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Exploring an Interdisciplinary Interface Between Journalistic Translation and Journalism Studies: Insights from Discursive News Values Analysis

Abstract

Translation has always been an inseparable part of news production. Therefore, enhancing the interaction between translation studies and journalism studies is important. News translation scholars have actively engaged in this interdisciplinary dialogue by borrowing concepts like gatekeeping and framing from journalism and communication studies to channel innovative insights into journalistic translation research (JTR). Nevertheless, this interdisciplinary interface remains relatively underexplored. This study argues that journalism studies have more to offer to JTR than the concepts of framing and gatekeeping. Among them is the notion of news value, a core concept in journalism. In particular, this study highlights the usefulness of the discursive news values analysis (DNVA) approach, developed by Caple and Bednarek in analyzing translated news discourse, which helps track how news values embedded in semiotic resources are re-established via translation, and how the construction of news values differs between source texts and target texts. This article concludes by suggesting potential directions for advancing JTR and boosting journalism-oriented investigations of translated news discourse through the lens of news values.

Keywords: journalism, journalistic translation; news values; discursive news values analysis (DNVA)

1. Introduction

As an emerging subarea in translation studies, journalistic translation research (JTR) has garnered much scholarly attention over the past two decades (Valdeón, 2015, 2020a). JTR, the label per se, has demonstrated the interdisciplinary nature of news translation at the interface of journalism and translation, not to mention the entangled history between translation and news production since “the birth of journalism” (Valdeón, 2012, p. 851). Thus, it seems reasonable for translation and journalism studies to collaborate closely and draw insights from each other.

News translation scholars have noted the potential of exploring the interdisciplinary interface between JTR and journalism studies: the prevalence of concepts such as framing (Li, 2022; Liu, 2017; Wu, 2018) and gatekeeping (Song, 2017; Valdeón, 2021, 2022a; Vuorinen, 1997) in the existing literature is indicative of this initiative. However, the common ground journalism and translation studies share is more than framing and gatekeeping. For instance, agenda-setting theory, effective in interpreting the impact of news media, has been suggested to bring refreshing insights into JTR (Valdeón, 2021). For his part, Ping (2022) opted for agenda-setting to explore the role of translation in setting the cultural agenda by an official Chinese newspaper. Valdeón (2022b) drew on tabloidization, a trend witnessed in many broadsheet newspapers and a buzzword in journalism studies, to interrogate how translation has enhanced and facilitated the tabloidized transformation undertaken by the Spanish version of the *New York Times*. These attempts have highlighted the prospects of interconnecting journalism and news translation.

Our contribution suggests that the concept of news values, which is widely studied in journalism, could provide a new perspective on JTR. In particular, we would like to test the applicability of the discursive news values analysis (DNVA) approach developed by Caple and Bednarek (2016) in analyzing translated news discourse. News values, often understood as the criteria or factors determining the newsworthiness of an event (Bednarek & Caple, 2012a), forms a crucial part of existing literature in journalism (Zhang & Cheung, 2022), but has rarely become the research focus in JTR. It is assumed that news values and DNVA could channel new insights into JTR, helping us track how news values embedded in semiotic resources are re-established via translation and how the construction of news values differs between source texts (ST) and target texts (TT). After a brief introduction to news values and the DNVA approach, a pilot study putting DNVA in use is presented. Potential directions for advancing JTR and boosting journalism-oriented investigations of translated news discourse through the lens of news values are also mentioned.

2. News Value: A Possible Interdisciplinary Interface

News values exert considerable influence on the decision-making process of news production, thereby making them an essential dimension in exploring “the focus and shape of news stories and the decisions of journalists” (Cotter, 2010, p. 67). Considering their importance in constructing journalistic discourse, news values have been a classic and enduring research topic in journalism studies. Consequently, numerous lists of news values have been developed to reveal the patterns and criteria for making news worth covering. Galtung and Ruge (1965) pioneered the pursuit of the criteria that makes news stories worth being covered, thus marking the emergence of news values research. They proposed a list of 12 factors that might prompt the reporting of specific news events, namely “frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to elite

nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons, and reference to something negative” (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, pp. 70-71). This seminal contribution laid the foundation for subsequent attempts to map out news value patterns in journalism, mainly via refining and updating the list proposed by Galtung and Ruge (Mast & Temmerman, 2021). Harcup and O'Neill (2001) re-evaluated the previous literature concerning news values and examined British newspapers to devise a novel list of news values containing “the power elite, celebrity, entertainment, surprise, bad news, good news, magnitude, relevance, follow-up and newspaper agenda” (p. 279). In a later contribution, Harcup and O'Neill (2017) modified the previous one and added “exclusivity, conflict, audio-visuals, shareability, drama” (p. 1482) to the 2001 list, taking into account the affordances of social media. In their monograph, *News Values*, Brighton and Foy (2007) presented a brand-new set of news values, emphasizing the importance of considering the impact of the altered journalistic field on newsworthiness construction. Their news value list comprises factors including “relevance, topicality, composition, expectation, unusualness, worth, and external influences” (Brighton & Foy, 2007, pp. 25-29).

The aforementioned contributions of devising news values have sketched a more transparent picture “of practices and judgments which are otherwise shrouded in opacity” (O'Neill & Harcup, 2019, p. 215) in news production. However, they are not without drawbacks. One of the biggest problems regarding these taxonomies is that they are often concerned with different dimensions of news values (Bednarek et al., 2021), such as stories and events per se, the practices and perceptions of journalists, and the preferences of media outlets. These chaotic entanglements have made news value an elusive and vague concept challenging to investigate and define. To prevent the concept of news value from “becoming ineffectual as an analytical approach” (Caple & Bednarek, 2016, p. 436), it is necessary to disentangle the different aspects of news values.

Bednarek and Caple (2017) summarized four dimensions of news values: material, social, cognitive, and discursive aspects. The material aspect of news values concerns the newsworthiness intrinsic to the event per se “for a given community” (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 42). Thus, this kind of research often opts for content analysis to investigate the potential factors prompting the selection of certain events to be reported in news stories (Caple & Bednarek, 2016). The social and cognitive dimensions of news values attend to “newswriters’ mental representations” and “newswriters’ social practice” in constructing newsworthiness, respectively (Bednarek et al., 2021, p. 704). The investigations of newswriters’ journalistic practices perfectly match the ethnographic approach that provides first-hand observation and resources of people involved in the news production process (Caple & Bednarek, 2016). The discursive aspect of news values focuses on how newsworthiness is established via the deliberate manipulation of texts and images in news stories.

The discursive dimension can be deemed “complementary to” the material, social, and cognitive aspects of news values (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 139). Admitting the lack of theoretical and methodological tools to approach newsworthiness construction from a discursive perspective, Bednarek and Caple (2017) have developed the discursive news values analysis (DNVA) framework to explore the establishment of news values via semiotic resources in journalistic discourse. This study argues that news values, especially the DNVA framework, might generate some new collaborative research agendas between JTR and journalism studies, and shed some insights on “a better understanding of the manipulative processes, hidden agendas and ideological biases of news production” (Valdeón, 2020b, p. 1658).

3. Introducing Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA)

News values can be reflected in “the kind of language in which that news is told” (Bell, 1991, p. 2). The DNVA framework echoes this point and argues that journalistic discourse is a crucial site for observing news values construed via semiotic resources (Bednarek & Caple, 2017). This method considers both verbal and non-verbal resources, examining “journalism as a semiotic practice and news values as discursively constructed” (Bednarek et al., 2021, p. 720). This discursive approach does not demean the material, social or cognitive dimensions of news values detailed in the previous section, but offers a complementary perspective to comprehend newsworthiness construction (Bednarek & Caple, 2012b). The DNVA approach can be combined with “ethnographic and other research on social, cognitive, and material dimensions of news values” (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 43) if an enhanced and holistic understanding thereof is desired.

As shown in Section 2, many news value lists are already available in the existing literature. Therefore, Bednarek and Caple (2017) built upon the previous literature and identified those that overlapped and frequently occurred to draft their news value list, which includes “positivity/negativity, impact, superlativeness, proximity, timeliness, unexpectedness, eliteness, personalization, consonance, and aesthetics” (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 53).

