


Cultus

THE JOURNAL OF INTERCULTURAL
MEDIATION AND COMMUNICATION

2008,1

Iconesoft Edizioni - Terni

CULTUS

the Journal of Intercultural Mediation and Communication

Volume 1 Number 1
2008

TRANSLATION AT WORK

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The Translator's Constrained Mediation in Trans-Editing of News Texts Narrating Political Conflicts

Yamei Chen

Abstract

News organisations are socially, economically and politically situated, so news texts are inevitably produced from certain perspectives. To meet the expectations and interests of the target audience, translators usually need to customise source news texts in terms of the local viewpoints. Trans-editing can assist translators in achieving the required adaptation through trans-editing strategies. This kind of translator's mediation is performed not totally at random but is systematically governed by contextual factors. Thus, this paper conducts a case study on trans-editing of news texts narrating political conflicts in order to investigate such mediation, especially how the translator mediates overall news structures, and how the mediation is constrained by the interplay of different contextual factors.

The data examined in the case study covers various news texts about U.S. arms sales to Taiwan from the New York Times and the Washington Post (including hard news texts and editorials), and their trans-edited Chinese versions from the China Times and the Commercial Times in Taiwan. Firstly, the relevant contextual factors are introduced. Then, how the translator mediates the overall structures of source hard news and editorials is explored by comparing the source and target texts in terms of their schematic and semantic macrostructures for recurrent shifts. Additionally, the underlying contextual reasons behind the shifts are examined against the contextual factors. Lastly, this paper makes clear how, based on the underlying reasons, the news translator's mediation is governed by the interplay of the Taiwanese government's political policies, the target newspapers' audience design and Taiwan's trans-editing conventions.

1. Introduction

A news text, be it non-translated or translated, is a socio-cultural product

constrained by institutional as well as social conventions and norms in the wider cultural context. Hence, if a source news text is translated as faithfully as possible, the communication efficiency of its target text in the receiving culture would be relatively low, as the source reporting perspective usually cannot meet the target audience's expectations and interests. In other words, what news translators need to achieve is an 'adaptive' or a 'reader-oriented' translation. A considerable amount of reshaping will take place to ensure that target news texts are suitable to and desirable for the target audience (Vuorinen 1997; Lee 2001; Cheng 2004; Orengo 2005). Given this situation, trans-editing, a special type of translation combining both translating and editing (Stetting 1989), becomes a very common practice in news organisations, as it can assist news translators in fulfilling the need for adaptation with its fundamental strategies of selection, deletion, addition, summarisation, substitution and reorganisation.

The translator's mediation through the above trans-editing strategies is not entirely idiosyncratic and random, but, to a great extent, systematic and norm-governed. As indicated by Vuorinen (1999: 68), news trans-editing "is embedded at least in: (1) the culture of a specific news organisation; (2) the journalistic culture prevailing in a given society; (3) the mass communication culture prevailing in a given society; and (4) the socio-cultural setting in general."¹

It is, therefore, unavoidable for the translator's mediation to be influenced by various contextual factors from the above four cultures. The following flow-chart of English-Chinese news trans-editing in the *China Times* in Taiwan provides an example of the constrained mediation occurring in the actual trans-editing process:²

¹ The term 'news trans-editing' is not used by Vuorinen (1999). Instead, he opts for the term 'news translation'. For the sake of consistency, the term 'news trans-editing' is used in this paper.

² The information on the flowchart was obtained through the author's personal correspondence with Guo Chonglun, the deputy editor-in-chief at the *China Times*, on 23 October 2004.

