



**REFRAMING POSITIONING IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF
CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSONS' RESPONSES ON
COVID-19**

By

LIU QIYUAN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

December 2023

FBMK 2023 17

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Facing the challenge and opportunity of both globalisation and international cooperation, diplomatic communication has become increasingly significant for countries when it pertains to defending their own national interests. Thus, diplomatic translation is very important for properly clarifying positions and persuading others to achieve diplomatic goals. However, deviations on positioning can create shifts in power, identities, stance, and even political conflicts—which has been less highlighted in translation studies covering diplomatic discourse. Therefore, through focusing on the COVID-19 global health crisis, this study attempts to discuss how positioning is reframed in the English translation of Chinese foreign spokespersons' responses on press conferences. From the perspectives of Appraisal Theory and framing strategies, this study aims to identify the deviations on appraisal resources in the translation; to examine the framing strategies used in appraisal deviations; to analyse the positioning reframed in the translation; and to explore the influence of reframed positioning on diplomatic function. This study is a qualitative research. It applies Fairclough's approach of Critical Discourse Analysis with the aid of ATLAS.ti. This study also applies Munday's model, which integrates the analysis on appraisal resources and positioning. The first procedure is text analysis; it compared the appraisal resources between the source and target text, which subsequently discovered the appraisal deviations. The second procedure is process analysis, which examined the framing strategies used in the deviations and thus how they reframed positioning in the translation. The final procedure is social analysis, which discussed the possible influence on the diplomatic function caused by the reframed positioning in terms of stance, national image, power relations, and solidarity.

The results find many deviations on appraisal resources, with most of them seeing a decrease in the translation. Nevertheless, the framing strategies used in the deviations show different preferences in different appraisal categories—which reframes the positioning in the target text. Based on the appraisal deviations and framing strategies,

this study finds that the positioning of positive evaluations on China is largely decreased and scaled down. The positioning that expresses negative others has become more explicit. Besides, the deviations on dialogic expansion make the translation monoglossic. The positioning tends to take for granted the proposition, and aligns the audience with shared value. Moreover, it finds that reframed positioning has a positive or negative influence on specific aspects of diplomatic functions. The spokespersons' stance is weakened, which hinders the advancement of values. China's national image is reframed as more modesty, objectivity, and politeness; on the other hand, the negative images of other countries become less severe, they are more specific. In addition, the power asymmetry between the spokespersons and journalists—as well as between China and other countries—is enlarged. The solidarity is highly constructed in the Chinese audience and the audience with shared values. This study highlights the importance and contents of positioning in diplomatic translation. It links positioning with Appraisal Theory and framing strategies—which is highly recommended for future studies. Besides, it also stresses the significance for translators to be aware of their roles in the translation of diplomatic discourse.

Keywords: Appraisal Theory; diplomatic discourse; framing strategies; positioning; translation

SDG: GOAL 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PEMBINGKAIAN SEMULA KEDUDUKAN DALAM RESPONS
TERJEMAHAN BAHASA INGGERIS OLEH JURUCAKAP KEMENTERIAN
LUAR NEGARA CHINA TERHADAP COVID-19**

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Mendepani cabaran dan peluang bagi globalisasi dan kerjasama antarabangsa, komunikasi diplomatik telah menjadi semakin signifikan bagi negarannegara apabila ia berkaitan dengan mempertahankan kepentingan mereka sendiri. Oleh itu, terjemahan diplomatik adalah sangat penting bagi memperjelas kedudukan dengan betul dan menyakinkan orang lain bagi mencapai matlamat diplomatik. Walau bagaimanapun, penyimpangan terhadap pbingkaiakan boleh mewujudkan anjakan dalam kuasa, identiti, pendirian, dan malah konflik politik yang kurang disorot dalam kajian terjemahan yang meliputi wacana diplomatik. Oleh sebab itu, dengan memfokuskan krisis kesihatan global COVID-19, kajian ini berusaha untuk membincangkan bagaimana kedudukan diperbingkaiakan semula dalam terjemahan bahasa Inggeris responsjurucakap luar negara China dalam sidang media. Dari perspektif Teori Apraisal dan strategi pbingkaiakan, kajian ini bertujuan mengesan penyimpangan ke atas sumber apraisal dalam terjemahan; meneliti strategi pbingkaiakan yang digunakan dalam penyimpangan apraisal; menganalisis kedudukan yang dibingkaikan semula dalam terjemahan; dan meninjau pengaruh kedudukan yang dibingkaikan semula ke atas fungsi diplomatik. Kajian ini merupakan penyelidikan kualitatif yang mengaplikasikan pendekatan Analisis Wacana Kritikal Fairclough dengan bantuan ATLAS.ti. Kajian ini juga mengaplikasikan model Munday, yang mengintegrasikan analisis tersebut ke atas sumber apraisal dan kedudukan. Prosedur pertama ialah analisis teks; ia membandingkan sumber apraisal antara teks sumber dengan teks sasaran, yang seterusnya mengesan penyimpangan apraisal. Prosedur kedua ialah analisis proses, yang meneliti strategi pbingkaiakan yang digunakan dalam penyimpangan dan seterusnya bagaimanakah mereka membingkaikan semula kedudukan dalam terjemahan. Prosedur akhir ialah analisis sosial, yang membincangkan pengaruh yang wajar ke atas fungsi diplomatik yang disebabkan oleh kedudukan yang dibingkaikan semula dari segi pendirian, imej kebangsaan, hubungan kuasa, dan solidariti. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan banyak penyimpangan ke atas sumber apraisal, dengan kebanyakannya memperlihatkan penurunan dalam terjemahan. Namun begitu, strategi pbingkaiakan yang digunakan dalam penyimpangan

