Social Identity at Work: Interpreter's Grammatical Choices and Interpersonal Alignment

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This study explores the role Chinese government in-house interpreters have played at several high-level annual press conferences hosted by the Chinese government. By analyzing their interpreting choices for elements of MOOD, defined in the Systemic Functional Linguistic as a discourse analysis tool and using data from a self-built corpus consisting of multiple video clips of the events, this study has discovered that the interpreters realise a level of interpersonal alignment with only one party in interpreter-mediated communication, and that the choices of alignment are heavily affected by the interpreter's evaluation of the power relationship. The findings also suggest that although greatly constrained by their institutional roles, these interpreters remain as linguistic professionals. However, their grammatical choices demonstrate a tendency of their shifting social positions between the speaker and the addressees, betraying their deliberate efforts in embracing two roles in interpreting for the press conferences - one as inseparable part of the institution with allegiance pledged to the government, and the other as individual interpreters adhering to the norms of the profession.

1. Introduction

This study explores the role of Chinese in-house interpreters in practice at the Premier's press conferences of both China's National People's Congress (NPC) and

the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)). Abbreviated as "the two-session conference", this annual dual conference is one of the most important political events in China.

Interpreting is fundamentally a language-based activity, in which the interpreter's role has to be enacted through his or her use of language in line with the dynamics of a situated context. To respond to dynamic social and contextual variables, the interpreter has to constantly make linguistic choices in order to adjust his or her social positioning. This decision-making process is predominantly shaped by his or her self-perception of interpreter's interpersonal functions (e.g. Leanza, Boivin and Rosenberg 2010; Rosenberg, Seller and Leanza 2008; Setton and Guo 2009); his or her selfhood, a tot-up of his or her professional background, cultural and social allegiance, ideological commitment (e.g. Le et al. 2009; Takeda 2009; Sun 2014); and the setting and nature of the communicative activity (e.g. Katan & Straniero-Sergio 2001; Wadensjo 2008a, 2008b). By going through this vigorous process, the interpreter's identity as a social agent is realized (Angelelli 2004; Wolf & Fukari 2007; Inghilleri 2005). Therefore, interpreting, as language in use, is a sociocultural resource.

In fact, the so-called interpreter's role is a relational concept about a social position (Pochhäcker 2004). Since identity is constructed by and reflected in language use (Bucholtz and Hall 2005; Danesi 2014; Schiffrin 1996; Van Dijk 2011), the manifestation of interpreter's role will inevitably be identified from linguistic choices he makes in mediated communication. Since it is important to acknowledge that discursive social action is the locus where culture and social identities take shape, it is also imperative to understand that discursive acts need to be studied in particular social contexts. In other words, linguistic choices in interpreter-mediated communication deserve being analyzed and understood in the situated context.

This study, therefore, uses Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) as the means of discourse analysis for comparing source and target texts. In reference to the 'function-rank matrix' in SFL (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014), language consists of meaning-making resources that include sets of options available to language users

through the network system of all strata: semantics, lexicogrammar, phonology and phonetics. Grammatically, to configure language users' intentions into concrete forms of a language, the choices are made from different resources before being interpreted into a system network and constructed within a grammatical rank scale (Butt et al. 2001; Matthiessen and Halliday 1997). In particular, interpersonal meaning is realized in MOOD, MODALITY and APPRAISAL (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014; Martin and White 2008). To make interpersonal metafunction choices perform, different wording patterns in clauses, termed as the system of MOOD enact different speech roles for both the language user and his or her audience in communication (Butt et al. 2001; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014).

This study, however, only focuses the interpreter's choices in Mood elements for expression of interpersonal meanings as compared with the original in order to find out how the interpreter changes his or her role by shifting and aligning his or her social positioning. The aim of the study is therefore, by identifying and describing MOOD-related linguistic variations in the interpreted texts in relation to different contextual patterns, to shed light on interpreter's decision-making as to what specific role to choose and how to play the role in a given context while intent on maintaining his or her identity as a mediator.

2. Social Identity

Identity is generally defined as "the way that we conceive ourselves as individuals or as members of groups, or, indeed, the way others perceive and categorize us" (Edwards 2013: 1). Each individual's identity is actually an abstract reflection of his or her psychological categorization or attachment to a given social group in that identity resides in "a complex inventory of possibilities for self-presentation". Therefore, the concept of identity could be respectively regarded "as collective or individual, as social or personal, as mental constructs or as the product of actions" (De Fina 2013: 1).

Identity can be constructed, conveyed and extracted for analysis through language

in use, but at the same time, it is also socially constructed, reflexive and dynamic to social contexts (Hall 2012; Mendoza-Denton 2004). In this sense, identity defines an individual's social practice and is, in turn, defined by the social context of the individual's practice.

However, with social structures likely to change in society, an individual's discursive practice may also change in response by adapting to the different linguistic features of other interlocutors within the same interaction (De Fina 2013). As a result, between patterns of linguistic variation and social categorization is the correlation where language changes according to the individual's social status and the situations in which language is used (Coupland 2007; Mendoza-Denton 2004).

From the perspective of community of practice, identity is social, as being related to a group of people "who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger 2005 : 1). Through community of practice, particular participants develop a social identity and, accordingly, different linguistic productions to articulate that identity. Hence, realization of meaning relies on two crucial conditions: participants' shared experiences over time and their commitment to shared values (Eckert 2006). The shared elements will ultimately shape a joint style, including the linguistic style that embodies both commitment and their interpretation of social positioning. This could be explained further through Bourdieu's conception of the field of habitus (Bourdieu 1993), according to which identity derives from individual's experiences, his or her fields of practice, and habitus in socialization and social engagement. In general, it is widely acknowledged that identity can be multifaceted and each is constructed and thus reflected in language in line with the dynamics of situated contexts; and therefore that discursive acts need to be understood in particular social contexts.

