

## Investigating gender effects on interpreters' styles: A case study of multidimensional analysis

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### Abstract

By using the diplomatic discourse interpreting corpus this study investigates gender effects on interpreters' style in the framework of multidimensional analysis. The results showed that female and male interpreters share similar interpreting style in regard to dimensional functions of their interpreted texts, characterized by informational production, non-narrative concerns, elaborated reference, overt expression of persuasion, abstract information, and online information elaboration. However, they use different methods to shape akin interpreting styles. Independent-samples t-test showed that 14 factors significantly distinguish female interpreters from male ones. For example, female interpreters tend to use lengthier words, second person pronoun, "there be" structure, causative adverbial subordinators and connectives whereas male interpreters are more inclined to use the pronoun "it", which-type attributives and other adverbial clause conjunctions. It is argued that keeping faithfulness to the source language leads to similar interpreter behavior whereas different roles in society and concern for target language practicality attribute to differences in choosing linguistic factors.

### 1. Introduction

As a cultural and social construction, gender refers to gender roles distinguishing masculine behaviors from feminine

behaviors. (Hu, 2018:118) Since Translation<sup>1</sup> is in essence a process of bilingual transformation and information processing, its process and production are supposed to be influenced by gender. Corpus-based studies on translator's style originate from Baker's *Towards a Methodology for Investigating the Style of a Literary Translator* published in 2000. Thereafter, corpus-based methodology has witnessed great prosperity in investigating translator's styles either from the perspective of vocabulary, syntax, collocation, semantic prosody, discourse and narrative features and other linguistic features (Winters, 2007 ; Meng Ji , 2008 ; Cermakova, 2015; Huang, 2014) or from the perspective of non-linguistic features, i.e., the strategies and tactics used by translators or interpreters (Bosseaux, 2006; Pöchhacker, 2007; Besien & Meuleman, 2008; Liu, 2011). However, researches in this strand have yielded methodological intractability. First, analyzing the translator's style from an individual dimension is comparable to "the blind touch the elephant" (meaning taking a part for the whole). This will cause overgeneralisation, threatening the integrity of the translator's style. However, we might run into agnosticism had we not made an in-depth investigation of each dimension. Second, while much has been made of "style" in written translation since "the translator's voice" was invoked in Hermans in 1996, hardly anything has been written about interpreting

<sup>1</sup> Capitalized T refers to both written and spoken translation.

The present study, which is an exploratory attempt towards this far less explored territory, aims to globally and locally investigate the impact of interpreter's gender upon his or her interpreting style in Chinese-English diplomatic consecutive interpreting. Under the framework of multidimensional analysis (MDA) and by using the diplomatic discourse interpreting corpus 1.0 (DDIC) developed by the authors and their research team, differences and/or similarities between male and female interpreters in terms of dimensional functions and linguistic features are examined to identify effects of gender identity on interpreters' styles.

## 2. Literature review

A great number of researches on gender difference in the use of language have been conducted in the field of linguistics since the threshold of 20th century. As a particular kind of ideology, gender identity not only plays a decisive role in language use but also plays a part in translation, and the interconnectedness between gender and translation is thereafter explored.

### 2.1 Gender difference in language use

The interaction between gender and language dated back to as early as the 1920s when Jespersen Otto (1922/1949) observed women's speech to be generally more conservative than men's, which was further affirmed by Reik (1954) that "we all know that there is a 'man talk' and a 'woman talk'". But it is not until the second wave of feminism during the 1960s and 1970s (Weatherall, 2002: 3) that witnessed its heyday.

