</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>6.536</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>496</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>7.980</td>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>0.046</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>8.827</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>1.956</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-4: Chi-square tests of tense and aspect variation across NNS novice and professional groups in translation different Chinese tense

The results of the crosstabulation analysis and the accompanying Chi-square tests listed in Table 8-3 and Table 8-4 reveal that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way when they translate present tense and future tense in the source language (p=0.055; 0.046<0.1), while past tense in the source language does not show any significant impact (p=0.159>0.10). Therefore, graphic representations of the percentages of tense and aspect used by the two groups when translating present and future tense in the source language are produced as shown in Figure 8-2 and Figure 8-3. The figures show that:

1. The professional translators used less past simple and more present perfect than the novice translators when translating Chinese present tense (Figure 8-2); and,

2. The professional translators used more present perfect, present simple, and past simple and less future simple when translating Chinese future tense (Figure 8-3).
It is noted that not all tense and aspect forms are shown in the figures. This because some tense-aspect forms were not used by the translators when translating the respective Chinese tense. Such cases are invisible to the statistical procedures of Chi-square tests, which need positively weighted cases.

Figure 8-2: Differences between NNS translators in translating Chinese future tense

Figure 8-3: Differences between NNS translators in translating Chinese future tense groups
In summary, there are significant differences between NNS novice and professional translators when translating Chinese present and future tenses, specifically in their use of English present perfect and past simple forms. It appears that the influence of Chinese present and future tenses and English present perfect and past simple may potentially contribute to the differences between the two NNS translator groups.

8.1.2.1 NNS novices’ and NNS professionals’ understandings of English present perfect and past simple

In this section, I will first use some examples to illustrate that NNS novice and professional translators differ in their understanding of the grammatical rules of English present perfect and past simple. I will argue that the difference in their understanding of the rules contributes to their different choices of English tense and aspect forms, although negligence may also play a part. In addition, I will argue that both novice and professional NNS translators are mistaken in their understanding of some English grammatical rules, such as the tense harmony rule.

The results in Table 8-4 suggest that NNS professional translators differ from NNS novice translators in their understanding of English tense-aspect usages when choosing different tense and aspect in translation. In one way or another, it appears that after years of learning English, NNS novice translators have not satisfactorily mastered tense-aspect usages in English, especially because of the overlap between some usages.

This is particularly evident in the usages of present perfect and past simple. Figure 8-2 shows that the differences between the NNS professional group and the NNS novice group when translating Chinese present tense lie for the most part in
their use of present perfect and past simple. Exact counts of the differences are shown in Table 8-3. In a total of 89 cases of the present tense in the source text being translated into present perfect, NNS novice translators account for 40 cases and NNS professional translators 49. In a total of 73 cases of the present tense in the source text being translated into past simple, NNS novice translators account for 50 cases and NNS professional translators 23 (shown in bold in the Present row of Table 8-3). In the following examples, the tense of the source sentence in Example 8.1 is regarded as present because it is a topic sentence expressing the author’s point of view. The present tense is expressed through its context. Instead of using the present tense, however, the NNS novice translator in Example 8.1 used past simple, which denotes an incorrect interpretation of to solve the problem of trade deficit was not, but is now, the real purpose of the US. In fact, according to the source text’s author, solving the trade deficit has never been the real purpose of the US, as translated by the NNS professional translator.

Example 8.1

Source text (2): 美國催促人民幣升值的真正目的，絕對不是要解決貿易赤字，

Translation (1): However, the genius purpose of the U.S. intention was definitely not to solve its trade deficit. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): In reality, the real purpose of America’s urging the Yuan to appreciate has by no means been to resolve the trade deficit between them, (NNS professional)

The Chinese present perfect in Example 8.2 is expressed through tense-aspect
markers (in italics). The NNS novice translator, however, chose past simple and ignored the aspectual marker, which indicated the “current relevance” of the two events in the source sentence. In fact, the source sentence states that the problem of trade deficit has not been solved and the Japanese threat has been removed, as translated by the NNS professional translators, who all used the correct tense-aspect form, present perfect, in the translation.

Example 8.2

Source text (2): 到如今，對美而言，雖然逆差的問題完全沒解決，但是日本爭霸的威脅卻完全解除 了。

Translation (1): Until now, to the U.S., although the problem of deficit was totally not solved, the threat that Japan contended for hegemony was solved.
(NNS novice)

Translation (2): and until today, for the Americans, the trade deficit still has not been completely resolved. However, Japanese economy has been halted for more than a decade. (NNS professional)

The distinction between present perfect and past simple in English has been the subject of a great deal of research; the most common interpretation of present perfect has argued that it shares identical functions with past simple and the major difference between the two is that the former expresses current relevance (Quirk et al. 1985; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1998; Inoue, 1979; McCoard, 1978; Comrie 1976). In Suh’s (1992: 82) words, with the use of the present perfect “the speaker brings what happened in past to the realm of the present.”

In Example 8.1, the tense of the source text is expressed through context, and
thus the inappropriate choice of past simple by the NNS novice translator may be subject to different factors, such as misinterpretation of the tense in the source text. In Example 8.2, however, although the Chinese tense-aspect markers (如今 and 了) indicate present perfect, the NNS novice translators still chose past simple in translation. This suggests that some NNS novice translators may have serious problems with some basic usages of English present perfect, particularly its reference to current relevance. In these two examples, the NNS professional translators have obviously shown a better understanding of the quality of current relevance attached to English present perfect than the NNS novice translator.

The NNS novice translator’s choice of past simple in both Examples 8.1 and 8.2 might have resulted from negligence. For example, in another case, a NNS novice translator used past tense to translate the sentence in Example 8.3, in which there is no past tense marker in the source text at all. Of course the translator might have simply interpreted the sentence as in a past context, and so used the past tense. As the translators in my study have not been asked to make commentaries on their translations, we do not know the exact reason why the past simple has been used by the translators, and the translator’s negligence is only one possible explanation.

Example 8.3

Source text (4): 看到這些，我們還能對「快速累積的外匯存底」，感到樂觀嗎？

Translation (1): With regard to this, I believed we can not be too optimistic about the rapid increase of foreign reserves. (NNS novice translator)

In addition, the translations in Example 8.2 show that translators of both groups
tend to follow the tense harmony rule faithfully. The source sentence is a concessional complex sentence, consisting of a main clause (日本爭霸的威脅卻完全解除) and a concessional subordinate clause (到如今，對美而言，雖然逆差的問題完全沒解決). The novice translator chose past simple, and the professional translator chose present perfect for both clauses in their translations. According to Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman. (1998), many grammar books instruct the learner to follow the tense harmony rule in writing complex, compound and reporting sentences. A further search of our translation data shows that Example 8.2 is a case in which no translator from the two NNS groups has chosen a combination of different tense-aspect forms. This may suggest that translators tend to over-simplify the tense choice when dealing with complex sentences. In fact, there are at least two extra tense-aspect options for this sentence, apart from past simple plus past simple and present perfect plus present perfect:

1. Present simple plus present perfect. For Americans the Japanese threat is totally gone nowadays although the deficit with Japan has remained a problem to be solved. (author’s version)

2. Present simple plus present progressive. For Americans the Japanese threat is no longer an issue nowadays although the deficit with Japan is still increasing. (author’s version)

Our analysis of the translations of Examples 8.1 and 8.2 shows that NNS professional translators used more tense-aspect forms than NNS novice translators when translating the Chinese present tense. This flexibility in tense choice also appeared in their translations of the Chinese future tense, as shown in Figure 8-2. Although translators from both groups used present simple and future simple frequently in their translations of the Chinese future tense, the professional
translators used more tense-aspect forms in addition to present simple and included present perfect, past simple, and future simple in their choices, while the novice translators tended to use only one tense-aspect form, future simple, in addition to present simple when translating Chinese future tense (Figure 8-2). The bold figures in the Future row of Table 8-3 show that of a total of four cases of the future tense in the source text were translated into present perfect, NNS novice translators account for only one case and NNS professional translators the other three. Of a total of 10 cases of the future tense in the source text being translated into past simple, NNS novice translators account for one and NNS professional translators, nine. The following are some examples:

Example 8.4

Source text (1): 讓辛勤終年的農民叫苦連天，不知道未來要何去何從。

Translation (1): Hard working farmers do not know what to do next in the future. (NNS professional)

Translation (2): They have no idea what the future will bring. (NNS novice)

Translation (3): farmers who worked diligently throughout the year still have no idea of where their future will be. (NNS novice)

Translation (4): The farmers who have been working whole year complained about that they had no future. (NNS professional)

Translation (5): Hard working Taiwanese farmers have suffered and confused about their future. (NNS professional)

Since the Chinese phrase in *italics* ‘未來’ (future) in Example 8.4 is a tense marker, it is not surprising that many translators from both groups chose to use future
simple or present simple and produced translations similar to (1), (2), and (3). Some NNS professional translators, however, made tense-aspect choices other than future simple and present simple. As shown in translation (4), the past simple is used, and in translation (5), present perfect is used.

As Ellis (2006) pointed out, the difference between Chinese and English in grammatical realisation could result in learners’ avoidance of some target linguistic features about whose uses they are unsure. Our data show that NNS novice translators are more careful than the professional translators when making tense-aspect choices. In Example 8.4, their choices of present simple and future simple (translations (1), (2), (3)) are obviously the safest. As for the professional translators, most of them used present simple or future simple to translate the clause 不知道未來要何去何從. Translations (4) and (5) are only extracted here to show, as in Figure 8-2, that professional translators used a wider variety of tense-aspect forms than novice translators when translating Chinese future tense.

Although translations (4) and (5) show that professional NNS translators have more choices at their disposal, the translations indicate that professional NNS translators are not necessarily more competent than the novice translators in this example per se. There is no grammatical tense and aspect error in translation (5); however, the translation is over-simplified with several omissions such as ‘終年’ (all year round) and ‘叫苦連天’ (complain) and its rendition of ‘不知道未來要何去何從’ into have confused about their future is also unsatisfactory. The most serious error arises in translation (4), in which the professional translator failed to establish the correct temporal relations in the complex sentence. According to Declerck (1991), a writer/speaker, when choosing tense, needs first decide in which tense-sector $T_0$ falls to establish the absolute tense of the whole sentence; only after the absolute
tense has been established, can other temporal relationships be established among different situations. In translation (4), two time-sectors are mistakenly established: a pre-present sector introduced by the use of present perfect progressive have been working whole year, and a past sector introduced by past simple usages of complained and had. As a result the translation reads temporally vague with different interpretations: it may mean either that hard working farmers made complaints in a past situation or that they used to complain but do not complain anymore now. To solve the problem, translation (4) needs some modification as follows:

a. The farmers who have been working the whole year complain that they will have no future. (author)

b. The farmers who had worked the whole year complained that they had no future. (author)

Similar errors also occurred in translations by NNS novice translators as can be seen in translation (3). This kind of error highlights the difficulty of making tense choices when dealing with complex sentences (Hocking, 1974; Declerck, 1991, Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998; Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000), and it appears that both professional and novice translators in my study have serious tense-aspect problems when translating complex sentences.

The problems facing both NNS novice and professional translators echo the findings of Yang and Huang (2004), in which learners showed a very slow shift from depending more on the Chinese way of expressing temporal reference to depending more on the English way. As shown by many studies, the acquisition of the proper usage of English tense-aspect is heavily influenced by the learner’s first language (Bardovi-Harlig, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig & Bergstrom, 1996; Collins, 2005; Coppieters, 1987; Guiora, 1983; Hinkel, 1992, 1997; Liszka, 2004). With regard to
the context of this current study, both native Chinese-speaking translator groups may still be influenced by the Chinese language tense system when choosing English tense-aspect forms.

8.1.2.2 The differences in the reliance on tense-aspect markers in the source text

The analyses in 8.1.2.1 show that the differences between NNS professional translators and NNS novice translators may result from the former’s better understanding of a variety of English tense-aspect usages. In this section, I will first present the results of a Chi-square test, which show that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way when translating Chinese tenses expressed through the context. I will then use some examples to argue that the Chinese way of expressing tense through context also explains an important part of the differences between NNS professional and novice translators. I argue that the lack of tense and aspectual markers in Chinese sentences in which the tense is expressed through context has greater influence on NNS novice translators than on professional translators. The former rely heavily on chronological order, adverbial temporal markers, and connectives to express English tense rather than on the more proficient way of using morphological inflections. The latter group, although they appear to perform better than the former, have not yet developed their command of English tense and aspect to avoid unnecessary tense shifts in the tense choice for a whole paragraph.

The findings for research question 2.2 (see 5.3) indicate that both NNS professional and novice translators tended to rely on tense and aspectual markers in Chinese when they choose tense and aspect in translation. Our brief discussion of the results in 6.1 indicates that when the tense of a source sentence is expressed through context, translations tended to use present tense. In order to gain a better
understanding of the differences between the two groups of NNS translators when translating Chinese tenses marked by tense and aspectual markers or expressed through context, we first carried out Chi-square tests to look at the differences between the two groups in their translation of the Chinese tenses marked by tense and aspectual markers or expressed through context. The results of the Chi-square tests (Table 8-5) show that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way in their tense-aspect choices when they translate Chinese sentences whose tenses are expressed through context (p=0.044<0.1), while they do not differ in a statistically-significant way when they translate Chinese sentences whose tenses are expressed by tense or aspectual markers (p=0.919; p=0.588>0.10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense-Aspect Expression in Source Text</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tense marker</td>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>2.011(a)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>2.040</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>501</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aspectual marker</td>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>3.737(b)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>3.786</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>335</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>context</td>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>12.965(c)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>13.642</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>11.937</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>735</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-5: Chi-square tests of tense and aspect variation across NNS novice and professional groups in translation Chinese tenses
Therefore, in this section we only focus on their translations of Chinese sentences whose tenses are expressed through context. Descriptive data on the tense-aspect choices by NNS novice and professional groups in translating Chinese sentences temporally expressed through context are presented in Table 8-6 and illustrated in Figure 8-4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal Expression in Source Text</th>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Translation</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NNS novice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expessed through context</td>
<td>present simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% within Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% within Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>present progressive</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% within Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% within Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% within Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% within Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>future simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% within Competence Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-6: The tense-aspect choices by NNS novice and professional groups in translating Chinese sentences temporally expressed through context
Figure 8-4: Differences of NNS novice and professional groups in translating Chinese sentences temporally expressed through context

Table 8-6 and Figure 8-4 show that when the tense of the Chinese sentence is expressed through context, both NNS novice and professional translators tend to choose present simple most frequently, and their choices of present simple account for 68.9% and 77.8% of their total tense-aspect usages respectively (the bold figures in the present simple row of Table 8-6).