From a sociocultural perspective, communication is also socially conventionalized. Language users have to establish different communicative models, based on their social knowledge, to demonstrate their social identities, including their interpersonal relationships within and memberships of a particular social group or community (Hall 2002). The language then is seen as "a sociocultural resource constituted by a range of possibilities, and open-ended set of options in behavior that are available

to the individual in his or her existence as social man" (Halliday 1973: 49). Therefore, from a SFL perspective, identity becomes a social-linguistic construction, as language provides a set of sociocultural resources (systems) for making meaning, and for enacting social identity. More specifically, a person's social identity is enacted through his or her linguistic choices of interpersonal meaning in relation to tenor values, which are applied to evaluate the participants' relationship in a discourse, including power relations, formality, and closeness (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014).

A variety of studies (Tompson 1999; Bednarek 2010; Tann 2010) have examined speakers' choices for the realization of interpersonal meanings to understand the roles of monolingual speakers/texts in communication. These studies illustrate how the construction of a social identity is realized by specific linguistic choices out of a range of potential systemic options. Specifically, a speaker's social identity is typically related to his or her choices of the interpersonal metafunction of language in response to different contextual variables. Given that interpreting is an inter-linguistic communication and that the message for transmission is largely a product of the interpreter's voluntary choices, the interpreter's role and therefore his or her identity should be situated in and thus reflected from the linguistic choices of the interpersonal meaning in the target rendition. Linguistically, therefore, it is important to probe into the translational shifts in relation to the interpersonal meaning of the two languages in interpretation so as to understand an interpreter's choices of social positioning in communication. More specifically, the study of the interpreter's role is dependent on the analysis of the interpreter's discourse: how and why different linguistic resources for the realization of the interpersonal meaning are processed and selected to finalize the interpreter's social response to tenor values for self-presentation of identity in relation to speakers and addressees.

3. MOOD in SFL and its Interpersonal Function

Grammatically, a clause, the basic functional unit in SFL is "organised as an

interactive event involving speaker, or writer, and audience" to perform the interpersonal metafunction (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 134). A clause expresses the interpersonal meanings of speech roles at the semantic level of language, and such a level is realized grammatically in the wording construction termed MOOD (Butt et al. 2001; Halliday & Matthiessen 2014). Therefore, it is the elements of MOOD that actually carry the semantic function of a clause as an interactive event (Halliday 2001).

Mood is primarily composed of two closely linked elements: Subject and Finite. Both are semantically motivated. The Finite defines and circumscribes the arguability of a proposition. It relates the proposition to its context in a speech event by reference to the time of speaking and the judgement of the speaker, both of which are realized respectively in grammatical terms of primary tense and modality (Halliday 2001). The Subject, on the other hand, is the nominal component that combines with the Finite to form Mood in a proposition by reference to its modal responsibility (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014). Thus, it is only the wording of Mood elements rather than the whole grammatical structure of a clause that becomes different when the speech functional roles of proposition and proposal change. For Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), the speech functions of the interpersonal meaning are further distinguished into four primary types: offer, command, statement, and question (see Figure 3.1).

Role in exchange	Goods and services	Information
Giving	Offer	Statement
Seeking	Command	Question
	proposal	*proposition*

Figure 3.1: Speech Function & Types

To realize four speech functions grammatically, clauses are then structured into various Mood types, and grammatical realizations for each speech function can vary greatly. For example, a command may be realized by a clause of imperative Mood, other clauses in declarative or interrogative forms, and even the combination of

different clauses. However, these semantic options are constrained by a combination of tenor values relating to the power relations and closeness of the discourse participants (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014). When contact is minimal and the power relation is unbalanced, it is hardly possible for a person to command a superior stranger in command's congruent grammatical realizational form, i.e. an imperative clause. Lexicogrammatically, alternatives to the conventional and common strategy of imperative Mood for command exist among other metaphorical realizations such as the declarative or the interrogative. In all, the congruent realization is applied only when there is compliance with appropriate social relationships, whereas metaphorical realizations are used to contribute comfortability to the situation.

Thus, the grammatical and semantic strategies used for interpersonal meanings in communication, particularly the selection of a metaphorical realization for a speech function, are obviously meaningful resources for the linguistic investigation into the social relationship.

4. Methodology

This study analyzed the performance of the interpreter from the Department of Translation and Interpretation (DTI), which is a government agency under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of China. Charged with the responsibility of "coordinating interpretation in multi-languages for major international conferences and events" (MFA 2014), DTI is probably the largest employer of top-notch in-house interpreters in China, whose job is to interpret for leaders of central government. Enjoying high social status (Setton and Guo 2009; Sun 2014), the in-house interpreters of DTI need to receive a suite of lengthy and vigorous training during their career, which covers interpreting-related skills and strategies for various modes of interpretation plus specialized knowledge (Cai 2010; Deng 2014). For many of them, working at DTI is "a stepping stone to a diplomatic career" (Setton and Guo 2009: 213). Just as indicated at the MFA official website, many ambassadors and ministers, past and current, began their careers as DTI in-house interpreters (MFA

2014).

One of the most important and high-profile assignments for the DTI interpreters is to interpret for the Premier's press conference of the 'two session conference", where the Premier would update China's political, social and economic development as well as relevant policy changes and answer questions from invited journalists from different parts of the world. Broadcast live to the world since 1988, the importance of the press conference is self-evident.