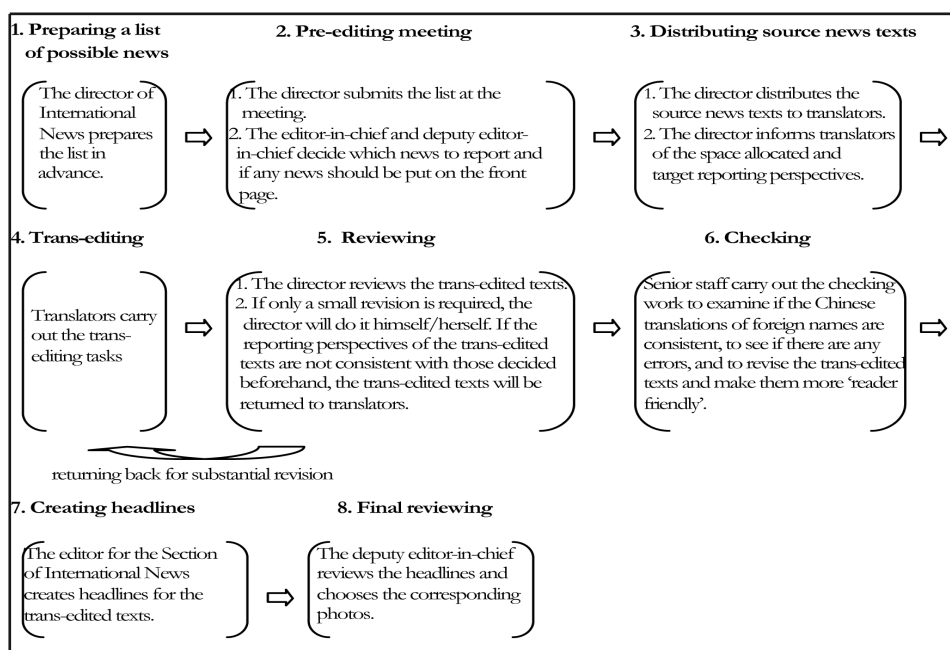


Figure 1 Flowchart of English-Chinese News Trans-Editing in the *China Times*

At stage 3, the target reporting angles are set first; and they, most of the time, are at variance with those of the source texts. Then, news translators need to produce the target texts from these pre-determined target angles.

The trans-edited texts are later reviewed and slightly modified where necessary to make sure that the translator's mediation is congruent with the target newspaper's viewpoints.

It should be noted that the people doing trans-editing at stage 4 are not journalists who work from English, but rather translators who work with journalists. The translators are fluent in both English and Chinese, but have not usually undertaken sufficient training in journalism and international affairs before they work for the newspaper. This phenomenon is quite common in the Taiwanese press. Hence, novice translators normally have to work through considerable trial-and-error before they can efficiently carry out the mediation deemed suitable by their own newspapers.

Some attempts have already been made to use empirical news data in the press to clearly illustrate the relations between the news translator's mediation and contextual factors (Hursti 2001; Sidiropoulou 2004; Kuo & Nakamura 2005; Holland 2007; Ji-Hae 2007). However, there are still two aspects that have thus far rarely been touched upon in empirical studies. Firstly, much less

attention has been paid to the methods the translator adopts to mediate the overall structures of news items (both schematic and semantic), and the interrelation between such mediation and corresponding contextual factors. Secondly, previous studies are mainly concerned with a single contextual constraint coming from the target news organisation, such as its audience design (Hursti 2001; Sidiropoulou 2004; Holland 2007) or its political and commercial ideologies (Kuo & Nakamura 2005; Ji-Hae 2007). How various contextual factors (both from within and outside the target news organisation) work together to govern the translator's mediation has not been further explored. Accordingly, this paper intends to address these inadequacies with a case study on English-Chinese trans-editing of news texts narrating political conflicts.

2. Case Study Data

2.1. Three Types of News Trans-editing in the Taiwanese Press

The main focus of the case study is to explore the translator's mediation in news trans-editing conducted in Taiwan. Generally speaking, three main types of news trans-editing can be identified in Taiwan, as illustrated below:

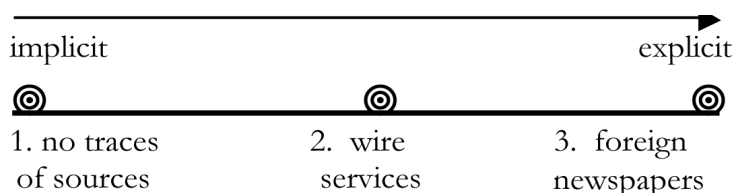


Figure 2 Three Types of News Trans-editing in the Taiwanese Press

For all these three types of news trans-editing, target texts may be trans-edited from either single or multiple source news texts. Additionally, the target audience can know that they are reading a trans-edited text through the by-line, which normally indicates that the news text at hand is a trans-edited version. However, there also exist some differences. In the first type, no references regarding the source texts are made in the target texts. In other words, the sources are untraceable. The target news texts in the second type are trans-edited from news items provided by foreign wire services. Such wire services as Reuters, AFP, UPI or AP are indicated in by-lines. Concerning the third type,

the source texts are on-line or printed news items published by either single or multiple foreign newspapers. The publication dates of the source texts and the names of the foreign newspapers are both specified clearly in the target texts. The first two types aim to provide update information to the target audience, while the third type fulfils a dual function of offering the latest information and working as a form of citation to convey “authoritative” statements or opinions of foreign newspapers.

2.2. Data Collection

This paper limits itself to the third type of news trans-editing because of the increasing importance of this type in Taiwan and the ready availability of the source texts. Unlike news items offered by wire services, which are usually short and continuously updated, news texts from foreign newspapers are reported with broad perspectives as well as in-depth contents, and they are final products, which make news-trans-editing tasks easier to carry out. Thus, the news trans-editing from foreign newspapers is increasingly gaining importance.³ Besides, the comparison of the source and target texts is an integral part of the case study, which will be elaborated upon in Section 4. Since no source is given in the first type of news trans-editing, it cannot be examined. The source material from wire services is frequently not available to researchers, or because of updating by the services, it is impossible to know which version was used for the trans-edited piece. The source texts in the third type, however, can be easily traced and identified.

Accordingly, this paper focuses on the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* as the source newspapers, and the *China Times* and the *Commercial Times* under the China Times Group in Taiwan as the target newspapers. The source and target news texts collected from these newspapers are illustrated in the Appendix. The source data includes both hard news items and editorials. The news events of the data collected revolve around U.S. arms sales to Taiwan in the Clinton and Bush administrations, with particular reference to the sales of Aegis destroyers. Presidents Clinton and Bush were expected to make the final decision on arms sales by late April 2000 and late April 2001 respectively, so news reporting concerning the sales started to emerge one or two months ahead of the final decision.

