

Critical Discourse Analysis, Ideologically Biased Discourse, and Translation

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In its attempt at treating texts from a social and a linguistic point of view, critical discourse analysis has been proposed both as a theory and a method as well (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999 :16). In this respect, Roger (2004:2) declares that CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) offers:

Not only a description and interpretation of discourses in social context but also offers an explanation of why and how discourses work. (Roger,2004:2).

Three main tasks are then achieved via CDA in handling Discourse, the first of which description which tends to accurately locate the key concepts elaborated in the structure of the text whose main function is to shape it and drive it onto a specific genre. In this respect, the descriptive nature tackles the choice of words, sentence structure, tense, register, in addition to the linguistic elements of discourse that function in an interrelated way in the organization of ideas as a final product.

In the second function of CDA, Roger talks about the interpretation of discourse in social context, that is, the text is understood in respect to the situation that surrounds it and that is mainly composed of events, personal agents, topics, places, time, etc. in order to

draw a logical relation between the structure of the text and the social background that animate the whole discourse.

Respectively, the foregrounding and the backgrounding mechanisms that are used in discourse, for instance, largely depend on this social structure, hence ensuring coherence between language use and the social motives.

As a third function, CDA can achieve an explanatory role that permits the reader to understand why and how discourse works.

Accordingly, discourse works in the attempt of transmitting messages, informing, expressing points of view or expressing ideological beliefs in favour of a group or an important enterprise, etc. However, the way it works can be shaped in a variety of ways in so far as the text itself takes different natures or genres as to give it a political, economic, cultural or religious orientations, here again language use works interdependently with the social context.

Respectively, and in the attempt of placing the understanding of CDA in especially treating translated texts, the present study tends to analyze the way ideological reflections in a source or a target text are shaped and expressed by the writer and aims at understanding the position of the task of translating via CDA.

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Translation and Ideology

Among the very important objectives that translation tends to achieve is the transmission and /or the transfer of cultural concepts between societies with different beliefs, ways of thinking, ways of living and different political attitudes and economic conditions. Accordingly, the transport of these concepts is undoubtedly tied to the sociolinguistic ideology of the writer or the translator per se.

According to Hatim and Mason (1997), translation is “an act of communication”, therefore, the task of translating itself is a manner of communicating and supporting ideas that may be or may not necessarily be part of the translator’s cultural and ideological beliefs, the case in which the translator only tries to accomplish a professional mission.

In the present paper, ideology is then treated as a voluntary or an involuntary action from the part of the writer and CDA is a research strategy that recognizes elements of discourse that externalize the hidden forms of ideology in case the translator represents one of the actors supporting a given belief. Respectively, CDA is also a strategy that judges free (innocent) the attitude of the writer.

The present study tries to understand via CDA the way ideologies are created, manipulated, and imposed through translation. It also aims at understanding the

limits of ideological inclination in both translation and Critical Discourse Analysis.

Critical Discourse Analysis and Translation

One primary relationship between translation and critical discourse analysis is shaped in the consideration of the translated version as a piece of discourse that is worth analyzing to understand the multiple ways of perceiving the source text and the way ideas are constructed in a target one, and whether or not the meaning of the source text has been preserved with or without ideological intentions.

However, while CDA has the ability to locate ideologies in a text, it can itself have ideological inclinations in analyzing the translated piece of discourse. At this very point the task of analysis can provoke a kind of indirect translation of the source text with another meaning or orientation depending on the personal belief of the discourse analyzer.

Two major questions are then whether or not it is possible to have a translated text without ideology, and if possible to analyze a translated text without being influenced by ideology.

In order to answer both questions, it is important to know the different criteria that CDA suggests in the detection of ideological behaviours in a translated text, it is also important to know the materials that are used by

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the translator to shape ideological inclinations in a target language.