Figure 8-4 also shows that the 8.9% difference (77.8%-68.9%) between the two groups in their use of present simple is due to the novice translators’ more frequent use of past simple and future simple in their translations than those of the professional translators when translating Chinese tenses expressed through context. The following are examples extracted from the dataset.

Example 8.5
Source text (2): 美國催促人民幣升值的真正目的，絕對不是要解決其貿易赤字，

Translation (1): However, the genius purpose of the U.S. intention was definitely not to solve its trade deficit. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): In reality, the real purpose of America’s urging the Yuan to appreciate is by no means to resolve the trade deficit between them, (NNS professional)

Example 8.6

Source text (3): 企圖讓民眾從股市得到點甜頭，趕快忘卻蕭條、失業、物價上揚所造成的痛苦，為立委與總統選情注射強心與抗憂鬱綜合劑。

Translation (1): Furthermore, it will serve as an injection and anti-depressant to give strength and support to its partisan candidates in the coming legislative and presidential elections. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): Essentially the measures serve as an anti-depressant injection for the government to gain a favourable position in the upcoming elections for legislators and the president. (NNS professional)

In both Examples 8.5 and 8.6, the tense of the Chinese sentences is expressed through context. According to Smith (2003), there is no default tense in editorials and all the tenses except for those that are dependent on their dominant ones are anchored to the author’s “now,” which warrants the use of present tense in these two cases. The researcher and the Chinese linguist also judged this sentence to be present tense. In the translation of these two sentences, however, only the professional translators chose present simple for both sentences, while the novice translators
chose past simple for the first sentence and future simple for the second. This is consistent with previous studies on tense and aspect use by speakers of tenseless languages (Hinkel, 1992; Svalberg & Chuchu, 1998), in which speakers of tenseless languages were often found to have problems with the inflection of English verbs. As reported in Hinkel (1992), when learners are asked about what they did at the weekend or last week they will frequently, even at advanced levels, reply using uninflected verb forms. As previously noted, Chinese verbs do not have obligatory tense and aspect inflections, so at lower levels novice translators simply might not have fully recognised the importance of this in English, particularly if the temporal reference comes from the context. Unlike low competence learners of English writing, who often forget about using verb inflections, novice translators are doing the opposite: they try to use inflected verbs but often do so incorrectly.

Bardovi-Harlig (1995, 1998) suggested that low competence learners tend to rely on chronological order to express time reference or on adverbial expressions (e.g., yesterday, today) and connectives (e.g., and, therefore). When there were no time adverbials, and the judgment could only depend on the context and its implicature, the low competence learners could barely tell the difference between the tense meanings and showed more problems in their tense choice. The NNS novice translator’s choice of tense-aspect in my study may be explained by this tendency. In Example 8.5, where there is no Chinese tense-aspect marker and the judgment could only depend on the context and its implicature, they would try to establish a chronological order by looking at the nearby Chinese sentences before making tense-aspect choices. In this example, the anterior Chinese sentence reads:

美國政府一再呼籲：人民幣應對美元升值，以改善中美巨額貿易逆差。
(the US government repeatedly call: RMB should appreciate against the US dollar to reduce the huge trade deficit between the two countries.)

The italic Chinese clause ‘美國政府一再呼籲：人民幣應對美元升值’ in the anterior sentence expresses the same meaning as the phrase ‘美國催促人民幣升值’ in Example 8.5, and thus the NNS novice translator may interpret the situations of the two sentences as unfolding in a chronological order to a situation that has occurred several times in the past. Therefore, they choose past simple in their translation.

Generally, professional translators showed better performance in their translation of sentences whose tense is expressed through context as shown in Examples 8.5 and 8.6. The better choices of the professional translators may well result from, as Svalberg & Chuchu (1998) have observed, their awareness of the difficulties and uncertainty in tense and aspect rules that causes them to avoid using “risky” tense-aspect forms. In Example 8.7, both NNS novice and professional translators found themselves in a situation where there was no tense or aspectual marker in the source sentence. The professional translator chose a “safer” solution by using present perfect, while the novice translator made a wrong choice by using past simple and present simple together.

Example 8.7

Source text: 央行解釋，進口外匯支出萎縮，是外匯存底增加的另一大原因，這是民間投資不振的結果。(Source Text 4)

Translation (1): According to the central bank’s declaration, one of the main causes of the foreign exchange reserve increase was due to a decrease in
spending in the foreign exchange and another cause is the lack of nongovernmental investments. (NNS Novice)

Translation (2): According to the Central Bank’s explanations, the decrease in foreign exchange expenditure on imports has led to the increase in foreign reserve. This is the result of insufficient investments in the private sector. (NNS professional)

The source sentence is a topic sentence of a paragraph and consists of four clauses: ‘央行解釋’, ‘進口外匯支出萎縮，是外匯存底增加的另一大原因’, and ‘這是民間投資不振的結果’. There are 4 events in the sentence:

1. 央行解釋: the Central Bank explains
2. 進口外匯支出萎縮: foreign exchange expenditure on imports declines
3. 是外匯存底增加的另一大原因: the decline of foreign exchange is the major reason of the increase of foreign exchange
4. 這是民間投資不振的結果: the decline of foreign exchange expenditure on imports is caused by weak private investment

There is no tense-aspect marker in the source sentence, so the interpretation of the tense must rely on the context. As there are causal relations between the clauses, indicated by the words 原因 (reason) and 結果 (cause), we may infer the chronological order of the sentence as follows:

Event 4 -> Event 2 -> Event 3 -> Event 1

Therefore, the key to the interpretation of tense in the whole sentence lies in the tense of Event 1. Although the final interpretation of the tense of the source text in my
study was judged by the researcher and the Chinese linguist as past tense, the translation could be either past or present. (A detailed discussion of the past and present tense interpretation of this sentence was presented in Source Sentence 4 of Example 6.4 in Chapter 6). If Event 1 were translated into past tense without current relevance, then Events 2 to 4 could be treated as sitting in the past time sector. In this case, according to Declerck (1991), past perfect should be used for Events 2 to 4 as past perfect is the absolute tense of the past time sector. In Translation (1), the translator’s use of the past simple (was) for the first clause and the present simple (is) for the second clause has shifted the time sector from past to present, and thus the translator has failed to relate the situations in the two clause in either the past or the present time sector. If Event 1 were translated into present tense as referring to an event with current relevance, then Events 2-4 could be treated as sitting in the pre-present sector, according to Declerck (1991). Thus, present perfect, as the absolute tense of pre-present sector, should be used for Events 2-4. However, in Translation (2), the NNS professional translator used present simple (is) for Event 4 and present perfect (has led) for Event 3. The choice of present simple here is acceptable but not ideal, and it would be better for the temporal relationship in the source sentence to be followed in the translation. Therefore, if the present tense interpretation of the source sentence is adopted as shown in Translation (3), then a minor revision to Translation (2) is necessary.

Translation (3): According to the Central Bank’s explanations, the decrease in foreign exchange expenditure on imports resulting from insufficient investments in the private sector has led to the increase in foreign reserve. (author’s version)
This example shows another possible side of professional translators’ better performance in the translation of sentences whose tense is expressed through context. The professional translator’s use of “safer” solutions suggests that not all of them are confident in their choice of tense-aspect forms when translating Chinese sentence whose tense is expressed through context, as in Example 8.7.

In fact, when we look further into the translations of some whole paragraphs by NNS professionals, their translations appear as problematic in terms of tense-aspect usages as those of some novice translators. This is probably because diverse forms of temporal markers are used in the whole Chinese paragraph and sometimes they interact with one another. Example 8.8 and its translations are retrieved from our dataset.

Example 8.8

Source text (1): 米酒本來是千百年來中國人傳統的強身補品，是日常料理的必需品，只因它是用蒸餾方式做的，就必須比照國外進口的XO、威士忌，課上重稅，實在沒有道理。這也顯示這些掌控國際經貿組織的強權國家，在進行所謂的貿易談判時，根本不尊重個別國家的歷史文化與民情風俗，硬要將自己的一套標準強加於人。

Author’s Translation: Rice wine is after all a traditional tonic that the Chinese have used for thousands of years, and it is also an essential everyday cooking ingredient. There really is no justification for it to be heavily taxed at the same rate as imported brandies and whiskies only because it happens to be made by distillation. It shows that when conducting so-called trade negotiations, the few powerful countries that have controlled international trade organisations...
have no respect whatsoever for the history, culture, and customs of individual countries, but insist on applying their own standards to others.

Translation (1): Rice wine *originated* in China centuries ago, and it has been considered to strengthen the body’s immunization system. It has also been used in Chinese cooking. It is produced by a distillation process, and because of this, it is taxed as heavily as other imported wines such as XO and Whiskey without justifiable reasons. This shows that the countries that formulate the international trade policies do not consider the history and cultures of other countries and try to impose their own standards on others when conducting the so called trade negotiations. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (2): For thousands of years, the rice wine has been used as a health supplement for the Chinese and also a daily gourmet necessity. It makes no sense at all that the rice wine is heavily taxed, like those imported alcohol products such as XO and whiskey merely because it *was* produced by distillation. This is also an indication that those empowered countries, which are in control of international economic and trade organizations, when proceeding in the so-called trade negotiations are always using their own standards on every member, which is disrespectful of the history, culture, and tradition of each individual country. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (3): For thousands of years, the Chinese have always considered rice wine as traditional tonic supplement and a necessity of daily cooking.
However, rice wine has been taxed heavily in accordance with foreign imported alcohol products such as XO and Whiskey because it was made by distilling. As a matter of fact, it doesn’t make sense at all. All of these unfair treatments have revealed that the superpower economic nations whom control international economic and trade organizations don’t respect any individual nation’s historical cultures and customs and therefore have imposed their qualified standard on other nations. (NNS novice translator)

The italic words ‘千百年來’ (for thousands of years) and ‘時’ (when) in the source sentence are tense-aspect markers, but the former indicates duration and the latter refers to an unspecific time. The tense of the remaining sentences in the paragraph is expressed through context. Since there are no obligatory past time markers in the paragraph, its default tense, according to Smith (2003), is present. While the majority of translators from both groups have used present tense consistently in their translation, as has the author’s version, some translators from both groups shifted their tense from present to past when translating some sentences/clauses as highlighted by bold letters in translations (1), (2), and (3). As Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1998) and McCarthy and Carter (1994) have pointed out, these arbitrary shifts are not warranted and could result in ungrammatical and unnatural texts. The occurrence of unwarranted shifts of tense in the translations of both groups may suggest that some NNS professional translators are not more competent than NNS novice translators in terms of their understanding of the use of tense-aspect at the discourse level. This is supported by Coppieters (1987a) study, in which very advanced learners with near-native like proficiency are yet to acquire the proper usage of English tense-aspect forms.
Of course, generally speaking, NNS professional translators’ shifts of tense in translation of a whole paragraph were less frequent than those of NNS novice translators. In Translation (4) by a NNS novice translator, there are more shifts of tense from present to past (in bold italic)

Translation (4): For thousands of years, rice wine has been one of ingredients in traditional tonic recipes. It has been also a necessity in everyday cooking. As rice wine, exported XO and Whisky, are distilled, it has been said that it should follow their standard to be taxed heavily. It really makes no sense. Heavier taxes indicated that economic superpowers, which control international trade organizations, disregarded history, culture, and custom of other countries when negotiations took place, and intended to impose its own standards onto others. (NNS novice translator)

In addition, our examination of the tense-aspect choices in whole paragraphs has serendipitously identified some extreme cases, where translators use past tense throughout the translation of the entire paragraph. This occurred in the translations of both NNS professional and novice translators as shown in Translations (5) and (6).

Translation (5): Rice wine was originally the traditional tonic for thousand years and the necessity of daily cuisine. It was levied with heavy tax like XO and Whiskey that were imported from foreign countries, only because it was made by distillation. This didn’t make sense at all. This also showed that the countries with great power, who controlled international economic and trade organizations, did not respect the history, culture, feelings of the citizenry
and custom of individual countries when they *underwent* the so-called trade negotiation and even *imposed* their standard on others. (NNS novice translator)

Translation (6): Recently, the government *spared* no effort in uplifting the stock market, hoping to give the public impression that the Taiwan’s economy *wasn’t* as bad as it *looked* through statistic numbers. Also, they *aimed* at giving the public what they *had wanted* in the stock markets, urging them into forgetting the sufferings that depression, unemployment, and price elevation *had imposed*. It *had* the effects of providing a revitalizing and anti-depressing injection for the upcoming elections. (NNS novice translator)

Translation (7): The only reason why the government *took* every possible measure to promote the stock market *was* that the government *wanted* to create an impression that Taiwan’s economy *was* still in a good shape, and allow investors to make some profits from the stock market, so as to ease the pain caused by economic recession, unemployment, and rising prices, in the hope that the election ploy would work for the legislative and presidential elections. (NNS professional translator)

The source text for translations (6) and (7) is reproduced here with italic words indicating tense-aspect markers.

政府這陣子用盡各種手段拉抬股市，無非是希望營造台灣經濟其實沒那麼糟的數據印象，同時也企圖讓民衆從股市得到點甜頭，趕快忘卻蕭
As past tense has been used throughout the whole paragraph in translations (5), (6) and (7) consistently, it is evident that the translators have chosen past tense for some reason. The translators might have considered that their translation would be read and so all events and situations described in the translation would be in the past. Thus, they have chosen the decoding time (i.e., when the message is read or listened to) as $T_0$. Although in English it is not obligatory to use encoding time (i.e., the time when the sentence is uttered, written, or translated as far as my study is concerned) as the temporal $T_0$, the choice of decoding time as $T_0$ is limited to situations such as road signs, travel itineraries, and greeting cards (Declerck, 1991). Declerck (1991) even claimed that the choice of $T_0$ is one of the great difficulties in English learning. It is possible that NNS translators are not fully aware of the tense convention in editorials and many other types of English writing in which $T_0$ is set as encoding time, not as decoding time. The bio-information of the participating translators shows that many translators have a background in English literature. In the writing of literary works the writer usually represents fictional situations as if they had happened in the past, and thus uses past tense extensively to create the illusion that the story is authentic (Declerck, 1991). It is possible that the NNS translators’ major readings in the past, such as fictions and novels, which do not expose them to a variety of genres, have given them the impression that the practice of using past tense in fictions and novels is an authentic way of writing and can be applied to any genre.

