



From Confrontation to Collaboration: Attitudinal Changes of Trish Regan on US-China Trade War in Commentaries and Debate

Weichao Wang

School of English for International Business Guangdong University of Foreign Studies No.2 North Baiyun Avenue, Baiyun District Guangzhou, 510420, PRC. China

Xiaofen Zhang (Corresponding Author)

Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, 2 North Baiyun Avenue, Baiyun District, Guangzhou 510420, China
Email: 20190310047@gdufs.edu.cn

Article History

Received: 16 November, 2020

Revised: 13 December, 2020

Accepted: 27 December, 2020

Published: 30 December, 2020

Copyright © 2020 ARPG & Author

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International



CC BY: Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0

Abstract

In her cross-border debate with Chinese anchor Liu Xin, Trish Regan, an American anchor, behaved differently than what she had done in her previous commentaries. This paper explores the attitudinal differences evinced by Trish Regan on different occasions from a linguistic perspective. Based on the Appraisal System, especially the Attitude subsystem (Martin and White, 2005), this paper examines the attitudinal resources utilized by Trish Regan in her two news commentaries and her online debate with her counterpart Liu Xin—a set of texts which provides a longitudinal account of how Trish has changed her attitude. By annotating the attitude resources used by Trish, positive and negative evaluations are expected to be clarified, with detailed analyses of subsystems in the Attitude System to be given. The results suggest that Trish’s attitude towards China has changed a lot in her commentaries and the debate with Liu Xin—from negative to partly positive. It also appears that Trish maintained positive attitude towards the United States while she changed her positive attitude towards trade war into a negative one in her debate with Liu Xin.

Keywords: Attitudinal changes; Attitude system; Trade war; News discourse.

1. Introduction

Recent years have witnessed a great undulation on the trade relationship between China and the United States. With a series of relevant measures and countermeasures imposed, trade conflicts between the two countries have become increasingly fierce (Zhang, 2019). Early in the May of 2019, Trish Regan, host of Fox Business Network, made a series of comments on US-China trade war, accusing China of “stealing” their intellectual property. In response to her commentary, Liu Xin, anchor of China Global Television Network, released a video titled “China won’t accept unequal trade deal” on the morning of May 22, 2019, in which she accused Trish’s words of being “supported with little substance”. Trish soon responded with a news commentary titled “China State TV Targets Trish” and challenged Liu Xin to a debate. On May 30, Chinese anchor Liu Xin and American anchor Trish Regan, both claiming to speak for themselves, had their debate on trade talks through satellite.

News, as is defined by Montgomery (2007), refers to current or recent information to which the audience can’t get immediate access. In news discourse, multiple voices are integrated, such as those of correspondents, news reporters, bystanders and experts (Głaz and Trofymczuk, 2020; Montgomery, 2007; Sanders, 2010). News commentary is a category of news discourse that mainly comprises the evaluations of the journalist or agency (Van Dijk, 2013). In her news commentaries, Trish Regan is supposed to make comments which consist of her own evaluations. In her debate with Liu Xin, her evaluations are also necessary. However, in the debate, she performed rather differently compared to what she had done in her own news commentaries.

Under the theoretical framework of Appraisal System (Martin and White, 2005), mainly its Attitude subsystem, this paper aims to explore the attitudinal changes of Trish Regan in her news commentaries and her debate with Liu Xin. By analyzing linguistic resources that negotiate affect, judgement or valuation, we provide implications for the understanding of how personal evaluations are made in news discourse. Focusing on the shifting process of Trish’s attitude, the present study also contributes to the longitudinal research on attitudinal changes.

The remaining sections of the paper are outlined as follows: Section two reviews some established literature. Section three introduces the methodology adopted in the study, including the data collected and specific analytical procedures involved. Section four analyzes Trish Regan’s attitudinal changes in detail. Section five is a conclusive part, in which directions for further research will be presented.

2. Literature Review

Abundant work has recently been devoted to analyzing news discourse (Bednarek, 2016; Boer and Van Tubergen, 2019; Ge and Wang, 2018; Idrus and Ismail, 2013; Montgomery and Shen, 2017; Schubert, 2015; Van Krieken and Sanders, 2016). Among them, investigating evaluative language in news is an emerging and promising area (Ghavannia and Dastjerdi, 2013; Pounds, 2012). The present study, taking advantage of established efforts, intends to follow the trend.

