**Framing Traditional Chinese Medicine**

2019 Joint Research Project by

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&

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**Abstract**

The concept of Cultural distance (CD) initially developed by Geert Hofstede and defined by other researchers (e.g. Raza, Singh & Dutt, 2002) as the degree to which cultural norms, worldviews, attitudes, perceptions and ideas differ between countries, has been widely applied in cross-culture comparison studies. For example, scholars have examined how it has influenced trading between two countries. In particular, research indicated that the bigger the cultural difference between two countries, the more negative effects it would have on the amount of trade (Tung and Verbeke, 2010).

Similarly, it could also be used to explain the extent to which how a cultural product of one country is accepted or framed by another country’s people or the news media. The assumption is that the larger the cultural difference, the more negative evaluation the people or the news media will have on the cultural product. Such assumption is rather commonsensical but the influence of CD could be moderated by various factors. The case of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) as the cultural product of China could illustrate such complexity. The influence of CD on the acceptance and TCM in another country could be minimized if the country is the origin of some precious wildlife, which could be taken as ingredients of TCM. Despite its curative effects, the fact that TCM uses parts of animals and plants as the ingredient of its medicines has aroused strong criticism from people/news media in countries where there are such wildlife.

Besides, the population of Chinese immigrants in one country might also affect the acceptance of TCM in the nation. However, there have been few studies on how exactly CD, origin of TCM ingredients and population of Chinese immigrants influence or moderate the evaluation of TCM in a country’s news media.

To fill the gap, this study will do a quantitative content analysis of mainstream news media’s reports on the TCM in a number of countries which vary in terms of CD to China, origin (or not) of TCM ingredients and population of Chinese immigrants to gauge the influence of these factors to the reporting of TCM. The dependent variables will include the tones of news reports (positive, neutral or negative) and the frames used by the news media to report TCM. In this study, not only issue specific but also generic frames (see De Vreese 2005 for classifications between the two types of frames) will be coded so that the findings from the study could serve as more effective reference for further studies examining the news reports of other cultural products from China.

**References**

De Vreese CH (2005) News framing: Theory and typology. Information Design Journal + Document Design 13(1): 51–62.

Raza G, Singh S, Dutt B (2002). Public, Science, and Cultural Distance. Science Communication 23(3): 293-309.

Tung RL, Verbeke A (2010). Beyond Hofstede and GLOBE: Improving the quality of cross-cultural research. Journal of International Business Studies 41(8): 1259-1274.

**CODING INSTRUCTIONS**

First version drafted by Dr. Xianwen Kuang for first coder meeting (xx/xx/2019)

**PLEASE DO NOT QUOTE OR DISSEMINATE WITHOUT PERMISSION**

The units of analysis are news stories on Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) from mainstream newspapers of different countries. These countries vary in terms of their cultural distance (CD) to China. In particular, they are vary on the CD dimension of “uncertainty avoidance”, which is defined in Hofstede (1984, p14) as “ways of dealing with uncertainty, relating to the control of aggression and the expression of emotions”. Uncertainty arises from the unknowability of the future, which is essentially subjective experience. This feeling is not personal, but shared in society. Usunier (2005) states that the uncertainty avoidance dimension measures the extent to which people in a society tend to feel threatened by undefined situations. This dimension of CD is adopted because TCM would be considered an “undefined” object which might cause the feeling of threat of people in a non-Chinese society.

Besides, these 8 countries also vary in terms of whether they are origin of TCM ingredients or not. They also show differences on population of Chinese immigrants. Together with the “uncertainty avoidance” dimension of CD, the three are the main factors (independent variables) that are assumed to influence the reporting of TCM.

The dependent variables, on the other hand, will include the tones of news reports (positive, neutral or negative) and the frames used by the news media to report TCM. In this study, not only issue specific but also generic frames will be coded so that the findings from the study could serve as more effective reference for further studies examining the news reports of other cultural products from China.

Issue specific frames will include the environment/animal protection frame and the curative effect frame (more could be added following the pilot study), while generic frames will include human interest frame, responsibility frame, morality frame, economic consequence frame, conflict frame, leadership frame and factual frame.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

RQ1: How do news organizations in countries which vary in terms of cultural distance and in particular the distance on “uncertainty avoidance” with China frame the Traditional Chinese Medicine?

RQ2: How do news organizations in countries which vary in terms of number of Chinese immigrants frame the Traditional Chinese Medicine?

RQ3: How do news organizations in countries which vary in terms of abundance of TCM ingredients frame the Traditional Chinese Medicine?

**LIST OF VARIABLES**

**General information**

**V0 Number of news item**

V1 Coder ID

V2 Country of news outlet

V3 News outlet

V4 Year of publication of news item

V5 Type of news item

**V6 Keyword in news lead**

**Tones**

V7 Positive

V8 Neutral

V9 Negative

**Issue specific frames**

V10 Environment/animal protection frame

V11 Curative effect frame

**Generic frames**

V12 Human interest frame

V13 Responsibility frame

V14 Morality frame

V15 Economic consequence frame

V16 Conflict frame

V17 Leadership frame

V18 Factual frame

**CODING INSTRUCTIONS**

General information

**V0 Number of news item**

Give a number to each news item. Start with 1001, 1002 and so on. Delete news items using track changes which are repeated.

