Re-Narration in John Minford's Translation of Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*

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Abstract

In the field of translation studies, while re-narration is commonly observed in translated works, there is a noticeable lack of research focusing on re-narration specifically within wenyan translations. Addressing this gap, this study aims to investigate how re-narration occurs in wenyan translation through the framing strategies employed by translators, using Sun Tzu's The Art of War as a classical wenyan literary example in China. John Minford's 2002 translation is selected for analysis due to its publication in the 21st century and its inclusion of commentary to aid English readers in contextual understanding. The theoretical framework of Baker's Narrative Theory guides this examination. A sample of 671 translation instances from Chinese to English is analysed. The findings reveal that selective appropriation emerges as the primary framing strategy in commentary translation, while the repositioning of participants emerges as the most prominent framing strategy in re-narration.

Keywords: Wenyan, Narrative Theory, Framing Strategy, Sun Tzu, John Minford.

Introduction

Re-narration entails the active intervention of translators and interpreters to determine the content that is conveyed to the target audience (Baker & Saldanha, 2019). According to Baker & Maier (2014), translators play a crucial role in the processes of narration and re-narration, which shape all interactions and fundamentally shape our understanding of the world. Re-narration manifests in diverse contexts, such as media translation concerning war or conflict, as exemplified in studies on Iran's nuclear program (Sanatifar

& Jalalian Daghigh, 2018). Within the realm of understanding re-narration in translated texts, Mona Baker's Narrative Theory stands out as highly esteemed among scholars. Historically, researchers have applied Narrative Theory in various domains of translation, including literature (Pasmatzi, 2022; Saad, 2021), public services (McBeth & Lybecker, 2018), popular culture (Zur, 2018), and children's language acquisition (Linyu et al., 2022; Prud'hommeaux & Roark, 2015). Baker et al. (2014) emphasizes the necessity for future research to encompass a broader range of genres and topics amenable to narrative analysis, underscoring the ongoing evolution of Narrative Theory within translation studies (Wang et al., 2020).

As highlighted by Baker (2006), the transition from wenyan (classical literary Chinese) to baihua (Mandarin vernacular) in early twentieth-century Chinese literature translation represented a significant repositioning aimed at constructing new social relations suitable for a modern, egalitarian, and democratic society. This shift exemplifies the process of repositioning within textual translation. By applying Narrative Theory to the study of wenyan translation, this research endeavours to extend the horizons of translation studies into new domains, as discussed earlier.

Sun Tzu (545 B.C. - 470 B.C.), a renowned military strategist contemporary to Confucius (551 B.C. - 479 B.C.), authored The Art of War, which became an integral component of ancient Chinese cultural heritage (Minford, 2002). Since its initial English publication in 1905 (Calthrop, 1905), numerous English translations of Sun Tzu's The Art of War have emerged, including renditions by notable international translators such as Giles (1910), Griffith (1965), Cleary (1988), and Minford (2002). Scholarship on the translation of Sun Tzu's work has proliferated alongside these translations (Luo & Zhang, 2018; Sha, 2018; Song, 2012). John Minford, a distinguished British sinologist and literary translator renowned for translating 40 chapters of The Story of the Stone and other classical Chinese literary works, including Sun Tzu's The Art of War, saw his translation published by Penguin Books in 2002. Minford's rendition stands as a prominent English translation of Sun Tzu's work in the 21st century. John Minford's characterization of Sun Tzu as "chilling" and "worrying" contrasts with the revered image of Sun Tzu in Chinese cultural discourse, where he is often lauded as a "智者(wise man)" and "兵圣(sage)" (Yu & Xiao, 1995). This divergence prompts an inquiry into how Minford undertook re-narration in his translation of Sun Tzu. This research question serves as a focal point of interest in the present study.

To address the aforementioned research query, the author employed Narrative Theory as a methodological framework to scrutinize both textual and paratextual frames within the target texts. This study meticulously examined the discrepancies between the narratives of the source and target texts, alongside a detailed analysis of the employed framing strategies. Baker (2006) delineated four framing strategies utilized in translation for re-narration: selective appropriation, labelling, temporal and spatial framing, and repositioning of participants. This study scrutinized these strategies within Minford's rendition to investigate how the translator reconfigures Sun Tzu's text through the act of translation.

Wenyan Translation

Wenyan, as defined by Baker (2006), encompasses classical literary Chinese texts. Examples include renowned works in Chinese literature such as The Analects of Confucius and Tao Te Ching. Written in an ancient form of Chinese, wenyan adheres to linguistic principles distinct from modern Chinese, posing challenges even for contemporary Chinese readers. A characteristic trait of wenyan texts is the inclusion of commentaries, exemplified by texts like Tao Te Ching. These commentaries, provided by scholars across various Chinese dynasties, are essential for comprehending wenyan texts. Commentators meticulously traced the origins of these texts and analysed their meanings, with their interpretations often laying the groundwork for subsequent schools of thought.