Lakoff (1973) investigates the language spoken by women and of women, arguing that speech differences between male and female are embodied in the choice and frequency of lexical items, the situations in which certain syntactic rules are performed etc. Thereafter, gender difference in the use of language has become an increasingly perennial area of academic investigation with legions of scholars identifying that men and women talk about different topics, contents and uses of spoken language (Kramer, 1974; Eakins & Eakins, 1976; Bloom & Lahey, 1978; Haas, 1979). For example, Haas (1979) investigates the stereotypes and evidence of male and female spoken language differences by reviewing literature concerning the form, topic, content and use of language between male and female. She concluded that in terms of form males use more nonstandard forms than females and that females laugh and cry more, and in terms of content males were generally more assertive and directive than the women. But her observation and examination are lack of empirical support and she suggests that these gender differences be attributed to socioeconomic background, failing to explore further reasons, thereby more empirical studies are badly needed.

Recently, more studies have verified gender differences in conversational practice involving minimal responses, hedges, tag questions etc. (Weatherall, 2002). As one branch of sociolinguistics, gender and language cover a wide area of topics, including the influence of gender speech differences in classroom (Thome, 1997; Coates, 2013) and workplace (Pauwels, 2003). For example, Coates (2013) reviews the history, the present and the future development of gender differences in language. She also summarizes ten features

of “women’s language” covering a wide range of dictation, syntax, intonation etc. However, in her opinion, gendered behavior later in life derive from such a reason that children might receive gendered education in classroom without considering other factors besides education.

## **2.2 Gender difference in translator’s style**

Translator’s style refers to translation characteristics that are stable but differs him or her from other translators, formed by the manifestation of the translator's subjectivity in the process of translation (Hu & Xie, 2017:15). The notion of style includes the translator’s choice of the type of material to translate, where applicable, and his or her consistent use of specific strategies, including the use of prefaces or afterwords, footnotes, glossing in the body of the text etc. (Baker 2000: 245) Gender, as a particular ideology, influences the process and production of translation (Hu & Meng, 2018), hence, male and female translators may show different translator’s style.

Given the essential similarities between translation and interpreting, there is no reason to suppose that style is not also present in interpreting. However, while much has been made of “gender-based style” in written translation, and literary works in particular (Winters, 2007; Meng Ji, 2008; Cermakova, 2015; Huang, 2014; Liu et al., 2010), hardly anything has been written about interpreting, despite the fact that its existence is acknowledged and mentioned. Previous gender-based studies on interpreter’s style fall into 2 categories. The first type holds that interpreters’ role incidentally includes gender difference (e.g.

Anderson, 1976; Bühler, 1985; Cecot, 2001; Angelelli, 2003). Anderson (1976) concludes that interpreters can have different roles and power in face-to-face interactions and he claims a list of variables affecting interaction in many contexts including social class, education, sex, age and so on. It is an early work which mentions gender differences but blurs distinction between gender and sex. In discussing the importance of visual aids and non-verbal cues in conference interpreting, Cecot (2001) studies pauses in simultaneous interpretation, concluding that women interpreters use more filled but shorter pauses while men use more unfilled but longer pauses. However, it is too early to claim that this result is representative with 11 interpreters involved. These studies remain far too nebulous for any serious research without solely focusing on gender.

The second type of gender-based studies on interpreters’ style is like icing on the cake notwithstanding a limited number. Exploratory researches in this strand are mainly conducted by using public interpreting materials issued by China Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Hu & Hu (2015) study hedges in Chinese-English consecutive interpreting in diplomatic settings and discover that the number of hedges like “perhaps, I believe, a little bit” used by male interpreters is a little fewer than those used by female interpreters. What’s more, they attribute the gender difference to the overall social environment, interpreting itself and personal styles of different interpreters. Nevertheless, due to the limited length of their research paper, it is not so clear to identify any direct causes for gender differences in hedges. Hu & Meng (2018: 117–134) analyze the differences between male and female