Positivity and *Negativity* are often construed via positive/negative evaluative language, or depictions of negative/positive behaviors. The news value of *Impact* is concerned with describing the severe consequences of an event, often established through descriptions or assessments of the profound effects. Linguistic resources such as intensifiers, quantifiers, repetition, and metaphors contribute to establishing the news value of *Superlativeness*, which highlights “the high intensity or large scope/scale” of an event (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 55). The establishment of *Proximity* mainly depends on references to places that are culturally or geographically familiar to the target readership. *Timeliness* is a news value that underlines the recency of an event, often construed with linguistic resources referring to time, such as temporal references and present tense. The novelty of an event realizes the value of *Unexpectedness*, whose construction can often be attributed to adjectives and adverbs describing unusualness. While the news value of *Eliteness* is displayed via various references to famous figures and organizations, traces of *Personalization* are detected in references to ordinary people. *Consonance* is a news value relevant to stereotypes, as its realization relies on stereotypical descriptions of news actors or linguistic resources to demonstrate similarity and expectedness. *Aesthetics*, which indicates the beauty of an event, only applies to visual elements in news discourse. Based on these news values, Bednarek and Caple formulated detailed inventories of linguistic and visual devices to establish newsworthiness, the complete lists of which are available at www.newsvaluesanalysis.com. A more detailed introduction concerning DNVA can be found in the monograph co-authored by Bednarek and Caple (2017).

The DNVA framework was initially developed for analyzing English news texts. Notwithstanding an English-oriented framework, DNVA has been proven helpful in interrogating news texts published in other languages, such as Persian (Makki, 2019, 2020) and Chinese (Guo et al., 2022; He, 2021; Wu & Pan, 2021). These studies have laid the foundation for using DNVA in JTR, which often involves cross-cultural and cross-linguistic analyses. News translation has been suggested as “a promising area for applying and developing DNVA” by Bednarek and Caple (2017, p. 247). However, this approach has hitherto seldom been employed in JTR. The only exception might be the research by Riggs (2021), which approached news reports produced by media outlets of different countries from the perspective of cultural translation, and examined the news values established in pictures accompanying headlines of the

collected news stories via DNVA. This study explores whether this innovative DNVA approach can analyze translated news and lead to new perspectives in JTR.

4. Applying DNVA to Journalistic Translation

This section provides a pilot study of approaching news translation via DNVA. The data analyzed here were retrieved from a corpus built for a larger research project that analyzes popular English-Chinese translated news reports about the United States published in 2020 by a Chinese official news agency, *Reference News* (RN), on its WeChat subscription account. Popular news translations refer to those capturing more than 100,000 clicks, the highest traffic number shown by WeChat. RN is a unique official news organization in the Chinese media environment, famous for publishing selected and translated news stories based on sources from the foreign press. Thus, instead of disseminating information produced by domestic media, RN mainly provides Chinese readers with coverage of China-related news or other international affairs through the lens of foreign news agencies. RN's identity as a popular official media outlet concerned with many translation activities makes it a valuable case to explore news translation practice within the Chinese context. As an official and highly institutionalized news agency, RN's translation practices are collective and performed by "a team of people with common interests" (Xia, 2019, p. 118). Thus, it can be said that such news translations, though often involving the collaborative efforts of multiple stakeholders, reflect the collective ideologies upheld by RN and are accepted by each individual participating in the workflow (Pan, 2015; Xia, 2019).

This preliminary study has analyzed a dataset of 220 pairs of English headlines and their Chinese renditions published on RN's WeChat account through the prism of DNVA. It aims to determine what news values have been established in the collected English and Chinese headlines and how their newsworthiness construction practices differ. The selection of headlines as the analytical focus can be attributed to their crucial role in summarizing news stories and attracting the target readership (Bell, 1991). For a WeChat article, a headline is crucial in capturing clicks, as it is the first element available to the audience. An investigation of headlines offers a general picture of the news values underlined by the press for attracting readers and construing the newsworthiness of news events or actors involved; in our case, the investigation pertains to news coverage of the United States. Note that this preliminary attempt does not aim to draw any general conclusions concerning RN's journalistic translation practice; instead, it seeks to test the applicability of DNVA in news translation research, especially in comparing the sources and target texts involved through the lens of news values.

