An Appraisal System Based Discourse Analysis on China-Hungary Anti-epidemic Reports

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Abstract: *As the official media, China Daily's attitude in foreign reports is highly consistent with the government's foreign policy. Based on the theories of CDA and PDA, this paper analyzes the attitude resources in the reports of China and Hungary fighting against the epidemic. The results demonstrate that the affect resources take the largest proportion in China Daily's China-Hungary anti-epidemic reports. Almost all attitude resources are positive and mainly expressed in the implicit form (invoked). More appraisers are among others rather than the author of the report. The appraised are primarily others instead of the appraiser oneself. This evaluation mode ensures the objectivity of the report and helps to win the trust and support of readers.*

Keywords: *Critical Discourse Analysis, Positive Discourse Analysis, Appraisal System, China-Hungary Anti-epidemic Reports*

1. Introduction

Systemic Functional Linguistics is a comprehensive theory in analyzing the ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning in texts and it has been widely applied in discourse analysis. [1] According to Thompson (2008: 30), the interpersonal meaning is used to "interact with other people, to establish and maintain relations with them, to influence their behavior, to express our own viewpoint on things in the word and to elicit or change theirs" [2]. In order to perfect the interpretation of the interpersonal meaning, Martin and other scholars gradually develop Appraisal theory to systematically evaluate things, people's character and their feeling via the appraisal lexis. Appraisal is a central part of the meaning of any text and that any analysis of the interpersonal meanings of a text must take into account. In general, Appraisal theory is about the positive and negative evaluation of attitudes that are negotiated, value positions/stances that are adopted and grades of the feelings and stance. [3]

Systemic functional linguistics has always been an important tool of discourse analysis, which provides strong theoretical support for critical discourse analysis represented by Fairclough. In 1999, Martin read out his paper Positive Disclosure Analysis: Solidarity and Change in the international seminar on Critical Discourse Analysis held in Birmingham of England (see Martin, 2004). It symbolizes the rising of Positive Discourse Analysis (abbreviated as PDA). As a derivative theory of CDA, PDA and CDA complement each other, which is a new perspective in the field of discourse analysis. CDA focuses on exposing the manipulation of power and ideology, while PDA focuses on how to build a harmonious and friendly discourse environment and discourse order.[4]

Since the outbreak of covid-19, COVID-19 news has become the focus of discourse analysis. However, most of the research articles start from the perspective of news theory, and few of them use linguistic theories, appraisal theory for example, as analysis tool from the perspective of discourse analysis. Moreover, the corpus involved in these studies mainly focuses on China or the United States, and pays less attention to reports involving other countries.

This paper combines the three-dimensional framework of Fairclough's discourse analysis with Martin's theory of positive discourse analysis, and makes a systematic study on the Hungarian anti epidemic reports published in China Daily from 2020 to 2021 with appraisal theory. Different from the anti-epidemic discourse research before, this study takes Hungarian epidemic related English news reports as the research corpus. Based on Martin's appraisal theory, this paper analyzes the corpus from the perspective of linguistics, and then discusses the distribution of attitude resources and the language strategies contained in China-Hungary anti-epidemic news reports. The study on China-Hungary anti-