However, a further review of the four translations of these three translators revealed that they took decoding time as $T_0$ only for several paragraphs across their
four translations and that they never used decoding time as $T_0$ consistently for any entire article. It is more likely that their use of decoding time as $T_0$ is a translation strategy. With this strategy, they could at least “anchor” the tense choice to something with certainty. For example, in the past time sector, all tense-aspect forms are marked with “past,” which may give them a sense of “safety” because no matter what forms they used those forms are in the past. On the other hand, in the present time sector, present simple can denote a past event, past simple, a present event, and present perfect, both present and past events. As we have discussed previously, some NNS translators find it difficult to distinguish present perfect and past simple, resulting in their failure to establish temporal relationships within the present time sector. If they choose encoding time as $T_0$ they have to stay in the present time sector and face the difficult task of dealing with present perfect and establishing temporal relationships. Therefore, they may be motivated by a false belief that by moving into the past time sector they can avoid making all tense-aspect mistakes.

The strategy of “using the same tense for a whole paragraph” also suggests that some translators have over-generalised tense harmony from the sentence level to the discourse level. This can be seen from their consistent use of past tense throughout an entire paragraph. Previous studies have found that learners usually apply the tense harmony rule and make improper use of tense at the sentence level (Riddle, 1986; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998). The new findings from my study may require further research to understand why NNS translators, as advanced learners lift the tense harmony rule to the discourse level. Nonetheless, this new finding has reinforced our previous argument that some NNS professional translators may not be more competent than novice translators in their command of the English tense-aspect system.
8.1.3 Section Summary

The two groups of translators have been found to differ in a statistically-significant way when translating Chinese present and future tenses. Their differences lie specifically in their use of English present perfect and past simple forms, which may be a result of their different understandings of English grammatical rules. Chinese sentences where tense is expressed through context have posed a great difficulty for NNS novice and professional translators, which requires them to develop more proficient way of expressing English tense through morphological inflections instead of through the chronological order, adverbial temporal markers, and connectives.

8.2 The Differences between NNS Professional and NS Professional Translators

Chi-square tests in 8.2.1 reveal no significant differences in the overall occurrence counts of English tense and aspect forms in the translations of NNS professionals and NS professionals. Further analyses in 8.2.2, however, show that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way when translating Chinese past and future tenses, and that the major differences lie in their use of English present simple, past perfect, past simple, and future simple. The differences in their understanding of Chinese past and future tense is first discussed in 8.2.2.1, and the differences in their use of English present simple, past perfect, past simple, and future simple are discussed in 8.2.2.2. A comparison of the two groups’ choices of English tense and aspect forms is also made at the discourse level, and the discussion is presented in 8.2.3. In 8.2.4, the influence of the Chinese way of expressing tense on the two groups in their use of English present simple, past perfect, past simple, and future
simple will be discussed. The whole section is summarised in 8.2.5.

8.2.1 Overall Differences in Use of Tense and Aspect

In this section, the NNS professional and NS professional translators were compared in terms of the occurrence counts of tense and aspect forms in translation. The results indicate that there is no significant difference between the two groups, and it is necessary to look further into how the translators deal with specific Chinese tenses.

To examine the differences between NNS and NS professional translators in their use of tense-aspect, the frequency counts of all tense-aspect forms are presented in Table 8-7 and graphically presented in Figure 8-5. Table 8-7 shows that three tense-aspect forms were used most frequently by NNS and NS professional translators: present simple, 61.3% by NNS, 61.2% by NS; past simple, 20.5% by NNS, 17.5% by NS; present perfect, 10.6% by NNS, 12.8% by NS. The translators did not use the remaining tense-aspect forms frequently. Figure 8-5 shows that the two lines almost match each other, which indicates that there is little difference between the groups’ use of tense-aspect forms in general. As the lines do not match at present perfect, present progressive, and past simple, Figure 8-5 indicates that some differences may exist between the two groups in their use of these three tense-aspect forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Translation</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NNS professional</td>
<td>NS professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present simple</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This result is further confirmed by the result of a Chi-square test (Table 8-8). The two-sided asymptotic significance of the Chi-square statistic (highlighted in Table 8-8) is 0.191 (> 0.10), so it supports the null hypothesis that the NNS professional translator group does not differ from the NS professional group in the use of tense and aspect in translation and the differences are due to chance variation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>9.965</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>10.468</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Assoc.</td>
<td>0.447</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>1,546</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-8: Chi-square test of tense and aspect variation across NNS and NS professional groups

It is not surprising that NNS and NS professional translators do not differ in their use of tense-aspect forms in general because both groups are professional translators with at least five years of experience. As their first languages are different, NS translators might have different in understandings of specific Chinese tense and aspect forms, and the NNS translators might differ from the NS translators in their use of English tense-aspect forms. As we have seen in 8.1, such differences even exist between translators who are native Chinese speakers. These differences will be discussed in the following sections.

8.2.2 Differences between the Translator’s Choice of Tense-Aspect Influenced by the Tense-Aspect of the Source Language

In the previous section only compared occurrence counts of tense and aspect between the two groups. A further analysis was performed to scrutinise the differences between the two groups’ use of tense and aspect when dealing with different tense and aspect in the source language, which has been identified as a major influence factor on translators’ choices of tense and aspect. It has been found that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way in their use of English present simple, past perfect, past simple, and future simple when translating Chinese past and future tenses. Their different understandings of Chinese past and future tenses will be discussed in 8.2.2.1, and the differences related to English present
simple, past perfect, past simple, and future simple are discussed in 8.2.2.2.

The results of the Chi-square tests listed in Table 8-9 reveal that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way when they translate past and future tense in the source language (p=0.037; 0.028<0.1), while it fails to show significant differences on the variation of tense and aspect (p=0.789>0.10) when they translate present tense in the source language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Source</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>2.435</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>0.786</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>2.443</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>929</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>13.374</td>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>0.037</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>14.369</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>485</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>10.904</td>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>0.028</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>14.076</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>3.331</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>131</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-9: Chi-square tests of tense and aspect variation across NNS professional and NS professional groups in translation different Chinese tense

The percentages of tense and aspect used by the two groups when translating past and future tense in the source language are summarised in Table 8-10, and the percentages of tense and aspect are graphically presented in Figure 8-6 and Figure 8-7. Table 8-10 , Figure 8-6 and Figure 8-7 show that:

1. When translating Chinese past tense, translators of both groups used almost the same amount of past simple. However, the NNS professional translators used more present simple (31.2% vs 24.7%) and past perfect (4.4% vs 1.7%) than the NS translators, while the NS translators used more present perfect than the NNS translators (18.7% vs 11.6%). There are
some differences in present progressive, past progressive, and future simple; however, since the total numbers of these three tense-aspect forms are very small, they will not be discussed further; and,

2. When translating Chinese future tense, both groups used present simple most frequently (63.9% for the NNS translators and 56.3% for the NS translators). However, the most significant differences came from future simple (NS’s 39.6% vs NNS’s 21.7%), past simple (NS’s 0% vs NNS’s 10%), and present simple (NS’s 56.3% vs NNS’s 63.9%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense and Aspect in Source</th>
<th>Competence Level</th>
<th>NNS_ professional</th>
<th>NS_ professional</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>Tense and Aspect in Translation</td>
<td>present simple</td>
<td>Count 78</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% 31.2%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Count 29</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% 11.6%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>present progressive</td>
<td>Count 4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% 1.6%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>past simple</td>
<td>Count 125</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% 50.0%</td>
<td>50.2%</td>
<td>50.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>Count 11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% 4.4%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td>Count 1</td>
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Table 8-10: The use of tense and aspect by NNS professional and NS professional groups in translating different Chinese tense
Figure 8-6: Differences in translating Chinese past tense by NNS professional and NS professional groups

Figure 8-7: Differences in translating Chinese future tense by NNS and NS professional groups
8.2.2.1 The differences in understanding of Chinese tense-aspect with focus on past and future

In this section, I will first use some examples to illustrate the differences and similarities between NNS professional and NS professional translators in their translation of Chinese present, past and future tenses. I will then argue that they resemble each other in their understanding of Chinese present and future tenses even when the two Chinese tenses are expressed through context. I will also argue that the differences between NS professional and NNS professional translators in their choice of English present simple, past simple, and past perfect result from their different understandings of Chinese past tense expressed through context. It is acknowledged that NNS professional translators may also face difficulties understanding Chinese past tense expressed through context, even though Chinese is their mother tongue.

The results in 8.2.2 showed no significant differences on the variation of tense and aspect when translators of both groups translated present tense in the source language. In Example 8.9, in which the tense of the source sentence is expressed through context, both groups chose present simple. As shown in Figure 8-2 in 8.1.2, NNS professional translators mainly used present simple and present perfect to translate Chinese present tense, the few differences between NNS and NS professional translators in their translation of Chinese present tense suggests that NS professional translators may share the same level of understanding of Chinese present tense as NNS professional translators.

Example 8.9

Source text (4): 但要跟國人報告的是，外匯存底不能以數字多少， 作
為評斷 的指標。
Translation (1): This is why we must inform the nation that the monetary figure of foreign exchange reserves is not an indicator of the government’s achievements. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (2): But we feel that we ought to point out that the amount of foreign reserves a country has cannot be used as a fair indicator of economic performance. (NS professional translator)

The differences in their translations of Chinese past and future tense may suggest that there are some differences in their understanding of Chinese past and future tense. In Figure 8-6, we have noticed that in quite a number of translations, present simple is chosen to translate Chinese past tense by the NS professional translators. Translations (1), (2) and (3) in Example 8.10 were extracted from our dataset, and they were all made by NS translators.

Example 8.10

Source text (4): 央行解釋，進口外匯支出萎縮，是外匯存底增加的另一大原因，這是民間投資不振的結果。

Translation (1): The central bank also points to shrinking foreign exchange import payments as another reason for the record amount of foreign reserves, which are in fact a result of declining domestic investment.

Translation (2): The central bank explains that the decline in import payment expenditures is another reason that the foreign reserves have increased, and is the result of low public investment.

Translation (3): The central bank explained that another main reason for the increase in the foreign exchange reserves is the decrease in import-related
foreign currency expenses, which is the result of a weak private investment market.

The source sentence consists of four clauses without any tense or aspectual markers, and the tense for each clause is expressed through context. According to Yang and Xu (2007), Chinese temporal boundaries can go beyond sentences. The first clause in this sentence, 央行解释 which happened before the writing of the Chinese editorial article continues the past temporal boundary established at the very beginning of the text. This past temporal boundary ends at the end of the sentence. The tense of the sentence has been interpreted as past tense by the researcher and the Chinese linguist. We can see that in translations (1), (2) and (3), the choice of tense in the translation of the first clause is different among three NS professional translators. The first two choose present simple, and the third, past simple. By using present tense for each clause, translations (1) and (2) create a false image of the author by conflating the author’s view with that of the central bank. On the contrary, the author does not agree with the central bank’s explanation. With this in mind, the translation can be more native-like in tense-aspect choices with some modifications based on translation (3) as follows:

Translation (4): The central bank explained that another main reason for the increase in the foreign exchange reserves was the decrease in import-related foreign currency expenses, resulting from a weak private investment market. (Author’s version)

As many English linguists have pointed out, the use of past tense carries the
implication that the event of concern is no longer true in the present (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998; Declerck, 1991; Quirk et al. 1985). By using past tense, translation (4) conveys the message that the central bank’s explanation is not true, and this is what the author of the editorial article is trying to argue.

A closer look at the dataset finds that all cases of NS translators using present simple to translate Chinese past tense occur when the Chinese past tense is expressed through context. This indicates that NS translators might have experienced difficulties in their understanding of Chinese past tense, particularly when it was expressed through context. This may result from the differences between Chinese and English tense-aspect systems. In English the tense is morphologically marked, while in Chinese it could be expressed through aspect or context. In fact, the Chinese tense system is complex and sometimes NNS professional translators were confused too. In translating the source sentence in Example 8.10, many NNS professional translators may have confronted the same problem as the NS translators did. For example, translation (5) is produced by a NNS professional translator who has chosen present simple for the first clause.

Translation (5): The Central Bank explains the shrinking expenses of the foreign exchange rate for import is another main reason for the increasing foreign exchange reserves. (NNS professional)

Our results also show that the use of future simple (39.6%) and present simple (56.3%) accounts for the majority of tense-aspect usages by NS professional translators in their translation of Chinese future tense (see Figure 8-7). As pointed out by Declerck (1991), future simple is the absolute tense for post-present sector and
present simple can be used in the post-present sector to refer to anteriority. Therefore, this result suggests that NS professional translators have few problems understanding Chinese future tense.

Grosman (2000) once pointed out how theories which favour translation into the native or first language tended to neglect the importance of the translator’s comprehension of the source text. From the analysis above, it appears that NS translators tend to have achieved similar understanding of some Chinese tenses, which means that translators (NS translators in my study) can acquire native-like comprehension of the second language (Chinese) through education and practice. The results of my study further suggest that translators (NNS translators in my study) may not necessarily have an absolute advantage in comprehending the source text when translating into their second language. Nevertheless, as Grosman (2000) and Lonsdale (2001) pointed out, comprehension of the source text also includes the culture of the source language, which may give some advantage to translators who translate into the second language.