Evaluations are “the speaker’s or writer’s attitude or stance towards, a viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about” (Hunston and Thompson, 2000). Thus, evaluative language definitely indicates personal attitude. Two approaches are widely adopted in the literature to analyzing evaluations in news discourse. One of the approaches is based on theories of news values, including (Bell, 1991) news values taxonomy and Bednarek (2006) core evaluative parameters. However, evaluating the expectedness, significance or negativity of the news (Bednarek and Caple, 2014; Bednarek, 2016), studies on news values (Ghavannia and Dastjerdi, 2013; Huan, 2016b) emphasize the news per se, rather than the journalist or reporter. The current study will focus on the journalist or reporter. In order to probe more fully into personal evaluations in news discourse, the other approach—Appraisal System (Martin and White, 2005) could be adopted.

Appraisal System, which explores the “interpersonal metafunction” Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) of language, is an important development of Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). It is a useful tool for discourse analysis of various genres, including official statements or reports (Huan, 2016a; Li and Xu, 2018; Smith and Adendorff, 2014; Swain, 2012; Vertommen *et al.*, 2012) and comparatively more personal texts such as Trump’s tweets (Ross and Caldwell, 2020), personal emails (Ho, 2014), online hotel reviews (Tian, 2013), academic thesis (Geng and Wharton, 2019) and doctors’ discourse (Gallardo and Ferrari, 2010). The present study, endeavoring to analyze news discourse, will also adopt Appraisal System as the analytical framework. Appraisal System is comprised of three main subsystems: Attitude, Graduation and Engagement (Martin and White, 2005). One or more subsystems will be applied for specific purposes: Attitude subsystem contributes to analyzing how the speaker or writer evaluates people and things (Cabrejas-Peñuelas and Díez-Prados, 2014; Marshall *et al.*, 2010), Graduation subsystem deals with the intensification of evaluative expressions (Ross and Caldwell, 2020), and Engagement subsystem is related to the source of evaluations (Tian, 2013). With the aim of examining individual attitudes, this study will concentrate on the Attitude subsystem.

In news discourse, although reporters or journalists are supposed to maintain objectivity and neutrality, their impersonal voices, or “reporter voice” can still be recognized in related texts through invoked attitude and heteroglossic engagement (White, 2012). Through qualitative and multimodal analysis of an episode of the British news programme *BBC News at Ten*, Pounds (2012) finds that verbal and non-verbal categories authorial affect is conveyed in news reporting. However, opinions or attitudes found in the above literature are “synchronic” (Saussure, 1916), while diachronic studies (Meadows and Sayer, 2013; Vis *et al.*, 2012) are limited. The most important difference between a synchronic study and a diachronic study is that the later involves the existence of changes while the former usually disregards changes. In this paper, tracking the shifts of personal attitude in different contexts, we therefore intend to conduct a diachronic analysis.

One of the few studies we refer to is that of Meadows and Sayer (2013) who carry out an intertextual analysis. Combining all the three subsystems of Appraisal System as the methodological tools, Meadows and Sayer (2013) juxtapose three diachronic texts—the original *BBC Top Gear* episode that is viewed as a kind of derogatory speech to Mexican people, the reactions in Mexican media and the BBC public statement. The original episode is found to make negative valuation towards Mexican cars which can be synonymous with the Mexican nation. The reactions of Mexican media reflect their denial and criticism of the comments made by the *Top Gear* as well as their praise of the Mexicans. While in the BBC statement, expanding expressions are firstly made but then contracted by pronouncement, endorsement or denial. The present study follows its way of diachronic analysis and its employment of Appraisal System. And in order to concentrate on how Trish Regan’s evaluations are made and how they shift in different contexts, only one subsystem—Attitude System will be focused, with the intensification and the source of her evaluations nearly ignored. And it is Trish Regan who is the owner of her emotions, judgements and appreciations, only one appraiser—Trish Regan therefore will be involved in the present study.