To ensure a minimum of interpreting mistakes, DTI organizes robust and comprehensive preparations for those selected for interpreting the event. According to ZHANG Lu (Deng 2014), the chief interpreter for Premier WEN Jiabao and the deputy director of DTI's English Division, the relevant preparations generally started months ahead. Prior to the press conference 2010, for example, she reviewed audio-recordings of the conferences from 2003-2009, and summarized all the poetic quotations and idioms ever used by the Premier (Cai 2010). FEI, Shengchao, the chief interpreter for the Premier's press conferences from 2006-2009 and the current director of DTI's English Division, said he only slept for 3-4 hours a day during the preparation period. Interestingly, although he worked alone during the press conference, 40 of his colleagues assisted him in preparation by selecting piles of relevant materials for him to read, giving him simulated conference with a list of possible questions and answers, and also providing comments and suggestions for improvement (Bi 2009). In the sense, there is an established professional community within DTI, and the performance of two-session interpreters on stage is largely contributed to and somehow representative of all DTI interpreters.

The data of the study are collected from multiple video clips of the China's two-session press conferences for the years of 2003-2006, 2009, 2010, and 2012, which is considered sufficient enough to capture the range of possible patterns in the interpreters' linguistic choices of interpersonal meaning, thus capable of reflecting the social positioning of the DTI interpreter in practice. For the ease of analysis, a specialized and open corpus, the China's Two-Session Press Conference (CTSPC) corpus was designed, which consists of seven Premier's two-session press conferences. Brief information on these press conferences is listed in Table 4.1,

where the seven press conferences were retrieved from multiple multimedia websites.

Table 4.1: Overview of Seven Press Conferences in the CTSPC Corpus

Session	Date	Retrieved Website	Duration
2003pm	17/03/2003	www.tudou.com/programs/view/vsUrl4Hg-0A	109'
2004pm	15/03/2004	v.youku.com/v_show/id_ca00XMjYwMDkxMjQ=.html v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNTYyNTQzODA=.html	107'
2005pm	14/03/2005	www.tudou.com/programs/view/qjsR0Vfa9uA/	115'
2006pm	16/03/2006	news.cntv.cn/china/20120313/110635.shtml	128'
2009pm	13/03/2009	v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNzc1MTgwMzY=.html	144'
2010pm	14/03/2010	www.tudou.com/programs/view/FiUCiP2ZUN8	137'
2012pm	14/03/2012	tv.sohu.com/20120330/n339405450.shtml	182'

The audio-visual information is transcribed into written texts following the basic transcription conventions, and then filed as individual bilingual archives. The annotation of each archive marks out the language properties as either in English or Chinese, and as either in the source language or the target language. Each conference archive can be reclassified into two monolingual texts for independent linguistic analysis. The comparative analysis is conducted to investigate the interpreters' linguistic choices when speakers and addressees (due to the complexity of the audience composition) are changed.

5. Analysis

As one of the series of studies using the CTSPC corpus, this study divides its findings into two parts. The first part compares different linguistic features of the interpretations with the source speeches (SSs), which are produced by the three types of speakers identified based on their social, political and geographical backgrounds: the Premier (PM), the journalists from countries other than Mainland

China (JOs) and the journalists from Mainland China (JMs). With the assigned roles in Q&A session of the press conference, namely the interviewee and the interviewer, the three types of speakers are assumed with some distinctive linguistic features to realize different social positioning in communication. In the sense, the SSs by the speakers are and should be interpersonally different for varying social positions. The comparative analysis on the interpreters' choices for the realization of interpersonal functions, namely whether the different roles of the speakers may or may not change through the interpreters' language use will eventually avail some valid argumentation on the social positioning of interpreters.

5.1. Interpreters' Choices: the Interpretation for Different Speakers

Given the categorization of speakers as PM, JOs and JMs, their corresponding interpretations are compared for studying the translational shifts. Therefore, the interpretations of PM's speeches are abbreviated as INTER-PMs, while the interpretations of JMs and JOs' are respectively coded as INTER-JMs and INTER-JOs. Since the interpreted speeches of the seven selected press conferences in the CTSPC corpus involve five interpreters, each having to finish at least one complete session, the seven press conferences are labeled as such combining both the interpreter's code and the year of the session for the identification of a specific interpreter at service. For example, when the interpreter M1 served in 2003 PM's press conference, the relevant session is coded as "M1-03", with "M1" specifying the male interpreter and "03" signifying the session of 2003. In this way, the linguistic choices by the five interpreters can be identified, analyzed and presented for social positioning with different speakers.

5.1.1. The Premier in Interpretation

The analysis on the Premier's speeches finds a consistent and dominant share of statements, with a minimum of 97.19% of statements being used among all speech functions in the seven press conferences. In contrast, other speech functions in PM's speeches appear statically insignificant.

The finding concludes that the primary function of PM's speeches is to provide information. Linguistically, PM relies heavily on the speech function of statement to realize the interpersonal meaning in situation. In addition, the analysis also finds that over 99% of the statements in PM's speeches are realized congruently via declarative clauses. Such choices of realization are highly consistent among the seven sessions, meaning that PM rarely uses the metaphorical way to realize his statements.

Focusing on the speech role of statement that is obviously the locus in PM's speeches of the CTSPC corpus, Figure 5.1 displays the deployment of the statement in the SSs and interpretations. For the ease of comparison, the distributive rates of statements in PM's speeches and their interpretations (INTER-PMs) are labeled above their relevant session columns.
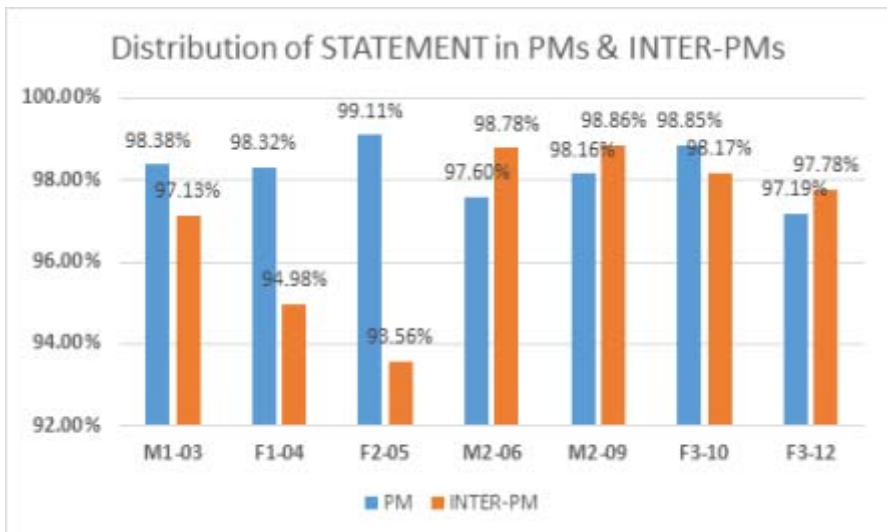

