Interpersonal Prominence and International Presence

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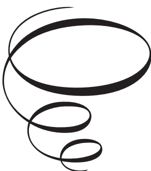
Implicitness Constructed and Translated in Diplomatic Discourse

By

Junfeng Zhang

Cambridge Scholars Publishing



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To my parents, my wife, and my daughter

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INTRODUCTION

> Language is deceptive; and though English is subtle it also allows a clever person—one alert to the ambiguities of English—to play tricks with mock precision and to combine vagueness with politeness. English is perfect for diplomats and lovers. (Cited in Channell 1994: 1)

American travel writer and novelist Paul Theroux made the above observation in his short story collection *The London Embassy*. I agree with him, on the last sentence in particular.

Back in 2001, when I was a graduate student in the Master's program of American Studies at the University of Kansas, an air-collision involving an American EP-3 reconnaissance plane and one of two intercepting Chinese F-8 fighters occurred around 104 kilometers off the Chinese Hainan Island in the South China Sea. Due to the impact of the collision, the Chinese F-8 and its pilot were lost and the severely crippled EP-3 managed to land in Lingshui Airfield, a Chinese Navy base in Hainan Island from which the two intercepting jet-fighters had been sent. A diplomatic impasse between the People's Republic of China and the United States of America ensued when the two nations carried out verbal battles over the release of the EP-3 crew, the return of the EP-3 to the United States, the construction of a U.S. apology, and the amount of reparation China should get. It was the constructed and then translated "two very sorries" letter that defused the volatile situation. As I remember, when the EP-3 crew went home just before Easter that year, a professor lecturing on Cold War ideology said, "Thank God we speak English and the Chinese are willing to understand."

As a Chinese national, I studied the letter as well as its various Chinese versions. Later, I learned that the letter was negotiated, and therefore in a sense, jointly constructed in English by diplomats from both nations. A comparison of the letter and its different Chinese counterparts validated Theroux's assertion. Two other things were also revealed in the comparison: a) Chinese is a perfect language for diplomats, too; and b) translation was the key to unlocking the impasse. This personal experience spurred me to look further into the diplomatic discourse (DD) in question. Turning this spontaneous curiosity into an academic inquiry is what this book is all about. A preliminary review of literature of diplomatic

discourse and translation studies shows that there has been a dearth of relevant studies that examine this topic.

On September 10th, 2008, I made a phone call to the translation office of China's Foreign Ministry. In the phone inquiry, I was informed that the translation is carried out by in-house translators under supervision. Apart from that, I also learned that the translating guidelines for translators to follow are "accuracy" and "completeness." When I pointed out that some of the cases in translating the web-released texts of the incident did not seem to be very accurate and complete, the female translator who received my call responded that it should then be my job to validate my assertion and uncover the reasons, because I was the one who planned to undertake this academic investigation.

Entrusted with the job of undertaking the academic inquiry, I began to look for a linguistic mechanism that can be employed for creating implicitness and a theoretical model with which translational treatment of the implicitness can be accounted for. Since the air-collision incident triggered this study, I will take China's Foreign Ministry's web coverage, in both Chinese and English, as my data corpus. Textual analysis and comparison will be carried out with reference to accessible literature on the incident. There will be two components of the literature: a) those from non-academic sources; and b) academic research from a multitude of disciplines.

My theoretical framework consists of two parts: a linguistic mechanism identified as Lexicogrammatical Metaphor (LGM) and an expanded Structure of Meaning (SOM) model for evaluating translational treatment. It is argued that LGM is capable of creating implicitness, among other functions it can perform. LGM is a combination of Conceptual Metaphor in Cognitive Linguistics and Grammatical Metaphor in Systemic Functional Linguistics. It is hypothesized that the implicitness at issue starts with choice in lexicon and ends with grammatical configuration in the lexicogrammatical plane of a language. Within an LGM applied successfully for generating implicitness in diplomatic discourse, the lexical choice is aimed to control or channel message recipients' cognition while the grammatical configuration further strengthens the conception via (un)packaging information components in the intended message, be it constructed in ST through intralingual translation or rendered into a TT through interlingual translation.

The original SOM model (Zhu 1996) is expanded to suit the need of analyzing implicitness produced and translated in diplomatic discourse. The expansion allows for an account of perlocutionary imaging peculiar to diplomatic discourse generated in a diplomatic crisis. It is deemed necessary in that perlocutionary imaging, as shall be explained in Chapter

Seven, incorporates into the model an awareness of how concerns of face and national interest work together to initiate implicitness and its translation in diplomatic discourse. It is hoped that the augmented awareness in the model can throw more light on the relations between diplomatic intention and textual effect and between linguistic attempt and perlocutionary achievement.