Based on prior literature, this study adopts Attitude System to explore how personal attitude is conveyed through appraisal resources in news discourse, as well as how it changes on different occasions. This study will not only help to understand the fact that on different occasions attitude towards the same issue may be different but also promote the research on Appraisal System, especially on Attitude subsystem, in news discourse such as news commentaries.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

In this paper we have collected three texts. The first text comes from Trish Regan’s news commentary in Trish Regan PrimeTime on May 6, 2019 (video source is available at <https://youtu.be/DFPa7Mwz3zs>). The second text is Trish’s response to Liu Xin on May 23, 2019 (video source is available at <https://youtu.be/JxT4ToZSxgY>). The third text is Trish’s debate with Liu Xin on May 30, 2019 (video source is available at https://youtu.be/Dn3_ABoJ7TY). Since we intend to target Trish Regan as the single appraiser, in our transcribed texts, therefore, only what she has said is preserved, weeding out the words of other people such as the guests in her program and Liu Xin in the debate. Respectively 500, 1137 and 1243 words are collected in the three texts for a discourse analysis in the current study.

3.2. Data Analysis

We have annotated each text manually based on the Attitude subsystem in Martin and White (2005) which is a “powerful analytical tool for the purposes of uncovering attitudes in texts” (De Klerk and Young, 2012).

In order to examine the expression of attitude, the source of attitude, or the “appraiser”, as well as the target of attitude, or the “appraised”, should be firstly identified (Martin and White, 2005). Because we concentrate on the dynamic changes of Trish’s attitude, the “appraiser” in our study will always be Trish Regan. The “appraised” may vary according to different topics involved in the discourse. To facilitate our comparison, we will classify those “appraised” into two representative categories—China and the US.

Attitude System (Martin and White, 2005) falls into three subsystems: affect, judgement and appreciation, with each subsystem consisting of its own sub-categories. Affect is related to emotions that react to behavior, process or phenomena, including feelings of happiness or unhappiness, security or insecurity, and satisfaction or dissatisfaction. For example, in “I’m very *pleased* tonight to welcome Ms. Liu Xin”, the adjective “pleased” conveys a positive mental feeling of pleasure, which can be annotated as “[+affect: satisfaction]. Judgement, which has something to do with the evaluation of behavior, including two sub-categories: social esteem and social sanction which can be subdivided into normality, capacity, tenacity, veracity and propriety. An example of judgement resources would be “they are very *active* in that very important market”. The adjective “active” reflects that the behavior is conducted with determined efforts, and therefore it can be annotated as “[+judgement: tenacity]”. Appreciation is something to do with aesthetics, evaluating a process or natural phenomenon. It includes three subcategories: reaction, composition and valuation. In the example “this is actually a really *unique* opportunity”, the adjective “unique” realizes a positive valuation, and it can be annotated as “[+appreciation: valuation]. All the three subsystems involve positive and negative assessments (Martin and White, 2005), so both positive and negative evaluations will be analyzed in detail. A negative example of evaluations would be “it’s quite *bizarre* frankly”. The word “bizarre” is a negative judgement of normality, annotated as “[-judgement: normality].

4. Analysis of Trish Regan’s Attitudinal Changes

From her own news commentaries to the debate with Liu Xin, Trish Regan has changed significantly in her choices of attitudinal resources, which reflects the changes of her attitudinal meanings. In the following analysis, we will discuss on one hand how Trish conveys her attitude by annotating relevant attitudinal resources that express her emotions, judgements and appreciations based on Appraisal System, and on the other hand how her attitude diachronically changes by following three stages successively including her initial commentary, her responsive commentary and her interactive online debate with Liu Xin. The distribution of Attitude resources will be presented with statistics, and detailed analyses on the annotations as well as interpretations of attitudinal resources will be conducted.

4.1. Commentary in Trish Regan Prime Time

In her news commentary titled “China needs us more than we need them”, Trish Regan expressed her opinion on the current situation of China and the US, with the later including her attitude towards the president, American businesses and the trade war with China.

Table-1. Attitude resources in Trish Regan’s commentary

Appraised	Affect	Judgement	Appreciation	Positive	Negative	Total
China	0	4	1	1	4	5
The US	4	15	5	24	0	24

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of attitudinal resources including affect, judgement and appreciation in Trish Regan’s own commentary in which Trish mainly showed her evaluations pertaining to the US. Towards the US president, American businesses and the US-China trade, Trish employed various resources to express her positive attitude: 4 positive affect resources are utilized to realize mental emotions, 15 positive judgement resources target the behaviors of the US president Donald Trump and its businesses, and 5 positive appreciation resources are employed to evaluate the US market and the US-China trade war. While about China, she made 4 negative judgements on its capacity and the propriety of its behaviors, with only one positive valuation which was made towards the importance of the Chinese market. Specific examples will be analyzed according to the targets of Trish’s attitude.