Figure 5.1: Distribution of Statements in PM's Speeches and Interpretations

As is presented in Figure 5.1, the statements in INTER-PMs range from 93.56% to 98.86% among all speech functions in the CTSPC corpus, indicating a primary focus on providing information. Given less than 5.55% of distributive ratio between INTER-PMs and PM's speeches, the interpreters are deemed faithfully portraying the

communicative role of PM via their choices for the grammatical realization of interpersonal meanings.

A further analysis on the realization of statements (in Table 5.1) reveals that the average distributive rate of congruent realization of statement in INTER-PMs is 99.92%, which is even higher than the original 99.68%. That nearly all statements in INTER-PMs are realized via declarative clauses suggests that the interpreters present an exceedingly high level of uniformity in choosing declarative clauses to realize statements for PM.

Table 5.1: Distribution of Statements Realized by Declarative Clauses in PM's Speeches and Interpretations

	M1-03	F1-04	F2-05	M2-06	M2-09	F3-10	F3-12	Av.
PM	99.73%	99.15%	99.40%	100%	99.73%	100%	99.74%	99.68%
INTER-PM	99.70%	100%	100%	100%	99.71%	100%	100%	99.92%

The data of INTER-PMs in Figure 5.1 and Table 5.1 show that the interpreters are highly faithful to represent PM's role as information-provider and to the way PM chooses to realize his interpersonal meanings. More importantly, the interpreters choose to preserve or even enhance the comfortable communicative relationship enjoyed by PM with more congruent realization of the statements in INTER-PMs, implying that the interpreters tend to carefully make themselves invisible in interpreting for PM.

5.1.2. The Journalists in Interpretation

Table 5.2 summarizes the number of speech functions and their distributive percentages in the speeches of JMs and JOs.

Table 5.2: Speech Functions in the SSs of JMs & JOs

Speech Functions		2003	2004	2005	2006	2009	2010	2012
statement	JM	19/ 63.33%	21/ 55.26%	26/ 72.22%	21/ 70.00%	20/ 60.61%	23/ 67.65%	25/ 59.52%
	JO	27/ 51.92%	27/ 58.70%	30/ 62.50%	34/ 65.38%	28/ 52.83%	39/ 67.24%	22/ 52.38%
question	JM	7/ 23.33%	13/ 34.21%	8/ 22.22%	6/ 20.00%	10/ 30.30%	7/ 20.59%	12/ 28.57%
	JO	22 42.31%	16 34.78%	16 33.33%	14 26.92%	24 45.28%	17 29.31%	19 45.24%
command	JM	4/ 13.33%	4/ 10.53%	1/ 2.78%	3/ 10.00%	3/ 9.09%	4/ 11.76%	5/ 11.90%
	JO	3/ 5.77%	3/ 6.52%	2/ 4.17%	4/ 7.69%	1/ 1.89%	2/ 3.45%	1/ 2.38%
offer	JM	0	0	1/ 2.78%	0	0	0	0
	JO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

As is shown in Table 5.2, among all speech functions, the statement and the question take the first and the second largest proportions in the journalists' speeches respectively. The much higher distributive ratio of statement suggests that statements are more frequently applied by journalists. This is rather unexpected and unusual in a setting like the press conference, where the conventional role of the journalist is set to request answers mostly framed in questions. Therefore, the highest percentage of statement found in the journalists' SSs shows that the journalists' speeches are not only to request information, but also to provide information. Linguistically, the questions are always accompanied by elaborative information to arguably either foreground (constrain) or support (explain) the information request.

Given the dominant presence of statements and questions in the journalists' speeches, this analysis focuses only on the journalists' statements and questions in the corpus. Figure 5.2 presents the statement/question (S/Q) rate in JMs and JOs'

speeches and their interpretations. This rate indicates the number of statements used for one single question in SSs and interpretations. The higher the rate is, the more statements are found in the relevant speeches or interpretations. To highlight the analytical focus of interpretation, only comparative ratios of INTER-JMs and INTER-JOs are labelled respectively above and below the relevant session points.
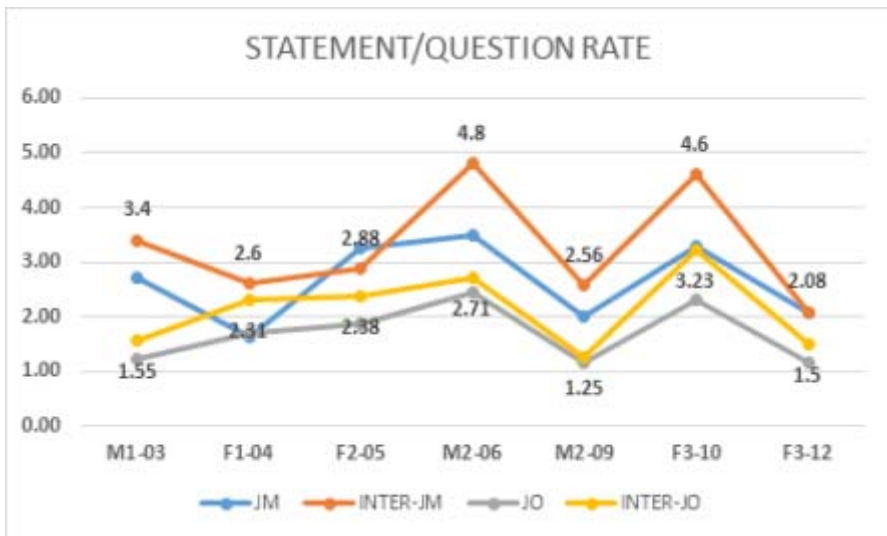

