

On Socialist Ideology Education and Translation Syllabus Design in the New Era: A Case Study on Course Design of *Translation of Texts of Current Affairs*

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Abstract

The present study discusses the integration of socialist ideology with translation teaching by surveying the design of the course of *Translation of Texts of Current Affairs*. Guided by Marxism and core socialist values, the translation course shall take a series of concrete principles into consideration so as to achieve the socialist education objective.

Key words: Rewriting theory; Ideology; Poetics; Patron

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INTRODUCTION

Chinese President Xi Jinping has said ideological work in colleges should be integrated into the entire education process, underlining the need of firm Party leadership in higher education. Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at a two-day meeting on ideological and political work in China's universities and colleges, which wound up on Dec. 8, 2016 in Beijing. As higher education shoulders the major responsibility of cultivating successors for the socialist cause, it must adhere to correct political orientation, Xi said.

“China's higher education institutions are under the leadership of the CPC, and are socialist colleges with Chinese characteristics, so higher education must be guided by Marxism, and the Party's policies in education must be fully carried out” Xi (2016). President Xi called for greater efforts to teach Marxist theory to help students lay an ideological foundation for their lives. Xi urged college teachers to be “disseminators of advanced ideology and culture” and “staunch supporters of governance by the Party,” so that they can better guide students in their growth. Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core has worked toward the overall goal of improving and developing the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Naturally, Chinese higher education must follow the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the Theory of Three Represents, the Scientific Outlook on Development, and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. Likewise, the syllabus design, material selection and teaching practice must also hold high the banner of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

1. POLITICAL IDEOLOGY, CULTURAL FILTER AND MANIPULATION IN THE COURSE OF TRANSLATION OF TEXTS OF CURRENT AFFAIRS

Marxism is an economic and social system based upon the political and economic theories of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Marxism is an economic and social system derived from the work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It is a theoretical-practical framework based on the analysis of “the conflicts between the powerful and the subjugated” with working class self-emancipation as its goal (Han, 1982). As a proletariat party, The Communist

Party of China (CPC) attaches great importance to theoretical innovation, and is committed to using innovative theories to sharpen the minds of Party officials and unite the people. From the day of its founding, the CPC made Marxism its guiding ideology.

As a part of Chinese higher education, translation courses shall also be guided by Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the Theory of Three Represents, the Scientific Outlook on Development, and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. There are three crucial factors in the design and teaching process, i.e., political ideology, cultural filter, and manipulation.

1.2 Political Ideology

An ideology is a coherent set of ideas for purposeful action such as integration or conflict. Political Ideology is usually defined as “a system of political ideas, developed for the purposes of political action, (e.g., governing a country, launching a social movement or a political party, organizing a revolution--or a counterrevolution, etc” (Doupe, 2016). Major political ideologies include Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism and Fascism in Modern Age.

Naturally, as for the higher education in China, efforts should be made to foster a new generation of young people capable of shouldering the mission of national rejuvenation, and those who have all-round moral, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic grounding with a hard-working spirit. The thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era and Core Socialist Values should be used to educate Chinese people and guide students to strengthen their confidence in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics and to boost patriotism. Therefore, translation courses must also be guided by socialism with Chinese characteristics as well as Core Socialist Values at School of Interpreting and Translation, Beijing International Studies University (BISU). Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era is absolutely the primary guiding principle for the course of translation of texts of current affairs.

1.2 Cultural Filter

“In a covert translation, the translator has to make allowances for underlying cultural differences by placing

what I call a ‘cultural filter’ between the source text and the translation text. The translator has to view the source text through the eyes of a target culture member” (House, 2015, p.57). Wherever there is a conflict between political ideologies of source text and target, translation teachers shall delete the part violating socialist ideologies through application of cultural filtering. In this way, the target text (product) keeps a high degree of consistency with socialist ideology in China.

1.3 Manipulation

“Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1992, p.vii). Lefevere (1985) presents and discusses three major factors influencing translators’ decision-making during translating process, namely, ideology, patronage, and poetics.

Thus all translated versions are manipulated (rewritten) to some extent under the influence of the three factors proposed by André Lefevere. In Chinese Mainland, we may combine the two factors of ideology (Socialism) and patronage (e.g. news agencies and higher education institutions) because Chinese universities and news agencies are sponsored by the Party and government and must be led by the Communist Party of China in all aspects. As for poetics, it could be understood as a general set of linguistic and cultural norm accepted and abided by a certain speech community. As for the English-Chinese translation, the target texts shall be consistent with Modern Standard Chinese.