menunjukkan keutamaan dalam kategori apraisal yang berbeza yang membingkaikan semula kedudukan dalam teks sasaran.

Berdasarkan penyimpangan apraisal dan strategi pemingkain, kajian ini mendapati bahawa kedudukan bagi penilaian positif ke atas China banyak berkurang dan diperkecil. Kedudukan yang mengekspreskan negatif yang lain menjadi lebih ketara. Selain itu, penyimpangan ke atas peluasan dialogik menyebabkan terjemahan tersebut monoglosik. Kedudukan tersebut cenderung untuk mengambil mudah syor, dan menyelaraskan audiens dengan nilai bersama. Tambahan pula, juga didapati bahawa kedudukan yang dibingkaikan semula mempunyai pengaruh positif atau negatif ke atas aspek fungsi diplomatik tertentu. Pendirian jurucakap adalah lemah, dan menghalang pemajuan nilai. Imej kebangsaan China telah dibingkaikan sebagai lebih merendah diri, bersifat objektif, dan bersopan santun; sebaliknya, imej negatif negara-negara lain menjadi kurang teruk, malah lebih ketara. Di samping itu, asimetri kuasa antara jurucakap dengan pemberita antara China dengan negara lain pula diperbesar. Solidariti terbentuk tinggi pada audiens Cina dan audiens lain yang berkongsi nilai bersama. Kajian ini telah menekankan kepentingan dan kandungan kedudukan dalam komunikasi diplomatik selain mengaitkan Teori Apraisal dan strategi pemingkaian. Hal ini sangat digalakkan sebagai kajian pada masa depan. Kajian juga menunjukkan kepentingan kepada penterjemah supaya lebih waspada tentang peranan mereka dalam penterjemahan wacana diplomatik.

Kata Kunci: Teori Apraisal; wacana diplomatik; strategi pemingkaian; kedudukan; penterjemahan

SDG: MATLAMAT 17: Perkongsian untuk Matlamat

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the four-year study, I have been confused, lost and suffered, but with the knowledge and guidance served by UPM and my supervisors, I have grown up, gained and finally survived in my PhD journey.

First and foremost, I would like to express my exceedingly thanks to my dear supervisor, Associate Professor Dr. Ang Lay Hoon, for her selfless and wholehearted guidance during my PhD study. She always thinks for the sake of her students with responsibility and professionalism. It is her academic pursuit and dedication to work that inspires me all the time.

I am also very grateful to my co-supervisors, Associate Professor Dr. Moniza Waheed and Associate Professor Dr. Zalina Binti Mohd Kasim. They are always kind, patient and willing to help. Every time we met, they offered constructive suggestions from different perspectives, which helped me finish this final draft.

Finally, I'd like to thank my parents and my husband, for their endless love and understanding. They are always be my side no matter what happens, encouraging me to overcome all the difficulties. I cannot finish my study without their support.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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Date: 16 May 2024

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AT	Appraisal theory
ST	source text
TT	target text
BT	back translation
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
WHO	World Health Organisation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces this study's background, which includes translation of political and diplomatic discourse, introduction of political and diplomatic texts, and China's diplomacy in terms of foreign policies and relations. It points out the problems that occur while translating diplomatic discourse, as well as some of the limitations found in previous studies. The research objectives, research questions, and conceptual framework of this study are proposed. Then, both the significance of the study and some definitions of key terms that are used within it are explained.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Translation of Political and Diplomatic Discourse

With the development of globalisation and the increase of international and cooperation, translation is becoming increasingly important for international communication. Translation and interpreting play significant roles especially in political and diplomatic discourse since diplomatic discourse is the communication across national borders among different languages and cultures and political translation is the instrument to make information available beyond national borders (Schäffner, 2004 & 2012). For example, when a United Nations General Assembly is held, the speeches on the assembly are simultaneously interpreted into different languages for the participants from different countries and the United Nations resolutions are required to translate into different languages as well. When a state visit takes place between leaders from two countries with different languages, such as China's Prime Minister Li Keqiang's visit to Germany in 2017, an accompanying interpreter is needed for both sides in every activity during the visit—including formal addresses, meetings, cultural events, and dinners. In addition, translation and interpretation are important even during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many diplomatic activities are held online. For instance, Chinese President Xi Jinping had a virtual meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden in November 2021, where consecutive interpreters were needed to translate the opposite speech into the language of their party.