³ The information provided here was obtained through the author's personal correspondence with Guo Chonglun, the deputy editor-in-chief at the China Times, on 23 October 2004.

Accordingly, the time scales for the data collected are limited to the following two periods: (1) from February to April 2000 and (2) from March to April 2001.

The main reason behind the selection of these news events is that they involve the trilateral relationship between Taiwan, China and the U.S. in China-Taiwan political conflicts. For Taiwan, China is undoubtedly an out-group; whereas the U.S. usually finds itself in the middle, and neither China nor Taiwan seems to be regarded by the U.S. as a definite out-group. Due to the different roles that Taiwan and the U.S. play as well as their diversifying political policies toward China-Taiwan relations, it is assumed that the translator's mediation may be more prominent.

To clarify the corresponding contextual factors surrounding the case study data, the following section will provide a brief historical account of the power relations involved in U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, and introduce the political policies held by the U.S. and Taiwan as well as the profiles of the source and target audiences.

3. Corresponding Contextual Factors

3.1. Historical Account of the Power Relations

The U.S. changed its diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to China on 1 January 1979, and formal relations between the U.S. and Taiwan were terminated. To ease this shock, the U.S. Congress passed the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) to maintain unofficial relations with Taiwan. The TRA has also been adopted to govern arms sales to Taiwan since 1979. The U.S., therefore, started the annual debate over what types of U.S. weapons to sell Taiwan. After the 1995-1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis, where China launched missile tests, the Clinton administration started to pay attention to the transfer of software, as well as discussions over strategies, training, logistics and plans in the event of an attack from China.

The Pentagon also carried out its own assessments on the defence needs of Taiwan. After the visit by a Pentagon team in September 1999 to assess Taiwan's air defence capability, a classified assessment was completed in January 2000, pointing out many problems concerning Taiwan's military ability to defend against ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and aircrafts. Later in September 2000, the Pentagon conducted another classified assessment concerning Taiwan's naval defence needs, and concluded that Taiwan needed the Aegis destroyers,

Kidd-class destroyers, submarines and anti-submarines (Kan 2003: 2-3).

Since 2000, as China started to deploy more and more short-range ballistic missiles along its southeast coast, Taiwan has sought to purchase the destroyers equipped with Aegis radars. In order not to further provoke China, both the Clinton and Bush administrations deferred the decision on whether to sell the Aegis destroyers. Although the purchase of the Aegis destroyers was rejected by Presidents Clinton and Bush, they approved the sale of other advanced weapons to Taiwan. (Gill 2001).

3.2. Political Policies of the U.S. and Taiwan

The time scales of the case study data are within the last year of President Clinton's second term (1996-2000) and the first year of President Bush's first term (2001-2004). The Clinton and Bush administrations both followed the long-standing 'one China' policy, which holds that there is only one China, and that Taiwan is part of China. They did not take any definite stance toward Taiwan's future, but insisted that the future of Taiwan should be settled peacefully by China and Taiwan themselves through cross-strait talks. Also, they both adopted a policy of 'strategic ambiguity' to deal with U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. They promised China a reduction in arms sales to Taiwan but still sold arms to Taiwan in accordance with TRA. Thus, the defence articles and services they would provide for Taiwan were far from specific (Hickey 1999). The time ranges of the case study data also run through two Taiwanese presidencies, that is, the last year of President Lee Teng-hui's second term (1996-2000) and the first year of President Chen Shui-bian's first term (2000-2004). The government under President Lee Teng-hui held the policy that there were 'one China' and two equal political entities. Here 'one China' was not defined in political terms. It referred to China as a historical, geographical, cultural and racial entity. Later, in 1999, President Lee Teng-hui proposed a 'special state-to-state relationship' between China and Taiwan. This was later interpreted by most Taiwanese media as the 'two-state' theory. President Chen Shui-bian, however, disputed the concept that there is 'one China', and that Taiwan is a part of it. Instead, he emphasised a 'new Taiwanese identity' and said publicly that Taiwan already was an independent, sovereign country (Dumbaugh 2005). It is obvious that under these two Taiwanese presidencies, China was regarded as an opposing out-group.

3.3. The Profiles of the Source and Target Audiences

The profiles of the source and target audiences are distinct. The intended audience for the source texts are well-educated U.S. readers. However, the target texts have Taiwanese readers as their intended audience. Also, the concerns of the U.S and Taiwanese readerships are far from the same. What concerns the source readers most is how to maintain the U.S.'s political and economic interests in the China-U.S.-Taiwan trilateral relationship, whereas the Taiwanese readers are assumed to pay more attention to the security and interests of Taiwan as well as to the threat from China. Having understood the corresponding contextual factors, the overall structures of news items will be explored in what follows. How the translator mediates these structures will be examined by comparing the source and target texts in terms of their schematic and semantic structures, showing recurrent shifts caused by the translator's mediation. Then, the underlying contextual reasons behind the recurrent shifts will be examined against the above-mentioned contextual factors to explain the relations between the translator's mediation and relevant contextual factors.