4.1.1. Attitude towards China

Extract 1:

So, here is the deal: if China continues to *play around* like this, refusing to keep up! It’s the end of bargain, then we engage in retaliation.

[-judgement: propriety]

The verb phrase “play around” means “to behave in a silly way to amuse oneself or others”. Trish Regan, by using the word “continue”, presupposed that China used to and is behaving improperly and stupidly during the trade talks with the US, indicating her criticism on China’s behavior.

Extract 2:

Do you think you are able to get them to stop *stealing* our intellectual property? [-judgement: propriety]

In her question to US president Donald Trump, Trish here also presupposed China's behavior by her use of "stop". Accusing China of "stealing" their intellectual property, she used this negative judgement to depict China as a thief who had taken something from others without permission. Such behavior of China, in Trish's point of view, has violated ethical standards and should be reproached.

4.1.2. Attitude towards the US

Extract 3: The President of the United States is *playing hardball* with the Chinese tonight, *making good* on his threat to raise tariffs to 25 percent on Chinese goods coming to the United States of America.

[+judgement: tenacity]; [+judgement: capacity]

Saying that Donald Trump is "playing hardball" with the Chinese in the trade talks, Trish here suggested that Trump was very determined on his policy with China and Trump's resolve was emphasized. The verb phrase "making good on" means "to fulfill". It is a positive judgement of Trish on Trump's capacity of fulfilling what he has said or threatened.

Extract 4: We *support* their economy and the bottom line here is China *needs* us more than we need them.

[+judgement: capacity]; [-judgement: capacity]

Trish expressed her positive judgement on American business as well as her negative judgement on China's economy. On one hand, the US, who is stronger than China and can "support" China's economy. The verb "support" implicates that the US owns potential ability to help Chinese economy. Trish utilized the word to eulogize the capacity of the US economy. While China, on the other hand, weaker than the US, "needs" the US. Modalities of ability can be related to judgements of capacity (Martin and White, 2005). Trish used the modal verb "need" to downgrade the capacity of Chinese economy.

Extract 5: So if they intent to engage in an economic war affair and that's exactly what they are doing and they should just remember, by now, we *win* that *fight* and tariffs are a *weapon* that the president tells me he's not afraid to use.

[+judgement: capacity]; [+appreciation: valuation]; [+appreciation: valuation]

Confident of the capacity of the US, Trish held that they would be "the winner". By using two metaphors—"trade negotiation is a fight" and "tariffs are a weapon", Trish employed invoked appreciation resources to express her positive attitude towards the so-called trade war with China. In her point of view, wining in the trade negotiation with China is so important that it can be viewed as a fight or war in which Americans should try their best to be the survival with raising tariffs being one of their weapons to fight against China.

The above examples suggest that Trish's attitude towards China is predominantly negative in her initial news commentary, which is indicated in her use of negative judgement resources that depreciated China's capacity and the propriety of its behaviors. Contrastively, it is also suggested that the attitude of Trish Regan towards the United States in her news commentary is very positive. She asserts the capacity and tenacity of its president, holds positive view on its businesses and supports its action—trade war with China.

4.2. Responding to Liu Xin

In response to Liu Xin, Trish released her new commentary titled "China State TV Targets Trish", in which she mainly stated her ideas about China and the US, including her comments of the previous video made by Liu Xin and the state media, and her opinions about herself.

Table-2. Attitude resources in Trish Regan's response to Liu Xin

Appraised	Affect	Judgement	Appreciation	Positive	Negative	Total
China	3	16	6	3	22	25
The US	2	15	4	16	5	21

The second text is Trish's response to the Chinese media, as a result, she employed slightly more appraisal resources to evaluate China—25 units of appraisal resources targeting China and 21 units targeting the US. From Table 2, it can be found that the distribution of attitudinal categories is similar between the two sides: Trish used more judgement resources and less affect resources in her evaluations of both China and the US. However, it can also be found that most (22 units) of Trish's attitudinal resources related to China are negative, with the positive few (only 3 units) being appreciations of China's economy. In contrast, most (16 units) of her evaluations of the US are positive, with only 5 negative appraisal units. And what she criticized, actually, is those American companies that willingly gave up their intellectual property to Chinese companies, and those people who worried about American economy.

4.2.1. Attitude Towards China

Extract 6: ...just look at the last 20 years' China's aspirations. Let's face it, they are *not good* for us, they are *not good* for our families.