interpreters in using typical English words and interpreting methods at the press conference. It is found that male interpreters prefer to use low-value modal verbs and the first-person plural pronoun “we” and are inclined to adopt strengthening, while female interpreters tend to use high-value modal verbs and employ English equivalents to translate Chinese modal adverbs, intensifiers, verbs of cognitive attitude and the first-person plural pronoun “we”. Their study pioneers to suggest that gender does play its role in interpreting, shedding light on generalizations about the role of gender identity in interpreting, thus calling for more gender-focused viewpoint regarding interpreting studies. Jiang & Hu (2020), by making use of the Chinese-English Conference Interpreting Corpus, compare Fei Shengchao's<sup>2</sup> and Zhang Lu's<sup>3</sup> interpreting style in terms of disfluency (i.e., (un)filled pause, repetition and repair) and grammatical functions. It is found that Fei's interpretation has some repetition and repair, emphasizes the accuracy of information and tries to leave hearers feeling represented. By contrast, Zhang's interpretation is simple and clear, follows the culture and rules of the target language, and pays attention to maintaining a positive personal image. We believe that this kind of quality assessment research makes professional interpreters more reluctant to become the subjects of future studies.

Although these studies contribute to enhancing understanding of gender identity and translation style, data analysed in the studies have been limited to written translations, *ad hoc* literary works, ignoring interpretation. More importantly, gender-based interpreting studies carried out to this date just incidentally includes gender differences without fine-grained investigation or just focus on unidimension rather than give both a holistic and specific description of gender-oriented interpreting style. Therefore, the present study, by using Chinese-English diplomatic interpreting corpus and the state-of-art software Multidimensional Analysis Tagger 1.3 (MAT), attempts to chart this less explored territory with an aim of ascertaining differences and similarities between male and female professional interpreters drawing upon multidimensional analysis. Furthermore, the reasons why diplomatic interpreters shape their interpreting style are to be explored.

### **3. Diplomatic Discourse Interpreting Corpus (DDIC)**

This study is to explore the impact of gender identity on interpreters' style, and addresses the following two questions: (1) In which dimension does the interpretation produced by female interpreters differ from/ similar to that produced by male interpreters? If there is difference, in which language features do they differ? (2) What are the possible reasons for the differences/similarities of

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<sup>2</sup> Fei Shengchao (费胜潮) is a male interpreter of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Zhang Lu (张璐) is a female interpreter of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

interpreters' style between female and male interpreters?

The data was drawn from Diplomatic Discourse Interpreting Corpus (DDIC) developed by the authors and their research team. Although the bilingual version of the Chinese Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's Press Conference could be found on the Internet, in fact, most of them were translated versions uploaded by translation enthusiasts, they were different from authentic Chinese-English press conference interpreting characterized by spontaneity and extemporaneousness. We therefore adopted *iFlytek Heard* (讯飞听见<sup>4</sup>) for transcribing the materials, and proofread them by listening to on-site video repeatedly. The final transcription further underwent member checking to ensure the authenticity and reliability of the follow-up research results. The final DDIC consists of the transcription of real-time recordings of 8 press conferences by males and 9 by females from 2003 to 2019. Press conferences are political and diplomatic occasions where our senior leaders answer questions raised by journalists from both at home and abroad. The content of the materials covers topics including economy, politics, and foreign affairs.

**Table 1** provides a detailed description of the corpus, including number of press conferences, number of interpreters, and size of the sub-corpus. The male interpreters included Zhang Jianmin, Fei Shengchao and Sun Ning while female interpreters involved were Zhang Lu, Yao Mengyao, Zhang Jing and Dai Qingli. The male and female interpreters were both staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, which provides systematic training in English language and translation. Hence, their high proficiency

and a great wealth of experiences in interpreting ensures as much comparability as possible between the texts produced by male interpreters and female interpreters.

	Male interpreters	Female interpreters
Numbers of diplomatic conference interpreting	8	9
Tokens of source text	53927	65828
Types of source text	1136	1239
Tokens of targeted text	50792	54991
Types of targeted text	4528	4405
Numbers of interpreters	3	4

**Table 1. Corpus size**

#### 4. Theoretical framework

This study aims to reveal the effect of gender identity on interpreters' style by drawing upon MDA, based on the analysis of the similarities and differences between texts by male versus female interpreters taking 67 linguistic features as point of departure.

