Discursive Mediation in Translation:

with reference to *Living History* and its two Chinese translations

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ABSTRACT

Underpinned by Critical Discourse Analysis, Text Linguistics, Systemic Functional Linguistics, *Skopos* theory, Norm theory and notions from Sociology, the dissertation develops an integrated theoretical framework for mediation investigation. The framework contains a linguistic as well as a socio-cultural approach. The linguistic approach invests most attention in mediation operation at the text level. It proposes that the translation process consists of two stages (the stage of information selection and configuration and the stage of information presentation) and that mediation in translation can be traced by examining how mediation operates at these two stages to bear upon the world presented in the source text. At the stage of information selection and configuration, mediation is observed from the selection of control centers and topics and their configurations for building up a textual world. Due attention is also given to additions and deletions. At the stage of information presentation, the focus of the research is on the way the original conceptual relations are managed (adjusted or repaired) / monitored to project a textual world distinct in an ideological sense from the world presented in the original text. The socio-cultural approach places mediation in a wider social context and examines the interactive relationship between discursive mediation and social structure. Power, ideology and norms are of particular importance in the present research in discussing social structure as a condition for as well as an effect of mediation.

Four cases from *Living History* and its two Chinese translations have then been investigated. Each case study starts with an account of how topics and control centers are selected, configured and related with each other to create a textual world in the English text. Such textual characterization continues in the two Chinese translations, but its focus shifts to how mediation is carried out at the two translating stages to project a textual world, bearing distinct ideological implications from what is presented in the source text. In addition to this, first-hand information about power, ideology and norms, involved in the mediation process as well as the wider social context, has been collected through qualitative interviews with publishers of the three parallel texts. Our findings demonstrate the overriding role of political and ideological power in the mediation process. The impact of economic power on mediation operation is also apparent.

The significance of the present research is threefold. Firstly, it provides a systematic approach to mapping out mediation operation at the text level, which lays a solid basis for an in-depth discussion of the interactive relationship between mediation and social structure. Secondly, it represents an initial effort in extending Critical Discourse Analysis to translation studies with a focus on mediation. Finally, it helps raise translators and translation trainers' awareness of the way mediation operates in the translation process and helps increase their mediation efficiency.

KEYWORDS: discursive mediation, ideology, managing, monitoring, power relations.

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