8.2.2.2 The differences in using English tense-aspect with focus on present simple, past perfect and past simple

In this section, I will use some examples to argue that the differences between NNS and NS professional translators lie in the NNS professional translator’s lack of understanding of the meaning of some English basic tense and aspect forms, such as present simple, present perfect, and past simple. NNS professional translators may overgeneralise the historical present usage to present simple, and fail to recognise that the underlying temporal meaning of English present perfect is past. Based on an examination of the NNS professional translators’ excessive use of English past
perfect, I will argue that they lack understanding of the underlying temporal meaning of English past perfect which refers to “the past in the past.” In addition, I will argue that NNS professional translators may confuse modal auxiliary verbs such as “would” and “could” with their past tense morphological inflections.

In 8.2.2.1, we looked at the differences between NNS and NS professional translators’ understanding of Chinese tense. The results from Figure 8-6, which demonstrated that NNS translators differed from NS translators in their translation of Chinese past tense and future tense, warrant a further examination of whether or not the NNS or NS translators’ improper use of English tense-aspect forms result in differences when they translate Chinese past and future tenses. We will focus on present simple, past perfect and past simple as Figure 8-6 and Figure 8-7 have shown that the two groups differed in their use of these three tense-aspect forms when they translated Chinese past and future tenses.

The use of present simple and past simple

The results in 8.2.2.1 have established that NS translators only make improper choices when Chinese past tense is expressed through context. A further search of the dataset found that NNS professional translators also made improper choices when Chinese past tense was marked by tense and aspectual markers. The following are some examples.

Example 8.11

Source Text (4): 去年一年，是台灣外匯存底增加最多的一年，

Translation (1): Last year is the year in which Taiwan’s foreign exchange reserves increased the most. (NNS professional translator)
Translation (2): Last year is the year with most increase in foreign exchange reserves for Taiwan. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (3): Last year Taiwan’s foreign reserves grew the most of any year. (NS professional translator)

Translation (4): Last year has been the year in which Taiwan’s foreign reserve saw the largest increase. (NS professional translator)

In Example 8.11, there is only one past tense marker 去年一年 (last year) at the beginning of the clause, and there is no change of verb class or shift of text mode which would warrant the change of tense. Translations (1) and (2) by NNS professional translators, however, all use present tense. Since the tense of the clause is clearly past, it is expected that NNS translators would have no problem recognising it. The use of present simple by the NNS translators is worth further analysis.

First, the clause in Example 8.11 is the first clause of the article and its following clauses read: 快速累積的外匯存底, 成為政府宣導「拚經濟」成效的最佳樣板。（the rapid increase of foreign reserves has become the best propaganda for the government to show off its achievement in striving for economic growth.). A shift of verb class from sending and bringing (increasing) to changing possession (becoming) marks the change of tense from past to the present (Yang & Xu, 2007). The translators, however, might not have been confident about the tense of the second clause because there is nothing in it to indicate the time. They have realised the relevance of the past event with the present time in this sentence, but they simply do not have the skill to represent the event properly as present. In translation (2) the intention of the translator to relate the past event to the present appears even stronger
when the translator uses a prepositional phrase (with most increase) to replace the second verb *increase* to avoid using past tense for the verb. Although present perfect would resolve this problem easily, some of them have improperly chosen to use present simple. Present simple can be used to refer to a past event, but the usage, also known as historical present, is limited to narration (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998). The use of present simple *is* by NNS translators in translations (1) and (2) suggests that they may have overgeneralised the historical present usage to present simple because they lack understanding of the use of present perfect to represent past events in the present time.

Of course, many NNS professional translators do not have this problem and are able to use present perfect. This means that confusion of historical present, present simple, and present perfect is not a widespread problem. While the discussed in 8.1.2.1 has shown that NNS novice translators have problems distinguishing the use of past simple from present perfect, the discussion in this section shows that NNS professional translators also have problems with present perfect. It appears reasonable to suggest that present perfect is an area in grammar that requires more attention for NNS learners and translators.

Second, the NNS translators might have been influenced by the use of verbs in the source clause, which includes the use of a copula verb *是* (*is*), and they may have copied the copula verb *is* in translation. If the translators let go of the form of the Chinese sentence, their translations might become more native like. For example the sentence can be translated as follows “Taiwan’s foreign exchange reserves *have increased* most rapidly over last year” (author’s version). As we can see, this modified version abandons the copula verb and uses the present perfect to relate the past event to the present.
The form of the source sentence and the use of the copula verb (is) have also influenced NS professional translators as translation (4) has shown. The difference is that the NS professional translator is more skilful than the NNS translators in his or her use of the present perfect form of the copula verb (has been) to establish a simultaneous temporal relationship between two verbs (has been and increased) in the past time sector.

The use of past perfect

Our results also show that NNS professional translators differ from NS professional translators in their use of past perfect. NNS translators tended to use more past perfect than NS professional translators. Examples 8.12-14 provide a comparison of NNS professional translators with NS professional translators in their use of past perfect.

Example 8.12

Source Text (2): ([答案是逐年增加到 750 億美元！美日逆差反而擴大了 50%！) 但日本的經濟從而停滯了十幾年，(到如今，對美而言，雖然逆差的問題完全沒有解決，但是日本爭霸的威脅卻完全解除了。)

Translation (1): But Japan’s economy had stagnated for 10 years as a result. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (2): Besides, the Japanese economy had remained stagnant for over a decade. (NNS professional translator)

Example 8.13

Source text (2): [那時在汽車、半導體、家電等領域，「日本第一」的威
Translation (3): During that time, Japan had become a posing threat as it was often referred as the “Number One” in areas such as automobiles, semiconductors and household electronics. (NNS professional translator)

Example 8.14

Source text (2): 日圓升值之後，美日逆差減少了多少呢？

Translation (4): How much decrease had there been in the US trade deficit with Japan since Yen began to appreciate? (NS professional translator)

Translation (5): How much trade deficit had been reduced after yen’s appreciation? (NS professional translator)

The use of past perfect in translations (1) and (2) to mark the verb 停滯 (stagnate) is inappropriate. Although there is an aspectual marker 了 (le) and a tense marker 十幾年 (more than ten years) in the clause of Example 8.12, its tense interpretation follows that of its anterior sentences (in the first bracket), and the tense of the sentence containing this clause only changes when the tense marker 到如今 (up to now) appears in the second bracket. We interpret the tense of the prior sentence to be past because it continues the description of the increase of US-Japan deficit in the past. Furthermore, there is a resultative adverb 從而 (as a result) in the source clause, indicating that the action 停滯 (stagnate) took place after unspecific actions. According to many linguists (Declerck 1991; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998; Quirk et al. 1985), past perfect is used to establish an anteriority relationship between two events both in the past time. The use of past perfect, in this case for the action stagnate, means it was completed in the past prior
to another action (*deficit increased between US and Japan*). This meaning is different to that of the source clause, which states that the action *stagnate* took place after the completion of other unspecified actions. Therefore, the correct tense of the clause in concern should be past simple as in the following translation:

Translation (6): As a result, Japan’s economy *stagnated* for 10 years.

(Author’s version)

From Example 8.12, it appears that the NNS translators have not recognised that the tense in the clause 但日本的經濟從而停滯了十幾年 follows that of its anterior sentence. One possible reason for this is that the exclamation mark ‘!’ in its anterior sentence made the translators believe that the current clause was not part of its anterior sentence and thus should not follow its tense. Another possible reason is that the punctuation mark ‘,’ at the end of the clause separates it from the tense marker *up to now* (到如今) in the posterior clause, so that the translators believed that the present time only applied to the clause following the tense marker *up to now* (到如今). By seeing this clause as separate from its anterior or posterior clauses, the NNS translators were left with only a durative tense marker *more than ten years* (十幾年) and an aspectual marker *le* (了). These two markers do not locate a time sector; however, the aspectual marker *le* (了) carries the perfective meaning. As a result, the NNS translators chose the past perfect to represent a past situation with a durative period. This may also explain why many NNS translators translated the clause as a separate sentence, instead of joined it with its anterior or posterior clause as follows:

Translation (7): The answer was that it increased by 50% to US$75 billion,
and as a result, Japan’s economy stagnated for more than 10 years. (Author’s version); or

Translation (8): The answer was that it increased by 50% to US$75 billion. As a result, Japan’s economy has stagnated for more than 10 years, and it has no longer been a threat to the US despite of its huge deficit. (Author’s version)

This example suggests that problem of the NNS translators’ inappropriate use of past perfect is twofold: (a) they misunderstand the past perfect as denoting a durative situation in the past rather than a past situation in the past; and, (b) they fail to recognise the temporal boundaries in complex Chinese sentences.

Similarly, translation (3) of the source sentence in Example 8.13 is incorrect. The tense of the sentence is marked by a past time marker at that time (那時), the two actions (Japan becoming a threat and being referred to as “Number One”) took place simultaneously according to the source sentence. The use of past perfect in translation (3), however, puts Japan becoming a threat anterior to Japan being referred to as “Number One” on the timeline. In fact, even if there were no indicator of which action took place first, our intuitive understanding of the situation would be that Japan becoming a threat was a result of Japan being recognized as Number One in every field. Again, the correct tense for this sentence is past simple instead of past perfect.

When we turn to NS professional translators, it appears that they do not have the same problem with past perfect. As shown in Example 8.14, past perfect is used in both translations by the NS translators. By using the adverbial conjunctions since and after, the temporal relationships are presented clearly.
The use of future simple and past simple

Table 8-10 and Figure 8-7 show that NS professional translators mainly used present simple (56.3%) and future simple (39.6%) to translate Chinese future tense; and that NNS professional translators used present simple (63.9%), future simple (21.7%) and past tense (10.8%). The most interesting difference is that past simple was used by some NNS translators but not by NS translators to translate Chinese future tense. As the total number of Chinese future tense cases in the dataset is constant, the differences in the frequency rates of using future simple and present simple between the two groups might have resulted from a major underlying cause. As Declerck (1991) has pointed out, the absolute tense in the post-present sector is future simple; if an anterior relation needs to be established in the past time sector, past simple can be used, as in *The police will believe that he was killed yesterday*. It appears that unless there is a need to establish an anterior relation with an event in the past time sector, past simple should not appear in a future time sector. As a result the difference in the use of present simple and future simple between the two groups is in fact a difference in their use of past simple. In Examples 8.15 and 8.16, past simple is used only by NNS translators, and a search of the dataset has found no such case by NS translators.

Example 8.15

Source text (3): 社會不知又將發生多少慘案悲劇

Translation (1): No one would know the number of tragedies that happened. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (2): We could not guess what the number of tragedies was. (NNS professional translator)
Since there is a clear future tense marker in the future tense (將) in the source clause, it is correct to use future tense in the translation. As the future tense marker can also be used as a modal auxiliary verb, it is also appropriate to translate it into ‘could’, ‘would’, ‘may’, and ‘might’ as the two translators have done in the following translations (3) and (4).

Translation (3): Nobody knows how many tragedies would happen. (NS professional translator)

Translation (4): We wouldn’t know how many tragedies could happen. (NNS professional translator)

The use of past simple as shown in translations (1) and (2) suggests that some NNS translators mistook the modal auxiliary verbs ‘would’ and ‘could’ as past tense morphological inflections of “will” and “can,” and then the translators apply the tense harmony rule to other verbs in the sentence. As discussed in 8.1.2.1, NNS professional translators and NNS novice translator alike follow the rule faithfully. Example 8.15 further confirms this tendency.

In Example 8.15 the future tense of the source sentence is marked by tense. In the following Example 8.16 it is expressed through context, and is much more difficult to recognise. The source clause of Example 8.16 starts with a tense marker 同時 (meanwhile) denoting an action taking place simultaneously with the one in the anterior clause "政府這陣子用盡各種手段拉抬股市，無非是希望營造台灣經 濟其實沒那麼糟的數據印象,”. In the anterior clause, the tense marker 這陣子
(recently) denotes pre-present time, which requires present perfect as the absolute tense, according to Declerck (1991). Based on Yang and Xu (2007)’s analytic framework for Chinese tense boundary, when a new tense adverbial 趕快 (quickly) appears in the source clause of Example 8.16, it terminates the temporal boundary of 同時 (meanwhile), and establishes a new future tense boundary.

Example 8.16

Source text (3): 同時也企圖讓民衆從股市得到點甜頭，趕快忘卻蕭條、失業、物價上揚所造成的痛苦

Translation (1): At the same time, they hoped that once the public obtained benefits from the stock market, they forgot about the pain of recession, unemployment, and price rise. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (2): Meanwhile, it was the government’s hope that the public quickly forgot about the depression, unemployment and price rising if the stock market made them rich. (NNS professional translator)

However, this new future boundary has not been recognised by some NNS professional translators because they have chosen past simple (forgot) as shown in translations (1) and (2) above. Actually their choices of past simple for the first clause are not correct either because the tense marker 同時 (meanwhile) indicates an inherited pre-present time sector from the anterior clause. The use of past simple in both translations suggests a shift of temporal focus (Declerck, 1991) and means that the government no longer hopes (or it is no longer the hope of the government) that the public will forget about the pain. This shift of temporal focus may cause unnecessary vagueness.
Similar to what has been discussed in the Example 8.15, the choice of past simple *forgot* may also result from some NNS translators’ application of the tense harmony rule. Once they have chosen past simple for the first clause (*hoped* and *was*), past simple is faithfully applied to the rest of the clause or sentence. Once again in my study, NNS professional translators have been found to have serious tense-aspect problems when writing complex sentences. The followings are translations of the two sentences in Examples 8.15 and 8.16 by NS professional translators:

Example 8.15

Translation (5): If the investment is lost and they can’t repay the loans, who knows how many miserable tragedies will occur in society. (NS professional translator)

Example 8.16

Translation (3): At the same time, they intend to give some benefit to stockholders so that they will quickly forget about the pains of the economic downturn, unemployment and an increasing consumer price index. (NS professional translator)

Our discussions in 8.1 have shown that NNS professional and novice translators have different levels of misunderstanding of the meanings of all major English tense-aspect forms such as present simple, past simple, present perfect, and past perfect. In this section, our comparison of NNS professional translators with NS professional translators further indicates that the NNS professional translator’s
misunderstandings contribute to the differences between them and NS professional translators in the use of English tense-aspect forms.

8.2.3 The Differences in Maintaining Communication Flow

In this section, I compare the use of English tense and aspect forms by NNS and NS professional translators at the discourse level. I will use examples to argue that NNS professional translators’ translations often suffer from various unwarranted tense shifts because they have insufficient understanding of the tense conventions at the discourse level. I will also argue that the so called tense harmony rule is overgeneralised to the discourse level by NNS professional translators.