Paul J. Lin undertook the translation of Lao-tzu's Tao Te Ching and Wang Pi's Commentary in 1977 (Lin, 2020). Similarly, in 2002, Minford translated Sun Tzu's The Art of War along with the Shiyijia Commentary. Minford's approach relied significantly on the Shiyijia zhu Sunzi, a compilation of commentaries by eleven Chinese scholars that is widely recognized as the authoritative text on Sun Tzu in China. This work includes extensive commentary notes offering diverse perspectives (Minford, 2002). Minford further elucidates that his translation method caters to Western readers by incorporating both context and subtext into the originally concise text, aligning with the Chinese tradition of reading classical texts alongside their commentaries (Minford, 2002).

In addition to referencing the commentaries compiled in Shiyijia zhu Sunzi, Minford incorporated passages from Lionel Giles' commentaries (Minford, 2002). Furthermore, he included his own reflections on warfare as explanatory notes to elucidate specific terms in Sun Tzu's text. Minford asserts that his primary objective is to enhance readers' comprehension of Sun Tzu's teachings. This inclusion of extensive commentaries distinguishes John Minford's translation, marking a notable departure from previous translations that did not integrate such comprehensive scholarly annotations.

Narrative Theory

Baker's Narrative Theory offered a theoretical framework to elucidate the strategies employed by translators within complex contexts, heralding a transformative era in translation studies. Drawing upon framing concepts borrowed from fields such as communication science, Baker introduced novel definitions of public and personal narratives that influence human conduct (Baker, 2006). According to Baker's framework, translation practice employs four fundamental framing strategies: selective appropriation, labelling, temporal and spatial framing, and repositioning of participants (Baker, 2006).

Selective appropriation can be categorized into two levels: higher-level selective appropriation and lower-level selective appropriation. At the higher level, translators exercise discretion in selecting specific texts, authors, languages, or cultures for translation, although this aspect is beyond the scope of the current study. Conversely, at the lower level, selective appropriation involves translation techniques such as omission and addition. Translators employ these strategies to suppress, highlight, or elaborate on elements of the narrative embedded in the source language or culture (Baker, 2006). This development marked a notable shift, as Wuthnow observed: "The expansion of these colleges and universities has been influenced by a diverse range of factors, not exclusively by the pursuit of professional and vocational education that predominantly shaped earlier institutions" (Wuthnow, 2006). Selective appropriation represents the most extensively researched framing strategy within Narrative Theory, evident from its frequent examination in numerous studies by scholars like Luo (2015), Saad (2021), and Linyu et al. (2022) who have explored this strategy in depth.

Labelling refers to the application of terms or designations that point to or denote significant figures or entities within a narrative, thereby providing a framework for interpreting and guiding readers' responses to the narrative (Baker, 2006). The findings of this investigation suggest that employing this model could potentially influence the establishment of social capital within the targeted group. Notably, the study highlighted how names and titles served crucial roles in translation efforts to realign the conveyed meaning in the translated text. However, translators and interpreters often emphasized their creative approaches in tackling these linguistic challenges in translation, sometimes overlooking the political and social context of the intended readership of these translated texts.

Temporal and spatial framing entails selecting a particular text and situating it within a temporal and spatial context that enhances the narrative and prompts readers to draw connections between the source narrative and contemporary stories that directly affect their lives, despite differences in temporal and spatial settings. As noted by Baker, temporal and spatial framing does not inherently require additional engagement within the text (Pan & Liao, 2021). This phenomenon can be attributed to several factors, among them. This repositioning of participants allows for the strategic repositioning of individuals in relation to each other and to the reader or listener through the linguistic manipulation of temporal dynamics, spatial references, deixis, dialect, register, use of epithets, and various forms of self- and other-identification (Baker, 2006).

Thus, the study categorizes the three main aspects as follows: The initial aspect involves participants' capacity to sustain optimism about the future and their readiness to participate in personally meaningful activities. In translation and interpreting, repositioning of participants can be subdivided into two categories: repositioning within paratextual commentary and repositioning within the text itself. The study extensively examines the aforementioned four framing strategies during the translation process of John Minford's rendition.

Methodology

Employing theoretical frameworks is a methodological approach to analyse data in case studies (Yin, 2011). This qualitative inquiry applies Narrative Theory (Baker, 2006) as its theoretical framework. The study utilizes John Minford's English translation of Sun Tzu as its primary dataset and conducts an in-depth analysis of the translator's framing strategies in re-narrating Sun Tzu in English. The dataset comprises 671 translation samples collected for analysis (Figure 1). The analysis of framing strategies in translation practice involved a meticulous comparison between the source and target texts. Each translation example was manually examined during this process. Subsequently, the author provided specific illustrations to demonstrate how the translator implemented the four strategies of selective borrowing, naming, temporal and spatial contextualization, and reconfiguration of actors in the translation process. Moreover, employing thick description is a recognized method to comprehensively describe the phenomenon of interest and furnish readers with detailed information (Mills et al., 2010; Shenton, 2004). Thus, this study offers a thick description of the commentaries found in John Minford's translation of Sun Tzu.