epidemic news reports from a linguistic perspective will help us to understand the attitude and policy direction of the anti-epidemic work as well as to provide a new perspective and inspiration for discourse researches.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) investigates the ideological meaning behind the linguistic structure by analyzing the linguistic features of texts and the social and historical background in which they are generated, and further reveals the complex relationship among language, power and ideology.[5] CDA began in Fairclough (1989). He pointed out that CDA is not only analysis, but also criticism; Ideology becomes common sense through the process of naturalization, and is accepted and familiar by people. What CDA needs to do is reverse movement, that is, denaturation. By analyzing the language forms in discourse, it reveals the relationship among the implied language, power and ideology, and how the ruling class uses language to control ideology and maintain its power status. As shown in figure 1, Fairclough(1989) identified text, interaction, and social context as three elements of a discourse, and the corresponding distinction between three stages of critical discourse analysis: description of text, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context. Figure 1 is regarded as the Three Dimensional Discourse Analysis Framework.
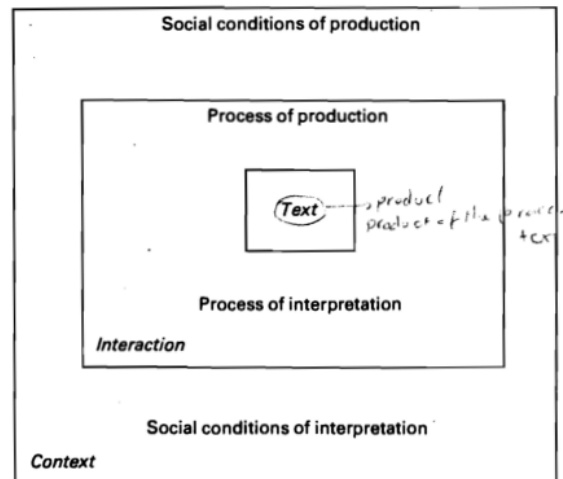

Figure 1: Three Dimensional Discourse Analysis Framework

2.2. Positive Discourse Analysis

Martin realize that modernity is obsessed with hegemony rules virtually to expose the naturalized power and show why the world is a terrible place and based on the proposals of relative scholars (Luke, 2002), Martin calls on more attention to reconciliation in the sites that motivate us. As a result, the complementary face of CDA (i.e. Critical Discourse Analysis)---PDA (i.e. Positive Discourse Analysis) emerges which focuses on community with the aim to make the world a better place without necessarily struggling against power. In 1999, Martin read out his paper Positive Disclosure Analysis: Solidarity and Change in the international seminar on Critical Discourse Analysis held in Birmingham of England (see Martin, 2004). It symbolizes the rising of Positive Discourse Analysis (abbreviated as PDA). Ever since, a series of papers are published by Martin to describe the motive, the selection of materials and the analysis methods of PDA, which arouse the support and resonance of some linguists.[6]

2.3. Appraisal System

Traditional systemic functional grammar (SFG) does not have a complete system based on the fact that language is regarded as the view and position of the reader or the speaker/listener on the situation. Dr. James R. Martin, a linguist who teaches in the Department of linguistics at the University of Sydney, Australia, saw this blind spot. In the 1990s, he developed systemic functional linguistics and established

the theoretical framework of appraisal system. Appraisal system was developed on the basis of the research on the language level of secondary schools and other places in New South Wales, Australia, from 1991 to 1994.[6]

The appraisal system includes three sub-systems: engagement, attitude and grading. They are respectively systematized. Attitude is sub systematized into affect, judgment and appreciation. Attitude refers to the judgment and appreciation of behavior, text/process and phenomena after psychological influence.[7] Therefore, the system is divided into three subsystems: judgment system, affect system and appreciation system. It is a resource to explain language phenomenon, which is used to explain the emotional response of language users to behavior, text/process and phenomenon. As a resource to explain language phenomena, the judgment system is used to explain the moral judgment made by language users according to ethics/morality (rules and regulations), such as whether they conform to ethics, whether they are reliable, whether they are brave and so on. As a resource to explain language phenomena, appreciation system is used to explain the appreciation of text/process and phenomenal aesthetic character of language users.

3. Research Design

Based on the related reports of Hungary's fight against COVID-19 in China Daily in 2000 -2021, this paper used corpus UAM to analyze the attitude resources involved in the software corpus. By combining Fairclough's three dimensional discourse analysis and Martin's positive discourse analysis theory, the distribution of the attitude resources was analyzed and demonstrated to answer the following questions:

(1) What is the distribution mode of attitude resources in the corpus?

(2) What attitude expression strategy is applied in the corpus?

(3) What social-political factors are behind the text feature and strategy?