As a result, translation and interpretation are quite essential in political or diplomatic discourse, which is expected to help a nation's strategies and policies in terms of politics, economics, diplomacy and culture better understood by international society (Huan et al., 2014). Furthermore, the accuracy and mediation of translation are very important because they would determine whether the political ideas are correctly transferred, and to what extent the original ideology and power relations are maintained. Translation shifts or different translation techniques that are driven by languages, cultures, and politics may result in different diplomatic effects; consequently, this attracts much attention and interest in the translation studies of these discourses.

1.1.2 Political and Diplomatic Discourse

The definitions and features of political discourse are closely related to political activities, participants, and political functions. As van Dijk (1998) believed, political discourse is categorised by the political context that involves political participants and activities. The participants involve not only the official and professional politicians who are paid for their activities, but also the public and citizens in general. These political actions could include governing, legislating, protesting, or voting. Meanwhile, Schäffner (2004, p.119) also shares the similar idea that the definition of political discourse “depends on the participants in the communicative context.” Some prototypical political texts include those which discuss political ideas, beliefs, and practices or texts that are crucial in constituting a political community or group (Schäffner, 2004). In addition, McNair (2011) uses political communication to define political discourse. He generalises three types of political communication that are 1) taken by politicians and other political actors for achieving specific objectives; 2) addressed to these actors by non-politicians, such as voters and newspaper columnists; and 3) about these actors and their activities, as contained in news reports, editorials, and other forms of media discussion regarding politics. To summarise, there are various forms of political discourse that include “policy papers, ministerial speeches, government press releases or press conferences, parliamentary discourse, party manifestos (or platforms), electoral speeches, etc.” (Bayley, 2005, p.3); furthermore, they all have specific features that trying to realise specific communicative functions like persuasion, rational argument, threats, and promises (Baker, 2007).

The nature of political discourse is about disputes and power maintenance; it is mainly concerns about power and ideology. According to Bánhegyi (2008), texts exist in their social contexts where human interactants are involved. In political discourse, power refers to the social power of groups or institutions over persons or groups of people. Ideology is the set of power relations that assure the social status of a certain social group, which is realised by reinforcing the social representations of the given social group in others (van Dijk, 2003). Therefore, political texts are “institutional means of communication through which political power may be obtained and retained and through which this very power and the related ideology can be maintained” (Bánhegyi, 2014, p.141).

There are also a number of sub-genres of political discourse; including party-political language, electoral language, the language of diplomacy, and so on (Kirvalidze & Samnidze, 2016). Among these sub-genres, the language of diplomacy is special because it is used to achieve political functions or interests of a nation in the international environment. Diplomacy initially refers to international negotiation. Amacker (2011) has generalised four main functions of diplomacy: (1) representing; (2) the gathering of information; (3) expanding ties between two countries; and (4) facilitating the observation of international laws. Representation that involves negotiation is the most important function of diplomacy because it helps representatives of different countries find common interests and avoid conflicts (Amacker, 2011). According to Gilboa (2001), through negotiation, representatives express or defend their interests and grievances as well as issue their ultimatums. It is a mean for them to clarify positions and persuade others to support the same position (Gilboa, 2001).

Thus, the use of language in diplomacy helps states in achieving these functions and assists in moving a nation's interests and goals forward. According to Stanko (2001), language in diplomacy is "a special way of expressing the subtle needs of the diplomatic profession," as well as "the verbal and non-verbal expression of thoughts or feelings." Yang (2012) also mentioned that diplomatic language is a rather special form that is policy-oriented and closely relates to foreign policy and national interests. Besides, Zhang (2014, p.76) defined diplomatic discourse as "a text in communicative use with representatives from foreign nations or political entities to achieve a pacific settlement of disputes, and above all, to serve the interest of one's country." Thus, diplomatic language takes place in various diplomatic activities and occasions; this could express foreign policies, reflect international relations, and finally achieve national interests. It could involve but are not limited to international agreement, joint statement, diplomatic visits, international conferences and summits, bilateral or multilateral dialogues, negotiations, as well as press conferences (Zhang, 2014; Hu & Li, 2018).

More specifically, diplomatic discourse contributes to the construction of a nation's identities, public images, and position within the world (Pimentel & Panke, 2020). It can both demonstrate a political stance and imply the principles and directions of political actions (Semenov & Tsvyk, 2021). Similar with political discourse, diplomatic discourse also implies power relations within political struggles overcoming geographical barriers, which makes it regarded as an object of political communication research (Pimentel & Panke, 2020). Thus, the study of diplomatic discourse is very significant to the analysis of both political stances and power relations.

