

Third Person Pronouns in Indigenous Chinese Texts and Translated Chinese Texts: the westernization of modern written Chinese

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is to define the pattern of development of Chinese third person pronouns in terms of gender and number markings, based on the data from indigenous Chinese texts (newspapers) and translated Chinese texts (the Bible) from three specific periods: 1) 1904-1919; 2) 1952-1953 and 3) 2002-2003. Secondly, it will evaluate the role of 'grammatical borrowing' in the Europeanization process of language change through a systematic comparison between indigenous Chinese and translated Chinese texts, the latter showing the foreign influence. This empirical study asserts that there are great discrepancies in the use of third person pronouns between the two kinds of texts, suggesting that the translated works are a much more open 'system' directly influenced by foreign languages during the translation process that allows grammatical borrowing to take place. It is a first step in the systematic analysis of the reasons behind those changes.

KEYWORDS: translation, language change, Chinese, pronouns.