[-appreciation: valuation]

The attitude of Trish towards China's aspirations in the past two decades is negative. China's development is "not good for" American people and American families. In Trish's opinion, the amazing and incredible ascent of China brings threat to the United State, therefore, she made negative valuation on China's aspirations.

Extract 7: And yet the Chinese are *stealing* from us, they are *stealing* intellectual property.

[-judgement: propriety]

Trish here again reiterated her accusation of China for “stealing” intellectual property from the United States, which she deemed as actions that against social ethics. She even intensified the force of her negative judgement by a repetition of the word “stealing”.

Extract 8: China, listen up, you pick the *wrong* fight here.

[-appreciation: valuation]; [-judgement: capacity]

The adjective “wrong” represents that Trish on one hand thought it’s wrong for China to compete with the United States, which means that Trish did not appreciate China’s countermeasures against the United States. On the other hand, it is an invoked negative judgement on the capacity of China, because Trish didn’t think China would have the ability to win in the fight with the United States.

4.2.2. Attitude Towards the US

Extract 9: Of course, we *will* and we *should* and we *will fight* to make world market *more fair, more fair* for us.

[+judgement: capacity]; [+judgement: propriety]; [+appreciation: valuation]; [+judgement: propriety]

Trish utilized “will”, the modal verb for ability, to imply the capacity of the US to take actions in the world market. Alongside, she also used “should”, the auxiliary verb for obligation, to highlight the propriety of the subsequent actions of the US. To indicate that she supported and honored what the US would do, the verb “fight” was employed. By a repetition of “more fair”, Trish emphasized that in her opinion, what the US was going to do is really proper and will benefit the country and its people.

Extract 10: Now, I mean people were *so worried*, they are *so worried* and you know what, we’re doing *just fine*. We are doing *just fine*.

[-affect: security]; [+judgement: capacity]

The adjective “worried” was used twice and its force was intensified by the word “so”. Despite the fact that people felt and still feel insecure— “so worried”, about the economy of the United States, Trish insisted that they were behaving in a good manner and the current situation was positive for the United States. She, once again, intensified the force of her words by repetition.

4.2.3. Attitude towards Liu Xin and the State Media

Extract 11: That anchor is reading a script that seems I guess *have no emotion*.

[-appreciation: reaction]

In this invoked attitudinal resource, Trish depreciated Liu Xin by describing her voice as “having no emotion”. No live human beings have no emotion. Trish here actually seems to metaphorically compare Liu Xin with a machine that simply reads a script without emotion.

Extract 12: It’s *a little odd* that the state media would be targeting me. Um, I think it’s *quite bizarre* frankly, but I hear ya and that they’re trying to push back against anything that might challenge them.

[-judgement: normality]

Both “odd” and “bizarre” imply the meaning of abnormality. Trish thought that it was very strange for Liu Xin, or the Chinese state media behind, to make comments on her and on her previous commentaries. It is a negative judgement on Liu Xin and the Chinese state media.

4.2.4. Attitude Towards Herself

Extract 13: ...their newest target—me, yeah, me because I *have dared to say* we should engage in economic warfare with the financial tools we have.

[+judgement: tenacity]

The verb “dare” represents a positive judgement of tenacity, through which Trish depicted herself as a brave person and affirmed her previous behavior. She thought she was not only right but also brave to say that Americans should fight with China by raising tariffs.

Extract 14: OK, for the record, any emotion you see is *quite real*. It’s *quite real*. It *comes from substance*.

[+appreciation: reaction]; [+appreciation; composition]

Compared to her opinion on Liu Xin’s voice, Trish believed that her own voice was emotional and the emotion was “real” and “comes from substance”. If something comes from substance, then it is real and can be proved. In this instance, Trish emphasized the authenticity of the emotion in her voice, and intensified it by a repetition of the clause “it’s quite real”.

In her responsive commentary to Liu Xin, Trish Regan remained negative attitude towards China, by depreciating its development and accusing it of “stealing” again. And she remained positive towards the US, acknowledging its capacity, the propriety of its actions and the brightness of its economy. As for her counterpart Liu Xin and the CGTN, she firstly made negative valuation on Liu Xin’s voice and then negatively judged the behavior of the state media. But when it came to herself, she turned to a positive judgement of her own tenacity and appreciated her own voice.

4.3. Debating with Liu Xin

Throughout the television debate with Liu Xin, the attitudinal resources involved mainly focus on Trish Regan’s attitude towards China, Liu Xin and the debate per se with few of them pertaining to her attitude towards the trade war.