##### 4.1 Multidimensional Analysis

Originally developed to investigate the linguistic patterns of variation among spoken and written registers (see e.g. Biber, 1986; 1988; 1995), the multidimensional analytical approach can be used to analyze the text, genre, register, style, and text type. In Biber's (1988) paper, 67 linguistic features were first annotated automatically and then the co-occurrence patterns among those linguistic features were analysed by factor analysis, identifying the underlying parameters of variation: the factors or 'dimensions'. Finally, six important dimensions were extracted and these dimensions were interpreted based on the weights of linguistic features in the

<sup>4</sup> iFlytek Heard (讯飞听见) is a software for transcription developed by iFlytek.

dimension.

Biber (2014: 12) illustrates each dimension can have positive and negative features, identifying two groupings of features that occur in a complementary pattern as part of the same dimension instead of reflecting importance. In other words, when the positive features occur together frequently in a text, the negative features are markedly less frequent in that text, and vice versa. Dimension scores are the result of summing the individual scores of the features that co-occur on a dimension (Biber, 1988). In order to get a holistic picture of interpreted texts given by male and female interpreters, MDA is adopted in the paper for comparing dimensional functions and the closest genre of each dimension as to male's and female's interpretation. Furthermore, this paper employed SPSS 26 to carry out independent-samples T test among 67 language features for figuring out factors differentiating male from female interpreters. By so doing, both overall and individual aspects are investigated for describing gender effect on diplomatic interpreters' style.

#### 4.2 Multidimensional analysis tagger 1.3

This study used Nini's (2015) Multidimensional Analysis Tagger 1.3 (hereafter referred to as MAT, ), which replicates Biber's (1988) analysis of LOB and Brown corpora, and its reliability and validity of results has been widely verified (Nini, 2015; Jiang & Xu, 2015). With MAT, texts can be automatically annotated in terms of 67 linguistic features and dimensional functions, but MAT requires the Windows operating system and Java environment. The statistics of dimensions

and linguistic features produced by the tagger were imported into Excel 2013 and SPSS 26 for further analysis.

### 4. Results and analysis

With the help of MAT 1.3 and SPSS 26, both similarities and difference between male and female interpreters are to be discussed and analyzed.

#### 5.1 Interpreters' style between male and female at the dimensional-textual

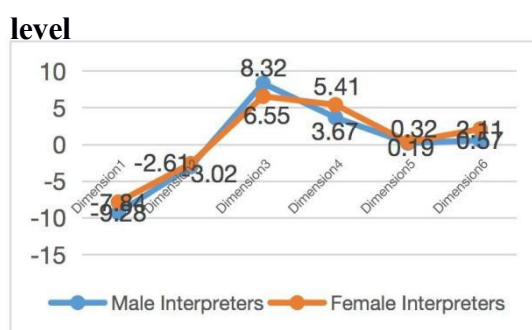


Figure 1: Dimension scores of interpreted texts

To answer the first question, we use SPSS 26 to conduct independent-samples T-test for dimension scores of male and female interpreting. The results show that there is no significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ) between male and female interpreters in six dimensions. In other words, diplomatic interpreters show a consistent trend of dimensional characteristics. In dimension 1, their interpreted texts are more informational because the press conference is an occasion for external publicity where the speaker on behalf of Chinese government are supposed to publicize a lot of information about China's politics, economy, diplomacy and other issues to the world. In dimensions 2 and 3, their interpreted texts are characterized by strong non-narration and context-independence,

which is consistent with its register as a serious diplomatic occasion. In dimension 4, their interpreted texts feature overt expression of persuasion which is related to the existence of numerous dialogues in the press conference where the speaker answers questions asked by journalists. In dimension 5, texts demonstrate higher levels of abstract information while showing online information elaboration in dimension 6, which is caused by the distinctive feature of interpreting, i.e., immediacy. The similarity of male and female interpreters' interpreted texts in six dimensions indirectly reflects the high threshold of selection in the Translation & Interpretation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Diplomatic interpreters represent the entire country and must convey China's voice, only through such trials as "strict screening, crazy practice and careful preparation" can he/she become a truly diplomatic interpreter. Therefore, it is believed that diplomatic interpreters must have excellent professional ability. The following will discuss linguistic features and the closest genre in each dimension for describing diplomatic interpreters' style at length.