Chapter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
Number	52	31	69	52	43	38	59	48	78	50	97	25	29	671

Figure 1: *Dataset.*

Findings

In this study, the analysis is guided by Baker's Narrative Theory. Baker posited that translation functions as a framing device, wherein translators employ strategies to reinforce or diminish specific elements of the narratives they translate (Baker, 2006). Figure 2 illustrates the total occurrences of the four types of framing strategies.
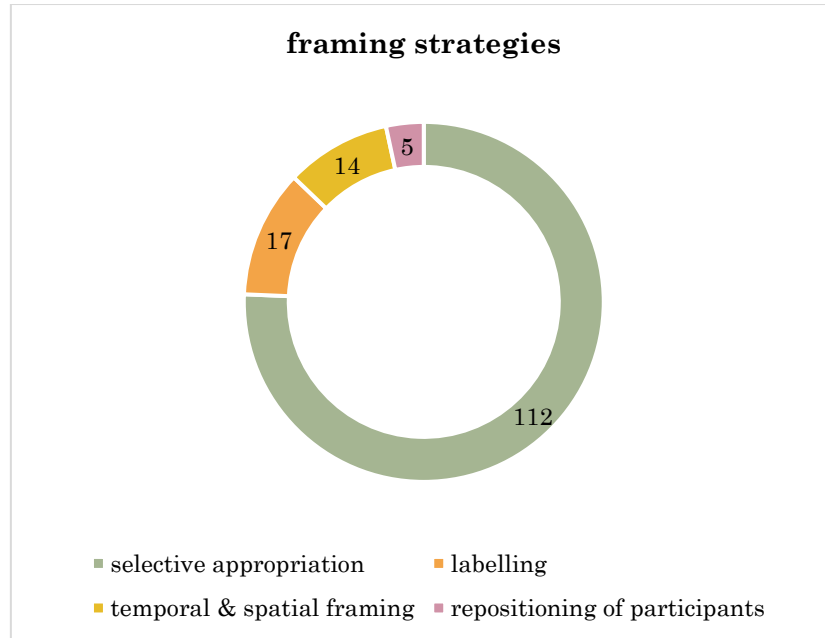

Figure 2: *Framing Strategies.*
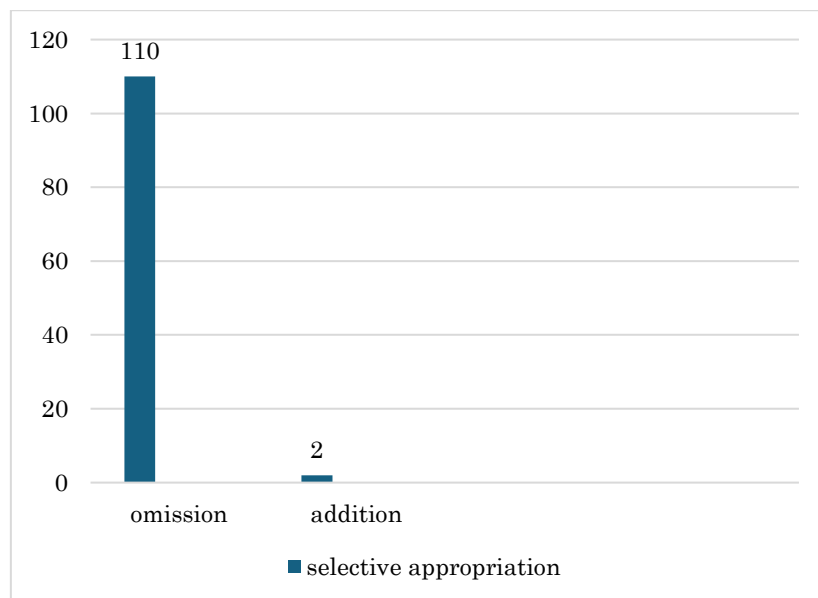
Selective Appropriation

Figure 3: *Selective Appropriation.*

Polkinghorne (1991) observes that in narrative construction, the selection of events, plot, or "theme" serves to direct the narrator's focus towards specific aspects of the story, thereby achieving the narrative's intended purpose. Selective appropriation is indeed a foundational element in narratives, as it involves the deliberate choice of events to construct a coherent self-representation, while leaving out others from the myriad of interconnected human experiences (Baker, 2006). This strategy is also prominently employed in the current study, where 110 instances of omission and 2 instances of addition are identified (Figure 3). The lower-level selective appropriation is particularly evident in the commentary translation of Sun Tzu. For

instance:

Example 1:

Sample [01-16]	
Source Text	Target Text
计篇	Making of Plans
天地孰得？	Which side has Heaven and Earth?
张预曰：观两军所举，谁得天时、地利，若魏武帝盛冬伐吴，慕容超不聚大岘，则失天时、地利者也。	Zhang Yu: See which side is acting in accordance with the advantages of season and terrain. When Cao Cao attacked the state of Wu in the depths of winter, he made a blunder.