4. Data Analysis

4.1. A general illustration of the corpus

Table 1: Frequency Analysis

Token	Frequency	Relative Frequency
Hungary	37	2.65%
China	25	1.79%
said	20	1.43%
Chinese	14	1.00%
vaccine	14	1.00%
Hungarian	12	0.86%
Covid-19	12	0.86%
coronavirus	10	0.72%

Through the UAM corpus analysis software, word frequency statistics was made on the corpus. According to the statistical results shown in table 1, "Hungary", "China", "vaccine" and "covid-19" are the main hot words. This is closely related to the choice of corpus, which is in line with the expectation of the research design. It is worth noting that the verb "said" appears more frequently, which means that the discourse is full of discourse sources from other aspects.

4.2. Text analysis attitude resource distribution

By classifying the attitude resources in the corpus, the following distribution data of attitude resources are obtained.

As shown in table 2, attitude resources in the corpus are mainly affect resources, accounting for 50.00%, followed by appreciation resources, accounting for 23.81%, and judgment resources, accounting for 26.19%.

Table 2: Distribution of Attitude Resources

ATTITUDE-TYPE	Frequency	Percentage
Affect	20	50.00%
Judgement	10	23.81%
Appreciation	12	26.19%
Total	42	100.00%

4.3. Affect Resources

Affect mainly involves four sub-categories: un/happiness, dis/satisfaction, in/security, dis/inclination.

Table 3: Affect Resources-Subtypes

AFFECT	Frequency
Un/happiness	1
Dis/satisfaction	4
In/security	11
Dis/inclination	5
Total	21

As shown in table 3, the resource expressing security-trust appears most frequently among the emotional vocabulary resources. It appears 11 times in the corpus.

In terms of the implementation of lexical resources, in/security resources includes adjectives, nouns, verb phrases and clauses. In/security resources shows the attitude of solidarity, cooperation and mutual trust.

1) *China Railway Group Limited (CREC), a listed Chinese construction company, has donated 300,000 surgical masks to Hungary to show its solidarity[+affect:trust], the company's Hungarian branch said in a statement on Wednesday.*

As a state-owned enterprise of China, CREC's words also represent China's positive attitude towards developing solidarity and friendly relations with Hungary.

2) *"....we are fighting together with [+affect:trust] our Chinese friends against COVID-19," Menczer (state secretary from the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade) told Xinhua(News Agency)...*
The report directly quoted the words of state secret from the Hungarian Ministry of foreign affairs and trade to show Hungary's positive attitude towards China's aid to Hungarian anti epidemic materials. "Fighting together with" is a metaphor for war. It will compare COVID-19 with war, while China and Hungary are good comrades in arms. This attitude shows the close ties and cooperation between Hungary and China in fighting COVID-19.[8] China Daily directly quoted Menczer's speech to show China's support and praise for Hungary's high evaluation of bilateral relations, as well as China's attitude of affirming friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries.

3) *"A friend in need is a friend indeed.[+affect:trust] The CREC is a trustworthy[+affect:trust] friend for us, and we believe[+affect:trust], as the two nations stand closely together[+affect:trust], we sure will tide over the difficulties," Homolya (president of Hungarian Railways) said.*

With the development of discourse, the resonance between evaluation resources is just like the melody of music running in the discourse, which strengthens or weakens the author's attitude (Martin & Rose, 2003:48). Martin further divided the prosodic structure into three types: saturation, intensification and dominance. Martin pointed out that in the permeable prosodic structure, the embodiment of rhythm is random, and it will appear in any place that can appear. In this sentence, many positive in / security resources are used to infiltrate into the discourse through clauses, adjectives, verb phrases and other forms. The sense of solidarity and mutual trust has been strengthened, which shows the Hungarian side's trust in China and the confidence of the two countries to work together to overcome the epidemic.

4.4. Judgement resources

The judgment of evaluation theory is further divided into social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem is the evaluation of the normality of behavior, while social sanction is related to whether the behavior conforms to the law and moral standards.