The analysis was undertaken following a revised DNVA coding scheme based on the inventory for linguistic analysis developed by Bednarek (2015). During the coding process, it is necessary to carefully mull over aspects like co-text, context, and target readership before making any coding decisions (Caple et al., 2020). As mentioned above, the collected English headlines were all retrieved from news stories concerning the United States published by various sources, especially American media outlets (around 68%) such as the *Associated Press*, *CNN*, the *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, and the *New York Times*. Although sources from other countries or regions were identified, like the *South China Morning Post* from Hong Kong SAR, *Reuters*, and the *BBC* from the UK, most of the data were produced by American media. Therefore, news values identified in the collected English headlines were coded from the viewpoint of American readers to maintain consistency. The Chinese headline translations on RN's WeChat account were then coded by envisaging the perspectives of Chinese readers, which was an easier task, as both authors are native Chinese speakers.

Meanwhile, we must admit that subjectivity is inevitable regarding manual coding. Previous literature undertaking manual DNVA has given prominence to the problem of subjectivity in coding news values. Some may argue that including the inter-coder agreement can resolve the issue, which can be countered via remarks made by Bednarek (2015). According to Bednarek (2015), the inter-coder agreement does not reduce the impact of subjectivity relevant to manually identifying news values, but would “only have provided information on the quality of the coding manual” (p. 6). Researchers should focus on the consistency and transparency of the coding process and ensure that each coding decision can be well justified (Bednarek, 2015). Therefore, a revised coding scheme, tailor-made for our linguistic analysis of news values, was devised based on the inventories developed by Bednarek (2015). Following Makki (2019, 2020) and Zhang and Cheung (2022), the first author coded the collected data for three rounds to maintain intra-coder reliability and consulted with the second author when encountering ambiguous cases.

The news values identification phase was conducted through NVivo 12 by coding news values constructed in each collected headline under their corresponding node. A news headline may contain multiple linguistic resources for establishing one specific news value. Under such circumstances, the news value construed was still coded only once, as this study solely aims to investigate news values commonly established across the collected headlines. *Consonance* was not discussed in the following cross-cultural and cross-linguistic analysis, considering that the English sources are published by agencies of different partisanships, which made it extremely difficult to identify “potential stereotypes members of the target audience hold if the coder is not a member of that target audience” (Bednarek, 2015, p. 7).

4.1. An Overview

Figure 1 and Table 1 (below) present an overview of news values distributed across the collected English headlines and their Chinese counterparts published on RN’s WeChat account. In the following analysis, notions of the source text (ST) and target text (TT) were also used to refer to the English and Chinese headlines investigated in the pilot study. Despite our efforts to mitigate the impact of subjectivity, it was unavoidable. Hence, the following numbers “should be interpreted as tendencies/ trends rather than facts” (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 214).

The top four news values prioritized in the English headlines are *Proximity*, *Timeliness*, *Eliteness*, and *Negativity*, while their Chinese counterparts have underlined *Eliteness*, *Negativity*, *Timeliness*, and *Superlativeness*. Both groups give prominence to *Eliteness*, *Negativity*, and *Timeliness*. All the Chinese headlines have garnered over 100,000 clicks on RN’s WeChat account. Based on the excellent performance of these news translations, we argue that when consuming news about the United States, the followers of RN’s WeChat account prefer negative and timely news stories involving high-profile American political figures, such as the former president Donald Trump and his Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo. In what follows, we further discussed news values that demonstrated statistical significance between the English headlines and their Chinese counterparts, including *Proximity*, *Superlativeness*, *Timeliness*, and *Negativity*.