In example 1, the translator omitted "慕容超不聚大岘" (Mu Rongchao did not gather at Da Xian Mountain) and "地利" (the advantage of terrain). The translator only kept "若魏武帝盛冬伐吴" (When Cao Cao attacked the state of Wu in the depths of winter) because Cao Cao is a more familiar historical character for English readers than Mu Rongchao and the example of Cao Cao can illustrate Zhang Yu's viewpoint "失天时" (lose the advantage of season). The translator ultimately categorized these instances as errors, encompassing both seasonal and terrain-related aspects. Somers & Gibson (1993) contends that this selection process is guided by the narrative's thematic orientation. In example 1, the translator re-narrated the text by selectively omitting certain elements.

Example 2:

Sample [01-33]	
Source Text	Target Text
计篇	Making of Plans
故能而示之不能,	When able, Feign inability;
张预曰：实强而示之弱，实勇而示之怯，李牧败匈奴、孙膑斩庞涓之类也。	Zhang Yu: When in reality strong, appear to be weak; when in reality full of courage, appear to be fearful.

Although the process of selective appropriation can impact the world consciously or unconsciously (Baker, 2006), translators' initial decision to translate a text is considered the primary act of selective incorporation. In example 2, the translator omitted both two cases of Li Mu and Sun Bin in Zhang Yu's commentary, which are "李牧败匈奴、孙膑斩庞涓之类也" (Li Mu defeated Xiong Nu and Sun Bin killed Pang Juan). The reasons for omitting translations are diverse, but it is certain that English readers are unfamiliar with the historical warrior cases of Li Mu and Sun Bin. Hence, the translator faithfully rendered the initial section of Zhang Yu's commentary to elucidate the concept of "When able, feign inability," while omitting the other two historical examples from ancient China (Pan et al., 2021).

Example 3:

Sample [01-36]	
Source Text	Target Text
计篇	Making of Plans
利而诱之,	Lure with bait;
杜牧曰：赵将李牧大纵畜牧，人重满野。匈奴小入，佯北不胜，以数千人委之。单于闻之大喜，率众大至。牧多为奇陈，左右夹击，大破杀匈奴十馀万骑也。	**Du Mu**: The Zhao general Li Mu [d. 229 B. C.; charged with defending the northern frontier against the nomadic Xiongnu] released large numbers of cattle and their herders into open country, which induced the Xiongnu barbarians to advance a little. General Li then pretended to retreat, leaving a few thousand straggles as a decoy. The khan of the Xiongnu when he learned of this was overjoyed and advanced into the open at the head of a large force of men. General Li then took them by surprise and attacked with a pincer formation from left and right, crushing them and killing over a hundred thousand of their cavalry.

Example 3 is one of two additional entries in the database. By including "d. 229 B.C.; charged with defending the northern frontier against the nomadic Xiongnu" in Du Mu's commentary, the translator provided detailed context about Li Mu, a renowned general from Zhao during the Warring States period. Commentator Du Mu utilized Li Mu's narrative to illustrate the concept of "Lure with bait". The translator's addition enhanced readers' comprehension of Du Mu's commentary. Selective appropriation can manifest consciously or subconsciously (Baker, 2006), and the initial decision to translate a specific text represents the

first step in translators' selective incorporation process (Saad, 2021). This example illustrates the translator's approach to re-narration in commentary translation.

Example 4:

Sample [01-39]	
Source Text	Target Text
计篇	Making of Plans
怒而挠之，	If he is angry, Disconcert him.
何氏曰：怒而挠之者，汉兵击曹咎于汜水是也。	He Yanxi: As when the Han troops succeeded by dint of repeated taunts and insults in provoking the Chu forces under [the grand marshal] Cao Jiu into the battle of the river Si. [In 203 B. C., Cao Jiu, provoked to a fit of rage, disobeyed the orders of his sovereign Xiang Yu and led a fatal sortie from the city of Chenggao. His troops were halfway across the river when the Han army fell on them and routed them. Cao Jiu subsequently cut his own throat. This historical incident is a favourite with the commentators. See Chapter 3.]

According to Entman (1993), highlighting involves the process of selecting specific narrative elements to make them more prominent and meaningful to the audience. In example 4, the translator included "In 203 B.C., Cao Jiu, provoked to a fit of rage, disobeyed the orders of his sovereign Xiang Yu and led a fatal sortie from the city of Chenggao. His troops were halfway across the river when the Han army fell on them and routed them. Cao Jiu subsequently cut his own throat. This historical incident is a favourite with the commentators" to provide a comprehensive explanation of the Battle of the River Si. Additionally, the translator remarked on this battle, noting that "This historical incident is a favourite with these commentators". In this instance, the addition in translation not only offered essential background information but also reflected the translator's perspective on He Yanxi's commentary. Thus, the translator re-narrated the text through selective appropriation via addition.