Table-3. Attitude resources of Trish Regan in her debate with Liu Xin

Appraised	Affect	Judgement	Appreciation	Positive	Negative	Total
China	6	4	9	14	5	19
The US	1	1	2	0	4	4

As is illustrated in Table 3, when talking with Liu Xin, Trish mainly expressed her positive attitude towards China, including her pleasure and appreciation for having Liu Xin in the debate. A total of 19 units of attitudinal resources are related to China, among which 14 units are positive. But she still made negative judgements on China such as its behaviors concerning intellectual property. In terms of the US, Trish, during in the debate, showed fewer evaluations. With regard to its trade war with China, Trish made negative valuations, depreciating it by repeated denials of its benefit.

4.3.1. Attitude Towards China

Extract 15: *There is evidence that China has stolen enormous amount of intellectual property, hundreds of billions of dollars' worth now.*

[+appreciation: valuation]; [-judgement: propriety]

Again, Trish negatively judged China, accusing it of “stealing” intellectual property from the US companies. The negative judgement is, in Trish’s words, supported by “evidence”, a positive valuation which means that she believed authenticity of such a negative judgement.

Extract 16: *Let me turn to China right now which is now, wow, the second largest economy.*

[+appreciation: valuation]

By citing the economic status of China as “the second largest economy”, Trish here at least admitted China’s economic strength, holding a positive attitude towards China’s economy.

4.3.2. Attitude Towards Liu Xin and the Debate

Extract 17: *I believe this is actually a really unique opportunity, an opportunity to hear a very different view. As these trade negotiations stall out, it's helpful.*

[+appreciation: valuation]

Trish viewed the debate as “a really unique opportunity” and “helpful”, which implies that she appeared to value the debate a lot. As Trish mentioned, the debate is of significance in that it not only would bring different ideas but also may be helpful for the progress of trade negotiations between China and the US.

Extract 18: *I'm pleased tonight to welcome Ms. Liu Xin, host of the primetime opinion program, the Point with Liu Xin to Trish Regan Primetime tonight.*

[+affect: satisfaction]

At the very beginning, Trish expressed that she was “pleased” to have a television debate with Liu Xin, which indicates that she held a positive attitude towards her Chinese counterpart Liu Xin and the approaching debate.

Extract 19: *And Xin, I appreciate that you think China could lower some of its tariffs. I watched you say that and I'm totally in agreement with you.*

[+affect: satisfaction]

With the fact that Liu Xin had proposed that China could make some of its tariffs lower, Trish felt satisfied. She here supported Liu Xin as she used positive affect resources including the word “appreciate” and the phrase “totally in agreement with”.

4.3.3. Attitude Towards Trade War

Extract 20: *I would stress that trade wars are never good. They are not good for anyone.*

[-appreciation: valuation]

By acknowledging that trade wars are “never good” and “not good for anyone”, Trish denied the positive value of a trade war. She reiterated it in order to intensify the force of her negative valuation.

From her television debate with Liu Xin, both negative and positive attitudinal resources used by Trish about China can be identified, in which China’s economic strength was appreciated while its certain behavior was still accused. During the debate, Trish, shown in her words, was positive towards Liu Xin and the debate per se. And different from her own commentary, Trish, when debating with Liu Xin, expressed a negative attitude towards US-China trade war.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

With the purpose of exploring the attitudinal differences of Trish Regan, this study has analyzed the attitude resources in her own commentary, her response to Liu Xin and her debate with Liu Xin, during which some features have been identified and comparisons between her attitude towards China and the US are made.

The results obtained in our study demonstrate that a shift of Trish’s attitude occurred in different contexts. Trish changed her negative attitude towards China in her initial and responsive commentaries to a rather positive one in the debate. In her own news commentary, Trish showed negative attitude towards the capacity of China as well as the propriety of its behaviors. In her responsive commentary to Liu Xin, though admitting China’s economic progress, Trish still depreciated China by accusing it of “stealing” their intellectual property and made negative comments on Liu Xin and the state media CGTN. In her debate with Liu Xin, though still accused China of “stealing” from the

US, Trish acknowledged China's economic strength, appreciated Liu Xin and held a positive attitude towards the debate with her. Besides, Trish maintained positive attitude towards the United States but changed the positive attitude towards trade war into a negative one in her debate with Liu Xin. In her own commentary, Trish spoke highly of the US, praising the capacity and tenacity of its president Donald Trump, the bright future of its businesses and its trade war with China. When responding to Liu Xin, she also insisted on the strength of American economy and the propriety of trade war with China. Moreover, in response to Liu Xin, she emphasized the authenticity of her emotion while depreciated that of Liu Xin. During the debate with Liu Xin, Trish did not comment much about the US, but she reiterated that trades wars "are not good", which indicated her negative attitude towards the trade war with China.