4. The Translator's Mediation and Its Relations to Contextual Factors

The source news texts contain both hard news and editorials. Different mediation-related shift patterns are found between these two sub-types of source texts, so the shifts occurring in the trans-editing of source hard news and editorials as well as their underlying contextual reasons are discussed separately.

4.1. Source Hard News

4.1.1. Mediation on Overall News Structures

When the source hard news texts are trans-edited into Chinese, shifts do not occur in schematic structures but only in semantic structures. Both the source and the target texts employ White's (2002) orbital mode as their schematic structures:

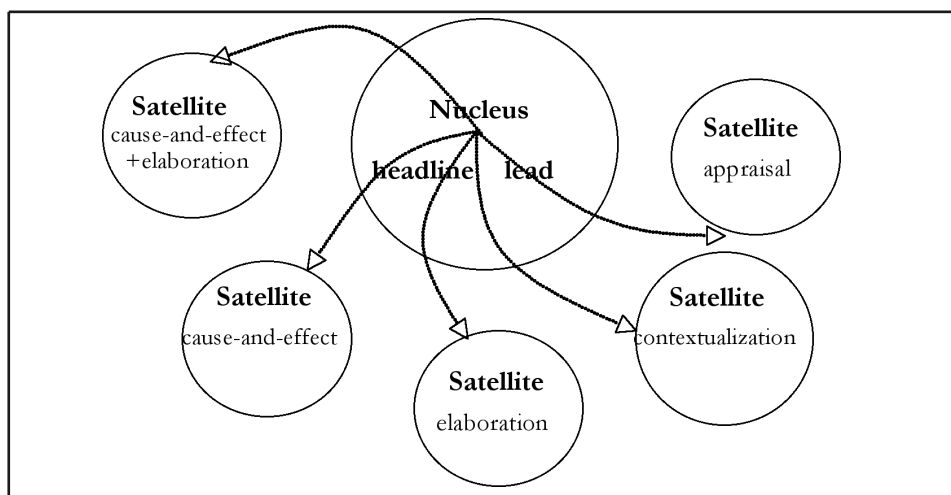


Figure 3 Orbital Mode of Hard News (adapted from White 2002: 403)

The orbital mode consists of a nucleus and a range of satellites. The opening nucleus is made up of a headline and lead, which encapsulate core information. In other words, the nucleus contains all new information essential for the text's central message. Subsequent satellites act "not to introduce new meanings but to qualify, elaborate, explain, and appraise the meanings already presented in the opening nucleus" (White 2002: 401). They usually do not hold logical relations with one another, but all refer back to the nucleus. Hard news texts, therefore, can be cut because of the textual predominance of the lead and the orbital relationship of the satellites (Iedema, Feez & White 1994: 136-137).

Although no shifts appear in schematic structures, given the space limitations imposed by the target newspapers, changes are made to the semantic macrostructures of the trans-edited versions. In the journalistic culture of Taiwan, trans-edited texts tend to be much shorter than the source texts. Even though no exact space limitations are laid out in style guides, in the Taiwanese press a target text trans-edited from a single source text usually contains just one third of the total contents of its source text; when a target text is trans-edited from more than one source text, a larger portion of the source texts needs to be cut. The mediation-related changes of the semantic macrostructures lie in three aspects: (1) the source specification, (2) the semantic contents of nuclei and (3) the composition of satellites.

Clear indication of the source newspapers or source texts is found throughout the semantic macrostructures of the target texts, that is, the source newspapers or source texts are recurrently specified in both the nucleus and its

subsequent satellites. Here are two examples:

(1) No. 2

ST: The Pentagon will recommend against the diplomatically explosive sale of four Aegis destroyers to Taiwan...

TT1: 據華盛頓郵報報導，美國國防部建議延遲出售台灣四艘神盾級驅逐艦.....

(As reported by the *Washington Post*, the U.S. Department of Defence suggests a delay in selling four Aegis destroyers to Taiwan...)

(2) No. 11

ST: A confidential review by the United States naval officers has concluded that...

TT1:

紐約時報昨日引述美國海軍一份機密報告指出.....

(The *New York Times* yesterday quoted a confidential report by the U.S. Navy as saying that.)

The source newspapers, such as 華盛頓郵報 (the *Washington Post*) and 紐約時報 (the *New York Times*) are added to the target texts to clearly indicate where the sources are from.