Figure 5.2: Statement VS. Question in Journalists' Speeches and Interpretations

As presented in Figure 5.2, the S/Q rates in INTER-JMs and INTER-JOs are generally higher than those in JMs and JOs, suggesting that the interpretations usually contain more information-giving functions than the SSs do. Based on the data in Figure 5.2, a simple calculation on the average S/Q rate in SSs and interpretations leads to the finding of a statistic difference of 0.63 between INTER-JMs and JMs, which is slightly higher than 0.44 between INTER-JOs and JOs. The difference then suggests that interpreters are comparatively restrained from adding extra statements for JOs. Hence, the INTER-JOs are more grammatically faithful to the JOs' interpersonal-role choices. Yet, despite such a statistic difference, the rise of the statement ratio in the interpretations of all sessions indicates that the information-giving is observed and even augmented deliberately by the interpreters,

most likely for the sake of re-framing journalists' questions in a more precise and specific manner. In this case, the interpreters' facilitating role becomes evident.

Since only two methods are found on the realization of questions in INTER-JMs and INTER-JOs: congruently via interrogatives or metaphorically via declarative clauses, Table 5.3 presents the metaphorical realization of questions in both INTER-JMs and INTER-JOs, and describes the interpreters' choices of grammatical congruency for the questions of JMs and JOs.

Table 5.3: Distribution of Questions Realized by Declarative Clauses in the Interpretations of Journalists' Speeches

	M1-03	F1-04	F2-05	M2-06	M2-09	F3-10	F3-12	Av.
INTER-JM	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	0%	4%
INTER-JO	9%	0%	0%	7%	0%	8%	0%	3%

In Table 5.3, the metaphorical realization of questions in INTER-JMs and INTER-JOs rarely happens, highlighting that the congruent realization is the interpreters' common choices. In reference to the predominant congruent realization of questions in the speeches of JMs and JOs, Table 5.3 suggests that the journalists' grammatical choices are largely retained in interpretation.

Focusing on the congruently realized questions, Table 5.4 presents the distributive rates of wh-interrogatives and polar-interrogatives of INTER-JMs and INTER-JOs.

Table 5.4: Distribution of Interrogative Clauses for Questions in Interpretation

		M1-03	F1-04	F2-05	M2-06	M2-09	F3-10	F3-12	Av.
Wh-	INTER-JM	50%	100%	50%	80%	55.56%	42.86%	100%	68.34%
	INTER-JO	36.36%	69.23%	46.15%	57.14%	66.67%	46.15%	66.67%	55.48%
Polar-	INTER-JM	50%	0%	50%	20%	44.44%	46.15%	0%	30.09%
	INTER-JO	54.55%	30.77%	53.85%	35.71%	33.33%	46.15%	33.33%	41.10%

As is seen in Table 5.4, the distribution of wh-interrogatives is generally higher than that of polar-interrogatives. Besides, such distributive differences are more evident in INTER-JMs than in INTER-JOs. The average distributive rate of wh-interrogatives among questions in INTER-JM is 68.34% whereas the distribution of polar interrogatives is only 30.09%. This difference clearly suggests that questions in INTER-JMs are mostly raised for requesting new information, not for confirming what is given. In contrast, the distribution of wh-interrogatives and polar-interrogatives in INTER-JOs is more balanced, suggesting a higher level of directness in information-request.

Figure 5.3 illustrates the distributive change of these interrogatives in interpretation. The highest and lowest rates are labeled next to the relevant session points in both figures.
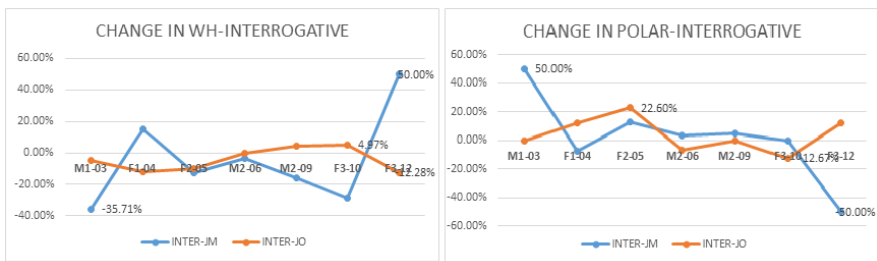

Figure 5.3: Distributive Changes of Wh- and Polar-Interrogatives in Interpretation

As is presented in Figure 5.3, the distributive deviation of wh-interrogatives ranges from -12.28% to 4.97% in INTER-JOs whereas all changes in INTER-JOs are below 12.28%. In INTER-JMs, the change of wh-interrogatives vary greatly among sessions, ranging from -35.71% to 50%. In addition, the distributive change of polar-interrogatives in INTER-JOs ranges from -12.67% to 22.6%. Though, in INTER-JMs, such distributive change is mostly limited, with only two radical spikes of 50% in M1-03 and F3-12.