Previous scholars underscored the significance of selective appropriation in the practice of translation. Minford incorporated Western historical works on warfare, such as the book chapters from The Art of War in World History (1994), into his translation as supplementary commentary. He also integrated passages from ancient Chinese scholars like Sun Bin and Mencius, along with contributions from modern Chinese scholars such as Li (1997) and Guo (1984). His reflections are catalogued under the section titled "Translator," positioned at the conclusion of the text.

Labelling

Any form of designation employed to identify or signify a prominent figure or element within a narrative consequently establishes an interpretive framework that guides and constrains the narrative's interpretation (Baker, 2006). Labelling as a framing strategy involves the use of words, names, terms, or phrases to designate individuals, locations, groups, events, or other significant aspects within a narrative context (Baker, 2006). In this text, the principal categories of the labelling framing strategy include individuals, locations, events, and periods (Figure 4). As depicted in Figure 4, the most frequently employed labelling strategy in the text pertained to the identification of individuals.
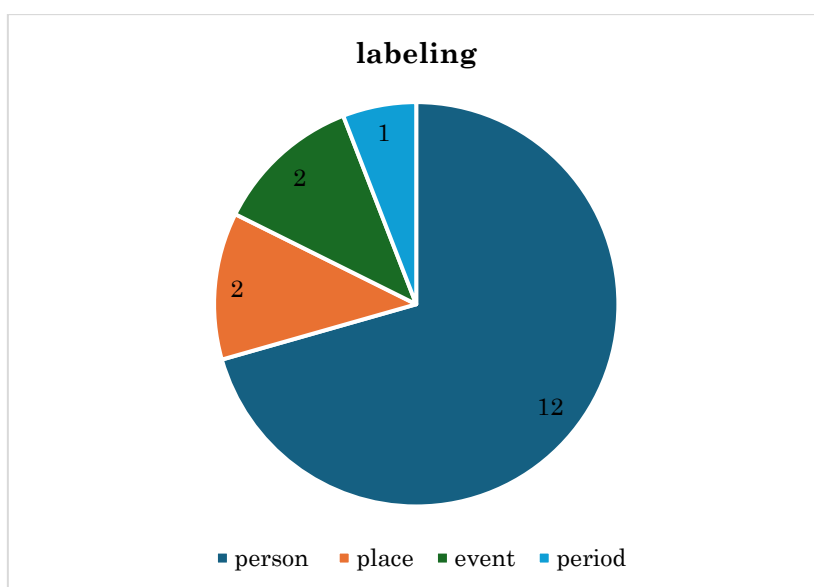

Figure 4: *Labeling of Data.*

Baker (2006) argued that naming individuals serves not only to identify them but also to assign significance and convey the translator's perspective and stance. In essence, when a translator names an individual, it inherently reflects their beliefs, justifications, and position. Example 5 exemplifies this framing strategy of labelling individuals. Moreover, example 5 illustrates a typical instance of labelling used to identify the specific individual "Fan Li". The translator provided additional information stating that "Fan Li" was the great minister of Gou Jian, King of the state of Yue in the fifth century B.C. Readers would perceive "the great minister" from this translated statement, which was not present in the source text. As Baker noted the significant framing power of names and titles (Baker, 2006), the translator re-narrated the text through the labelling of this individual in this example.

Example 5:

Sample [01-07]	
Source Text	Target Text
计篇	Making of Plans
天者，阴阳、寒暑、时制也。	Heaven is Yin and Yang, Cold and hot, The cycle of seasons.
张预曰：夫阴阳者，非孤虚向背之谓也，盖兵自有阴阳耳。范蠡曰："后则用阴，先则用阳。尽敌阳节，盈吾阴节而夺之。"	**Zhang Yu**: Here Yin and Yang have nothing to do with the calculations of divination [as they often did]. Warfare has its own particular sense of Yin and Yang. As Fan Li [the great minister of Gou Jian, king of the state of Yue in the fifth century B. C.] put it: "Use Yin last; use Yang first. Exhaust the enemy's Yang energy, nurture your own yin energy, and thus prevail."

Example 6:

Sample [11-16]	
Source Text	Target Text
九地篇	The Nine Kinds of Ground
诸侯之地三属，先至而得天下之众者，为衢地。	When the ground Borders Three states And the first to take it Has mastery Of the empire That is Crossroad ground.
孟氏曰：若郑界于齐、楚、晋是也。	Meng: An example of this was the [small] state of Zheng, which was surrounded by the [large] states of Qi, Chu, and Jin.

Example 6 exemplifies the use of labelling to denote a location. Meng's commentary aimed to provide an illustration of the concept "When the ground borders three states," using the state of Zheng as an example to support his argument. The translator supplemented this by translating "[small]" and "[large]" to elucidate the geographic context. This addition enables the target readers to grasp the complex situation of the ground bordered by the three larger states of Qi, Chu, and Jin. In this instance, John Minford employed the framing strategy of labelling to identify the place of state Zheng as a small state and differentiate it from the larger states of Qi, Chu, and Jin that surround it.