1.1.3 Foreign Policies and Relations of China

Diplomatic discourse reflects the foreign policies and relations of a given country. China's foreign policies have also been expressed and repeated in various diplomatic occasions and discourses. For instance, it upholds multilateralism, promotes the construction of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, and builds a human community with a shared future (Yuan & Wei, 2021). However, the rapid growth of China's national power reshapes the World Pattern. Western countries such as Western Europe, the United States, and Australia are the traditional developed and powerful countries in the world. However, the development of non-Western countries—especially China—is believed to threaten the international position of these powers, especially the dominant position of the United States (Yu, 2019). China's rapid development in terms of economy, military power, science, and technology would damage the national interests of Western countries led by the United States—weakening their international positions (Wang, 2023). Therefore, the United States—drawing in Japan, Australia, and India—is building a military alliance in Asian Pacific regions in order to impede the rise of China (Yu, 2019). The Western countries and their allies took a series of actions to undermine China's development. For example, the United States provoked the Sino-U.S. trade war (2018 to 2021) in order to obstruct the international trading of China. The Canadian side detained Meng Wanzhou (2018), the head of Huawei company, to suppress Chinese technological companies. Japan provoked the Diaoyu Island dispute in the East China Sea (2012--), and India keeps provoking in the southwest border of China (2020).

According to history, World Pattern, geopolitics, and foreign policies, the Chinese government has divided China's diplomatic relations of affinity into 11 levels (Li, 2021). They could offer clues for the different attitudes reflected on the diplomatic discourse when China is facing different countries. The following introduces three major levels. First, the relationship between China and Russia is categorised as a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination. This diplomatic relation not only involves ordinary cooperation but is also a joint discussion of military cooperation and international affairs. Besides, there is level of comprehensive strategic partnership. This implies that countries in this level have different ideas on political and strategic issues with China, which may cause frictions at some points. There are 26 countries divided in this level, including many western countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Australia, and so on. At last, China's diplomatic relations with the United States and Japan are regarded as a constructive partnership and mutually beneficial strategic relationship—respectively. They are the second lowest level of affinity, which implies a less friendly relation that carries with many conflicts. China's foreign relations are very useful for the understanding of Chinese diplomatic actions and speeches; this could also explain the different political stances and attitudes toward different countries.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

During the process of diplomatic translation and interpreting, it is inevitable for translators or interpreters to produce translation shifts. Generally, shifts are regarded as the differences between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) in terms of lexis, grammatical structure, cohesion, coherence, and cultural background. Many scholars (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958; Nida, 1964; Catford, 1965; van Leuven-Zwart, 1989) believe that translation shifts are inevitable because of the linguistic and cultural differences between two languages and translators could apply various techniques of adjustment or translation procedures to achieve an equivalence.

Therefore, the factors of shifts in translating Chinese diplomatic discourse may lie in three aspects. Firstly, there are differences between two languages in terms of language patterns, grammatical structures, cohesion, and coherence. Secondly, there are differences between two cultures—which can cause difficulties for translation. For instance, some rhetorical devices—especially metaphors—are widely used in diplomatic discourse; these devices are largely based on the cultural elements found within their own country, which also causes difficulties for understanding and finding equivalence. In addition, Chinese politicians are very fond of using quotations from classics—including ancient poems, historical stories, and idioms; this, too, can become quite challenging for translation.

Thirdly, as mentioned before, diplomatic discourse is used to achieve specific political functions and some features of diplomatic discourse leave space for translators to adjust—thus causing translation shifts. To begin with, diplomatic discourse pertains to power relations in political struggles overcoming geographical barriers; the degree of hostility, friendship, or indifference in diplomatic discourse differs greatly when concerning different issues and countries (Pimentel & Panke, 2020). Furthermore, argumentative and rhetoric techniques are widely applied as strategies to deal with

struggles and power relations; these are reflected in the art of negotiations, pressures, coercion, and persuasion (Castro, 2012). Moreover, though many diplomatic speeches are scripted, there are spontaneous speeches or remarks that may show a degree of ambiguity, evasion, and self-contraction (Zhang, 2012). All these features cause difficulties for translation practices and provide chances for translators to intervene through shifts.

While many translation shifts are used to deal with linguistic and cultural differences for the better understanding of the TT, they could cause either a negative or positive impact on diplomatic effects. For example, the translation shift could result in a political dispute. A real case took place in 1994 when translating a German document into English. This document was produced by the parliamentary group, which argued for an inner group of European Union member states could lead to further European Union integration (Schäffner, 2004). One of the extracts from the English translation says that "... existing hard core of countries oriented to greater integration and closer cooperation must be further strengthened." (as cited in Schäffner, 2004, p.125). The problem that caused a controversial debate is the word choice of "hard core" which is used to render the German source word "fester Kern." "Fester Kern" is a positive expression in German, which indicates a "firm commitment" to European integration in the ST. However, the term "hard core" is usually linked with negative meanings of "tough, immoral, and incorrigible" (Schäffner, 2004, p.126). Thus, the dependable image of European Union core members is changed into one that appears tough and aggressive in the translation. The British government and media are very careful about using this expression, as they do not want core countries to impose their ideas on other member states. Thus, the then UK Prime Minister John Major responded to the document that he saw "a real danger in talk of a hard core" and "there should never be an exclusive hard core either of countries or of policies" (as cited in Schäffner, 2004, p.126).