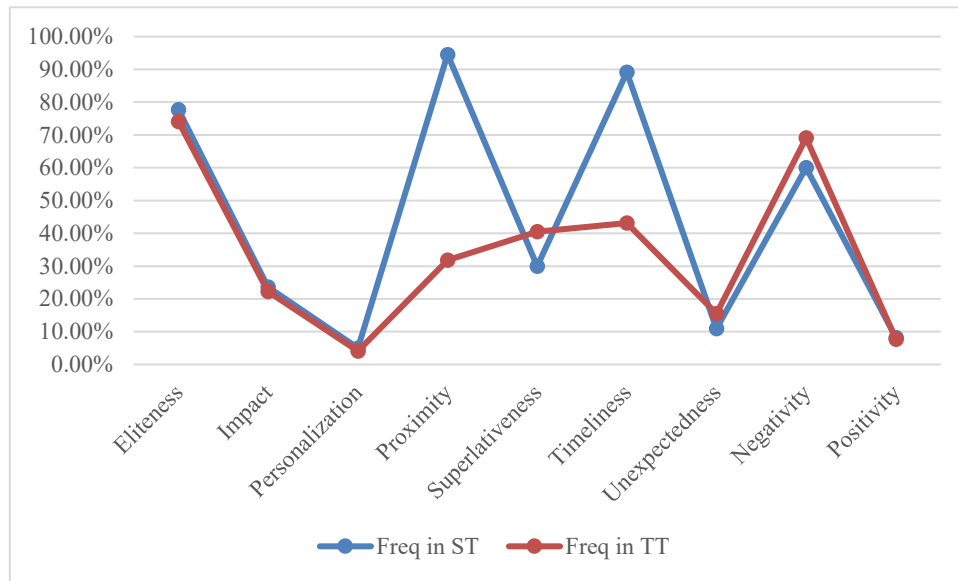


Figure 1. The construal of news values in the English and Chinese headlines (as percentages)

Table 1. The distribution of news values in the English and Chinese headlines (raw numbers)

<i>News value</i>	<i>Freq in ST</i>	<i>Freq in TT</i>	<i>Chi-square</i>	<i>P-value</i>
<i>Eliteness</i>	171	163	0.7954	0.3725
<i>Impact</i>	52	49	0.1157	0.7338
<i>Personalization</i>	11	9	0.2095	0.6471
<i>Proximity</i>	208	70	186.0592	0.0000***
<i>Superlativeness</i>	66	89	5.2690	0.0217*
<i>Timeliness</i>	196	95	103.5181	0.0000***
<i>Unexpectedness</i>	24	34	1.9859	0.1588
<i>Negativity</i>	132	152	3.9726	0.0462*
<i>Positivity</i>	18	17	0.0310	0.8601

Statistical significance: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ and *** $p < 0.001$.

4.2. Proximity: Positive Reflection of China's Image

Statistical significance was noted in construing *Proximity* between the ST and TT collected. *Proximity* foregrounds a news story's "geographical, cultural nearness" to the target readers (Bednarek & Caple, 2017, p. 53). Over ninety percent of the English headlines have shown traces of *Proximity*, whose establishment can be attributed to labels referring to various political figures (e.g., Donald Trump, Mike Pompeo, Barack Obama), organizations (e.g., FOX, CNN, CDC, CBS, the White House), and locations (e.g., Tennessee, California, Alaska, New York, America, US). A high frequency of *Proximity* in the English dataset is not surprising, as all sampled English headings are retrieved from news reports concerned with the United States, which can make American readers "feel more geographically proximate to the event" (Makki, 2019, p. 451).

In comparison, only one-third of the Chinese headlines have constructed *Proximity* by mentioning locations (e.g., Asia, South China Sea, China, Wuhan, Beijing, and Taiwan), figures (e.g., Hua Chunying, the spokesperson for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Meng Wanzhou, Huawei's CFO), or other references familiar to the Chinese readership (e.g., The People's Liberation Army, WeChat, TikTok). Although America is neither geographically nor culturally close to Chinese readers, the translated news stories about America published on RN's WeChat account still received a significant amount of the readers' attention, especially considering that news reports with Chinese headlines achieved the ultimate traffic benchmark for a WeChat article (100,000+ views). The popularity of translated US-related news stories published on RN's WeChat account has demonstrated the significance of China-US relations and Chinese readers' genuine interest in international news about America. Superficially, the news coverage of America functions to inform Chinese readers of what has happened in one of the largest economies in the world. Nevertheless, we argue that the underlying purpose of reporting China's top frenemy is to "provide a sense of what China is not" (Pan et al., 2020, p. 63).