Example 7:

Sample [08-10]	
Source Text	Target Text
九变篇	The Nine Changes
死地则战	On death terrain, Do battle.
李荃曰：置兵于必死之地，人自为私斗，韩信破赵，此是也。	Li Quan: Place troops in a position where they face certain death, and they will identify with the conflict. Such was the case when Han Xin defeated the army of Zhao [leading his men out of Well Ravine, by means of a subtle stratagem].

Example 7 illustrates the use of labelling to identify an event. The translator meticulously elucidated the renowned battle of Han Xin defeating the army of Zhao by including detailed information such as "leading his men out of Well Ravine, utilizing a subtle stratagem." Through this narrative of the battle, the translator assisted the target readers in comprehending Sun Tzu's statement "On death terrain, Do battle" in a practical

scenario. As Baker (2006) posited, translators adopt their own narrative stances and bear responsibility for shaping and disseminating public narratives. In this instance, John Minford employed the framing strategy of labelling to specify an event in translation.

Example 8:

Sample [07-58]	
Source Text	Target Text
军争篇	The Fray
穷寇勿迫	Do not press An enemy at bay.
何氏曰：五代晋将符彦卿、杜重威经略北鄙，遇虏于阳城。	He Yanxi/Giles: The Chinese general Fu Yanqing of the [short-lived] Later Jin Dynasty, during the period of the Five Dynasties, together with his colleague Du Zhongwei, was surrounded by a vastly superior army of Khitans [in the year A. D. 945].

Example 8 serves as an illustration of labelling used to specify the name of a dynasty in ancient China. The translator firstly chose "Later Jin" to translate "晋(936 A. D - 947 A. D)" in the source text, which differed it from "晋朝(Jin Dynasty)" in the period of 266 A. D to 420 A. D. Secondly, the translator prefaced "Later Jin Dynasty" with "[short-lived]" to indicate to readers that this dynasty had a brief existence in history. As noted by Baker (2006), the use of labels to reframe narratives often involves subtle alterations within the text itself. In this example, John Minford utilized the term "Later Jin Dynasty" to provide detailed historical context to the target readers and guide them towards additional knowledge about the Jin Dynasty. Therefore, the translator employed the framing strategy of labelling to specify the name of a historical period in ancient China.

The act of naming persons, places, events, or periods represents a significant and intriguing discursive feature within the realm of translation. These labels carry historical weight, necessitating translators to approach them with a sense of responsibility and respect. In employing the framing strategy of labelling in his translation of Sun Tzu, John Minford made deliberate choices to tactfully circulate the narrative. By inserting his interpretations at various junctures where the text allowed for such glosses, the translator asserted his stance within the translated context and became apparent to the target readers.

Temporal and Spatial Framing

Temporal and spatial framing involves selecting a text and placing it within a temporal and spatial framework that highlights the narrative it conveys. This positioning facilitates connections between the story depicted and the narratives shaping contemporary reality, despite the source story originating in a different temporal and spatial context. Such embedding does not necessitate further alteration of the text itself (Baker, 2006).

Example 9:

Sample [01-30]	
Source Text	Target Text
计篇	Making of Plans
兵者，诡道也。	The Way of War is A Way of Deception.
张预曰：用兵虽本于仁义，然其取胜必在诡诈。故曳柴扬尘，栾枝之谲也；万弩齐发，孙膑之奇也；千牛俱奔，田单之权也；囊沙壅水，淮阴之诈也，此皆用诡道而制胜也。	**Zhang Yu:** War must be based upon righteousness, but victory depends on deception and cunning. **Translator:** As Francois Jullien points out (pp. 167-68), this is more than a trite piece of advice to be tricky for the sake of it. On the basis of deception, of dissimulation and concealment, is built the whole principle of "manipulation" of the enemy, which lies at the heart of Master Sun's strategic thinking. It is a question of unsettling the enemy, getting him into a weak situation, or of getting him to get himself into such a situation, rather than of directly confronting him and "fighting it out". By these means we gradually erode the enemy's capacity to resist.

Example 9 illustrates the translator's insertion of his own interpretation of "The Way of War is A Way of Deception". Minford translated the initial sentence of Zhang Yu's commentary but omitted subsequent examples from Sun Bin and Tian Dan. Instead, he incorporated Francois Jullien's interpretation to expound on the same concept. Minford justified this approach by stating, "I have myself from time to time added reflections on war by other writers... I have added an extended note of my own, where I felt that certain key terms used by Master Sun needed a bit of explaining," suggesting that Jullien's perspective aligns more closely with the cognitive framework of English readers compared to the historical references of Sun Bin and Tian

Dan. Despite their temporal disparity, Western scholars' explanations render "The Way of War is A Way of Deception" more accessible to readers. This example thus demonstrates how the translator employed temporal framing to reinterpret the text.