**V1 Coder ID**

1 Yinlong (coding 100% of samples)

2 Qingqing (coding 10% of samples)

**V2 Country of news outlet**

Write down the name of the country where the newspaper is from or published. For China Daily and Global Times, code “China”, while for other newspapers, code the country where the newspaper is printed or published.

If country of news outlet is not clear, search the title of the newspaper online (using baidu.com or bing.com) to identify which country the newspaper belongs to.

**V3 News outlet**

Write down the title (name) of the newspaper.

**V4 Year of publication**

Year of publication of the news item (YYYY)

**V5 Type of news item**

To determine the type of article, look first of all at the label used by the newspaper. If that does not clarify which category should be chosen, look at the descriptions of the types of items below

1 News story

i.e. most frequent type of story, factual news report, report of events etc. of what has happened- when, where, who, what, why. This is the most commonly occurring story category.

2 Background story/analysis

This category should be chosen if the story is explicitly labeled as a background story or analysis. Also choose this category if the news item is a longer article, not only factual reporting. The difference with reportage is that it is not so much based on personal experience or involvement of the author, no eye-witness story)

3 Bullet

Short story which consists of a headline and a short summary-at least one sentence- announcing a substantial article that can be found inside the newspaper

4 Reportage

i.e. feature article, vivid report of a correspondent, named as the author of the article. A ‘reportage’ describes the individual experience of the author(s); it is an eyewitness story of an event, often explicitly marked as ‘reportage’

5 Column

News items which are clearly marked as a special column. Also choose this category for items which are re-occurring on a regular basis as fixed parts of the newspaper. Columns can be written in a very personal style and are separated from regular coverage, often they have a fixed location in the newspaper. The difference between a column and a ‘commentary’ is that the same author writes his or her column on a regular basis.

6 Commentary/opinion piece/letter to the editor

News items which are explicitly labeled “commentary” or “opinion piece”. Also choose this category for news items which are not written by a journalist but by an external source such as an expert; media observer etc., often the official title or affiliation of the author is given as well. Commentary/opinion pieces clearly express the standpoint of the author and are often placed on a special opinion page of the newspaper.

7 Editorial

This category should be chosen for news items which are explicitly labeled “Editorial” and for news items which expresses the standpoint of the newspaper

8 Interview

This category of article is an interview, in which the main part of the article consists of questions by the journalists and answers by the interviewee. Note: interviews as an element of ‘reportages’ are not meant here)

9 Press release

News items which clearly state the source as related governmental departments.

10 Documentation

The news item in its original text, e.g. of a treaty, constitution, contract, of a letter)

11 Feature

A feature story is an article that is not meant to report breaking news. It is likely to be written from a personal perspective, and unlike news stories do not always deal with the events of the immediate past. It is usually marked as ‘feature’.

99 Cannot be determined.

**V6 Keyword in title and lead**

1 (Traditional) Chinese Medicine

2 Chinese therapy

3 acupuncture

4 cupping

Only code the main keyword if more than two of the above appear.

**Tones**

V7 Positive

Is the news item largely positive about the Traditional Chinese Medicine?

1 Yes

0 No

V8 Neutral

Does the news item introduce/discuss the Traditional Chinese Medicine with neutrally and objectively?

1 Yes

0 No

V9 Negative

Is the news item largely negative about the Traditional Chinese Medicine?

1 Yes

0 No

**Issue specific frames**

V10 Environment/animal protection frame

Does the news item mainly discuss the influence of the Traditional Chinese Medicine on the environment, plants and animals?

1 Yes

0 No

V11 Curative effect frame

Does the news item mainly discuss the medical or curative effects of the Traditional Chinese Medicine?

1 Yes

0 No

V11 Practitioner qualification frame

Does the news item mainly discuss the qualification of the Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioners?

1 Yes

0 No

**Generic frames**

V12 Human interest frame

Does the news item bring an individual’s story or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue or problem?

1 Yes

0 No

V13 Responsibility frame

Does the news item present an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for its cause or solution to either the government or to an individual or group?

1 Yes

0 No

V14 Morality frame

Does the news item interpret an issue, event or problem in terms of moral prescription, such as presenting moral messages, or offering specific social prescriptions about how to behave?

1 Yes

0 No

V15 Economic consequence frame

Does the news item emphasize the actual or potential economic impact or consequences of an event, issue, action or problem on individuals, societies or nations?

1 Yes

0 No

V16 Conflict frame

Does the news item emphasize the conflict between individuals, groups, governmental departments or other institutions?

1 Yes

0 No

V17 Leadership frame

A news item is coded with the leadership frame when it focuses on the activities, actions or speech of a leader of a nation, an institution, a government agency or a group, or highlights the discussion and assessment of the leadership.

1 Yes

0 No

V18 Factual frame

Does the news item present events or issues in a straightforward fashion without indication of implications?

1 Yes

0 No