ST1 and ST2 are concerned with the coronavirus issue, the former about the high infection rate in the US military and the latter about the virus's dreadful impact on New York and the world. RN's rendition of ST1, in addition to the information mentioned in the original, added descriptions of the US military's passive responses to the virus outbreak. Similarly, TT2 omitted the exact number of global deaths, which, if translated into Chinese, may weakly construe *Proximity* for RN's Chinese followers on WeChat; instead, it gave prominence to a surge of confirmed cases and the constantly increasing death toll in New York. The decline of America's economy is delineated in ST3 and ST4. TT3 has kept the core message in the original headline, which is already a negative delineation of America's economic prospects. ST4 indicates the looming depression with the word "downturn" and a large number, "five million," while RN's translation opted for a Chinese four-character idiom ("板上钉钉 cast in stone") to highlight the *Superlativeness* of the impending crisis in the US. Compared with Trump's America, China in 2020 has performed more effectively in containing the virus and fulfilling the role of a global player amid a worldwide crisis. Ultimately, the representations of an America with decreased economic prospects, a surge of confirmed cases, and a high death toll depicted in RN's journalistic translations serves to "reflect well on China" (Colley & Moore, 2022, p. 16). While national unity can be strengthened by foregrounding *Proximity* (Guo et al., 2022), RN's translation of English news discourse construing *Proximity* for American readers, yet implicitly leading to a positive reflection of China, might be another way to boost national pride, as shown in the examples below.

Example 1

ST1: Coronavirus cases in the US military surpass 1,500 (Dickstein, 6 April 2020)

TT1: 美军队确诊破 1500, 军方仍不提供口罩 [US military has more than 1,500 confirmed cases, but masks are still not provided] (RN, 8 April 2020)

Example 2

ST2: New York area walloped as global virus deaths pass 100,000 (Sedensky et al., 11 April 2020)

TT2: 美国确诊病例超 50 万, 纽约死亡病例快速上升 [America has more than 500,000 confirmed cases; death toll in New York surges] (RN, 11 April 2020)

Example 3

ST3: The US economy has come to a standstill, satellite imagery shows (Sheetz, 28 March 2020)

TT3: 美媒: 卫星图像显示美国经济已陷入停滞 [US media: Satellite imagery shows America's economy has come to a halt] (RN, 29 March 2020)

Example 4

ST4: Coronavirus-triggered downturn could cost five million U.S. jobs (Mitchell & Zumbrun, 21 March 2020)

TT4: 美媒: 美国陷入衰退“几乎板上钉钉” [US media: It is “nearly cast in stone” that America will slip into recession] (RN, 23 March 2020)

4.3. *Timeliness: Linguistic Differences and Traffic-Oriented Principles*

In our data, the frequency of *Timeliness* constructed in the English headlines outnumbers that of their Chinese counterparts. The discrepancy in constructing *Timeliness* might be interpreted through two aspects: the linguistic difference between Chinese and English, and the traffic-oriented social media logic RN's WeChat account has followed to capture more clicks.

A large share of the identified traces of *Timeliness* in the English headings should be attributed to the present tense. The present tense has nearly become a default setting in English headlines, enhancing a news story's recency (Chovanec, 2014). More than 70% of the English headlines under investigation adopted the present tense, thereby partly explaining the substantial disparity regarding the frequency of *Timeliness* between the Chinese and English datasets. Essentially, the construal of *Timeliness* via the present tense is absent in RN's Chinese renditions, given that Chinese, unlike English, lacks grammatical tense (Liu, 2015). Primarily temporal references (e.g., September 20, this year, May 25) and other indicators to the then-current events (e.g., the pandemic, the US presidential election, G20 summit) have established *Timeliness* in the collected Chinese headlines. Example 5 and 6 demonstrated this linguistic difference: the presence of *Timeliness* in ST5 and ST6 is ascribed to the marker of the present tense (-s), but no such markers are available in Chinese. Thus, *Timeliness* is absent in their Chinese renditions.

Example 5

ST5: As he seeks to punish China, Trump faces criticism at home over his own attacks on democratic values (Nakamura, 29 May 2020)

TT5: 美媒: 特朗普寻求“惩罚中国”但他的讲话在开始前就破产了 [US media: Trump seeks to “punish China” but his speech becomes useless before getting started] (RN, 31 May 2020)

Example 6

ST6: Marine 3-Star hits back at claims that corps' future design is too China-focused (Harkins, 2 June

2020)

TT6: 美海军陆战队制定“锁定中国”战略被批“过于狭隘” [US marine corps’ “China-focused” strategy was criticized for being “too narrow”] (RN, 4 June 2020)

Furthermore, *Timeliness* was constructed in the English headlines via references to ongoing issues or events in America, such as the pandemic, the 2020 presidential election, the protests for George Floyd, and temporal references (e.g., Nov. 1, Saturday night). Despite an unavailable toolkit of grammatical markers accompanying verbs (e.g., -s, -ed) to indicate tense relations, Chinese depends on “time expressions” or “contextual information” to indicate time (Liu, 2015, p. 275). Thus, if RN kept contextual information from the English source texts, *Timeliness* could still be established without the participation of grammaticalized tense relations. However, in our data, many of RN’s renditions have deliberately discarded references indicative of recency in their English counterparts to create more attention-grabbing headlines, which might form another reason for the lower frequency of *Timeliness* in RN’s Chinese WeChat headlines.