Example 10:

Sample [02-13]	
Source Text	Target Text
作战篇	Waging of War
故兵闻拙速，未睹巧之久也。	I have heard that in war Haste can be Folly; But have never seen Delay that was Wise.
张预曰：但能取胜，则宁拙速，而无巧久。若司马宣王伐上庸，以一月图一年，不计死伤，与粮竞者，斯可谓欲拙速也。	**Zhang Yu:** So long as victory is achieved, foolish haste is better than wise delay. **Giles:** What Master Sun says is that while speed may sometimes be injudicious, tardiness can never be anything but foolish—if only because it means impoverishment to the nation. The classic example of Fabius Cunctator [Quintus Fabius Maximus, "the Delayer," Roman general in the Second Punic War against Hannibal, d. 203 B. C.] will inevitably occur to the mind. That general [famous for his cautious "delaying tactics"] deliberately measured the endurance of Rome against that of Hannibal's isolated army, because it seemed to him that the latter was more likely to suffer from a long campaign in a strange country. [See the famous line of Ennius, Annals xii: "Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem," "One man, by delaying, saved the state for us."] But it is a moot question whether his tactics would have proved successful in the long run.

Another comparable instance is found in sample [02-13]. Here, the translator incorporated Lionel Giles' commentary as an additional layer of interpretation. As Minford noted, "I have also quoted several passages from the commentary by Lionel Giles," selecting a classical example of Fabius Cunctator as a representative battle to elucidate Sun Tzu's maxim "Haste can be Folly". Example 10 illustrates how the translator utilized spatial framing in the translation process to reinterpret the text.

Repositioning of Participants

As noted by Baker (2006), translators reposition themselves and their readers through various means such as introductions, prefaces, footnotes, glossaries, and even cover design and blurbs. This constitutes a form of repositioning within the paratextual commentary. Specifically, John Minford employed the framing strategy of repositioning through the introduction, notes, blurbs, and cover design.

Introduction

Repositioning in translation can alter the relationships between personal and collective narratives, thereby influencing the visibility of individual perspectives within broader societal contexts (Baker, 2006). Wendland (2010) echoed this idea, suggesting that the act of removing a frame still constitutes a framing activity in itself. In the publisher's introduction, John Minford aimed to relocate Sun Tzu's concepts within a different conceptual framework.

Example 11:

"Master Sun's short treatise *The Art of War* is both inspirational and worrying. It is beautiful and chilling."

—Introduction (p. xi)

The definition of "chilling" is "frightening" and "so scary as to cause chills and shudders". The word "chilling" is not a positive one in English In example N, Minford describes Sun Tzu's The Art of War as "concerning" and "chilling". As Wendland (2010) mentioned negating a frame is in itself a frame, the translator denies the positive image of Sun Tzu in traditional Chinese culture like "智者(wise man)" and "兵圣(sage)", but misled the readers into the negative side.

Example 12:

"The religion of the Chinese today is cheating, blackmail and theft, eating, drinking, whoring, gambling and smoking."

—Introduction (p. xxx)

In this excerpt from the Introduction, Minford not only characterizes the current situation in China as deeply troubling, highlighting various negative aspects, but also asserts that Sun Tzu's teachings reflect these darker elements of Chinese culture. Consequently, he aims to convey that Sun Tzu's philosophy is unsettling. Within the realm of translation, such recurring negation can be viewed as a framing device (Saad, 2021). The concept of "chilling" recurs multiple times in other paratextual elements such as notes and blurbs. John Minford reinterprets the translation by strategically repositioning participants and thereby reinforces a negative perception of Sun Tzu among the target readers through the repeated use of negation.

Note

Regardless of the specific strategies chosen by translators or interpreters, their aggregate decisions invariably extend beyond the immediate text or event (Baker, 2006). In Note 1, John Minford references others' statements to bolster his argument. Example 13 serves to illustrate this assertion.

Example 13:
    "Do not be misled by his simplicity.[1]"
    (Note 1: Quoted by Richard deacon, The Chinese Secret Service (London: Gfafton Books, 1989), p. 15.)
                                                —Introduction (p. xi)

Framing encompasses the elements of communication—language, visuals, and messengers—that guide the interpretation and categorization of new information by the listener or observer (Wendland, 2010). Terms like "misled" and "simplicity" suggest the translator's inclination towards a negative portrayal of Sun Tzu, echoing the earlier use of "chilling" in the introduction.

Blurb

Translators and interpreters, as active participants in society, bear responsibility for the narratives they propagate and the real-world consequences of these narratives gaining traction and credibility (Baker, 2006; p. 139). John Minford also employs "chilling" in the Blurb to express his reflections on Sun Tzu.

"With John Minford's crisp, accessible translation, and lively, learned introduction, even readers already familiar with The Art of War will experience it anew, finding it more fascinating-and more chilling-than ever."