Table 4: Judgement Resources-Subtypes

Judgement	Frequency
Normality	0
Capacity	8
Tenacity	2
Veracity	0
Total	10

As shown in table 4, only capacity and tenacity subcategories are involved in the corpus. Capacity expresses the evaluation of the ability of the actor, while tenacity is the evaluation of the spiritual quality of the actor, such as bravery, perseverance and so on.

Capacity is mainly realized by verbs or verb phrases in corpus. It mainly involves the positive evaluation of the progress of cooperation between the two countries and their ability to overcome the epidemic.

4) *"...we sure will tide over[+Judgement:capacity] the difficulties," Homolya said.*

5) *"The CREC believes in a community with a shared future for mankind and is convinced that through solidarity and mutual assistance, we will prevail[+Judgement:capacity] over this pandemic."*

The verb itself contains the evaluation of the behavior, the verb of "successfully completing something" implies the positive evaluation of the behavior subject. Both Chinese and Hungarian respondents have a positive attitude towards working together to improve the level of anti epidemic, showing their confidence and determination to fight the epidemic together.

4.5. Appreciation Resources

The appreciation system is further divided into reaction, composition and social value. It reflects the object's ability to cause the evaluator's emotional reflection; the composition involves the harmonious, balanced and orderly relationship among the parts of the object; the social value involves the usefulness and effectiveness on the social dimension.

Table 5: Appreciation Resources-Subtypes

Appreciation	Frequency
Reaction	3
Composition:	0
Social-valuation	8
Total	11

As shown in table 5, the corpus mainly involves two sub categories: reaction and social value.

Social value is realized by verb phrases and adjectives. It mainly involves two dimensions: importance and benefit.

6) *"It is important [Appreciation: Social-value+] that the air bridge between China and Hungary continue to operate, as we need to be equipped for a long-term defense," the minister concluded.*

7) *Wang(State Councilor and Foreign Minister) said he is glad to know that Hungary has approved import of a Chinese COVID-19 vaccine, adding that China attaches great importance to [Appreciation: Social-value+]Hungary's urgent desire to strengthen vaccine cooperation with China.*

Attitude words related to social value show Hungary's positive attitude towards China's air transportation of anti epidemic materials and China's high evaluation of Hungary's air transportation assistance value. At the same time, China also shows a friendly attitude of sharing weal and woe with Hungary and attaches great importance to Hungary's demands.

5. Interpretation of China-Hungary Anti-epidemic Reports

Discourse interpretation is the second stage of Fairclough's three-dimensional discourse analysis, which focuses on production consumption and distribution of text.

As shown in table 6, almost all the evaluations involved in the corpus are positive evaluations, which has strengthened the positive attitude of China and Hungary to fight against COVID-19 together, and demonstrated the positive attitude of good neighborly relations and win-win cooperation between the

two countries.

Table 6: Polarity

Attitude-Polarity	N=42	
Positive Attitude	41	97.62%
Negative Attitude	1	2.38%

This kind of single attitude expression is easy to reduce the objectivity of the text. Therefore, in terms of the realization of attitude resources, the collected reports prefer implicit mode of expression (invoked) as illustrated in table 7, so as to strategically preserve the objective nature of the reports. While, in terms of the evaluative source, external voice is more widely applied (This is the reason why "Said" occupied a high frequency in the corpus). According to the statistics from the aspects of appraiser and appraised in table 8 and table 9, most of the attitude in the corpus are not directly expressed by the author, and mainly come from the interviewees or other voices. Similarly, most of the evaluation objects are others, less involved in the self-evaluation. The source of evaluation in news report is closely related to the construction of news and text. It shows how the author introduces external voice (intertextuality) to enhance the objectivity of the article, so as to prompt the readers' acceptance to the views and positions expressed in the report. This evaluation mode of the corpus makes the evaluation itself highly objective, which improves the objectivity of the report itself, and is easy to win the trust and support of readers.