As a result of restructuring, the semantic contents of the target nuclei are quite dissimilar to those of the source nuclei. The shifts are specified in Table 1, where both the source and target nuclei are generally classified into three sub-types:

Source Nuclei	Target Nuclei
1. the recommendation or decision on what weapons to sell	1. the same but with information on specific weapons as well as opinions from the U.S. or China
2. the pressure from China	2. China's negative reactions toward arms sales to Taiwan
3. the pressure from Taiwan	3. what weapons Taiwan is about to obtain

Table 1 Semantic Shifts in the Target Nuclei

Only the first source nucleus is retained in the target texts, but it forms just part of the first target nucleus. Apart from ‘the decision on arms sales’, the two source newspapers are much more concerned with keeping the balance between China and Taiwan, whereas the target texts put more emphasis on specific weapons Taiwan can obtain and on China’s hostility, which may have decisive influences on U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. Based on the semantic shifts made in the nuclei, the main satellites chosen and deleted in the target texts are listed below:

Selected Satellites	Deleted Satellites
1. the specific weapons which the U.S. is going to sell	1. historical or current events happening between the U.S. and China
2. people supporting arms sales and the related opinions of these people	2. the dilemma the U.S. is facing
3. the benefits of arms sales to Taiwan	3. historical backgrounds on arms sales (such as the TRA and Taiwan’s reasons for purchasing advanced weapons)
4. China’s warning to the U.S. as regards arms sales	4. delicate information on the attacking potential of the weapons at issue
5. China’s military threat to Taiwan	
6. China’s objection on potential sales of certain weapons and its reasons behind the objection	
7. the weapons which Taiwan is going to obtain	
8. the reasons why the Aegis destroyers cannot be sold to Taiwan	

Table 2 Selected and Deleted Satellites

All selected satellites are, to some extent, relevant to the three major types of target nuclei specified in Table 1. The first three selected satellites have a relationship to the first target nucleus; the fourth to sixth selected satellites are used to elaborate on the second target nucleus, and the last two satellites are chosen to recycle and extend what is already presented in the last target nucleus.

The first two satellites deleted are much more connected with the source nuclei. Although the third satellite deleted is also concerned with arms sales, it merely offers the background contexts of the sales. Compared to other selected satellites, it is not very newsworthy for the Taiwanese readers. Also, most of the background information is related to Taiwan, such as the TRA or Taiwan’s underlying reasons behind arms purchases, so it is assumed to be shared by the Taiwanese audience. The last satellite deleted contains information that is either too detailed or too trivial to be included.

4.1.2. Underlying Contextual Reasons

There are two possible reasons behind the source specification in the target texts. For one thing, the source specification is one of the generic conventions of news trans-editing in Taiwan's journalistic culture, especially when source news texts are chosen from foreign newspapers. As mentioned in Section 2.1, reference to the source newspapers is characteristic of the target news texts trans-edited from foreign newspapers, for such target texts not only convey the latest information but also work as a form of citation. Secondly, the recurrent source specification in the target texts may be accounted for by the increase of newsworthiness. The U.S. had at the time of these news reports been playing a significant role in China-Taiwan political conflicts, so it is likely that the target newspapers had assumed that the then Taiwanese readers were quite interested in U.S. opinions. Guided by this assumption, the translators may have supposed that the target texts with prominent reference to the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* could grasp the Taiwanese readers' attention. These source newspapers are two of the most influential newspapers in the U.S., and are generally viewed as representative of U.S. public opinion.

The shifts in semantic macrostructures may be motivated by a wish to meet the target audience's needs and interests by increasing newsworthiness. The Taiwanese government did not at the time of the articles (and does not) share the ambiguity principle, so the target newspapers may have presumed that Taiwanese readers, as buyers, wanted to know upfront what weapons Taiwan could obtain. Accordingly, the news value of unambiguity may have been conceived of by the translators as significant in attracting the Taiwanese readers' attention during the production process. Also, the translators shifted the nucleus to 'China's hostile responses to arms sales', which they may have believed to be the main concern of the Taiwanese readers, as China was then viewed as an out-group, and such a nucleus could embody the news values of consonance and conflict.

In the target texts, the information about China-U.S. relations, the background on arm sales, and the possible consequences of the sale of Aegis destroyers were frequently deleted. This is possibly because the translators assumed that such information was irrelevant to the target readers, as compared to other information in the source texts. Given space limitations, these three types of information may be the best candidates for deletion, as they do not fulfill the news value of relevance.

4.2. Source Editorials

When the source editorials are trans-edited into Chinese, shifts occur in both schematic structures and semantic macrostructures.

4.2.1. Mediation on Schematic Structures

The argumentative mode is employed as the schematic structure of the source editorials. It usually consists of a thesis as tone setter, a range of subsequent arguments, and a conclusion, as demonstrated in Figure 4:

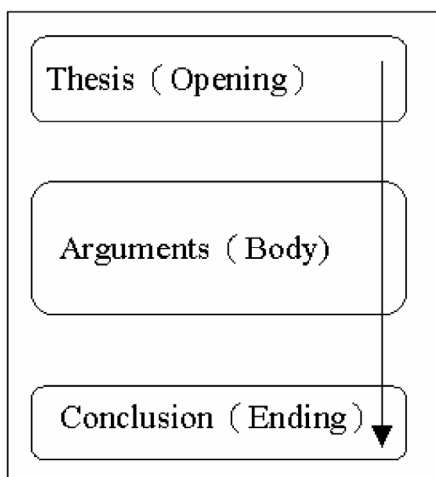


Figure 4 Argumentative Mode (adapted from Iedema, Feez & White 1994: 401)

Unlike the orbital mode, arguments do not recycle what has already been mentioned in the thesis. Instead, meaning is accumulated with each argument. Arguments are interlinked with one another in terms of logical relations. Their positions cannot be changed as satellites of hard news items, which usually do not relate logically with one another. Also, the argumentative mode reaches a conclusion, which is not the case with the orbital mode (Iedema, Feez & White 1994: 160-161).