On the contrary, the influence of translation shifts can also be positive in some instances. In 1987, former President Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev of the former Soviet Union had a state visit to the United States; former President Ronald Reagan offered his welcoming speech and said that "Gorbachev's visit represented a case of adversaries instead of allies coming together" (Zhang, 2014, p.77). Surprisingly, the American interpreter rendered "adversaries" into "competitors," which was widely accepted and even adopted by the Soviets. This translation removes the hostile attitude of Reagan in the ST and eases the intensive relationship between the two countries. The Russian interpreter of Gorbachev commended this adjustment as "overall precedence of diplomatic concerns over fidelity of linguistic transference" (Zhang, 2014, p.77).

As can be seen in the above examples, the translations of "hard core" and "competitors" show how the speakers position themselves and others, which cause different diplomatic effects in the TT. Positioning refers to the way speakers position themselves and others, as well as audiences through language (Berlin, 2020). This helps with the construction of social identity and power relations (Davies & Harré, 1990; Weizman, 2008; Schäffner, 2015).

Positioning can be explicitly expressed through utterances (Berlin, 2020). It is regarded as a pragmatic act and can be realised through the choice of words, which can also be manipulated during translation (ibid). Munday (2018) once mentioned that translators or interpreters may mediate the positioning of ST speakers and TT audiences either on purpose or unconsciously when translating political discourse. This manipulation or mediation could cause “shifts in power, access, or blocking of access, to certain features of claimed or desired identities” (Davies & Harré, 1990, p. 49). More specifically, there could be changes in the power relations between speakers and other participants or the addressed politicians, the identities of speakers and others, and on the stances and attitudes of speakers towards certain events or people. These changes would have a negative or positive influence on functions of diplomacy, which is worth investigating in translation studies covering diplomatic discourse.

Munday (2015) believed that how the speaker positions themselves and others can be realised by appraisal resources. Appraisal Theory (AT) is proposed by Martin and White (2005); it focuses on the interpersonal meaning of the text that introduces our own judgements and desires, as well as our own angle on a given situation (Halliday, 2009). Appraisal resources are “semantic resources used to negotiate emotions, judgements and valuations, alongside resources for amplifying and engaging with these evaluations” (Martin, 2000, p.145). According to Martin and White (2005), there are three domains of appraisal: attitude, engagement, and graduation. Attitude refers to the semantic resources that express our feelings, judgements, and evaluations of things or behaviour. Engagement focuses on the dialogic positioning and the play of voices around opinions (Bakhtin, 1981). Lastly, graduation refers to semantic resources that grade attitude—which can either amplify or blur feelings.

Appraisal resources help construct positioning through the three domains. Attitude resources help construct social identity of self and others by providing judgements and appreciations. Engagement resources directly refer to dialogic positioning, so that the speaker expresses a position towards the value in some ways to reduce or expand the possible range of the receiver’s responses (Munday, 2015). They could also reflect the power relations through interactional roles between the speakers and receivers. Besides, graduation is linked to positioning because it shows the degree of the speaker to commit to the value position, and how they outline the receivers to that value position (Martin & White, 2005).

Therefore, it can be inferred that the translation shifts of appraisal resources could very possibly cause the changes on positioning. In her study, Pan (2020) once mentioned that the deviations of appraisal resources could lead the audience to a different positioning. Her study focuses on the Chinese translation of the English news articles covering the 2008 Tibet riots in China. It was found that when presenting others who disapproved of China, the translation used a negative or less positive tone than in the ST. For example, “Tibetan exiles” was translated as “Tibetan separatists” in Chinese and “the spiritual leader of Tibet” was rendered as “the Dalai Lama.” Different from the ST, people who attended the riot were transferred as negative separatists in the TT instead of the word “exiles”—which makes them appear as victims. Besides, the positive evaluation of the Dalai Lama (spiritual leader) in the ST was omitted. Thus, the attitude towards those Tibetans has become negative—which indicated the positioning that they were in the

wrong. By doing so, the TT also tried to align the audience to this value position.

Focusing on the deviations of appraisal resources, the following question is how appraisal resources are changed. More specifically, what kind of translation strategies or techniques are used to cause such deviations. In the above example, the technique used in the translation of “Tibetan separatists” and “the Dalai Lama” is recognised as framing as labelling; this refers to the use of a lexical item, term, or phrase to identify the key elements in a narrative—such as a person or place (Baker, 2006). It is one of the framing strategies of the Narrative Theory proposed by Baker (2006). In fact, framing strategies are widely used in the translation of political or diplomatic discourse; this is because the same political event usually has many different narrative versions due to the differences in the acknowledgements and experiences to the world as well as the differences in the political stances or benefits. Baker (2006, p.106) sees framing “as an active strategy” that reflects how we consciously construct reality. She suggests that translation itself can be seen as a frame and that translators or interpreters could actively participate in the interaction by (re)framing aspects of narrative in the TT.