### **5.1.1 dimension 1**

Dimension 1 distinguishes Involved versus Informational Production. Positive factors/variables represent the text is more interactional while negative factors reflect the text is more informational. Overall, though constrained by real time production, both male and female's interpretation have a relatively informational purpose as shown in Figure 1. Male and female interpreters receive negative scores in dimension 1 due to frequent co-occurrence of negative factors. Nouns, prepositions, passive sentences and other informative features are adopted by diplomatic interpreters to deliver more informative interpretation, which can

be attributed to two reasons. On the one hand, against the backdrop of diplomatic occasions, spokesperson and Premier intended to publicize China's strategies, clearing up foreigners' misunderstanding and dispelling some countries' hostility against China, so they were inclined to give more information and explanation, causing diplomatic interpreters to deliver as much information as possible for meeting the requirement of ensuring information enrichment. On the other hand, interpreters used negative linguistic features like nouns, prepositions, lengthier words and passive sentences to improve the formality of diplomatic discourse interpreting, helping China shape its image as a big, powerful and considerate country. However, the readability test suggests females deliver more difficult interpretation than male interpreters with the Flesh-Kincaid grade Level of female and male interpreters being 12.1 and 11.3 respectively. Furthermore, the closest genre of male and female interpreters' interpreted texts in dimension 1 is akin to broadcasts such as ABC, BBC, VOC etc. The broadcast language is relatively informative, formal and thus difficult, reflecting that diplomatic interpreters are professional enough, even equal to native English speakers.

### **5.1.2 Dimension 2**

Dimension 2 is interpreted as 'Narrative versus Non-narrative Concerns'. Figure 1 shows that both males' and females' interpreted texts receive a negative score, meaning that negative linguistic factors are more frequently used by diplomatic interpreters such as present tense and attributive adjectives for delivering more non-narrative interpretation, which is attributed to two reasons. On the one hand, narration leaves readers or listeners such impression as

abstruseness and unreliability, which hinders building a country's positive image and goes against the speakers' intention to persuade others and publicize official declaration. On the other hand, Premier's Press Conference, Foreign Minister Press Conference and CPPCC Press conference are occasions where Chinese Premier and Foreign Minister answer questions raised by journalists and mainly concerned with current issues that are related to China. Consequently, it should behoove both male and female interpreters to use present tense, a negative linguistic factor in dimension 2 for stay faithful to the source language. Furthermore, female interpreters differ from male interpreters when it comes to the closest genre of their interpreted texts. The closest genre of female interpreters is academic prose while that of male interpreters is official document. This suggests that female interpreters are likely to use more academic and logical expression despite the fact that diplomatic interpreters prefer fidelity.

### 5.1.3 Dimension 3

Dimension 3 is concerned with Elaborated versus Situation-dependent Reference. Figure 1 shows that both female and male interpreters receive high positive scores meaning their interpreting is more context-independent which may derive from two reasons. First, in Chinese-English interpreting, nominalization is manifested as stereotyping the action process, omitting the actor and obscuring the acting motivation, thus shifting the focus of the listeners from the actor and making the discourse fairer and more objective. Nominalization not only gives the audience an impression that the interpreter is objectively expressing the meaning of the speaker rather than his/her own emotion or inclination, but also gains the listeners' confidence towards the

speaker. Meanwhile, nominalization enables the interpreter to contain more information in each sentence, enhance the cohesion and coherence of the discourse, and make the speaker's content sound more authoritative. The second reason lies in power distance. As powers leaders, it seems that there is a wee bit longer power distance between Chinese Premier and Foreign Minister and the journalists, so their language is relatively formal and context-independent. Furthermore, the genre of male and female interpreters' rendition is official document, characterized by high levels of formality and seriousness.