The inconsistency found in the INTER-JMs' interrogative distributive changes suggests that the way of information-request in INTER-JMs is less relevant to those in JMs' speeches. In contrast, the relatively stable and limited distributive change

rates of interrogative questions in INTER-JOs suggests that the interpreters' choices of interrogative types are basically close to those in their SSs, indicating that the interpreters perform with a shared objective. Hence, the analysis finds that the interpreters adopt two approaches to process these journalists' choices on interrogative questions. Specifically, the ways of the interpreters interpreting questions are only heavily influenced by the original choices in JOs' speeches.

5.2. Interpreters' Choices for addressees

5.2.1. Language-Direction Shifts and the Change of Addressees

The language used in interpreting between English and Chinese at the Premier's two-session press conference defines who the addressee really is. For the immediacy of the information request in communication, the interpreting for the journalists in the Q&A session appears to be more pragmatically and timely important than it is for the Premier. Since it is only possible for some foreign journalists to raise questions in English to PM, the choice of language among JOs decides not only the pragmatic functionality of the interpreting, but also who the addressee is. Put simply, if a journalist raises a question in Chinese, its interpreting becomes functionally secondary to both communicative parties as PM, the addressee of the question understands Chinese (see Figure 5.4).

	Addresser		Addressee
QUESTION	JO (Chinese)	➡	Premier (Chinese-speaking)
	Interpreter (English)	⇨	non-P (English-speaking)
	OR		
	JO (English)	⇨	non-P (English-speaking)
	Interpreter (Chinese)	➡	Premier (Chinese-speaking)

Figure 5.4: Language Direction & Addressee Change

As is indicated in Figure 5.4, only when questions are raised in English, as always by JOs, to PM who does not speak English, the communicative function of the interpreting from English to Chinese can be realized.

When interpreting JOs' questions, the interpreters must understand the nature of their role and the complexity of their target audience, and find ways to situate themselves in two sets of communicative relationship: 1) one between the Chinese-speaking PM and the Chinese-speaking JOs, where the addressee of the interpreting also includes the bilingual JOs; and 2) one between the Chinese-speaking PM and non-Chinese speaking JOs, where the interpreting only addresses the right communicative party.

In short, the change of language directionality in interpreting actually leads to two different sets of interpreter-addressee relationship, where the interpreter's social positioning can be challenged in different ways. In all, the change of addressee caused by the shift of language-direction changes the nature of the language service, signifying the potentiality of the interpreter to re-position himself in mediation between the speaker and the addressee.

5.2.2. Interpreters' MOOD Choices with the Change of Addressees

By only drawing on the interpretations of JOs, the similar number of clauses in SSs are analysed and, more importantly, the speakers with the similar political-geographic backgrounds are compared. To facilitate analysis and comparison, the JOs' speeches and their interpretations are classified as being either Chinese-English (C-E) direction or English-Chinese (E-C) direction.

For the ease of comparison and given the communicative role of JOs, this section focuses only on analysing questions. The reason is that it is mainly through questions that the journalists can request information or invite comments from PM, thus initiating a specific Q&A turn in the press conference. After all, questions are the locus of the journalists' speeches to instantiate their communicative role with PM.

According to SFL, questions can be realized in lexicogrammar, either congruently through wh-interrogatives and polar-interrogatives or metaphorically through

declarative clauses. Table 5.5 displays the grammatical feature of questions in the SSs and the interpretations, and summarizes the change in the questions and the types of their grammatical realizations between C-E and E-C interpretations from JOs' speeches.

In the table, both the tots and the distributive rates of different grammatical realizations of questions are presented for comparison. The language direction is abbreviated with the initial letter of the languages, which is widely acknowledged in translation studies.

Table 5.5: Choices of MOOD in C—E and E—C Interpretations

		Source		Interpretation		Difference	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
CC-E	Wh-	48	66.24	32	62.69	-16	-3.55
	Polar	22	31.63	19	33.51	-3	1.88
	Declarative	2	2.13	3	3.8	1	1.67
	Total	72		54		-18	
EE-C	Wh-	28	49.41	30	55.56	2	6.15
	Polar	26	47.66	23	44.44	-3	-3.22
	Declarative	2	2.93	0	0.00	-2	-2.93
	Total	56		54		-2	

As shown in Table 5.5, the number of questions decreases in both directions, suggesting that the interpretation, in general, tends to synthesize or simplify meanings of questions in the SSs. Yet, the table also shows a reduction of more questions in C-E than in E-C interpretation, signifying a higher level of summarization of meaning in C-E interpreting process. For example, the interpretations of Turn218 in the 2003-session and Turn111 in 2004-session both lose a question framed in WH-interrogative.

Table 5.6: Analysis on some turns in 2003pm and 2004pm

Source Speech (2003pm-Turn218)	Analysis	
您会不会要求针对赵紫阳先生， (You will not ask Mr. Zhao Ziyang)	interrogative: Polar	question
让他恢复工作呢？(Let him return to work?)	interrogative: Polar	question
针对伊拉克的最新状态，您有何评论？(What is your comment on the latest state of Iraq?)	interrogative: WH	question
Interpretation (2003pm-Turn219)	Analysis	
Would it be possible for it?	interrogative: Polar	question
And could I also have your comment on the latest development on the questions of Iraq?	interrogative: Polar	question
Source Speech (2004pm-Turn111)	Analysis	
What's the government's response to this?	interrogative: WH	question
And how is China going to address people's concern about this?	interrogative: WH	question
And also, are you going to declare the 1989 demonstrations a patriotic movement?	interrogative: Polar	question
Interpretation (2004pm-Turn112/114)	Analysis	
那么，您觉着中国政府方面对于这些人的关切应该采取什么立场呢？(So, what do you think the position of the Chinese government should be regarding the concerns of these people?)	interrogative: WH	question
您会把这个89年发生的事情宣布为一个爱国的活动吗？(Will you declare this 89-year event a patriotic activity?)	interrogative: Polar	question

In terms of the grammatical realization of questions, the number of polar-interrogatives decreases in both language directions. Since the polar-interrogative often leads to a very direct information request, this decrease suggests a unity in the interpretations that are less confrontational than their SSs in information request.