Moreover, framing strategies and narrative theory have been tested feasible for the analysis of appraisal resources in several studies (Rosa, 2013; Pan & Liao, 2020; Pan & Huang, 2020; Zeng & Li, 2021). According to Pan and Huang (2020, p.134), framing is the selection of “certain metaphorical images”— which can function through attitudinal resources and reflect value positions. Rosa (2013) believed that engagement resources reflect power relations between narrator and narratees, which help analyse narratorial positioning.

As mentioned in the background, there are various types of diplomatic discourse such as joint statement, international conferences, dialogues and negotiations, and press conferences. Among these text types, press conferences are quite unique—which can often cause problems for translation when compared with the other types of discourse. First, they are interactions rather than monologues. They are in the form of Q&A (questions and answer) and involve questions asked by domestic and foreign media on the latest political and diplomatic issues. The Foreign Ministry Spokespersons are those who host press conferences and answer questions. The interaction is directly between different journalists and the spokesperson, and proceeds quickly question by question. Second, unlike scripted speeches, the responses during the press conference are spontaneous; due to this, answers may contain mistakes and errors and where evasive remarks are widely applied when regarding sensitive issues or uncertain information (Zhang, 2014).

With all the difficulties and challenges, as well as the different foreign relations, the curiosity is how the translator/interpreter deals with them in a real practice, and to what extent positioning is either kept or changed in the translation of press conferences. In China, there is a regular press conference of the Foreign Ministry held on each workday, which offers large corpora for analysis. Domestic and foreign journalists ask questions during the press conferences, and the Foreign Ministry’s spokespersons provide answers. These questions involve topics or issues from different areas in order to ascertain the official remarks and stances of China. For instance, there are topics about international

cooperation, such as G20 (The Group of Twenty), and points of concern regarding international security—such as the Syrian War and COVID-19. There are different issues towards specific foreign countries or regions, such as the Sino-Russian nuclear energy cooperation, or the Sino-U.S. trade disputes. Furthermore, there are also issues that are often attacked by some foreign media, such as regarding the Xinjiang and Taiwan issues.

Despite the various question topics, the issue of COVID-19 seems to be one of the most notable due to its long-lasting and worldwide influence. As one of the most serious global public health crises, COVID-19 has not only threatened global health security—but also caused a series of conflicts in and between countries in terms of social systems, ideology, and development patterns. China has also been involved in many conflicts during the COVID-19 pandemic. The dramatic reversal of the pandemic in China has caused extensive concern with different voices from the international community. Thus, questions related with COVID-19 have been frequently mentioned and asked about during the press conferences since its outbreak. In responding to these questions, the Foreign Ministry spokespersons have made many statements and comments to brief about the situation with specific positioning and stances. Thus, the responses to COVID-19-related questions are full of attitudes, stances, and evaluations of self and others—which are highly worthwhile for the analysis of positioning.

Although there have been studies discussed the translation problems of positioning, as well as the appraisal resources and framing strategies, some limitations are found in the previous studies. First, positioning is often neglected in translation studies of diplomatic discourse. While there are several studies that focus on positioning in political communication, they only pay attention to speakers' alignment of the audiences to gain political support (Berlin et al., 2020). In translation studies, positioning is just highlighted in media discourse; moreover, they mainly focus on the stance and manipulation of different news agencies (Pan, 2015; Schäffner, 2012). In addition, some previous studies have tried to analyse positioning through appraisal resources in translation studies; however, they only choose one domain of appraisal such as engagement in political discourse (Qian, 2012; Munday, 2017) or graduation in news translation (Pan, 2015; Pan & Liao, 2020). Martin and White (2005) have mentioned, “appraisal meanings do not operate as isolated values but rather as elements in integrated complexes of meaning.” Thus, there is still a need to study positioning in diplomatic discourse from all three domains of appraisal.

Second, in the translation studies of diplomatic discourse, there is a limitation in analysing the text type of Q & As. Most previous studies focus on monologic speech or report (see, for example, Bánhegyi, 2008; Munday, 2015 & 2018; Omar, 2020; Schäffner, 2012; Li & Xu, 2018; Constantinou, 2020; Pan & Liao, 2020). Different from monologic speech, the text type of a Q&A is a kind of interactive communication. The answers and responses are given pointedly to specific questions that focus on specific diplomatic events or foreign relations. Thus, the political context of each question requires more attention and the speaker's positioning of each question could also vary greatly. Besides, the answers are given impromptu and immediately with different diplomatic communicative skills. These skills or utterances include the use of evasive remarks, the use of addresses, the controlling of the dialogue as well as how to position the audience, and so on. These features are far more obvious than that in monologic and scripted

speech, which are also closely related to positioning. However, it has been overlooked and there are only a few studies that discuss Q & As in a political translation context (Qian, 2012; Schäffner, 2012; Li & Zhang, 2021). Therefore, there is still a need for extensive and profound research on diplomatic Q&A translation—especially through the lens of positioning.