1.4 Guiding Principles of the Course of Translation of Texts of Current Affairs

We firmly hold the unshakable position that translation courses must be guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and Core Socialist Values. The translated versions shall be manipulated through cultural filtering under the guidance of socialist ideology (as illustrated in Figure 1) so as to nurture versatile and patriotic talents who will devote to the great cause of national rejuvenation after graduation.

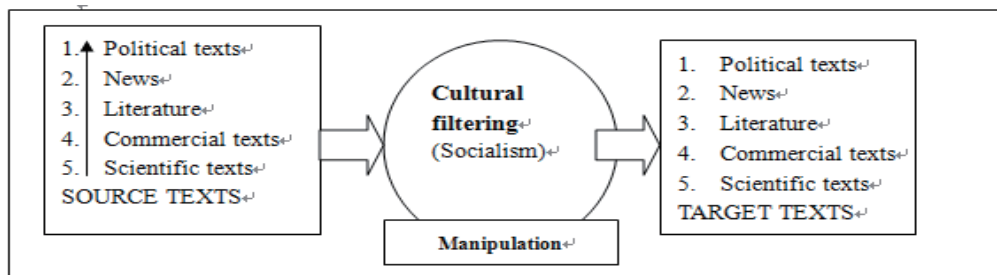


Figure 1
 Political ideology, cultural filtering and manipulation

As demonstrated in Figure 1, from political texts to scientific texts, the ideological elements decrease. Correspondingly, the ideological manipulation is less applied in the styles such as scientific and technological texts.

2. SYLLABUS DESIGN OF THE COURSE OF TRANSLATION OF TEXTS OF CURRENT AFFAIRS AT BISU

The course of translation of texts of current affairs has been delivered for junior college students at School of Interpreting and Translation and School of English Language, Literature and Culture of BISU for about a decade. Its guiding principles include Marxism, Socialism as well as Core Socialist Values. We believe that the socialist ideology shall be integrated into the entire process of course design and teaching process, incorporating translation material selection and specific manipulation methods. Students are expected to master the fundamental translation skills and socialist political knowledge through learning (i.e. primary aim of the course).

2.1 Material Selection

2.1.1 Cultural Filtering

In designing the course, we have used cultural filter to screen and choose proper texts. In this phase, translation teachers must be extremely cautious when the source texts are in English. Some Western media have been smearing Chinese government and socialism for many years. As for the fake news, we must delete them and never let such texts appear in translation classroom.

2.1.2 Timeliness of Source Texts

The teaching material must be timely updated because of the course is named as “texts of current affairs”. Otherwise it may not arouse students’ learning interests. For example, Chinese President Xi Jinping has said ideological work in colleges should be integrated into the entire education process, underlining the need of firm Party leadership in higher education. Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at a two-day meeting on ideological and political work in China’s universities and colleges, which concluded on December 9, 2016. We immediately started learning and editing the focal points of President Xi’s speech and used excerpts of it on Monday’s translation class. (December 12, 2016).

Example 1:

ST: 习近平在全国高校思想政治工作会议上强调，把思想政治工作贯穿教育教学全过程。（Xinhua Net, December 9, 2016.）

TT: Xi calls for strengthened ideological work in colleges - Chinese President Xi Jinping has said ideological work in colleges should be integrated into the entire education process, underlining the need of firm Party leadership in higher education.

Example 2:

ST: 他强调，中国的高校是党领导下的高校，是中国特色社会主义高校。办好高校，必须坚持以马克思主义为指导，全面贯彻党的教育方针。（Xinhua Net, December 9, 2016.）

TT: “China’s higher education institutions are under the leadership of the CPC, and are socialist colleges with Chinese characteristics, so higher education must be guided by Marxism, and the Party’s policies in education must be fully carried out,” said Xi.

The English expressions such as “ideological work” (思想政治工作) and “socialist colleges with Chinese characteristics” (中国特色社会主义高校) also conform to English poetics (norms).

2.1.3 Diversity of Source Texts

In order to trigger students’ motivation and learning interests, the source texts must be diversified, ranging from political documents, economic and commercial texts, scientific and technological texts, cultural and sports texts, etc.