The target versions are presented as hard news texts which employ a hybrid mode as the schematic structure. That is, the orbital and argumentative modes are mixed together in the target texts. In general, the headlines and opening paragraphs of the target texts usually summarise the main ideas or conclusions of the source editorials. They act like a nucleus encapsulating the main contents of the news event at issue rather than as a thesis, which plays the role of a tone setter. The subsequent paragraphs in the target texts act both like arguments and satellites. On the one hand, major arguments of the source editorials are mostly retained in the target texts. These arguments are often logically connected with one another, so their original order in the source texts is still maintained in the target texts. On the other hand, the subsequent paragraphs usually refer back to what has already been mentioned in the lead-like opening paragraph, especially when this opening paragraph is a summary of the main ideas of a given source editorial.

Further evidence of converting the source editorials into hard news is the close relationship of the headline to the opening paragraph in the target texts. According to Iedema, Feez & White (1994: 110), this close relationship is characteristic of hard news texts. Here is one illustrating example:

(3) No. 5

ST: **The Taiwan Arms Decision**

...Chinese officials are particularly upset at the idea of America selling Taiwan a warship with a sophisticated radar system known as Aegis. It seems to us, though, that the important question is not whether to sell the Aegis. What matters, first, is to get the principles right.

TT: 美是否售台神盾.....美輿論籲明確表態支持台灣
.....美國應該堅持台灣有自衛權利、明確表態支持台灣抵禦中共的攻擊’及美國應儘可能尋求與中共的合作等三項原則。

(Whether the U.S. sells Taiwan the Aegis... U.S. public opinion calls for definite support for Taiwan

... the U.S. should insist on these three principles: Taiwan has the right to defend itself; the U.S. should make clear that it will assist Taiwan in resisting the CCP's aggression; the U.S. should seek to cooperate where possible with the CCP.)

The lines in bold represent the headlines in the source and target texts, and the sentences following them are the second parts of the opening paragraphs. The headline of the source editorial indicates the topic to be discussed, and the second part of the opening paragraph explains the pressure the U.S. faces concerning arms sales to Taiwan, and then puts forward the main contention that the decision on arms sales should follow some principles. Conversely, the target headline and the second part of the opening paragraph are closely related, as they are both concerned with the necessity of U.S. defence assistance to Taiwan.

4.2.2. Mediation on Semantic Macrostructures

The source editorials and their target versions do not employ the same schematic structure, which inevitably leads to the shifts in semantic macrostructures. The differences of semantic macrostructures lie in three respects: (1) the source specification, (2) the semantic contents of opening paragraphs and (3) the deletion of certain information.

In the source editorials, all arguments are the author's own opinions and comments, and no outside sources are quoted. However, in the target texts, all the opinions expressed are quoted from the source editorials. Such terms as 華盛頓郵報社論 (the editorial of the *Washington Post*), 紐約時報社論 (the editorial of the *New York Times*) and 社論 (the editorial) recurrently appear in the target texts to specify that these are the outside sources.

The semantic shifts in the opening paragraphs of the target texts are illustrated in Table 3 below:

	Newspapers	Opening Paragraphs
No. 4	<i>Washington Post</i>	the Kennedy administration being challenged by Nikita Khrushchev in 1961
	<i>Commercial Times</i>	the Kennedy administration being challenged by Nikita Khrushchev in 1961 as well as China's pressure on the U.S. regarding arms sales to Taiwan
No. 5	<i>New York Times</i>	the pressure the U.S. faces from China and Taiwan in regard to arms sales to Taiwan
	<i>China Times</i>	three principles of arms sales to Taiwan which the U.S. should adhere to
No. 9	<i>New York Times</i>	continuous crises occurring in the triangular relationship between China, the U.S. and Taiwan
	<i>Commercial Times</i>	Taiwan being unable to resist a prolonged Chinese attack and an escalation of Chinese threats making the triangular relationship more explosive
No. 10	<i>New York Times</i>	The visit of Chinese Vice Premier Qian Qichen offering President Bush an opportunity to set a constructive course with Beijing
	<i>Commercial Times</i>	the deferral of the Aegis sale to avoid provocation as well as the establishment of stable U.S.-China relations
No. 13	<i>New York Times</i>	a sensible decision on arms sales to Taiwan which the Bush administration seems to head toward
	<i>Commercial Times</i>	the replacement of the Aegis with Kidd-class destroyers

Table 3 Semantic Shifts in the Target Opening Paragraphs

Only the source thesis of No. 4 is completely kept in the target text. Most of the source theses are to do with U.S.-China relations or the China-U.S.-Taiwan triangular relationship. The target texts, in contrast, highlight in the opening paragraphs the issues more directly pertinent to Taiwan, such as the opinions of the U.S., China's threat toward arms sales to Taiwan and possible weapons to be obtained.