Third, little effort has been done to study positioning through the combination of AT and framing strategies. Framing strategies are often applied to discuss the reframing of conflicts or image in translation studies (Baker, 2007; Spiessens & Van Poucke, 2016; Qin & Zhang, 2017; Dubbati & Abudayeh, 2018; Pan & Liao, 2020; Zeng & Li, 2021). For example, Baker (2007) found that figures and captions presented with articles, footnotes in translation, and selection of notes can reframe the Middle East Conflict in the texts. However, only a few studies combined the AT and framing strategies for analysis (Pan & Liao, 2020; Zeng & Li, 2021). For instance, Zeng and Li (2021) analysed how framing strategies help present China's image in the translation of social media comments on news reports. Combined with AT, this study focused on the framing strategies used in the deviations of attitudinal resources that evaluate China. Zeng and Li (2021) found that framing strategies used in appraisal deviations promoted a finer pro-China narrative and retouched China's global image. This kind of combination offers different perspectives (interpersonal and narrative) of analysis in order to discuss different translation issues, which should be further tested and developed in the analysis of positioning.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

According to the issues and the foci found within, this study aims to investigate the changes of positioning in the translation of the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokespersons' responses during press conferences. It analyses through the deviations of appraisal resources and the framing strategies that are used in these deviations. The specific objectives are presented as follows:

1. To identify the deviations of appraisal resources in the TT
2. To examine the framing strategies used in the deviations of appraisal resources
3. To analyse the positioning reframed in the TT
4. To explore the influence of reframed positioning on diplomatic function

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives presented above, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are the deviations of appraisal resources in the TT compared with the ST?
2. What kinds of framing strategies are used in the deviations of appraisal resources?
3. How is positioning reframed by deviations of appraisal resources in the TT?

4. How does reframed positioning influence diplomatic function in the TT?

1.5 Conceptual Framework

According to the problem statement, research objectives, and questions, the conceptual framework of this study is illustrated in Figure 1.1. Firstly, appraisal resources in the ST and TT in terms of attitude, engagement, and graduation help construct positioning in the ST and TT—respectively. Second, framing strategies used by translators cause the deviations on appraisal resources in the TT. Correspondingly, the deviations on appraisal resources in the TT result in the deviations on positioning in the TT. Finally, the reframed positioning has influence on the diplomatic function in the TT.

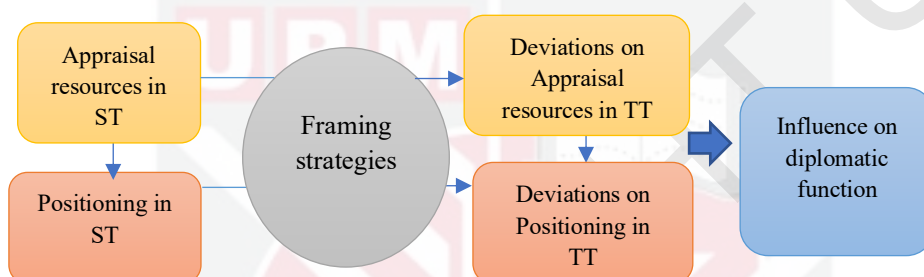


Figure 1.1 : Conceptual Framework

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to the deviations on positioning in the translation of diplomatic Q&A and how they influence diplomatic function. The discourse and text type are limited to diplomatic Q&A. As mentioned in statement of the problem, O&A are spontaneous and full of evasive remarks. Besides, the participants (including journalists and the spokespersons) have different stances. Usually, when a spokesperson speaks, they stand for their own country and present the national interests and diplomatic stances. On the other hand, journalists from different media outlets stand for different countries or institutions—which hold different stances and opinions. Thus, the stances and attitudes of the spokespersons could differ greatly according to different questions and even the media who raise questions. These features could cause difficulties and problems for translation, which requires further study.

In addition, this study only focuses on the Q&A of regular press conferences held by China's Foreign Ministry. It is limited to China, and it only discusses Chinese-English translation. The diplomatic function is also limited to the influence on China and/or its foreign relations. Among various issues asked during the press conferences, this study is limited to the issue of COVID-19. This means that the study only collects the questions that were related to COVID-19. The data collection is limited to three months, from March to May 2020.

As the study uses AT and framing strategies to analyse positioning, this study is limited to the deviations of appraisal resources rather than other linguistic resources. Besides, the effect caused by appraisal deviations is also limited to the deviations of positioning.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study analyses the Foreign Ministry spokespersons' responses and the corresponding translation to find out the variations of positioning. It is significant to highlight the pragmatic function of the text (which is positioning), as well as the influence on diplomatic functions caused by deviations on positioning, which is occasionally overlooked. It analyses by comparing the appraisal resources in the ST and TT and examining the framing strategies used in appraisal deviations. Therefore, it is also significant for the discussion of positioning within translation studies of diplomatic discourse from an interpersonal and narrative perspective.