Timeliness was construed in ST7 and ST8 with the present tense and references to the then-current issues. ST7 mentions the ongoing pandemic, and ST8 is relevant to the police’s murder of George Floyd, both of which are high-profile news topics at the time of publication. Similarly, ST9 and ST10 are concerned with Biden’s administrative plan after winning the presidential election and Trump’s false accusation of voter fraud in the 2020 presidential election, respectively. RN’s renditions of these English headlines could have easily established *Timeliness* by rendering the contextual information from their sources. Nonetheless, any details potentially indicating the currency or immediacy of the news stories were omitted, thus leading to very eye-catching, yet uninformative Chinese headlines on WeChat. Headlines like TT7, TT8, TT9, and TT10 might even be labeled “clickbait.” Traditionally, headlines are expected to “reflect as exactly, briefly, and clearly as possible the most important points of the story” (Khanjan et al., 2013), which is not the case in some of RN’s renditions on WeChat, as shown in the examples below. When discussing journalistic translations on WeChat, we must factor in the features of Chinese social media. Platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and TikTok are all highly dependent on traffic to generate revenues and increase impact, which prompted a soaring number of sensational headlines online, aiming to garner more traffic and excellent audience metrics (Zhang et al., 2020). The omission of contextual information concerning time in RN’s WeChat headlines has partly demonstrated its employment of sensational headlines or clickbait to capture clicks on WeChat at the risk of violating journalistic principles of quality journalism. Facing a fiercely competitive market, an official media outlet like RN cannot escape the traffic-oriented principle of social media if popularity and success are desired.

Example 7

ST7: Trump *tries* to walk back speculation about injecting disinfectants to *fight coronavirus*, claims he was being sarcastic (Higgins, 24 April 2020)

TT7: 特朗普 *改口了*? [Trump *withdrew his previous remarks*?] (RN, 25 April 2020)

Example 8

ST8: Democrats *propose* sweeping *police overhaul*; Trump *criticizes* (Mascaro, 8 June 2020)

TT8: 特朗普: 民主党人“*疯了*” [Trump: Democrats have “*gone crazy*”] (RN, 9 June 2020)

Example 9

ST9: Hillary Clinton under consideration for Biden's U.N. ambassador: report (Dorman, 12 November, 2020)

TT9: 希拉里也要“出山”了? [Hillary is also “coming back”?] (RN, 14 November, 2020)

Example 10

ST10: The Times called officials in every state: No evidence of voter fraud (Corasaniti et al., 10 November, 2020)

TT10: 特朗普又迎来“一记重击” [Trump again has taken “another hard hit”] (RN, 11 November, 2020)

4.4. Negativity and Superlativeness: Othering the United States

Negativity is construed when “negative aspects of an event” (Bednarek & Caple, 2012a, p. 42) are described using linguistic sources like negative attitudes, emotions, and evaluative language. *Superlativeness* refers to “the high intensity or large scope” of a news event (Bednarek, 2015, p. 4), whose establishment hinges on indicators like intensifiers, quantifiers, intensified lexis, metaphor, simile, comparison, and repetition (Bednarek, 2015, p. 4). A tendency to strengthen *Negativity* and *Superlativeness* was observed in RN’s Chinese headlines, consistent with the ideological square developed by van Dijk (2011) by emphasizing the “bad things” of the United States.