Seen in the distributive ratio of three types of grammatical realizations, however, are more meaningful differences of the interpreting choices. Firstly, the declarative clauses are up 1.67% in C-E interpretation, but down 2.93% in E-C interpretation, caused by a drop of two declarative questions in E-C interpretation and the rise of one declarative question in C-E interpretation as is shown above. Such a change may arguably be related to the linguistic influence of the source language because, despite the grammatical incongruence, the realization of question in the form of

declarative clause is comparatively common in Chinese, whereas it is rare in English. However, these distributive changes lead to a general impression that the Chinese questions are made more oral or informal in their English interpretations, while the English questions are more grammatically formal via their congruent realisation in E-C interpretation.

Secondly, the change in two congruent realizations of the questions is contrastively different between two language directions in interpreting. The C-E interpretation contains a deduction of 16 wh-interrogatives or 3.55%, but the E-C interpretation realizes an increase of wh-interrogatives in both totality and distribution. Furthermore, the decrease of polar-interrogatives in interpretation also varies between two language directions regarding the distributive rate. The E-C interpretation sees a lower distribution of polar-interrogatives in questions whereas the C-E interpretation witnesses a rise. Thus, a different approach seems to be applied for the grammatical realization of questions in E-C interpretation. Through significantly bumping up wh-interrogatives and cutting down polar-interrogatives, the speakers' requests for information are made much less confrontational and more informative in interpretation to the audience.

5.3 Discussion on the Interpreters' Linguistic Choices

5.3.1. On different speakers

Judging from the analysis of the linguistic features of the interpretations on the speeches of the three categories of speakers, the interpretations resemble the SSs in the grammatical expression of interpersonal meanings. However, despite all the similarities, some patterns of changes are found in the interpreted speeches.

Firstly, the interpretations simplify the grammatical structure of the SSs, particularly those from JOs. The linguistic structure of the interpretations is generally simpler than the original speeches at the grammatical-syntactic level, which suggests the interpreter's effort to re-present the source message more orally to facilitate the communication between the two primary parties.

Secondly, the grammatical variation between the interpretations and the SSs

remains subtle. Through grammatical means, the interpersonal roles of the speakers are faithfully re-realized in communication, including PM's information giving and the journalists' information requesting. Moreover, the choice of grammatical realization for PM's interpersonal role is highly consistent across all individual sessions conducted by the interpreters. However, subtle as it is, some meaningful differences have emerged in the interpretations of the journalists' speeches, where, for example, more statements are used in the interpretations, most likely due to explications made to frame the expected questions. Two types of questions are involved, and the proportion between these two is constantly adjusted for different purposes: either highlighting or mitigating the urgency of the journalists' information request. It is also noticed that the interpretations for JOs generally contain less changes than the interpretations for JMs, which suggests that the interpreters are generally more cautious on the issue of fidelity when they interpret for JOs.

Like any live broadcast interpreting events, interpreting in the corpus is received by different groups of people. At the individual conferences, the interpreting serves for the immediate but one-way communication between PM and the journalists, but with the audience extending from the invited journalists and government officials to millions of TV viewers from all walks of life and possibly in different countries. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the interpreting practice is situated in a complex of interpersonal relationships. However, the linguistic changes regarding the expression of interpersonal meanings in the speech/interpretation of PM and the journalists shows that the live broadcasting does not change the formality of this interpreting service. The audience, either at the conference or in front the TV, is unlikely to be prioritized for communicative concerns. It is the subjects, particularly PM and JOs, that are given primary focus of the interpreting, and the high level of prudence and cautiousness the interpreters demonstrate is reflected in their choices for management of all relationships during interpretation.

Furthermore, by focusing on the interpretations of PM's speeches, the study finds that the five interpreters present a high level of uniformity across all sessions, which demonstrates the feature of the community of practice. Generally, their performances are faithful to the meaning expressed in the SSs, suggesting the

interpreters' professional neutrality. In addition, the lexico-grammatical changes made in the relevant interpretations are mostly limited and rather consistent across all sessions. This might be associated with the constant communication and practice within the interpreting group as previously reported in the news on the DTI interpreters. In other words, the interpreting practice on PM's speeches aims for a uniformed linguistic performance and thus is presented accordingly. With such a community of practice presented and analyzed, it is reasonable to assume that the faithful and consistent interpretations of the five interpreters are basically supported by the stable interpersonal relationship between PM as a government leader, and the interpreters as public servants. The role of a professional interpreter and his or her position as public servant are well blended in the interpreters' service for PM.

Thirdly, the interpretation on the speeches of JMs and JOs suggests two different approaches adopted for interpreter-speaker relationships. As for JOs, the interpretations of their speeches present a high level of grammatical accuracy, and thus appear to be most cautious with changes in the interpersonal meaning. As with JMs who are in the same sociopolitical system, the interpreters' management of linguistic changes becomes rather selective and less restrained. Given the consistent performance shown in INTER-JOs and INTER-PMs, the interpreters seem to perform with more freedom for JMs in communication.

To sum up, we see three different interpreting styles based on the interpersonal-meaning expressed grammatically in CTSPC, which suggests three different sets of interpreter-speaker relationship. The most stable relationship is seen with PM who appears to be the absolute locus of the event. The most sensitive relationship is found with JOs who are socially, culturally or ideologically different from the CTSPC interpreters. And the most relaxed or linguistically unfocused relationship is with JMs who live and work in the same social and political system with the interpreters. What is also reflected in different management of meaning in interpretation is that the role of speakers affects the interpreter-speaker relationship at various degrees and eventually the interpreters' own conceptualization of their roles in practice.