### 5.1.4 Dimension 4

Dimension 4 examines overt expression of argumentation, which only has positive features. From Figure 1, it is concluded that interpreted text is more explicit than the original text, echoing previous studies to examine explicitation as one of the translation universals (e.g., Shlesinger, 1989; Hu, 2009). Moreover, diplomatic interpreters prefer hedging like "perhaps, I believe" and modal verbs (For example, maybe, must, can, should), which result in greater explicitness in target language. Meanwhile, both female and male interpreters deliver their interpretation like writing personal letter, featuring great logics, correct wording and a certain degree of freedom. This is easy to understand when the immediacy of interpreting is taken into consideration. Information processing in interpretation is characterized by immediacy and one-time representation of both source language and target language (Wang, 2019: 6), which require interpreters to spend efforts in listening and analyzing source language, short-term memory, production of target language and coordination (Gile, 1995). Dealing with such a multitasking, interpreters sometimes resort to diverse



strategies in a flexible manner to reduce cognitive load and save time, leading to a certain degree of freedom. For example, interpreters will add meaningless “that”, “and” and other connectives just as a time buffer to cope with time constraints.

### **5.1.5 Dimension 5**

Similar to dimension 4, only positive linguistic features could be found in dimension 5. It should be noted that male and female interpreters receive high positive scores, representing that their interpreted texts are more technical, abstract and formal, which is attributed to two reasons. First, they tend to use passive sentences and the readability test shows that passive sentences of female and male interpretation take up 11.4% and 10.6% of all sentences. Resorting to passive voice means that the interpreters tend to omit or understate the actor and thus ensure greater formality. Second, they employ a myriad of connectives to strengthen the logic among sentences, which is conducive for listeners’ understanding, ad hoc the foreign listeners. In addition, the closest genre of both female and male interpreters’ rendition is press reportage, consistent with the materials adopted for constructing the DDIC.

### **5.1.6 Dimension 6**

Dimension 6 explores textual on-line informational elaboration. Nini (2015) and Crosthwaite (2016) hold that higher score in dimension 6 suggests that the text is more informational in nature. It is demonstrated by Figure 1 that both female and male interpreters receive high positive scores, suggesting that they are inclined to use WH-clauses, Stranded preposition (e.g., of), demonstratives, and demonstrative pronouns. But there is difference regarding the closest genre in dimension 6, where female

interpreters seem to address a prepared speech while male interpreters seem to read an academic prose. In other words, female interpreters deliver interpretation that is more formal, abstract and somewhat more difficult, and this might suggest female interpreters outperform male interpreters to some extent.

## **5.2 Analysis of linguistic features distinguishing male interpreters from female interpreters**

As discussed above, although male and female interpreters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs show differences in the closest genre of their interpreted text in dimensions 2 and 6, their interpreted text shares a similar pattern that boasts informational production, non-narrative concerns, elaborated reference, overt expression of persuasion, abstract information and online information elaboration. Therefore, in order to make an in-depth investigation of gender difference in interpreter style, we use independent-samples t-test to compare 67 linguistic factors involved in 6 dimensions, only to find out that 31 factors (46.3%) contribute to the differences in interpreting style between male and female interpreters. Due to space limitation we solely focus on the first 14 factors (see Table 2) significantly distinguishing male from female interpreters with specific examples.