ST11 presents the remarks made by a high-profile US military figure on competing against Russia and China, which involves no linguistic resources signaling *Negativity*. Its Chinese counterpart, however, has explicitly established *Negativity* by describing the US strategy as “毒计 (vicious plan).” Similarly, ST12 states that the US will sell weapons worth billions of US dollars to Taiwan. *Negativity* was conveyed in TT12 by a four-character Chinese idiom, “一意孤行 (stubbornly take its own course)”, highlighting a rather negative evaluation of America’s behavior. Examples 13 and 14 are typical instances of further emphasizing *Negativity* via *Superlativeness* in RN’s Chinese renditions. While ST13 demonstrates a certain degree of *Negativity* via the word “sanction”, the emphasis in TT13 was on the extremely negative consequences of America’s actions. Thanks to the four-character Chinese expression “触犯众怒 (made everybody angry),” news values, including *Negativity*, *Superlativeness*, and *Impact*, were simultaneously constructed. The pattern observed in Example 14 resembles Example 13. ST14 has shown *Negativity* concerning Mike Pompeo and the US military via linguistic resources like “impeding actions” and “war crimes”. TT14, based on the readily negative content of the original, further established *Superlativeness* using a four-character Chinese idiom, “百般阻挠 (try everything someone could do to prevent something from happening),” to highlight Pompeo’s desperateness to fulfill his purpose. Previous literature concerning RN’s news translation practices testifies to the tendency of “othering” countries, like the US (Zeng, 2020) and Japan (Wu, 2018), in its translated reports. For a party-oriented Chinese newspaper like RN, which takes the responsibility of disseminating the official “ideological values and preferences” (Chase, 2018, p. 142), the accentuation of a negative tone concerning coverage of the United States is expected, especially considering the worsening China-US relations in recent years amid the trade spat and the pandemic.

Example 11

ST11: Ray: Great power competition is an ‘infinite game’ with Russia, China (Oprihory, 10 December, 2020)

TT11: 对付中俄, 美上将想出一条“毒计” [To deal with China and Russia, US General comes up with a “vicious plan”] (RN, 13 December, 2020)

Example 12

ST12: US announces planned \$2.37 billion weapon sale to Taiwan (Burns, 27 October, 2020)

TT12: 一意孤行! 美宣布对台出售“鱼叉”导弹系统 [*Stubbornly take its own course!* The US announces sale of “Harpoon” missile systems to Taiwan] (RN, 27 October, 2020)

Example 13

ST13: US sanctions International Criminal Court officials (Hansler, 2 September, 2020)

TT13: 美国再一次触犯众怒! [US has once again *made everybody angry*] (RN, 4 September, 2020)

Example 14

ST14: Pompeo signals impending action against ICC for investigating alleged U.S. war crimes (Forgey, 1 June, 2020)

TT14: 国际刑事法院获准调查美军蓬佩奥 百般阻挠 [International Criminal Court gets permission to investigate US forces; Pompeo has *tried everything he could do to prevent that*] (RN, 3 June, 2020)

5. Concluding Remarks

Although the previous section has sought to highlight the new insights DNVA could contribute to JTR, it has not demonstrated the full potential of DNVA in analyzing translated news discourse. More research is needed to extend the research scope of applying DNVA to journalistic translation.

The study only analyzed linguistic elements using the DNVA approach. However, it is also applicable to non-verbal resources. Thus, future research can investigate news values construed in the pictures accompanying the headlines under investigation and examine the interaction between verbal and non-verbal resources and their roles in newsworthiness construction.

While the above analysis is manual, DNVA can be implemented in a corpus-assisted manner to locate “pointers” (Bednarek & Caple, 2014, p. 145) that may have construed news values. The pilot analysis presented here only analyzed headlines. More interesting findings may surface if a corpus of the news stories is built and examined using various corpus techniques tested in previous DNVA literature, like word frequency, concordance, collocation, semantic tags, part-of-speech (POS) tagging, and keywords. Adopting different indicators “might have produced different results” (Caple et al., 2020, p. 83).

Triangulation has become a buzzword in news translation research. Likewise, the results from using DNVA to explore the discursive (re)construction of news values mediated by translation can be triangulated with investigations into the other three dimensions of news values. For example, the current analysis can be tied to an ethnographic study of RN’s production of translated news on WeChat, testing the claims made based on textual analysis.

In conclusion, news translation can take advantage of journalistic concepts and theories beyond framing and gatekeeping to provide a different perspective on JTR. This paper is a case in point, indicating that news values can be a fruitful analytical point of entry to expand the research scope and disciplinary boundary of JTR. It highlights how news values, especially the DNVA approach, might shed new light on JTR. Hopefully, more interdisciplinary research exploring the interface between translation and journalism studies will emerge, an agenda that requires efforts from both translation and journalism scholars.

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