The source editorials are usually not very long, and the arguments of these editorials are logically connected. For these reasons, the target texts usually retain most of the contents of the source editorials, and only a few messages are deleted:

Deleted Information
1. historical events between China and the U.S.
2. details of the Aegis
3. historical background on the purchase of the Aegis
4. information on Beijing's 'one China' principle

Table 4 Information Deleted in the Target Texts

The information deleted is primarily related to historical backgrounds and detailed information on some specific weapons, which are not major arguments.

4.2.3 Underlying Contextual Reasons

The use of hybrid structures in the target texts can be accounted for in terms of Taiwan's journalistic culture. From my survey of the on-line archives of the China Times Group as well as the United Daily News Group in Taiwan, source editorials are conventionally trans-edited as hard news. To put it in another way, such trans-editing convention is implicitly shared by news translators in the Taiwanese press. The main purpose of adopting hybrid schematic structures in the target texts is to inform Taiwanese readers from the outset of the main source arguments deemed more relevant and newsworthy for the target readers. The news nuclei of hybrid schematic structures can fulfil such a function, for they are employed to convey the essence of the news events in question, as pointed out in Section 4.2.1.

The reasons behind the shifts in semantic macrostructures identified in this section are quite similar to those explored in Section 4.1.2., so they are not repeated here.

5. Interplay of Contextual Factors

Based on the underlying contextual reasons behind the recurrent mediation-related shifts in overall news structures, how different contextual factors interplay to orient the news translators' mediation in the trans-edited texts produced by the *China Times* and the *Commercial Times* can be explained in the following figure:

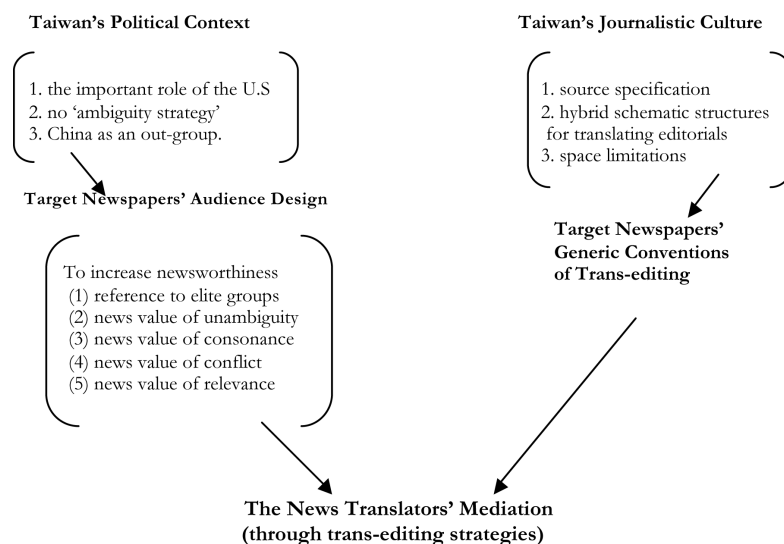


Figure 5 The Interplay of Contextual Factors in the Case Study

For one thing, the then political climate of Taiwan guided the target newspapers' assumption concerning their audience's needs and interests. The audience design in turn constrained the news translators' mediation of the target texts. For another, the target newspapers followed the prevailing trans-editing conventions of Taiwan's journalistic culture, which directed the news translators to specify news sources in the target texts and to adopt hybrid schematic structures.

6. Conclusion

The news translator is the person who receives, selects and conveys information during the process of news trans-editing. He/she also plays a decisive role in striking a good balance between the accuracy and acceptability of trans-editing.

ted texts. Such translator mediation, however, is under certain constraints, due to the fact that the task of news trans-editing is a cross-cultural and social practice situated in complex contexts. The news translator's subjectivity and contextual constraints co-exist simultaneously in the production process. In order to maximise communicative efficiency, the news translator's subjectivity needs to be most effectively managed by pertinent contextual factors.

The empirical study of this paper has illustrated that contextual forces coming into play during the news trans-editing process are multitudinous and complex. This indicates that news trans-editing is embedded in the system of news production in general, so it is subject to norms and constraints of both translation and news production. Given this, the notions of translation equivalence and fidelity to the source texts seem much less relevant or applicable to the translation tasks conducted in the setting of news organisations. Instead, the idea of translation as a socially regulated activity can best guide the news translator in accomplishing the trans-editing tasks satisfactorily and efficiently.

It is hoped that this paper, with the empirical examples given, can provide researchers as well as practitioners in the field of news trans-editing with some preliminary insights regarding the news translator's governed and constrained mediation.