Table 7: Explicitness

Explicitness	N=42	
Inscribed(Explicit)	27	64.29%
Invoked(Implicit)	15	35.71%

Table 8: Appraiser and Appraised

Appraiser	N=42	
Writer-appraiser	5	11.90%
Other-appraiser	37	88.10%

Table 9: Appraiser and Appraised

Appraised	N=42	
Self	11	26.19%
Other	31	73.18%

To sum up, from the perspective of discourse production, China Daily, on the one hand, tries to show the bilateral relationship of mutual assistance and sincere cooperation between China and Hungary in the process of fighting against the epidemic, on the other hand, ensures the objectivity and credibility of the report through implicit expression and external voice evaluation sources.

6. Explanation on Social and Political Context

The traditional friendship between China and Hungary has a long history. On October 4, 1949, Hungary announced its recognition of the people's Republic of China. On October 6, the two countries established diplomatic relations. After the establishment of diplomatic relations, the friendly relations between the two countries have developed in an all-round way, leaders have exchanged visits and other forms of exchanges have been close, cooperation in various fields has been continuously strengthened, friendship between the two peoples has been further deepened, and both sides have supported and cooperated closely in international affairs. China and Hungary have carried out extensive and close cooperation in the fields of culture and education as well as science and technology. Hungary has several "firsts" in the process of actively developing its relations with China. One belt, one road, China is the first European country to sign a document on cooperation with China in promoting the "one belt, one road initiative".

The elements of friendly relations between China and Hungary are relatively unique. First, China and Hungary have natural kinship and are both "Orientals"; second, before the collapse of the Soviet Union in the last century and the drastic changes in Eastern Europe, they were both socialist countries and used to be brothers in the same camp; third, the two countries should open to the outside world in response to the same needs of the world economic crisis and boosting national economy and comprehensive national strength. China's "one belt, one road initiative" is in line with Hungary's policy of opening to the East. Finally, good cooperation platforms such as CHINA-CEEC Investment and Trade Expro have ensured

the smooth progress of practical cooperation in all fields.

After COVID-19's outbreak in China, Hungary was one of the first countries to donate disease control materials to China, which not only reflected the friendly feelings of the Hungarian government and people to the Chinese people, but also reflected the deepening and importance of friendly bilateral relations between China and Hungary. At present, the epidemic situation in Hungary is facing severe challenges. China is willing to share information and experience with Hungary in a timely manner and provide assistance within its capacity. The Chinese government and people firmly support Hungary's efforts to fight the epidemic and work together to overcome the current difficulties.

Founded in 1995, China Daily has become a national comprehensive media website and the most influential English website in China. Driven by the development of media convergence, China Daily has carried out targeted public opinion guidance work, significantly enhanced its international discourse power, and has become an important public opinion position for national foreign publicity and one of China's information sources with the highest reprint rate of overseas media. Therefore, the attitude expressed in China Daily's reports is closely related to the country's major policies. The characteristics of the evaluation model of news reports on China and Hungary's joint fight against the epidemic reflect the corresponding political and cultural background, reflect the friendly diplomatic relations between the two countries, promote and reproduce the further development of friendly and cooperative bilateral relations.

7. Conclusion

China-Hungary anti-covid19 reports from China Daily are analyzed and following conclusions can be drawn:

(1) The attitude resources in the report are mainly affect resources, and the number of judgment resources and appreciation resources are similar, which are lower than affect resources. Most of the affect resources reflect mutual trust and assistance between the two countries.

(2) On the basis of positive attitude, the report tend to apply implicit expression and quote others' evaluation as strategy of maintaining objectivity of the official media.

(3) The attitude distribution and language strategies of the reports reflect the consistency of the attitude of China Daily as an official media with government's diplomatic policies. Meanwhile, the long-standing friendly and mutual aid bilateral relations between China and Hungary are also the influencing factors as the social and political background behind the reports.

Acknowledgement

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