Blurb

The preceding statement, featured in the blurb, underscores the significance of re-narrating Sun Tzu as John Minford's translation reintroduced The Art of War to readers already acquainted with it. The editor also utilized "more" and "than ever" alongside "chilling," thereby reiterating criticism of Sun Tzu's ideas.
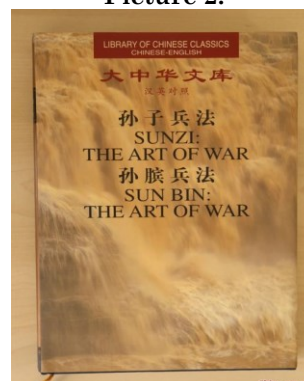
Cover Design

In the Cover design, an image of a Terra Cotta Warrior from Xian, China was prominently featured for English readers (Picture 1). As noted by Saad (2021), cover designs serve as initial framing devices that shape readers' interpretations. They provide an initial impression of the book's content and themes before the reader delves into the text. In John Minford's Sun Tzu, the inclusion of a Terra Cotta Warrior on the book cover carries at least two layers of implicit meaning. Firstly, the Terra Cotta Warriors date back to the pre-Qin Dynasty in Chinese history, coinciding with the era of Sun Tzu's The Art of War, characterized by frequent conflicts and battles between states. This choice of imagery contextualizes Sun Tzu's views on war within their historical milieu. Secondly, the depiction of Terra Cotta Warriors evokes a sense of cultural reverence in the English-speaking world, as these warriors symbolize fundamental elements of warfare. This portrayal suggests why John Minford connects Sun Tzu's ideas about war with Chinese cultural traits, framing them as "chilling" and "frightening" characteristics.

Picture 1:
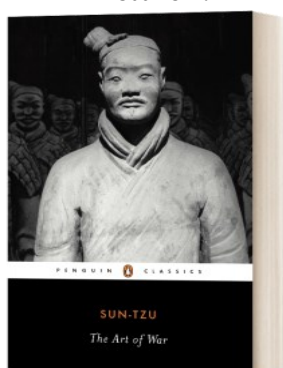
Picture 2:

Another rendition of Sun Tzu's The Art of War, translated by Chinese scholar Yuan Shibin, opted for a distinct cover design (Picture 2). The cover features a depiction of the flowing Yellow River in China, symbolizing the continuous course of human history. This imagery connotes that war has been intertwined with societal progress throughout Chinese history. It suggests that war was perceived as a means to attain harmony within Chinese culture, contrasting with its portrayal in English culture.

Discussion

The results indicate that 158 instances, constituting 23.5% of the database, utilized framing strategies. As highlighted by Baker (2006), individuals often employ diverse frameworks to interpret the same phenomenon. John Minford employed four distinct types of framing strategies to re-narrate the translation of Sun Tzu. The findings also indicate that selective appropriation emerges as the predominant framing strategy in commentary translation. According to Figure 2, selective appropriation accounts for 112 instances, constituting 70% of all samples in the database. Another noteworthy observation is the disparity between omissions and additions. Specifically, there are 110 instances of selective appropriation involving omission, compared to only 2 instances involving addition. This pattern contrasts with findings from related studies on selective appropriation (Linyu et al., 2022), suggesting that translators may prefer omission due to the challenges associated with translating wenyan into English. From examples 1 and 2, the readers can find that the translator omitted the unfamiliar historical characters and battles in the source text like "慕容超 (Mu Rongchao)" and "李牧(Li Mu)".

Among the array of framing strategies employed, repositioning participants emerges as prominently employed in John Minford's re-narration. This framing approach is notably deployed within the paratextual elements such as the introduction, notes, blurbs, and cover design. As highlighted by Saad (2021), translators' diverse backgrounds and experiences significantly influence their translations, shaping the interpretation of the text. The translator's standpoint is intricately interwoven with contemporary narratives, as well as those accumulated over time (Saad, 2021). John Minford's positioning of Sun Tzu in the paratextual components of his translation reflects his critical perspective, which tends to emphasize the negative aspects of the character. Repetitive expressions like "chilling" and "worrying" recur frequently, leaving a lasting impact on target readers after engaging with Minford's translation. As noted by St André (forthcoming), sinological translators in the nineteenth century often questioned the authenticity of Chinese texts, thereby contributing significantly to shaping broader colonial narratives of that era (Baker, 2006). The paratextual materials accompanying John Minford's translation of Sun Tzu further illustrate the validity of St André's observations.

Conclusion

Diverse sociocultural expectations influence varied communication styles, prompting translators to carefully consider their target readership. Framing, moreover, serves not only to present events but to construct how these events are perceived by others. John Minford translated Sun Tzu's work from wenyan into English, presenting a distinctly "chilling" Sun Tzu to English readers. His primary framing strategy involved repositioning participants through paratextual elements, which heightened his presence through introductions, notes, and commentaries. Additionally, Minford demonstrated integrity in his translation efforts, faithfully rendering the textual content of all thirteen chapters of Sun Tzu's The Art of War and a substantial portion of Shiyijia zhu Sunzi (commentaries from eleven commentators), marking a significant contribution to wenyan translation. Further research should prioritize the translation of wenyan texts from Chinese to English, as current scholarship remains insufficient in this area. Moreover, translators are encouraged to incorporate more commentaries from historical commentators, as these texts are rich in information and contextual knowledge from Chinese history, aiding English readers in comprehending the original texts more comprehensively.

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