From Table 2, first, it is found that female interpreters are more inclined to use second person pronoun (SPP2) “you” and “your” even if their corresponding Chinese “您/你” [nin/ni] or “您的/你的” [ninde/nide] may not be found in the source text for hearers’ sake. Second, female interpreters are more likely to use “there be” structure which is the most

distinctive type of existential process under transitivity system for realizing the ideational function of language according to Halliday's Systematic Functional Grammar (Halliday, 1985). Existential processes represent that something exists or happens, which is in accordance with the mode of press conferences, showing female interpreters' fidelity to the source language. Third, they are more likely to employ causative adverbial subordinators so as to explicitate the logic between sentences, widely known and studied as textual explicitation (e.g. Shlesinger, 1995; Hu & Tao, 2009). Fourth, female interpreters generally resort to demonstrative "that"<sup>5</sup> as a time filler for relieving time constraints. In addition, female interpreters prefer the use of longer words, making the interpreted text more difficult to understand as is verified by readability test.

In comparison, first, male interpreters resort to the pronoun "it" (formal subject) either to deliver balanced sentence or take it as a "time buffer" for gaining themselves more time and relieving working pressure for the fluency of delivery. Second, the following pattern is much more found: a noun or quantifier pronoun followed by a past participial form of a verb followed by a preposition, e.g. the solution produced by this process. Third, male interpreters prefer to use Which-type attributives as a useful way known as "syntactic linearity". Fourth, they tend to use other adverbial clause conjunctions, such as since, while, such that, so that, etc. to explicitate the logical relationship between sentences.

### 5.3 Motivation of interpreters' style

It is clear that there are notable similarities between the texts produced by female and male interpreters as regards dimensional functions whereas differences can be found in 31 linguistic factors. Female interpreters tend to use lengthier words, second person pronoun (you, your), "there be" structure, causative adverbial subordinators (e.g., so) and connectives (e.g., that) whereas male interpreters are more inclined to use the pronoun "it", Which-type attributives and other adverbial clause conjunctions (e.g., since, while, so that). Various factors can be responsible for these similarities and differences, including the time and venue where the interpreting occurs, the source language, and the interpreter's personal trajectory i.e., years of working experience, language proficiency and gender. Considering that interpreters concerned in this study are affiliated with the China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs who have gone through a plethora of strict training and screening procedures, all the factors are similar barring the interpreter's gender. First, faithfulness is usually required as press conferences are considered a special kind of political document in China. It is staying faithful to the source language that shapes a similar interpreting style between male and female interpreters. Moreover, as a highly formal diplomatic occasion, Chinese press conferences play a significant role in government's external publicity covering China's national policy, foreign affairs, economics and other issues and in the construction of national image. In this respect, both the Premier of National States or Minister of Foreign affairs speak on behalf of the country and their high social position are likely to produce a tendency towards faithfulness to what they

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<sup>5</sup> When the word that has not been tagged as either DEMP, TOBJ, TSUB, THAC, or THVC, it is encoded as a demonstrative (Biber, 1989), which can be understood as a connector for introducing object clauses.

Number	Factors	Female	Male	p	Absolute difference
1	Second person pronouns (SPP2)	-0.20	-0.05	0.000	0.15
2	Pronoun it (PIT)	-0.15	-0.44	0.000	0.29
3	Existential there (EX)	0.78	-0.17	0.000	0.95
4	That verb complements (THVC)*	0.97	0.28	0.000	0.69
5	Present participial WHIZ deletion relatives (WZPRES)*	0.44	0.50	0.000	0.06
6	Sentence relatives (SERE)*	0.50	1.75	0.000	1.25
7	Causative adverbial subordinators (CAUS)	0.06	-0.35	0.000	0.41
8	Conditional adverbial subordinators (COND)	-0.50	-0.82	0.000	0.32
9	Other adverbial subordinators (OSUB)	0.00	0.82	0.000	0.82
10	Word length (AWL)	0.83	0.77	0.000	0.06
11	Conjuncts (CONJ)	1.06	0.13	0.000	0.93
12	Demonstratives (DEMO)	1.14	0.29	0.000	0.85
13	Contractions (CONT)	-0.68	-0.71	0.000	0.03
14	Phrasal coordination (PHC)	3.11	5.19	0.000	2.08