Example 3:

原文: Flu season is upon us, which means it’s time for the wave of advertisements promoting \$8 juices or even more expensive supplements to “boost your immunity” or “support immune function.” But those are marketing terms, not scientific ones. And there’s no proof that those products are going to keep you from getting sick. (NPR, November 16, 2016)

译文: 时下正值流感高发季; 海量广告充斥媒体, 从8美元一罐的果汁到更贵的补剂, 都吹嘘能够“提升免疫系统”, 或“增强免疫力”。但这些都是营销噱头, 并无科学依据。没有证据表明这些产品能让你远离疾病。

The source text in example 3 does not contain any political ideological elements and thus can surely be chosen for translation practice. Readability is quite important in translating such texts. *Marketing terms* has not been translated into “销售术语”. Instead, it has been translated into “营销噱头”, which is more acceptable by common Chinese readers.

Example 4:

ST: 5 Healthy Eating Habits to Steal From Europeans (Yahoo Health, April, 17 2014)

TT: 源自欧洲的5种健康饮食习惯

Likewise, the ST in example 4 was selected from YAHOO HEALTH and it does not contain any political ideological words or expressions. In translating process, *steal* has been rewritten into “源自”, which is consistent with Chinese poetics.

2.2 Manipulation (Rewriting)

As demonstrated in Figure 1, news translation is actually transediting (Baker, 2006; Chalaby, 2005; Pan, 2014; Zhou & Wang, 2016), which is also a kind of manipulation (rewriting). Students are expected to master the specific translation methods such as omission, addition, adaptation, explanation to rewrite texts so as to make the TTs be consistent with the socialist ideology in China.

2.2.1 Omission

Example 5:

ST: “China building runway in disputed South China Sea island” (BBC, April 17, 2015)

TT: 中国在南海岛屿修建飞机跑道

China has indisputable sovereignty over the South China Sea Islands and the adjacent waters. China’s sovereignty and relevant rights in the South China Sea, formed in the long historical course, are upheld by successive Chinese governments, reaffirmed by China’s domestic laws on many occasions, and protected under international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Therefore, we must delete the word disputed in the original text when translating. The phrase “disputed South China Sea island” is thus translated into “南海岛屿” to indicate Chinese sovereignty over the South China Sea Islands and the adjacent waters.

2.2.2 Addition

Example 6:

ST: China’s Foreign Minister berates Canadian reporter over human rights (CNN, June 2, 2016)

TT: 加拿大记者无端指责中国人权问题，遭中国外长严厉斥责

The Canadian reporter Amanda Connolly was actually criticizing China over human rights. It’s nonsense! Thus the expression “over human rights” is translated into “无端指责中国人权问题” by adding “无端指责”.

2.2.3 Adaptation

Example 7:

ST: ‘Never imprison my mind’: Hong Kong lawmakers quote Gandhi, insult China (CNN, October 12, 2016).

TT: 香港立法会宣誓现场，港独议员公然辱华

On October 12, 2016, several separatist lawmakers in Hong Kong publicly declared separatism in taking oath at Hong Kong Legislative Council. Thus the original version must be manipulated by complete rewriting to reveal the separatists’ evil intentions.

Example 8:

ST: China to return seized US Navy drone, Pentagon says. (FOX NEWS, December 17, 2016).

TT: 五角大楼表示，中国将向美国移交无人潜航器。

Although the original text adopts the word “return”, implicating the underwater drone was captured by PLA Navy. But the truth is: a US Navy underwater drone was violating Chinese territorial waters and discovered by PLA Navy on the afternoon of December 15, 2016. Thus the word “return” was changed into “移交” to emphasize the Chinese sovereignty and position.

2.2.4 Explanation

Example 9:

ST: 自2009年启动旧村改造以来，昔日流动人口与户籍人口严重倒挂、靠吃“瓦片经济”、环境脏乱差的大望京村，已经转型为大望京科技商务创新区。(Beijing Daily, April 9, 2016).

TT: Dawangjing Village used to be quite shabby and dirty – migrants were far outnumbered than residents with local household registrations. Hence the villagers usually depended on “tile economy” (e.g. housing rents). Government started revamping the neighborhood in 2009. As a result, the village has been upgraded into Dawangjing International Technology & Business Innovation District.

In translating the culturally-loaded terms in Chinese such as “瓦片经济”, translators could adopt the method of explanation, i.e. “tile economy” (e.g. housing rents), which is both vivid and comprehensible.

CONCLUSION

“China’s higher education institutions are under the leadership of the CPC, and are socialist colleges with Chinese characteristics, so higher education must be guided by Marxism, and the Party’s policies in education must be fully carried out” (Xi, 2016). Therefore, the guiding principles for translation courses must be Marxism and Socialism. Students are expected to adopt different methods (omission, addition, adaptation, and explanation) to manipulate the TTs. In this way, Core Socialist Values can be naturally implemented and practiced in the courses of translation.

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