Translation, CDA, and Ideology

Translation can be described as a sociolinguistic discipline that aims at joining the society with its multiple structures to language and language use in order to perceive larger and deeper ideas and information about the world. Accordingly, the translator focuses on the meaning of the source text, this one is typically structured with a group of words, sentence structures, styles, genres, punctuation, etc. which are the linguistic elements that formulate the meaning of the text in relation to context. These linguistic elements and context can then be the source of ideological beliefs that the translator can construct. In the voluntary approach to expressing ideology, the choice of equivalent words becomes meticulous especially when synonymy offers approximate words meanings, and it is at this real point that ideology can be shaped with the choice of the most corresponding meaning serving the translator's intention.

Beside words, the structure of sentences sometimes offers a wide range of possible meanings with no necessary reliance on the import of new words that are not the product of direct translation. In this respect, a number of grammatical structures can differently express ideological beliefs, like passive and active forms, direct and reported styles, modes of questioning, formal and informal speeches, etc. However, these grammatical structures can take different meanings when punctuated.

Punctuation is then a linguistic and grammatical tool that serves ideologically biased expressions in translated texts when not respected in the way it has been placed in the source text.

The translator can then voluntarily make use of the linguistic material to express a definite idea, however, in case where no voluntary ideological belief is approached, the translator may not be influenced by the intention of the source text writer and tries to preserve the original message making use of the linguistic and social elements that shape the same idea in the target language, though, it remains possible for the translator to involuntarily express ideological behaviour different from the one expressed in the original text.

CDA and in the analysis of translated texts tends to understand the way translation has been achieved in texts which are ideologically biased. It tends to understand each linguistic form comprising words in relation to the contextual characteristics that make up both the source and the target texts. In this case, context defines which linguistic forms are suitable in shaping a definite idea and which are not, hence, in some situations the linguistic parallelism cannot always give the same product, and other ways of expressing the same idea are approached by the translator. However, along the analysis of translated discourse via the analysis of language use and context, it is also possible to describe ideological features. Then to what extent CDA can be ideologically neutral in treating ideologically biased translated texts?

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To answer this question it is worth considering the main tasks attributed to the analyzer of a text and the objectives behind the analysis. A former description of CDA joins the analysis of discourse to context in the aim of understanding the way it works and the reason behind its elaboration. Accordingly, the perception of contextual features in a text can be different from one view point to another, as to be subjective in judging human agents, in understanding behaviours from different religious points of view, and making subjective conclusions about political and economic events. It is at this real point that CDA can develop an ideological behaviour. However, there are cases where CDA remains objective in understanding translated texts, in this case it tends to analyze each element of discourse independently, as to meticulously describe persons, materials, cultural motives, actions with a mere consideration of the original context and the one of the target text. In this case, CDA tends to independently treat the two texts with their proper environments far from the idea suggested or offered by the translator.

CDA in this respect achieves different functions, one similar to the translator's and the other proper to the text analyzer.

With regard to translation, Venuti (1997) talks about two types of translating strategy; 'domestication' and 'foreignization', meaning according to him that "whether to leave the writer in peace, and to drag the reader towards him or to leave the reader alone as much

as possible and push the author close to him". He defines domestication and foreignization as

" two relative terms basically loaded with ideological stances".. In both situations, the translator via translation either tries to transport the cultural beliefs of the others to the target community(foreignization), or to preserve one's culture in translating texts with different cultural beliefs (domestication). In both situations, CDA goes deeply onto the source and the target texts' cultural traits and tries to perceive whether there is tendency towards either foreignization or domestication, or no real tendency towards both is clearly perceived in analysis.

CDA is then a method of analysis that follows the same tasks of translation when dealing with original discourse, it goes further and analyzes the translated text with the probability of acting as an indirect translation when providing the analysis with subjective views in understanding the characteristic of the translated text, and whether or not it fits the global context in its original location. In other words, CDA and translation have some common functions to achieve together when dealing with texts, after which CDA goes deeper in the aim of judging translation works and translators with different ideological beliefs, while sometimes acting subjectively in understanding the writer's and the text objectives. It is then a form of continuity that can never end at a purely neutral point where ideology stops and personal beliefs are not the product of economic, social or political impositions.

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Further perspectives in approaching ideology should then trace theoretical points that explain clearly ideological behaviours with no mere personal implication in evaluating events, agents or actions .

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