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Appendix: Case Study Data

No. 1	ST	Taiwan Seen Vulnerable to Attack, <i>Washington Post</i> , 31/03/00
	TT	美國官員：軍售台灣先進武器 非常急迫，工商時報，01/04/00 (U.S. officials: selling Taiwan advanced arms is urgent, <i>Commercial Times</i>)
No. 2	ST	Pentagon Won't Back Taiwan Deal, Radar Favored Over Sale of 4 Destroyers, <i>Washington Post</i> , 17/04/00
	TT 1	美國可能改售台灣長程雷達系統，工商時報，18/04/00 (The U.S. may sell Taiwan Long-range Radar instead, <i>Commercial Times</i>)
	TT 2	美將售我長程預警雷達 神盾艦暫緩，中國時報，18/04/00 (The U.S. will sell us Long-range Warning Radar, but defer the Aegis, <i>China Times</i>)
No.3	ST	China Lobbies to Block An Arms Sale to Taiwan, <i>Washington Post</i> , 03/03/01
	TT	阻美售台神盾艦 中共表樂觀，中國時報，04/03/01 (The CCP expresses optimism about keeping the U.S. from selling Taiwan the Aegis, <i>China Times</i>)
No. 4	ST	China's Game Of Chicken, Editorial, <i>Washington Post</i> , 12/03/01
	TT	對台軍售 且看布希縱橫捭闔，工商時報，13/03/01 (Arms sales to Taiwan depend on Bush's political tactics, <i>Commercial Times</i>)
No. 5	ST	The Taiwan Arms Decision, Editorial, <i>Washington Post</i> , 25/03/01
	TT	美是否售台神盾……美輿論籲明確表態支持台灣，中國時報，26/03/01 (Whether the U.S. sells Taiwan the Aegis ... U.S. public opinion calls for definite support for Taiwan, <i>China Times</i>)
No. 6	ST	Bush to Drop Annual Review Of Weapons Sales to Taiwan, <i>Washington Post</i> 25/04/01
	TT	軍售會議變革 冷卻競武，中國時報，26/04/01 (The annual review of arms sales is dropped to cool the arms race, <i>China Times</i>)
No. 7	ST	Warning by China to Taiwan Poses Challenge to U.S., <i>New York Times</i> , 7/02/00
	TT	紐約時報：美考慮售台四艘神盾艦，中國時報，28/02/00 (The <i>New York Times</i> : the U.S. considers selling Taiwan four Aegis destroyers, <i>China Times</i>)

No. 8	ST	Taiwan Asks U.S. to Let It Obtain Top-Flight Arms, <i>New York Times</i> , 01/03/00
	TT 1	柯林頓可能同意台灣軍購案, 工商時報, 02/03/00 (Clinton may approve Taiwan's arms purchase, <i>Commercial Times</i>)
	TT 2	美擬增售我其他武器 取代神盾艦, 中國時報, 02/03/00 (The U.S. plans to sell us other arms to replace the Aegis, <i>China Times</i>)
No. 9	ST	Military Rumbblings Over Taiwan , Editorial, <i>New York Times</i> , 03/03/00
	TT	紐約時報社論:中共威脅不利美中關係 同時呼籲台灣不要打「神盾牌」, 中國時報, 04/03/00 (The <i>New York Times</i> editorial: the CCP's threat is disadvantageous to U.S.-China relations, and [the editorial] calls for Taiwan's abandonment of the 'Aegis card', <i>China Times</i>)
No. 10	ST	China Comes Calling, Editorial, <i>New York Times</i> , 21/03/01
	TT	紐約時報:美國不宜出售神盾戰艦給台灣, 工商時報, 22/03/01 (The <i>New York Times</i> : it is not proper for the U.S. to sell Taiwan the Aegis, <i>Commercial Times</i>)
No. 11	ST	Secret U.S. Study Concludes Taiwan Needs New Arms, <i>New York Times</i> , 01/04/01
	TT 1	美國海軍機密報告:台灣需在2010年前取得神盾, 工商時報, 02/04/01 (The confidential review by the U.S. Navy: Taiwan needs to obtain the Aegis by 2010, <i>Commercial Times</i>)
	TT 2	紐約時報報導 美太平洋司令部實地調查 台灣需要神盾, 中國時報, 02/04/01 (The <i>New York Times</i> reports that the U.S. Pacific Fleet's on-site investigation indicates that Taiwan needs the Aegis, <i>China Times</i>)
No. 12	ST	U.S. May Withhold Main Radar Item on Taiwan's List, <i>New York Times</i> , 18/04/01
	TT1	布希國安幕僚力阻售台神盾艦, 工商時報, 19/04/01 (Bush's national security aides strongly oppose the sales of the Aegis to Taiwan, <i>Commercial Times</i>)
	TT 2	布希兩難 傾走中間路線, 中國時報, 19/04/01 (Bush is in a dilemma and intends to take the middle route, <i>China Times</i>)
No.13	ST	Weapons for Taiwan , Editorial, <i>New York Times</i> , 19/04/01
	TT	紐約時報建議 對台軍售紀德取代神盾, 工商時報, 20/04/01 (The <i>New York Times</i> suggests selling the Kidd to Taiwan instead of the Aegis, <i>Commercial Times</i>)