Table 2. Linguistic features distinguishing male from female interpreters

hear on the part of both female and male interpreters. Third, a diplomatic interpreter represents the entire country and must convey the voice of Chinese government rigorously. They are inclined to maintain the formality of press conference by using nominalization, passive sentence, therefore, both female and male interpreters' interpretation are highly informational in terms of dimension 1. Besides, press conferences on diplomatic occasions are real-time speaking, so diplomatic interpretation is much more challenging, leading to interpreters turn to "time fillers" like "and" and "that" to butter time constraints during which they could read their notes, mobilize short-term memory and give a proper rendition of the original information. This reason could be better comparable to Gile's (1995) tactics for dealing with problems encountered by interpreters during the process of interpretation.

However, 'translation is not made in a vacuum' (Bassnet & Lefever, 2001: 14). It

is rather intercultural communication influenced by ideology and identity, including the interpreter's gender role (Hu & Meng, 2018: 130). Interpreting features immediacy (Pöchhacker, 2016), obliging interpreters to take tactics for dealing with problems encountered. It is in their choice of linguistic factors that female interpreters differ from male ones as is discussed above, which may derive from different social positions on the part of men and women in China. As argued by Leech (1983), Holmes (1993) and Brown & Levinson (1987), the differential distribution of power or different social position of men and women lead to gender-based differences. In China, women were traditionally thought to be inferior to and less powerful than men, while men were supposed to be leaders or controllers. Although modern China boasts gender equality, bias and prejudice still exist to some extent since males seem to be more powerful, subjective and forgivable in our society. Hence, though faithfulness is rule of thumb obeyed by interpreters, male interpreters are more likely to intervene in

the source texts. Inspired by Relevance Theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), it is noted that interpreting is a communicative process in which the interpreter has to obtain the speaker's intention, and then convey it to the target listeners by considering the cognitive context of them. Compared with female interpreters, male interpreters are inclined to consider target language accessibility and try to leave hearers feeling represented by clarifying or explicating the source language or reinforcing his or the speaker's viewpoint. However, female interpreters stress faithfulness to the source text as the case of using second person pronoun and "there be" structure for keeping consistence with the oriinal. In other words, female interpreters' behavior is characterized by higher faithfulness to source language whereas male interpreter's behavior features a dynamic balance between faithfulness and practicality (i.e., target language accessibility out of communication purpose).

## 6. Conclusion

Multidimensional analysis can effectively distinguish the register variation of the text, and shows the linguistic factors influencing the genre difference of the text at length. Combined with quantitative and qualitative analysis, it can describe the interpreter's style in a more systematic and comprehensive way. Based on MAT, this study shows that diplomatic interpreters shape gender-free interpreting styles regarding dimensional functions, i.e., to deliver interpretation featuring informational production; non-narrative concerns, elaborated reference, overt expression of persuasion; abstract information and on-line Informational

elaboration. However, male and female interpreters display differences in 31 linguistic features among which 14 factors represent statistically significant difference. Female interpreters are more inclined to use lengthier words, second person pronoun (you, your), "there be" structure, causative adverbial subordinators (e.g., so) and connectives "that" whereas male interpreters tend to use the pronoun "it", Which-type attributives and other adverbial clause conjunctions (e.g., since, so that.)

This paper also reveals motivation for similarities and differences of interpreting style between female and male interpreters. It is argued that keeping faithfulness to the source language leads to similar interpreter behavior whereas different roles in society and concern for target language practicality attribute to differences in choosing linguistic factors. Since this paper only investigates male and female interpreters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, future efforts could probe into community interpreters. And it is suggested that qualitative interviews be applied to analyze the reasons why interpreters shape his or interpreting style causes of the differences in their interpreting style. It is hoped that the present research can enrich current limited literature on interpreter's style, shed light to future studies and improve interpreting teaching performance.

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