Personal behaviors in activities, including discourse, can also be understood by small culture in certain social groups (Holliday, 1999). As a media practitioner in the United States, Trish Regan's behaviors are affected by national culture of the United States as well as institutional culture of journalism. Influenced by individualist values in the United States (Hofstede, 2001), Trish Regan, to a great extent, could be subjective in her utterance. In her initial commentary and her responsive commentary, therefore, she appears to actively express her appreciations of the United States as well as her negative judgements on China. Alongside national culture, institutional lore also impacts Trish's manner. Journalism has long been seen as an act of critique (Zelizer, 2008). Journalism practitioners are supposed to offer their critical opinions or criticism of the emergent event, which helps to draw public attention. Thus, the comments of Trish Regan who is the anchor of her programme could also be made out of her sense of duty.

Meanwhile, however, language use is in essence "the continuous making of linguistic choices (Verschueren, 1999). The choice-making of language can be influenced by various factors, among which context is an important one. From her commentaries to her debate with Liu Xin, the contexts where Trish Regan situated herself are different, which triggers her linguistic adaptations. Her initial commentary is given in her own programme where she is the leading actor on the stage, and therefore she is less constrained and her evaluations could be uttered independently. Comparatively, Trish's responsive commentary which targets Chinese media and her debate with Liu Xin, the language participants are more varied and complicated. Especially in her online debate with Liu Xin, which aroused great attention internationally, Trish will and must take her counterpart Liu Xin and her audiences into account in order to maintain harmony in the communication process on one hand and to avoid further national conflicts on the other hand. Hence, she made adaptations through her linguistic choices, changing her positive attitude towards US-China trade war into a negative one and expressing quite positive attitude to Liu Xin and other Chinese correlates such as its economic strength.

To sum up, the attitudinal changes of Trish Regan in her commentaries and her debate with Liu Xin are not only related to the culture in her social groups including the dominant culture of her nation and the institutional culture of her profession, but also caused by different contexts that she has been involved in. These findings obtained in our study not only give substantial evidence to the fact that on different occasions attitude towards the same issue may be different, but also provide a diachronic analysis by integrating three stages that reflect the changing process of Trish's attitude. Our study also helps to promote the research on Appraisal System, especially on Attitude subsystem, in news discourse. Future research could draw upon our findings to explore evaluative language from a diachronic perspective.

References

- Bednarek, M. (2006). *Evaluation in media discourse: Analysis of a newspaper Corpus*. Continuum: London/New York.
- Bednarek, M. (2016). Voices and values in the news: News media talk, news values and attribution. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 11: 27-37.
- Bednarek, M. and Caple, H. (2014). Why do news values matter? Towards a new methodological framework for analyzing news discourse in critical discourse analysis and beyond. *Discourse and Society*, 25(2): 135-58.
- Bell, A. (1991). *The language of news media*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Boer, M. and Van Tubergen, F. (2019). Media messages and attitudes toward muslims and ethnic minorities: A panel study among ethnic majority adolescents in the Netherlands. *Social Science Research*, 83: 102311.
- Cabrejas-Peñuelas, A. B. and Díez-Prados, M. (2014). Positive self-evaluation versus negative other-evaluation in the political genre of pre-election debates. *Discourse and Society*, 25(2): 159-85.
- De Klerk, V. and Young, C. (2012). Changing the message from 'don't' to 'do': Awareness-raising strategies for responsible alcohol use at a South African University. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2(2): 224.
- Gallardo, S. and Ferrari, L. (2010). How doctors view their health and professional practice: An appraisal analysis of medical discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42(12): 3172-87.
- Ge, Y. and Wang, H. (2018). The representation of ordinary people: A discursive study of identities constructed in China's news reports of social conflicts. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 26: 52-63.
- Geng, Y. and Wharton, S. (2019). How do thesis writers evaluate their own and others' findings? An appraisal analysis and a pedagogical intervention. *English for Specific Purposes*, 56: 3-17.
- Ghavannia, M. and Dastjerdi, H. V. (2013). Evaluation in media discourse: Contrasts among journalists in reporting an event. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70(25): 447-57.
- Głaz, A. and Trofymczuk, A. (2020). Voice and viewpoint in journalistic narratives. *Language Sciences*, 80: 101274.
- Halliday, M. A. K. and Matthiessen, C. M. (2014). *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar*. Routledge.
- Ho, V. (2014). Managing rapport through evaluation in grounder—a qualitative study. *Journal of Pragmatics*: 63-77.

- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. Sage Publications: London.
- Holliday, A. (1999). Small cultures. *Applied Linguistics*, 20(2): 237-64.
- Huan, C. (2016a). Journalistic engagement patterns and power relations: Corpus evidence from Chinese and Australian hard news reporting. *Discourse and Communication*, 10(2): 137-56.
- Huan, C. (2016b). Leaders or readers, whom to please? News values in the transition of the Chinese press. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 13: 114-21.
- Hunston, S. and Thompson, G. (2000). *Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse: Authorial stance and the construction of discourse*. Oxford University Press: UK.
- Idrus, M. M. and Ismail, I. S. (2013). Petaling street almost Malaysian—a discourse analysis of news on Illegal Immigrants. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 90: 374-80.
- Li, T. and Xu, F. (2018). Re-appraising self and other in the English translation of contemporary Chinese political discourse. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 25: 106-13.
- Marshall, C., Adendorff, R. and De Klerk, V. (2010). The role of APPRAISAL in the NRF Rating System: an analysis of Judgement and Appreciation in peer reviewers' reports. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 27(4): 391-412.
- Martin, J. R. and White, P. R. R. (2005). *The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave MacMillan: New York.
- Meadows, B. and Sayer, P. (2013). The Mexican sports car controversy: An appraisal analysis of BBC's Top Gear and the reproduction of nationalism and racism through humor. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 2(2): 103-10.
- Montgomery, M. (2007). *The discourse of broadcast news: A linguistic approach*. Routledge.
- Montgomery, M. and Shen, J. (2017). Direct address and television news-reading: Discourse, technology and changing cultural form in Chinese and western TV news. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 17: 30-41.
- Pounds, G. (2012). Multimodal expression of authorial affect in a British television news programme. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 1(2-3): 68-81.
- Ross, A. S. and Caldwell, D. (2020). Going negative?: An APPRAISAL analysis of the rhetoric of Donald Trump on Twitter. *Language and Communication*, 70: 13-27.
- Sanders, J. (2010). Intertwined voices: Journalists' modes of representing source information in journalistic subgenres. *English Text Construction*, 3(2): 226-49.
- Saussure, F. D. (1916). *Course in general linguistics (trans. Wade Baskin)*. Fontana/Collins: London. 74.
- Schubert, C. (2015). Unidentified speakers in news discourse: A pragmatic approach to anonymity. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 89: 1-13.
- Smith, J. and Adendorff, R. (2014). For the people: Defining communities of readership through an appraisal comparison of letters to two South African newspapers. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 3: 1-13.
- Swain, E. (2012). Analysing evaluation in political cartoons. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 1(2-3): 82-94.
- Tian, Y. (2013). Engagement in online hotel reviews: A comparative study. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 2(4): 184-91.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2013). *News as discourse*. Routledge.
- Van Krieken, K. and Sanders, J. (2016). Diachronic changes in forms and functions of reported discourse in news narratives. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 91: 45-59.
- Verschueren, J. (1999). *Understanding pragmatics*. Oxford University Press: New York.
- Vertommen, B., Vandendaele, A. and Van Praet, E. (2012). Towards a multidimensional approach to journalistic stance. Analyzing foreign media coverage of Belgium. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 1(2-3): 123-34.
- Vis, K., Sanders, J. and Spooren, W. (2012). Diachronic changes in subjectivity and stance—A corpus linguistic study of Dutch news texts. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 1(2-3): 95-102.
- White, P. R. (2012). Exploring the axiological workings of 'reporter voice' news stories—Attribution and attitudinal positioning. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 1(2-3): 57-67.
- Zelizer, B. (2008). How communication, culture, and critique intersect in the study of journalism. *Communication, Culture and Critique*, 1(1): 86-91.
- Zhang, D. (2019). Economic policy uncertainty in the US and China and their impact on the global markets. *Economic Modelling*, 79: 47-56.