Examples 8.17 and 8.18 are each the first paragraph of an article. The tense and aspectual markers are in bold and italic, and the tenses of the remaining clauses and sentences are expressed through context.

Example 8.17 (reproduced from Example 8.8)

米酒本來是千百年來中國人傳統的強身補品，是日常料理的必需品，只因爲它是用蒸餾方式做的，就必須比照國外進口的XO、威士忌，課上重稅，實在沒有道理。這也顯示這些掌控國際經貿組織的強權國家，在進行所謂的貿易談判時，根本不尊重個別國家的歷史文化與民情風俗，硬要將自己的一套標準強加於人。(Source Text 1)

Translation (1): Rice wine originated in China centuries ago, and it has been considered to strengthen the body’s immunization system. It has also been used in Chinese cooking. It is produced by a distillation process, and because of this, it is taxed as heavily as other imported wines such as XO and Whiskey without justifiable reasons. This shows that the countries that
formulate the international trade policies do not consider the history and cultures of other countries and try to impose their own standards on others when conducting the so called trade negotiations. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (2): For thousands of years, the rice wine has been used as a health supplement for the Chinese and also a daily gourmet necessity. It makes no sense at all that the rice wine is heavily taxed, like those imported alcohol products such as XO and whiskey merely because it was produced by distillation. This is also an indication that those empowered countries, which are in control of international economic and trade organizations, when proceeding in the so-called trade negotiations are always using their own standards on every member, which is disrespectful of the history, culture, and tradition of each individual country. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (3): Rice wine is an invigorating tonic that Chinese people have been drinking for thousands of years, and is considered a necessity in daily life. Just because it is made through a distillation process it is subjected to a higher tax than foreign imports, such as XO and whisky. It absolutely makes no sense at all. It is evident that the super powers controlling the reins of international economic organizations hold no regard whatsoever for the unique cultures and customs of other nations when conducting trade negotiations. Unfortunately, they persist on forcing their own ideals and beliefs onto other people. (NS professional translator)
Translation (4): Rice wine is a traditional health tonic that has been used by Chinese for thousands of years as well as a staple in our everyday cooking. Because it is made by distillation, it is subject to the same heavy taxes as imported XO and whiskey. Truly, this makes no sense. It also demonstrates how the powerful nations that control international trade organizations are bent on imposing their own standards on other nations in so-called trade negotiations, with no respect at all for the history, culture, and local customs of those nations. (NS professional translator)

In this example, translations (1) and (2) by NNS professional translators show inconsistency (one shift from present to past in each translation), while the translations (3) and (4) show no such inconsistency. Our comparison of NNS novice and NNS professional translators, has shown that NNS professional translators used tense with more consistency at the discourse level. When NNS professional translators are compared to NS professional translators, the latter show better performance.

Example 8.18

Source text (3): 政府這陣子用盡各種手段拉抬股市，無非是希望營造台灣經濟其實沒那麼糟的數據印象，同時也企圖讓民衆從股市得到點甜頭，趕快忘卻蕭條、失業、物價上揚所造成的痛苦，爲立委與總統選情注射強心與抗憂鬱綜合劑。

Translation (1): Recently, the Taiwanese government has tried very hard to push up the stock market by every means possible. The intention behind it apparently was to create a positive image demonstrating that Taiwan’s
economy wasn’t as bad as generally believed. Thus, by creating good news of the market, it allows the public to forget about the sufferings caused by economic recession, the unemployment problem and rising price of commodities. It looked like the government was providing the society with some sort of Prozac so that people would feel more hopeful about the upcoming legislative elections and presidential election. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (2): The government, at the moment, is doing everything to pull the stock market up, simply to create an impression that Taiwan’s economy is not as bad as what the data showed. Meanwhile, the government is also trying to let its general public have a sweet taste of the stock market and forget the pains of recession, unemployment and inflation. This will provide congressional and presidential elections a composite dose of heart strengthening and anti-depression medicine. (NNS professional translator)

Translation (3): The government has recently been pulling out all the stops to bolster the stock market. The purpose seems to be to create the digital illusion that Taiwan’s economy is not really in dire straits and that by giving investors something to smile about they might forget the pain of recession, inflation and unemployment. And of course, a rising stock market is always a shot in the arm for the hopes of the ruling party’s candidates in the presidential and Legislative Yuan elections. (NS professional translator)

Translation (4): The government has recently been using all measures in
order to prop up the stock market for no other reason than in hopes of strengthening Taiwan’s economy. The fact of the matter is that these figures don’t have such a menacing impact in the first place. Also, the government is attempting to sweeten the stakes for public investment in the stock market in hopes that the people will be more apt to forget about the hardships arising from the sluggish economy, unemployment, and high prices on goods. This measure serves as a kind of broad spectrum elixir injected by the legislature and president to remedy the burdening heart problems and depression that the public has become inflicted. (NS professional translator)

The tenses of the source text in Example 8.18 are more complex since the text contains more markers and the temporal interpretation of sentences with tense expressed through context is more difficult. The NNS professional translators tended to make less consistent tense choices in translation. In particular, translation (1) shows several shifts of tense from present to past and then from past to present. Translation (2) shows a shift from present to future. On the other hand, the NS professional translators consistently chose present as their tense choice throughout the paragraph. It is interesting to find that the present has been chosen consistently in translation (4), even though the accuracy of the translation’s content is rather poor, especially in the second and the last sentences of the translation. This may suggest that the NS translator has completely misunderstood the source sentences, but it also suggests that NS translators rely less on the tense of the source sentence than NNS translators when making tense-aspect choices in translation. The misunderstanding of the source sentence has not affected the translator’s ability to choose the right tenses. It has been reported that native English speakers often violate the so called tense
harmony rule faithfully followed by native Chinese speakers (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1998; Riddle, 1986). It would be unthinkable for NNS translators to maintain tense consistency if they came across source sentences they couldn’t understand. This case may also suggest that the correct choice of tense-aspect forms does not require a full understanding of the source text. It is the understanding of the function at the discourse level that matters in making correct tense choices.

A better understanding of the discourse conventions of tense and aspect in English is also shown in the NS translator’s translation of the first sentence in Example 8.17. The present simple is used in translation (3)’s first sentence, and as an absolute tense for present time sector it clearly defines the tense of the scene. The choice of tense-aspect form in translation (4)’s first sentence is identical to that of translation (3)’s. Translation (2)’s first sentence is a typically good translation by an NNS translator. If we look at translation (2)’s first sentence, we find that it is different from both translation (3)’s and translation (4)’s. The use of the present perfect for the first sentence as in translation (2) slightly shifts the temporal focus of the sentence to some pre-present situation. Although the use of the present simple in the second sentence (makes no sense) brings the temporal focus back to the present, it is not as good as keeping the focus consistently in the present because there is no further elaboration of the pre-present situation in the rest of the paragraph. This contrasts with Example 8.18, where the first paragraph serves as an introduction to the background information. The first sentences of translations (3) and (4) in Example 8.18 use the present perfect progressive followed by the present simple, indicating the shift of the temporal focus from the pre-present time sector to the present time sector, which is exactly the sequence of the source text. The translations by NNS translators in both examples, however, appear to lack such considerations in
the choice of tense-aspect forms in the first sentence.

As Chen (2005) has reported in her study, Chinese speakers with enough English competence levels to obtain Masters or Doctoral degrees in USA still lack understanding of the meaning of English tense-aspect forms at the discourse level, and often ignore tense conventions at the discourse level. In my study, all NNS professional translators have obtained a Masters degree and have worked as translators for at least five years. It appears that their understanding of English tense and aspect is better than novice translators but poorer than NS translators.

According to many researchers (Bardovi-Harlig, 1995; Chen, 2005; Hinkel 1992, 2004), misunderstandings of English tense-aspect forms cause severe consequences, such as the writings of EFL learners being regarded as “unnatural.” When NNS translators misunderstand the meaning of English tense-aspect forms, they face similar consequences: their translations will be regarded as “foreign.” As Hinkel (1992) has pointed out, the members of the English speech community share mutual beliefs and perceptions of the linguistic meaning of tense and aspect, and translations produced by those who are not familiar with the beliefs and perceptions will be excluded from the community. Hinkel (1997) suggested that tense-aspect features in discourse frames are most important because they are very specific linguistically and serious problems may arise if tense-aspect conventions in discourse frames are not adequately understood.

In addition, understanding the meaning of tense-aspect forms at the sentence level in English also plays a crucial role in making correct tense-aspect choices. In both Examples 8.17 and 8.18, NS professional translators show flawless mastery of how to establish temporal relationships with different tense-aspect forms at the sentence level. For instance, translation (3) of Example 8.17 reads *Rice wine is an*
invigorating tonic that Chinese people have been drinking for thousands of years, and is considered a necessity in daily life. The translator first uses the present simple to set the present time sector, and then uses the present perfect progressive to relate another situation to the previous one in the same time sector. This task is impossible to complete without a good understanding of individual tense-aspect forms. In our discussion of the differences between NNS novice and NNS professional translators, some extreme cases have been identified in which the translators of both groups use past simple in their translation of the entire paragraph. A thorough search of the translation by NS translators finds no such cases.

8.2.4 The Differences in Reliance on Tense-Aspect Markers in the Source Text

In this section, I will first present the results of a Chi-square test, which shows that the two groups do not differ in a statistically-significant way when translating Chinese tenses. I will then argue that the Chinese way of expressing tense has limited influence on translators of professional levels although further research is needed to confirm this result.

Table 8-11 shows the result of a Chi-square test of the differences between NNS professional translators and NS professional translators in their translation of the three Chinese temporal expressions. The two groups do not differ in a statistically-significant way in their tense-aspect choices when they translate Chinese sentences with any one of the three means to express tense in Chinese (p = 0.695402, 0.47046, and 0.554295 > 0.1).
Table 8-11: Chi-square tests of tense and aspect variation across NNS professional and NS professional groups in translation different Chinese temporal expressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporal Expression in Source Text</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tense marker Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>3.861578361</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.695402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>3.918838355</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>0.341455198</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>511</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aspectual marker Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>4.570853183</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.47046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>4.777868422</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>1.025701851</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>319</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contextual clues Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>4.918600975</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.554295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>5.324775001</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>0.14565871</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>716</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8-5 compares the reliance of NNS professional and novice translators on the Chinese way of expressing tense, and demonstrates that the only significant difference between them is when the tense in the source text is expressed through context. There is no difference when the tense in the source text is marked by tense or aspectual markers. The results of this comparison imply that tense and aspectual markers in Chinese are easiest for translators to handle. In a further comparison of NS professional translators and NNS professional translators, it is hypothesised that no difference will be found in their choice of tense and aspect forms when the tense in the source text is marked by tense or aspectual markers. The results (shown in Table 8-11) have not only confirmed our expectation but also found that there is no significant difference between the two groups even when the tense of the source text is expressed through context.

This suggests that the increase of translation competence makes it more difficult
to find differences in their reliance on the temporal markers in the source text. It appears that the measurement of my research needs to be improved to capture the differences in the reliance on tense markers between translators of higher translation competence levels. For example, a questionnaire survey could be introduced to find answers in the underlying psychological process of the translator when he or she reads the source text and chooses tense and aspect forms.

In addition, a large number of tenses in Chinese are expressed through context. As Yang and Xu (2007) state, the temporal meaning in the Chinese sentence is more important than forms in the reader’s understanding of the tense. Chinese tenses expressed through context are difficult for NS professional translators to identify, but in some cases they are also difficult for NNS professional translators. NS professional translators are more aware of the tense convention at the discourse level and the general usage of English tense and aspect forms, while NNS translators have a greater understanding of tense in the Chinese source text. This may explain why there were few statistical differences between the two groups in terms of their reliance on tense markers in the source text.

8.2.5 Summary of 8.2

The NNS and NS professional translator groups differ in a statistically-significant way in their use of English present simple, past perfect, past simple, and future simple when translating Chinese past and future tenses. The differences lie in their understandings of Chinese past tense expressed through context. In addition, NNS professional translators lack deep understanding of some basic English tense and aspect forms, such as present simple, present perfect, and past simple, which might be another contributing factor. Translators of both groups
differed significantly in their choice of English tense and aspect forms at the discourse level, which further accounts for their differences. The Chinese way of expressing tense is not a significant factor influencing the groups.

8.3 The Common Practice of Following the Tense in the Source Text

In this section, I will use examples to show that following the tense in the source text is a translation universal. I will argue, however, that following the tense in the source text when translating Chinese editorials into English is not always a good solution, and translators of all three language background and competence levels need to gain deeper understanding of the communicative purpose at the discourse level (the rhetorical unit) in their choice of English tense and aspect. The two groups’ tense-aspect choices which follow the tense in the source text suggest that native English-speaking translators do not differ from native Chinese-speaking translators in this respect, particularly when there were clear tense markers in the source text (Examples 6.5-6.7).

To follow the tense of the source text is in most cases a valid choice in translation, because in all translation processes the source text is “fixed” and the major task of the translator is to produce translations which have an equivalent effect (Newmark, 1988). A close examination of the translation data, however, shows that translations that simply follow the tense in the source are not always appropriate. Examples 8.19–8.21, which I have extracted from the dataset, illustrate the problems that may result from following the tense in source text.

Example 8.19

Source Text: 這也顯示這些掌控國際經貿組織的強權國家，在進行所謂
Translation (1): This event revealed that powers controlling international trade organizations would definitely force other countries to accept their own ideology when they were engaged in trade negotiations without respecting the histories, cultures and customs in other countries. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): Heavier taxes indicated that economic superpowers, which control international trade organizations, disregarded history, culture, and custom of other countries when negotiations took place. (NNS novice)

Translation (3): Obviously, powerful states controlling international trade organizations showed no respect to others’ histories, cultures and customs while conducting so-called trade negotiations. (NNS professional)

In Example 8.19, the italicised adverbial phrase “在進行所謂的貿易談判時” (when conduct so-called trade negotiations) is a clear past tense marker. As shown in Translations (1), (2) and (3), the past tense (in italics) was chosen by the translators. A thorough search of the database found that the use of the past tense in the translation of this sentence occurs in both NNS professional and novice groups. The translators probably chose the past tense for the main verb because they thought that all the trade negotiations were actually conducted in the past, which was true. They then chose the past tense for the main clause for consistency. Such a choice, however, ignored the communicative purpose of the sentence. If we take a look at the whole paragraph in the source text (as reproduced below and translated by a NS translator), the purpose of the previous sentence is to present the authors’ argument (it does not make sense to raise the tax on rice wine), and the purpose of the current sentence is
to make a statement that superpowers do not respect others in trade negotiations.