5.3.2. On different addressees

When different language directions are required, the interpretation on JOs' questions regarding the grammatical realization shows several common features.

Firstly, the C-E interpretations appear more grammatically synthesized in instantiating questions. The units of meaning in the JOs' speeches are re-organized to the extent where 18 questions are nowhere to be found in interpretation. There are two possible explanations for the disappearance of these questions. Either some questions are simply omitted or more clause complexes are used in C-E interpretation to convey the journalists' requests for information from PM. Either way, this change largely weakens the emphasis on the meaning accuracy for not being able to retain the original units of information-requests. If the interpreters choose to synthesize multiple units of information requests into only one question, the original meaning can become less accessible for the audience. In contrast, the rise of metaphorical realization of questions with declarative clauses in C-E interpreting resets the journalists' questions in a much more casual style to the English audience. As a result, C-E interpretation becomes less audience-friendly due to a higher level of grammatical-syntactical complexity.

Secondly, when the questions raised in English are essential for PM to respond, they are seldom reduced in number when interpreted into Chinese. The fact that the number of questions is basically preserved in E-C interpretation suggests that the linguistic choices are made with the interpreters' highest respect to the speakers' choices on the organization of the units of meaning in each question.

Moreover, in E-C interpretation, the directness featured in the original information request is largely mitigated through less frequent choices of polar interrogatives and more wh-interrogatives. The interpreted questions are grammatically structured in such a way that the informative aspect of information requests is highlighted. Eventually, with wh-interrogatives in E-C interpretation overwriting the confrontational tone in JOs' informational requests to PM, the interpreters re-creates a more addressee-friendly communicative effect.

Given the close link between the addressee change and the language direction, the changes of the realization of interpersonal meanings here suggest a diametric

difference in interpreting approaches between the addressee of the Chinese-speaking PM and all English-speaking JOs. Being the direct addressee of JOs' speeches, the Chinese PM is consistently situated in a favourable situation through the interpreting process, where the interpreters facilitate his or her communication more comprehensively. As for the English-speaking JOs, only through the realization of interpersonal meanings are they addressed in a seemingly faithful manner. The condensation of questions in interpreting is obviously audience-unfriendly, as the approach may either sacrifice the completeness of the original meaning or make the information less accessible. The tendency to change for casual style in projecting these questions can hardly convey the original formality or reflect the interpreters' intention for a clearer rendering of the message.

Given the relationship between the language in use and the target audience in the event, the use of different interpreting approaches towards the journalists' questions suggests the consistent influence of the addressee in the interpreters' grammatical choices. When PM needs to be addressed directly in interpreting, the interpreters pay more attention to the detailed information and project the questions to PM in a much less confrontational manner. This differentiation shows that greater importance is always given to PM, as the addressee of the DTI interpreters' practice, thus reflecting how the interpreters socially position themselves by grammatically favouring one party in communication.

The change presented in the interpretations of JOs' questions for different addressees suggests that the facilitating role of these interpreters is actually very dynamic and shifting whenever it is needed, as it covers a rather wide spectrum. In short, the positioning of the interpreters could be sensitive to the interpreter-addressee relationship.

6. Conclusion

Given the social/political significance of these events and the corresponding formality involved, it is reasonable to believe that all parties apply the linguistic

resources carefully so that the identities of different speakers can be appropriately reflected in their respective discourses, which feature three different social status and therefore interpersonal roles assigned. Mediated through interpretation, any representation of or rectification on the different roles of the speakers projected in the events hinges on what and how the interpreters choose from linguistic resources.

By analyzing speakers from different cultural, social, political and geographic backgrounds, this study testifies how the interpreters' performance is grammatically affected in dealing with the dynamics of different interpreter-speaker relationships. What is consistently manifested from the interpreters' grammatical choices in practice are actually interpreters' choices for identities, professional and institutional, which are the true drivers for their social positioning.

This study shows that the in-house interpreters of the Chinese government realize a level of interpersonal alignment with only one party at the two-session conferences. Since these elite interpreters are highly competent both linguistically and professionally, having had thorough preparations prior to each two-session conference, their choices of alignment could only be interpreted as nothing but the result of their evaluation of the power relationship. More specifically, as the interpreters are institutional insiders and staff members, their choices of role in practice will inevitably be determined by institution itself: its interests, function and importance. Their struggling to balance out their roles is inevitably reflected in their practice in general and linguistic choices in particular. For them, PM is not only a client but also an authority representative of the institution, to which they have pledged their primary allegiance by prioritizing PM's communicative needs or intentions in interpretation. To ensure an accurate rendition of PM's information, they choose to make constant interpersonal alignment with PM and create a more agreeable communicative environment in the Q&A turns for him. On the contrary, they are conveniently selective with the interpersonal meaning choices for the journalists both when they are addressing and addressed. In summary, the in-house interpreters do not equally facilitate the communication to both parties.

Yet, the study also suggests that although greatly constrained by their institutional roles, the in-house interpreters are still linguistic professionals. They subordinate their

participatory activities, such as linguistic choices and interpersonal relations, to the preservation of professional requirements and professional survival in the long run (Monacelli 2009). Moreover, the live broadcast of the press conferences to the world could make the interpreters on stage more conscious of their decision making of linguistic choices (Katan and Straniero-Sergio 2001). Eventually, it is their efforts in balancing between the linguistic fidelity and the institutional loyalty that governs their decision-making on linguistic choices, and, hence, their roles. In summary, these interpreters attempt to embrace two roles in their interpretation of the two-session press conference: one as part of the institution pledging of allegiance to the government, and the other individual interpreters adhering to the norms of the interpreting profession.

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