More specifically, this study links positioning with AT and uncovers the relationship between appraisal resources and positioning. It shows how positioning is constructed through all three domains of appraisal, and how appraisal resources express interpersonal meanings in a diplomatic Q&A. In addition, it sheds light on the combination of the AT and framing strategies. It stresses the connection between appraisal resources and framing strategies; it also uses the framing strategies to categorise the deviations of appraisal resources. The combination of framing strategies help analyze different diplomatic narrations in terms of positioning.

Furthermore, this study has practical significance for the translation of diplomatic or political discourse. It could raise more attention for translators on interpersonal meaning and guide them to properly use framing strategies. It helps translators recognise the different impacts on positioning when there are translators' interventions with different understandings of values and feelings through using different framing strategies. Therefore, this study emphasises the importance of rendering appraisal meanings in diplomatic communication. It also illustrates how appraisal meaning would be kept or changed; this is so that the translators know what to do when they try to achieve the equivalence of positioning or try to make some adjustments according to particular purposes.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Translation Shifts

Shifts are defined as deviations from formal correspondence of two texts involved in translation (Catford, 1965). Shifts occur when the source text is translated into different grammatical or phonological forms in the target language text (Catford, 1978).

Positioning

Generally, this study adopts Berlin's (2020) concept that positioning refers to the way speakers position themselves, others, and audiences through language.

Appraisal

In this study, appraisal is defined according to Martin and White (2005, p.1). It refers to the interpersonal meaning in language and is concerned with "how writers/speakers approve and disapprove, enthuse and abhor, applaud and critics and how they position their readers/listeners to do likewise." It is also concerned with "how writers/speakers construe for themselves particular authorial identities or personae, with how they align or disalign themselves with actual or potential respondents, and with how they construct for their texts an intended or ideal audience" (Martin & White, 2005, p.1).

Evaluation/evaluative languages

Evaluation or evaluative language are other terms adopted equally with appraisal in this study. Evaluation means "the expression of the speaker's or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feeling about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about" (Thompson & Hunston, 2000, p.5). Evaluative language refers to language that expresses feelings, opinions, and judgements.

Evaluation Deviation

This study adopts Pan's (2015, p.221) definition of evaluation deviation, which refers to "a linguistic resource in the target text differing in evaluative meanings from its counterpart in the source text." In this study, it is expressed as "deviation" or "appraisal deviation."

Stance

According to Berlin (2020), positioning exists with stance as a component to establish the speaker's relationship to an object under consideration. "Stance focuses more on the output of an overall image, leading to the interpretation of the hearer/receiver" (Berlin, 2020, p.xii). In this study, it is regarded as the result of positioning.

Intervention

Intervention refers to the role or function of the translator. House (2008, p.16) defined intervention as "manipulation of the source text beyond what is linguistic necessary." Intervention would obviously have consequences in translation, and all intervention is evaluative (Munday, 2012).

Selective Appropriation of Textual Material

Selective appropriation is one of the framing strategies. It is realized by the omission and addition of textual material to “suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source text or utterance, or aspects of the larger narrative(s) in which it is embedded” (Baker, 2006, p.114).

Framing by Labelling

Framing by labelling refers to the use of “a lexical item, term or phrase to identify a person, place, group, event or any other key element in a narrative” (Baker, 2006, p.122). In this study, it includes relabelling, specification and generalisation. “Specification re-labels the narrative elements in a more concrete and detailed way” (Qin & Zhang, 2017, p.10), while generalisation provides generalized interpretive frame of the narrative (Qin & Zhang, 2017). Relabelling refers to other categories other than specification and generalisation.

Repositioning of Participants

Repositioning of participants can be realised through paratextual commentary such as footnotes, prefaces, and covers; it can also be realised within the text or utterance through linguistic shifts including time, space, register, the use of epithets, and addresses (Baker, 2006).

1.9 Summary

This chapter first introduces the research background of political and diplomatic discourse, as well as the key elements in diplomatic discourse that includes foreign policies and relations. It demonstrates the problems of translating positioning in political and diplomatic discourse, which causes different diplomatic effects. It also points out the relation among appraisal resources, framing strategies, and positioning. Furthermore, the limitations of the previous studies are also mentioned. On the basis of the problems and limitations, the research objectives and questions are addressed clearly. This study attempts to explore how positioning is rendered in the TT, and how it further influences diplomatic effects through analysing appraisal resources and the framing strategies applied for appraisal resources. The scope of this study is limited to China’s diplomatic Q&A and the English translations related to the COVID-19 issue. Moreover, the conceptual framework of the study is introduced, and its significance is highlighted.

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