米酒本來是千百年來中國人傳統的強身補品，是日常料理的必需品，只因爲它是用蒸餾方式做的，就必須比照國外進口的XO、威士忌，課上重稅，實在沒有道理。這也顯示這些掌控國際經貿組織的強權國家，在進行所謂的貿易談判時，根本不尊重個別國家的歷史文化與民情風俗，硬要將自己的一套標準強加於人。(Excerpt from source text 1)

Translation (1): Rice wine is a traditional health tonic that has been used by Chinese for thousands of years as well as a staple in our everyday cooking. Because it is made by distillation, it is subject to the same heavy taxes as imported XO and whiskey. Truly, this makes no sense. It also demonstrates how the powerful nations that control international trade organizations are bent on imposing their own standards on other nations in so-called trade negotiations, with no respect at all for the history, culture, and local customs of those nations. (NS translator)

According to Quirk et al. (1985), one of the basic usages of the present simple tense is “the state present,” which expresses general statements. In this case, the way the trade negotiations were conducted and the way superpowers treated others remain the subject of the author’s interest and they are considered relevant and unfinished from the author’s point of view, although they occurred in the past. The use of the past tense, which was employed by the NNS translators, implies that trade negotiations are now conducted in a different way and superpowers are now treating other nations differently. Therefore, the present simple, used by the NS translator, is more appropriate.
As Hinkel (1997) pointed out, the discourse frame governs choices of tense and other linguistic features. When making tense choices for the translation of this sentence, attention must be paid to the temporal frame within the whole paragraph in order to prevent serious problems arising from a breach of tense conventions. The topic sentence of this paragraph sets a “present” temporal frame by stating that it does not make sense to raise the tax on rice wine. The translators shift from present to past tense confuses the temporal frame of the whole paragraph—the translations read as if the statement in the first sentence is irrelevant to the issue raised in the next.

Studies (Hinkel, 1997; Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1998; Chen, 2005) have found that advanced non-native English learners tend to misunderstand how tense conventions at the discourse level override tense decisions at the sentence level. For example, without realising the tense conventions at the discourse level, non-native English learners may produce the following texts:

(1) I have a splitting headache that I had for 2 hours. I think I am going to take a couple of aspirin tablets.

(2) The little girl cries her heart out. She lost her Teddy Bear and is convinced she won’t ever find him.

(Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1998: 67)

Misunderstandings of tense conventions also affect the decisions of the translators to follow the past tense marker in the source sentence. From the perspective of temporal frame, the present tense is a more appropriate choice.

Tense choices enjoy much freedom and tense shifting is not uncommon in argumentative texts in general (Smith 2003; He, 2008). Some studies (Bolivar, 1994; Hinkel, 1992, 1997; Jordan, 1997) have also found that in some genres the tense in each rhetorical unit tends to be consistent. The sentence in this example sits in the
rhetorical unit of “AI” (Addressing an Issue). There are two choices that meet the requirement of tense consistency: both sentences should be translated as either past tense or present tense. If the past tense is used for both sentences, then the whole rhetorical unit would sound more like addressing an event that is remote and irrelevant according to Quirk et al. (1985). Doing so runs against the rhetorical purpose of the “AI,” which address a current issue.

The analysis of Example 8.19 demonstrates that the choice of past tense by the translators appears to be problematic in three aspects: communicative purpose, tense convention of the discourse frame, and tense consistency of rhetorical units in press editorials. It suggests that in some circumstances following the tense marker of the source sentence is not a sound translation strategy. Even when the tense marker is explicit, tense choices should be made considering not only the tense of the source sentence but also its communicative purpose. Furthermore, the temporal frame and the rhetorical unit of the translation should be considered when making tense choices.

Example 8.20

Source sentence: 當時 美國逼迫日圓升值所用的說詞和手法跟 現在 強逼人民幣升值的方式有著驚人的相似。 (Source Text 2)

Translation (1): The measures that the U.S. used to force the Yen to appreciate at that time was quite similar when compared to the present method that they are using to urge the RMB. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): The method that the USA used to enforce the RMB’s appreciation was exactly the same as with the Yen. (NNS novice)

Translation (3): The US argument and trick at the time to force Japan to be
revalued were astonishingly similar to what it does to RMB now. (NNS novice)

In Example 8.20 There are two temporal adverbials, “當時” (then) and “現在” (now) (in italics). “當時” (then) is a past tense marker, and “現在” (now) is a present tense marker. In all three translations, the past tense was chosen. A thorough search of the database found that the use of the past tense in the translation of this sentence occurs in the NNS novice group only.

Example 8.21

Source Sentence: 去年一年，是台灣外匯存底增加最多的一年，快速累積的外匯存底，成為政府宣導“拚經濟”成效的最佳樣板。(Source Text 4)

Translation (1): Last year was the year that Taiwan’s foreign exchange reserves grew the most. The rapid accumulation served as the best manifestation for the government’s effort to promote economic growth. (NNS novice)

Translation (2): Last year was the year that Taiwan’s foreign reserve increased the most. It went up so fast that it became the best highlight of the government’s policy toward economics. (NNS novice)

Translation (3): The rapid accumulation of foreign exchange reserves became a best representation of the Taiwanese government’s propaganda—“Economy first.” (NNS professional)

Translation (4): Last year, Taiwan’s foreign reserves grew at the fastest rate ever. The government has been trumpeting this achievement as the best proof
that their economic policies are working, and under the circumstances it might seem a little unfair to rain on their parade. (NS professional)

In Example 8.21, the source sentence can be divided into two clauses:

1. 去年一年，是台灣外匯存底增加最多的一年，
2. 快速累積的外匯存底，成爲政府宣導「拚經濟」成效的最佳樣板。

The italicised adverbial phrase “去年一年” (last year the whole year) is a past tense marker. In Translations (1), (2), and (4) the translators broke the source sentence into two sentences and chose the past tense (in italics) for the main verbs. In Translation (3), the translator did not translate the first clause (是台灣外匯存底增加最多的一年), but still chose the past tense for the main verb of the second clause. A thorough search of the database found that the use of the past tense in the translation of this sentence occurred in all three groups.

As in Example 8.19, the use of the past tense in Examples 8.20 and 8.21 is debatable. In Example 8.20, there are two tense markers in the sentence: “當時” (then) and “現在” (now), and all the three translators in this example chose past tense for the main verb. Such a choice ignored the communicative purpose of the sentence which makes a general statement about a comparison of US measures to force currency appreciation in other countries now and then, which requires present tense. As the sentence is the topic sentence of the paragraph (see below), the use of past tense renders the temporal frame of the whole paragraph as past tense.

當時美國逼迫日圓升值所用的說詞和手法跟現在強逼人民幣升值的方式有著驚人的相似。不同的是，日本在軍事、外交上仰賴美國，沒有說「不」的權利。殷鑑不遠，難怪中國現在不買美國的帳。（Source Text 2）
The use of past tense in the first sentence makes it difficult to choose the appropriate tense for the next two sentences. On the one hand, the function of this paragraph is to articulate the author’s position (AP), which requires present tense to be used for the last sentence. On the other hand, a past time temporal frame is set by the topic sentence, and to maintain tense consistency requires past tense for the last sentence.

The sentence in Example 8.21 is also the first sentence of the paragraph:

去年一年，是台灣外匯存底增加最多的一年，快速累積的外匯存底，成為政府宣導「拚經濟」成效的最佳樣板。這種時候去澆冷水，似乎很不上道。但要跟國人報告的是，外匯存底不能以數字多少，作評斷的指標。（Source Text 4）

There is a clear past tense marker “去年一年” (the entire last year) in the source sentence, and the sentence serves to provide background information for the subsequent argument. Therefore, past tense is a valid choice. The sentence appears, however, in an AI (addressing an issue) paragraph, the purpose of which is to claim that increases in foreign reserves must not be used as an economic performance indicator. It is possible that the author perceived an association between last year’s rise in foreign reserves as and the issue which he or she was “now” addressing. When the author wishes to describe events of current relevance even when they occurred in the past, the present tense is more appropriate, as Riddle (1986) has pointed out. If this is the case, Translation (4) by a NS professional would be a better version. The translator split the sentence into two independent clauses and used past tense for the
first clause (following the past tense marker of the source sentence) and present perfect for the second clause (not following the past tense marker).

Based on an examination of tense choices in Examples 8.19-8.21, it appears that tense choices made by simply following the tense marker of the source sentence in translation are contentious. As shown in these examples, the translation requires present tense even when there are past tense and aspectual markers in the source sentence. These examples also show how a translator’s inappropriate following of the tense marker in the source sentence is related to their misunderstanding of:

1. The general usage of English tense and aspect;
2. The temporal frame and tense conventions of English editorial articles; and,
3. The communicative function of English tense and aspect.

All these problems reflect differences between translators of different translation experience and language background and competence levels, which has been discussed in 8.1 and 8.2.

When translating Chinese sentences in which the tense is expressed through context, it is impossible to tell whether the translator follows the tense of the source sentence. Due to the absence of tense and aspectual markers, the tense of Sentence 2 in Example 6.7 (reproduced below) is subject to different interpretations. An analysis of the factors discussed in this section shows that present tense would be more appropriate for the translation of this sentence (as Translation 3) for the following reasons:

1. The communicative purpose of the whole paragraph is to provide statistics to support the author’s claim that currency appreciation will not solve the problem of trade deficit;
2. The temporal frame is present tense; and
3. The tense of the rhetorical unit is present, which needs to be maintained.

Example 6.7

Source sentence:

答案是逐年增加到 750 億美元！美日逆差反而擴大了 50%！(Source Text 2)

The source paragraph:

結果日圓從約 250 日圓兌一美元，逐漸升值到約 100 日圓兌一美元。日圓升值之後，美日逆差減少了多少呢？答案是逐年增加到 750 億美元！美日逆差反而擴大至 50%！但日本的經濟從而停滯了十幾年，到如今，對美而言，雖然逆差的問題完全沒解決，但是日本爭霸的威脅卻完全解除了。

Translation (1): The answer is the trade deficit went up gradually to $75 billion over the years! The America-Japan trade deficit actually increased by 50%! (NNS professional)

Translation (2): In the following year, the trade deficit increased by fifty percent to seventy five billion dollars! (NS professional)

Translation (3): The answer is that the trade deficit has gradually reached US$75 billion over the years, and the US-Japan trade deficit has instead increased by 50%! (Author’s version)

The above examples show that some translators, including both native Chinese-speakers and native English-speakers, have ignored the other options available when choosing tense. This tendency may be a translation universal.
According to Mauranen (2005), translation universals are features that are common to all translated texts regardless of text types and language pairs, and some corpus-based translation studies have confirmed that translations tend to follow the source text in many aspects, including the general word of the source text, its structure, and its communicative emphasis (Baker, 1995; Davies, 2000; Puurtinen, 2003). If it is a translation universal, it would be difficult for translators to avoid following the tense in the source text even in cases where there are other tense-aspect options available.

As pointed out by Bowker (2000), bilingual ability is often mistaken for translation competence, and native speakers are often assumed to have excellent translation competence when translating into their native language. While it may be expected that native English-speaking translators may differ from native Chinese-speaking translators when translating from Chinese into English, the results of my study show that native English-speaking translators and native Chinese-speaking translators are alike in terms of following the tense in the source text.

Needless to say, native speakers possess excellent intuition when translating into their mother tongue, and they normally produce better translations than non-native translators do (Newmark, 1988; Baker, 1992). The choice of tense and aspect concerned in my study is only a fraction of the broader translation competence issue. The similarity between Chinese-speaking and English-speaking translators in following the tense in the source text therefore cannot be overgeneralised as an indication of general translation competence.
8.4 Summary

The analyses in this chapter have demonstrated that NNS novice and professional translators differ in a statistically-significant way when translating Chinese present and future tenses. I have argued that their understanding of the grammatical rules of English present perfect and past simple contributes to their differences in using these two forms. I have also argued that both novice and professional NNS translators have misunderstood some English grammatical rules, such as the tense harmony. Although NNS professional translators perform better than NNS novice translators, the former have acquired a greater variety of English tense and aspect usages. Nevertheless, they still need to become more native-like in their tense and aspect choices in areas such as choosing more appropriate tense and aspect forms and avoiding unnecessary tense shifts in the tense choice for a whole paragraph. Moreover, Chinese sentences in which tense is expressed through context have posed a great difficulty for NNS novice and professional translators, which also contributes to their differences. NNS novice translators need to reduce their reliance on chronological order, adverbial temporal markers, and connectives to express English tense, and move towards using morphological inflections, a more proficient way of expressing English tense.

The comparison of NNS professional and NS professional translators has revealed that the two groups differ in a statistically-significant way in their use of English present simple, past perfect, past simple, and future simple when translating Chinese past and future tenses. NNS professional translators lack awareness of tense conventions at the discourse level and of the meaning of English present simple, past perfect, past simple at the sentence level. At the sentence level, overgeneralisation of English historical present usage, a lack of understanding of how English past perfect
refers to “the past in the past,” and confusion of modal auxiliary verbs with past inflections contribute to the inappropriate English tense and aspect choices made by NNS professional translators. Consequently these factors contribute to the differences between NNS professional and NS professional translators. At the discourse level, the NNS professional translator’s lack of understanding of tense conventions and possible overgeneralisation of the tense harmony rule are potential factors contributing to the differences between NNS professional and NS professional translators.

Having compared translators of all three language background and competence levels, I have argued that both NNS professional and novice translators have not mastered English past simple, present simple, present perfect, and past perfect (which are the core tense-aspect forms in Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman terms; 1998), much less the whole English tense system. The analysis of NNS and NS translators’ practice of following the tense and aspect in the source text, moreover, has demonstrated that it is not always a good solution when translating Chinese editorials into English. Translators of all three language background and competence levels need to pay more attention to the communicative purpose at the discourse level (the rhetorical unit) rather than simply follow the tense in the source text in their choice of English tense and aspect.
Chapter 9  Conclusion

This study has taken a data-driven comparative approach to investigating the differences between native Chinese-speaking and native English-speaking translators in their use of English tense-aspect forms when translating Chinese editorials into English. It has proposed an analytic framework of tense-aspect in translation, in which the factors affecting the choice of tense-aspect forms are properly accommodated for, such as the tense and aspect of the source text, the temporal marking of the source text, the lexical aspect of verbs, and the rhetorical structure of the source text. It was hypothesised that translators of different language background and competence levels and different native tongues use English tense-aspect forms differently in translation from Chinese into English, and that the differences in the use of English tense-aspect by non-native English-speaking translators contribute to the naturalness of their translations from Chinese into English. The hypotheses are supported by the data collected for this empirical study, which was designed specifically to investigate of the use of English tense-aspect forms and which was carried out with translators from two different language background and competence levels and two different native tongues. The findings of this study contribute to current knowledge about translation into the second language and bear implications for translation pedagogy and translation studies in general.

This chapter summarises the major findings of the present study in Section 9.1, and then discusses the theoretical and pedagogical implications in Section 9.2. It finally covers the limitation of this research and puts forward some suggestions for future research in Section 9.3.
9.1 Major Findings and Theoretical Implications

Based on its investigation of a large amount of data, the present study obtains answers to the research questions put forward in Chapter 1 which will be summarised as follows. First of all, the data and analysis in Section 5.1 confirms statistical differences in the occurrence counts of English tense-aspect forms in the translations produced by the three groups of translators. The subsequent three questions address the first: the differences between translators of three different language background and competence levels.

1. What are the influences of the tense and aspect in the source text on the translators?
2. What are the influences of the lexical aspect of verbs on the translators?
3. What are the influences of the Chinese editorial rhetorical structure on the translators?

The first question (Research Questions 2) was answered by analysing the data collected from translations by all three groups of translators. There was a strong tendency among all three groups to follow the tense and aspect in the source text, in which they frequently used: the present simple and present progressive to translate the present tense; the past simple, past progressive and past perfect to translate the past tense; and, the future simple and future progressive tenses to translate the future tense. This outcome provides further evidence to the claim that the following of source texts is a “translation universal.”

Although the three groups of translators shared a similar tendency to follow the tense and aspect of the source text, tense and aspect in the source text has influenced the translators’ choices of tense-aspect forms and has potentially contributed to the differences between translators of different language background and competence
levels. Further analyses (Sections 8.1.2 and 8.2.2) showed that the NNS professional group differs from the NNS novice group when translating the Chinese present tense and future tense, and that NS professional translators differed from NNS professional translators when translating the Chinese past and future tenses.

The difference between the two groups of native Chinese-speaking translators was particularly evident in the usages of present perfect and past simple. NNS professional translators tended to use more present perfect than the NNS novice translators when translating Chinese present tense, while NNS novice translators used more past simple. When translating Chinese future tense, the professional translators showed more flexibility in their use of a variety of tense-aspect forms such as present simple, present perfect, past simple, and future simple, while the novice translators tended to use only future simple and present simple when translating Chinese future tense (Figure 8-2).

My study attributes the difference between NNS professional and novice translators to the latter’s lack of understanding of English tense-aspect usages when choosing different tense and aspect in translation. In particular, the NNS novice translators in my study appeared to have more problems with the present perfect and past simple than other English tense-aspect forms.

Although the NNS professional translators in my study used a wider variety of tense-aspect forms than NNS novice translators, further analyses showed that the former may not be more competent than the latter when dealing with tense and aspect in complex sentences in which complex temporal relationships need to be established in order to hold different situations together in the same temporal domain (Section 8.1.2.1).

My study has also shown that the differences between the two NNS groups may
correlate with the tense in the source text when it is expressed through context (Section 8.1.2.2). When there were no tense and aspectual markers in the source text, and judgment depended on the context and its implications, NNS novice tended to establish a chronological order by looking at the nearby Chinese sentences. By approaching the task in this way, they were more likely to misinterpret the situations of the two sentences as unfolding in a chronological order. Such a practice may explain their disproportionately frequent use of the past simple in translation of Chinese editorials when the present tense is required to represent the author’s “now.” Nevertheless, the choice of present tense, in particular the present perfect, by NNS professional translators when the Chinese sentence is temporally expressed through context may be a “safe” translation strategy employed by the translators when they are uncertain of the tense of the source sentence.

My study has further found that a few translators from each NNS group may have over-generalised “tense harmony” from the sentence level to the discourse level, and consistently used past tense throughout their translation of an entire paragraph. This finding again indicates that some NNS professional translators may not be more competent than novice translators in their command of the English tense-aspect system. Furthermore, this finding also indicates that the above mentioned NNS novice translators’ poor performance in tense-aspect marking may also result from their first language interference because even the NNS professionals have the same problem of over-generalising “tense harmony”. It appears that Chinese as a non-tensed language, in contrast to English as a tensed one, does bear the same mark on professionals and the novices alike. As a result, both groups will show more or less the same tense-aspect marking pattern at the sentence level, but the professionals will probably win out at the contextual level with a smoothing over effect.
The comparison of NNS professional translators with NS professional translators in this study has found that both groups mainly used the present simple and present perfect to translate Chinese present tense, and that there was little difference between them when translating Chinese present tense. However, the two groups differed significantly when they translated the Chinese past and future tense. The major differences were:

1. When translating the Chinese past tense, NNS professional translators used more present simple and past perfect than the NS translators, while the NS translators used more present perfect than the NNS translators; and,

2. When translating the Chinese future tense, NNS professional translators used more present simple and past simple than the NS translators, while the NS translators used more future simple than the NNS translators.

Through a careful examination of all cases where the Chinese past tense was expressed through context, my study suggests that NS professional translators may have experienced difficulties understanding Chinese past tense when it was expressed through context. They tended, however, to have achieved the same level of understanding of Chinese present and future tenses as NNS professional translators. Furthermore, the examination finds that NNS professional translators have sometimes experienced the same difficulties understanding the Chinese past tense when it was expressed through context.

The differences between the NNS and NS professional translators were also influenced by their command of the English tense-aspect forms, especially, present simple, past perfect and past simple. NNS professional translators mistook the usage of present perfect with the historical present usage of present simple in English,
while no NS professional translators did. Additionally, NNS professional translators incorrectly used past simple when they translated Chinese future tense, probably because they mistake modal auxiliary verbs such as “would” and “could” as past tense morphology and so incorrectly applied the “tense harmony” rule. NS professional translators, on the other hand, did not have such a problem when translating Chinese future tense. However, both NNS and NS professional translators both used past perfect incorrectly to represent temporal relationships in the past time sector. A closer examination of the cases revealed why the past perfect is so problematic to professional NNS and NS translators: for the former, a misunderstanding of either the temporal relationships of complex sentences in the source text or the usage of past perfect in English may have contributed to the problem; for the latter, the mistakes were more likely a result of negligence.

The most important difference between NNS and NS professional translators was found in their use of tense-aspect at the discourse level. In the translation of a whole paragraph, NS translators tended to keep their tense choices consistent while NNS professional translators tended to make more inconsistent choices, resulting in inappropriate tense shifts. This difference may result in the NNS translator’s translation being regarded as “foreign” and “unnatural.” The tense shift in the NNS professional translator’s translation was found to be related to the influence of the “tense harmony” rule commonly emphasised in the English grammar textbook as well as their lack of awareness of tense conventions at the discourse level.

My study further found that there is little difference between NNS and NS professional translators in their reliance on the tense-aspect markers in the source text. Chinese tenses expressed through context were difficult for NS professional translators to identify, but in some cases they were also difficult for NNS
professional translators. NS professional translators were more aware of the tense convention at the discourse level and the general usage of English tense and aspect forms, while NNS translators had a more competent understanding of tense in the Chinese source text. This may offset the differences between the two groups and result in little statistical difference being detected when we examined their reliance on tense markers in the source text.

With respect to the second question (Research Question 3) concerning the influence of the lexical aspect of English verbs on the tense and aspect choice in translation, my study has found that NS professional translators tend to use more present simple with state verbs in translation than both NNS novice and professional translators, while the latter tend to use more accomplishment and achievement verbs with future simple, past simple, and past perfect in translation. In particular, NNS novice translators tended to use more accomplishment and achievement verbs with future simple than NNS professional translators (Section 5.4). A detailed comparison of the tense-aspect choices by both NNS professional and novice groups against the four lexical aspectual classes has found that although their choice of perfective morphology was different from that of low proficiency learners, their use of imperfective morphology was influenced by lexical aspectual classes and conforms to that of English learners of low proficiency levels. This finding provides some evidence to the Aspect Hypothesis in the context of translation which is different from previous studies, which have mainly focusing on second language acquisition. This finding argues that translators of both NNS groups may not have developed a native like English temporality system, even though they have reached a high level of English proficiency level. Their typical patterns include:

1. An association of past simple, present perfect and past perfect with
accomplishment and achievement verbs; and,

2. An association of present simple and present progressive with state and activity verbs.

These two patterns are explicable by cognitive principles that were used to construct the Aspect Hypothesis, such as the relevance principle, the congruence principle, the one-to-one principle and the prototype account.

With respect to the third question (Research Question 4), it was hypothesised that the choice of tense and aspect in translation was related to the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials. Although it has been found that NS professional translators tended to use relatively more present perfect in their translation of “Zhuan” sections of Chinese editorials, the rhetorical structure of Chinese editorials had little influence on the choice of tense-aspect forms by NNS professional and novice translators (Section 5.5). Therefore, among the five variables hypothesised in this research to influence the translator’s choice of tense and aspect in translation, tense and aspect in the source text, lexical aspect of the verb, and temporal marking in the source have been found to be the major factors.

9.2 Implications

The present study, with data collected from translators of three language background and competence levels from Australia and other countries, enables us to have a deep understanding of the uses and functions of tenses-aspects employed by native Chinese-speaking and native English-speaking translators. In addition to enlarging the current scope of understanding of translation into the second language, some important implications arise from the findings of this study, which can be concluded as follows.
9.2.1 Theoretical Implications

In terms of translation studies, the present study implies that the approach to analysing the use of tense and aspect in translation is useful in the description and exploration of translation competence, from Chinese into English. Although translators translating into their first language are not always considered superior to those translating into their second language, there are few empirical studies comparing the two (Alptekin, C & Alptekin, 1984; Davies, 1991; Kachru, Braj; 1992). In addition, unlike translation into the first language, there has been a lack of knowledge in translation studies of how translators perform when translating into their second language (Campbell, 1998). The empirical evidence provided by this current study shows that NS translators perform better than NNS translators in tense and aspect choices, largely because of their better understanding of the function of individual English tense-aspect forms and tense conventions at the discourse level. On the other hand, there is also evidence that NS translators have some difficulty understanding the temporal meaning of the Chinese sentences. These findings have potentially shed new light on how translators perform when translating into the second language and what can be done to make their translation more native like in terms of selecting appropriate tense and aspect. Since the choice of tense-aspect is only one of the many important linguistic choices in translation, the current study implies that translation into the second language is worth further examination from different research angles, so that our knowledge of this translation practice can be further enriched.

Following the source text has been held as a translation universal in translation studies, although it has not been sufficiently validated by empirical research (Melis
& Albir, 2001; Widdowson C., 2001). This current study provides evidence that supports this view, in which all translators, regardless of their first language, tended to follow the tense in the source text. However, the study also reveals that underneath this general tendency, there are subtle differences between NNS and NS translators in their way of following the tense in the source text, and these differences, to some extent, explain why translations produced by NNS translators often read “unnatural.”

The framework adopted by this study emerges as an effective account of the use of tense and aspect in Chinese into English translation, and shows how the use of tense and aspect in translation is influenced by the source text, the lexical aspect of the verb, the communicative purpose, and discourse conventions. It implies that the same framework may work in future studies of tense and aspect.

Among the few studies of the translation competence into the second language, Campbell (1998) proposed a systematic model that included three components (i.e. textual, disposition, and monitoring competence), each consisting of a number of linguistic features. Based on this model, Dong and Lan (2010) profiled the textual competence of translation into the second language focusing on native Chinese-speaking translators. Tense and aspect have been raised as potential linguistic features that may be worth further exploration. The current study finds that the choice of tense and aspect differs between novice and professional NNS translators when translating into the second language, and thus implies that such choices can be considered as an indicator of their textual competence, which constitutes the general translation competence into the second language.

Data collected from the present study lends some support to and refines the Aspect Hypothesis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds, 1995). Previous studies of the hypothesis seldom used translation to elicit data. As a result,
research subjects may have adopted the “avoidance” strategy by using expressions with which they were familiar to avoid making mistakes, which could have affected the accuracy of the research. In the current study, this situation has been improved. In all of the three groups, the first prediction that in low-to-intermediate learners, -ing marks activity verbs, -ed/irregular marks achievements and accomplishment verbs, and -s marks state verbs is convincingly supported. We find in our analysis that the four factors (a) universal predisposition, (b) the congruence principle, (c) input distribution, and (d) the principle of contrast might have all contributed to the acquisitional patterns observed. Therefore, this study contributes to the understanding of the hypothesis and principles.

9.2.2 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study can help translation trainers better understand the use of tense and aspect by NNS translators in the Chinese setting. They can draw on this knowledge in their teaching practice to provide the trainees with comprehensive guidance.

First, the results of this study have indicated the language related difficulties facing NNS translators when translating into English and the areas of intensive instruction they require. It has been found that the use of present perfect and past simple is the weakest area in the NNS translator’s translation. In this case, trainers could compare and contrast the present perfect with past simple, call the NNS translator’s attention to the common and unique features of the two tense-aspect forms, and prepare teaching materials and design exercises that present different usages of them. In addition, trainers could also use the negative examples provided in this study to inform trainees of the differences between the two forms that cause
confusion. For example, some NNS novice translators do not understand the meaning of “current relevance” which enables the use of present perfect to refer to a past event in the present time sector (cf. Examples 7.1 and 7.2). Trainers could show trainees these kinds of errors to help them understand the differences between these two tense-aspect forms and subsequently choose the correct one in the translation.

Another language related difficulty found in this study is the NNS translator’s confusion about when and when not to apply the tense harmony rule. The NNS translators in this study tended to be deeply influenced by the tense harmony rule when choosing tense-aspect forms. The study found that the tense harmony rule posed a great difficulty for NNS translators when they sought to establish appropriate temporal relationships in complex sentences and, in some extreme cases, NNS translators have even extended the tense harmony rule to the whole paragraph. This finding implies that translation trainers need to emphasise the importance of the role played by the writer’s point of view and purposes in the choice of tense and aspect. Trainers may guide trainees to relate tense and aspect in authentic English writing materials to the writer’s view and purpose, especially in complex sentences. Additionally, trainers could use examples to show the correct interpretation of temporal meaning in Chinese sentences that do not have temporal markers since such sentences are widespread in editorial articles and understanding the correct temporal meaning is crucial for NNS translators if they are to choose the correct tense-aspect forms in their translations.

The current study also found that NNS translators tend to rely on chronological order to express time reference or on adverbial expressions (e.g., yesterday, today) and connectives (e.g., and, therefore). This practice results in temporal inconsistency in their translations. A key source of the difficulty may be related to how English
tense and aspect is taught only as a device to express time, while their more general meanings and the discourse conventions of their use often go unrecognised in translation training. This study implies that introducing the concept of $T_0$ could be an effective way to address temporal inconsistency in translation. For example, trainers could first explain to trainees that $T_0$ in editorials is often the author’s “now,” and then teach trainees how to establish the temporal relationships of other events in relation to $T_0$ through various tense-aspect forms (e.g., using present perfect to relate past time events with the present time $T_0$). Such an approach would help NSS translators avoid mixing past tense with present tense in the same sentence. Special emphasis should be given to how to establish the temporal relationship of events in the past time sector in relation to $T_0$ in the present time sector, as this was the most problematic area identified in this study.

As an important linguistic feature, tenses and aspects are not isolated linguistic phenomena that indicate temporality; they are closely linked to communicative purpose. Functions and meanings should be combined when tenses and aspects are taught to NNS trainee translators. In this study, for example, editorials are characterised by the “atemporal” feature of tense and aspect choice, so there is much freedom of tense-aspect choice. Although there is no conventional “default” tense in the writing of editorials, past simple and past perfect should be avoided, because they tend to be overused. NNS translators should diversify their use of tense-aspect forms considering their different functions. I found that it was particularly difficult for NNS translators to choose appropriate tense-aspect forms in cases where the present perfect is required in translation but past time markers are present in the source text. In these cases the present tense is required in translation even though there are no tense-aspect markers in the source text. In addition, many NNS novice translators
failed to recognise the communicative purposes of the source text and the difference between English present perfect, past simple, present simple, and past perfect, which led to the high occurrence of the past simple and past perfect and the low occurrence of the present simple in their translations. By contrast, present simple and present perfect were often found in translations by NNS professional translators and NS professional translators, suggesting that they are more aware of the underlying communicative meaning of English tense and aspect. NNS translators of lower competence levels could learn from these examples.

In addition, the findings of the present study imply that the effect of the lexical aspect of English verbs should be considered in order to facilitate the teaching of tense and aspect in the translation context. A better understanding of the potential effect of lexical aspect on tense-aspect choices may enable trainers to pay more attention to the universal pattern of Aspect Hypothesis in tense-aspect acquisition and to instruct trainees to maintain a balanced distribution of verb morphology in different lexical classes. Considering the findings of the present study, we suggest that NNS translators increase their use of state and activity verbs with imperfective tense-aspect forms, such as present simple and present progressive, and reduce their use of accomplishment and achievement verbs with perfective tense-aspect forms, such as past simple, present perfect and past perfect. Negative examples of the under use of state verbs and activity verbs with present simple and present progressive and the overuse of accomplishment and achievement verbs with past simple, present perfect and past perfect (cf. Examples 7.7-7.9) should be more intensively presented and emphasised in classroom. Such input could help NNS translators produce a more target-like use of tense-aspect morphology because it would adjust the distributional bias found in the input. Moreover, the distribution of tense-aspect forms in lexical
aspect classes could be used as an assessment criterion of the NNS translator’s translation quality. We found that NNS translators, even at advanced levels of proficiency, tended to mark verb tense-aspects according to their lexical aspect. By comparing this pattern with authentic English writing, trainers could assess the NNS translator’s translation quality and provide specific feedback on their choice of verbs and tense-aspect forms.

The present study also has implications for university-level teachers who could help undergraduate and postgraduate students make their use of tenses and aspects more native-like through translation practice. To do this, corpus-based translation teaching could be applied as a new teaching model. The corpus and concordances could be presented to the students for their own observation of various functions performed by verb tenses and aspects in translation. Students could also be encouraged to read editorial articles from international newspapers, as well articles of other types, to gain a better understanding of how tense and aspect forms are used in different types of writing. Teachers of ESP (English for Specific Purposes), when their courses aim to help students’ academic reading or writing, could conduct a similar contrastive analysis of specific disciplines to help students discover the different uses and functions of tenses and aspects. Teachers could remind the students that framed writing can lead to the overuse of certain tenses and aspects, which should be avoided. The importance of the lexical aspect of the verb in tense and aspect choices should also be emphasised in the classroom. Finally, in order to increase the quality of student translations and writing, textbook writers should provide more authentic materials containing the different functions of certain tenses and aspects in each discipline.
9.3 Limitations of this Study and Further Research

This study was inevitably limited by time and resources. Other limitations are discussed below and it is expected that they can be taken as reminders for future research in this field.

First, although the study has collected data on tense and aspect choices in four translations produced by each translator, further investigation with a larger corpus is needed to discern the extent to which the present findings hold true. Similarly, this study was based on source texts of a similar level of difficulty, but in reality the level of difficulty varies with each article, which can lead to differences in tense and aspect distributions. Therefore, more quantitative standards could be employed as selection criteria in future studies, which would yield results that give us a more complete picture of the use of tenses and aspects in translation.

While the methodology of this study has enabled the comparison of NNS translators of different levels of proficiency, the criteria by which participants were selected imposes another limitation. The language background and competence level used to categorise NNS translators into novice and professional groups was based on their translation experience and their membership of professional translation and interpreting associations. It is possible that some NNS novice and professional translators are quite close in their English proficiency levels, even though their differences in the use of tense-aspect forms are statistically significant. The results of my study could be refined further if future studies were to use more stringent criteria and were to include a more generally accepted indicator of the actual English proficiency level, such as the score of TOEFL or IELTS tests for NNS translators.

The use of tense-aspect forms in this study has centred on press editorials, because theories of editorials are well-developed and editorials are widely used in
translation teaching and assessment. As translators create a variety of types of texts, however, it is important that future studies extend their inquiries to other genres. Although the analytical framework of this study was developed for editorial translation research, it has more general applicability. It could be used, for example, to study the tense-aspect forms in a variety of discourse types to explore topics that I have yet to address, including how translators of different language background and competence levels use tense-aspect forms when they translate texts from different genres, and the relationship between translation competence levels and translators use of tense-aspect forms in translation of across genres.

In addition, linguistic features are closely connected to each other, but this study focused only on the different uses of tenses and aspects. There are opportunities to widen this field of research by examining other linguistic features, such as the use of the passive voice, that-clauses, hedging, modal auxiliary verbs, and so forth, which would add more dimensions to this study and enable us to see a more complete picture. As this study probed the distributional features of using tense-aspect forms by native Chinese-speaking translators, the relative influence of the translators first language on the choice of tense-aspect forms could also be explored in future research.

There are also limitations related to the data analysis of this study. First, mistakes often arise when annotating large-size raw corpora. Since several annotation tasks have been performed in this study, it is possible that annotation-related errors occurred during the process, for example, missing certain verbs or mixing up the numbers used to tag tense-aspect forms. Second, it is difficult to determine the tense of a Chinese sentence when there are no tense-aspect markers. The use of the Chinese linguist in my study to determine the tense of Chinese
sentences reduces, but never eliminates, the chance of misinterpretation. Similarly, the lexical aspects of the verbs were carefully classified according to well-established Vendlerian categories, but the analysis still required personal and subjective judgment. Some aspects (i.e., accomplishment and achievement) carried by the verbs are very subtle and are not always easy to identify clearly, even after asking the translators themselves as found in some follow-up email communications. In order to minimise these potential mistakes, a third part should be invited in future studies to cross examine randomly selected samples of the annotation. The present study is suggestive and exploratory, and more research is required to increase the validity and reliability of the results.

This study focused on the analysis of the use of tense-aspect forms by translators. Although we have included translations from NS translators, without a comparison with the target use of tense and aspect in authentic English press editorials, we do not know whether the use was target-like. One way to solve this problem would be to compare the distributional patterns of the translator’s data with those of authentic English editorials. Such a comparison could be achieved in future research by adding a new category of authentic English editorials to the design of the experiment.

Finally, it should be noted that although the current study explores the trends of tense-aspect use across proficiency levels, the trends observed do not necessarily model the development of NNS translators’ translation competence. To discover the genuine developmental course of the use of tense-aspect forms in the NNS translator’s work, one would have to undertake a longitudinal study.
References


Hale, S., & Campbell, S. (2002). The Interaction Between Text Difficulty and


Appendixes

Source Text 1

米酒的省思 (Title)

米酒越來越貴，不但造成大量缺貨，還惹出駭人的「假米酒」毒死人風波，
[present perfect]對於这一点，相信許多人和我一樣，都有不吐不快的義憤。 (Qi)
[present simple]

米酒本來是千百年來中國人傳統的強身補品，是日常料理的必需品,
[present perfect]只因它們是用蒸餾方式做的，就必須比照國外進口的 XO、威士忌，課上
重稅，實在沒有道理。 [present simple] 這也顯示這些掌控國際經貿組織的強權
國家，在進行所謂的貿易談判時，根本不尊重個別國家的歷史文化與民情風俗，
硬要將自己的一套標準強加於人。 (Chen) [present simple]

其實不僅是米酒，台灣多項農產品及肉類、水果等，也都出現了價格大跌
的現象，[present perfect]讓辛勤終年的農民叫苦連天，不知道未來要何去何從。 
(Zhuan) [present simple]

在這種時候，或許我們應該開始思考，「全球化」難道只是經濟強權向外
延伸獲利觸角而提出的美好卻虛假的幻景嗎？[present simple] 希望在全球反戰氣
氛日益高漲之際，也能帶動反對經濟霸權的思維，讓類似假米酒毒死人的悲劇
事件不再發生。 (He) [present simple]

Source Text 2
美國要人民幣升值的真正目的（Title）

美國政府一再呼籲：人民幣應對美元升值，以改善中美巨額貿易逆差。[present perfect]美國催促人民幣升值的真正目的，絕對不是要解決其貿易赤字，因爲人民幣再怎麼升值，也解決不了這個問題。(Qi) [present simple]


當時美國逼迫日圓升值所用的說詞和手法跟現在強逼人民幣升值的方式有著驚人的相似。[present simple]不同的是，日本在軍事、外交上仰賴美國，沒有說「不」的權利。[present simple] 殷鑑不遠，難怪中國現在不買美國的帳。(He) [present simple]

Source Text 3

德政猛於虎（Title）

政府這陣子用盡各種手段拉抬股市，無非是希望營造台灣經濟其實沒那麼糟的數據印象，[present perfect]同時也企圖讓民衆從股市得到點甜頭，趕快忘卻蕭條、失業、物價上揚所造成的痛苦，[present perfect]爲立委與總統選情注射強
心與抗憂鬱綜合劑。(Qi) [present simple]

要不是最近歐美股市劇烈波動，台北股市也隨著震盪，[present perfect]還真有不少人已經被洗腦得快要相信，[present perfect]只要愛台灣就有新台幣，只要買股票就一定有錢賺。 (Chen) [present simple]

股票市場裡固然買的是夢，不過這個夢好歹要有現實為基礎，[present simple]政府想要用股市強行扭曲，也許短期可以讓眼明手快或有內線、有資金的人撈上一筆，[present simple]但卻會讓能寧可選擇苦幹實幹，或是沒有條件買股票的經濟、資訊弱勢族群，形同被政府懲罰，[future simple]形成更大的社會不公。(Zhuan) [future simple]

更可怕的是，萬一他們以爲既然政府掛保證，投資台股就是愛台灣，愛台灣必得新台幣，也掏出口袋裡最後的老本，甚至不惜借錢去籌措股本，[present simple]倘若蝕了老本還不出貨款，[present simple]社會不知又將發生多少慘案悲劇，[future simple]政府拉抬股市，豈不形同另一個減刑殺人的「德政」？(He) [present simple]

Source Text 4

外匯存底論政績 (Title)

去年一年，是台灣外匯存底增加最多的一年，[past simple]快速累積的外匯存底，成爲政府宣導「拚經濟」成效的最佳樣板。 [present perfect]這種時候去澆冷水，似乎很不上道。[present simple]但要跟國人報告的是，外匯存底不能以數字多少，作爲評斷的指標。(Qi) [present simple] 這個錢，指的是央行持有的國外資產，也就是「央行自己印新台幣鈔票，去跟民間買來的外匯」。[present simple]如果央行不跟民間買，這筆錢還是存在，差別只是記在民間的名下而已。(Chen) [present simple]
何況央行買這麼多的外匯，最主要目的，是為維持具有出口競爭力的匯價，[present simple]背後的意義，也就代表台灣的景氣仍在低點，需要靠匯率「加持」，刺激外銷幫景氣拉一把。(Zhuan) [present simple] 央行解釋，進口外匯支出萎縮，是外匯存底增加的另一大原因，這是民間投資不振的結果。[present simple]換言之，外匯存底增加未必代表「錢愈賺愈多」，反而是「企業不肯花錢進口設備」的警訊。(Zhuan) [present simple]

看到這些，我們還能對「快速累積的外匯存底」感到樂觀嗎？(He) [present simple]