There are altogether seven chapters and a conclusion in this book. The first five chapters identify, establish, and justify LGM as the linguistic mechanism for (re)creating implicitness in DD. Relevant literature on the air-collision incident is reviewed in Chapter Six. A discussion of the interpersonal prominence of implicit DD in relation to speech act theory is given in Chapter Seven to argue, on the basis of data analysis, that perlocutionary imaging should be the third dimension in an expanded SOM. In light of the established LGM notion and the refined SOM model, the Conclusion summarizes the implications of the case study. A more detailed account of the chapters is given below.

Chapter One examines such terms as diplomacy, diplomatic discourse, and implicitness. Diplomacy is viewed as an interest-bound dynamic verbal activity. Diplomatic discourse often demonstrates the design/scripted feature, which makes DD interpersonally prominent. In DD created to be evasive, implicitness is the goal pursued by the DD producer. Implicitness is taken as a context-bound linguistic phenomenon in use, usually with an intentional deprivation of the knowledge supposedly shared between participants in a smooth and clear communicative act, to create multiple readings of the linguistic form and/or to confuse a target audience.

Chapters Two, Three, and Four record the process of identifying a possible linguistic mechanism that is capable of creating implicitness in DD. Previous research in this regard is summarized in Chapter Two. In this chapter, four basically lexical phenomena of implicitness, i.e., ambiguity, vagueness, fuzziness, and generality (Zhang 1998), are explored and contrasted with examples found in DD. A tentative lexical model for creating implicitness in DD through intralingual translation and/or interlingual translation is attempted in Chapter Three. However, a closer look at the use of *contact* discussed in Chapter Three informs us that implicitness in DD often goes beyond the lexical level. This is why in Chapter Four, after a review of theories of metaphor, LGM, an informed blending of Conceptual Metaphor and Grammatical Metaphor, is identified as the linguistic mechanism of creating implicitness in DD. The identification of LGM as the mechanism also brings us to a hypothesis of the priority of lexical choice in lexicogrammatical configuration of meaning.

The notion of LGM is then put to test in Chapter Five. The *contact*

example in Chapter Three is revisited and the "two very sorries" are examined in the light of LGM. The lexical model suggested in Chapter Three is modified for a more comprehensive model capable of textually accounting for intralingually and/or interlingually generating implicitness in DD.

Relevant literature on the incident, both academic and non-academic, is summarized in Chapter Six. The intentions of both nations are clearly presented with supporting evidence from insider accounts. These revealed intentions are significant in anchoring the comparison of diplomatic goals and discursive means. A brief introduction to the case data corpus is also given in this chapter.

An expanded SOM model is established in Chapter Seven. Based on Zhu's (1996) model and the interpersonal prominence of DD created for the sake of implicitness, I revisit speech act theory in connection with the dynamic nature of congruence in LGM. The deployment of LGMs in ST and TT in the data is compared and analyzed. The resulting analysis suggests that perlocutionary imaging should be the third dimension in the SOM of the said DD.

The examination of the data also shows that national interest is the single most significant factor in producing and translating implicitness in DD. It is because of the national interest concern that some elements of information are packaged into LGMs to create the implicitness. It is also because of this factor that those elements are consciously manipulated discursively in representing information in TT. The manipulative means include, but are not limited to, omitting, amplifying, down-toning, and totally ignoring what is presented in ST. Findings of the case study are summarized and their possible applications are suggested in the Conclusion. For example, the notion of LGM and the expanded SOM model are brought forward to account for the implicitness produced and translated in DD generated in conflict-resolution scenarios, but their validity still needs to be confirmed in further applications with larger corpora.

If the observations made in the dissertation proves accurate, Theroux's reflection that "language is deceptive" and therefore "perfect for diplomats" should be slightly modified to that language itself is not deceptive but diplomats, out of national interest, can make *the result of language use* deceptive. As the case study shows, this applies not only to the language of English but also to other languages such as Chinese. Since any discussion of deceptiveness involves language use instead of language, and translation deals with language use within a language (intralingual) and/or between language pairs (interlingual), Theroux's assertion can be taken further to include translation as a possible means "perfect for diplomats and lovers."

CHAPTER ONE

THE INTERPERSONAL PROMINENCE OF DIPLOMATIC DISCOURSE

Introduction

In this chapter, a definition of diplomatic discourse (DD) is to be given and characteristics of DD are to be explored following a discussion of examples of DD in use. The exploration will be done in light of the three Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) meta-functions of language. It will be argued that implicit DD is marked by an interpersonal prominence. This interpersonal prominence is oftentimes achieved at the cost of textual clarity.

1. Diplomatic discourse and its features

As its modifier-head construction suggests, the term *diplomatic discourse* designates a subtype of discourse the nature of which can be understood through an analysis of the components of its "name": *diplomatic* and *discourse*. In the aligned order, I will look at the concepts of "diplomacy" and "discourse." Since diplomatic discourse is related to diplomacy by nature, an understanding of diplomacy should enable us to examine the features of this particular type of discourse. In what is to follow, therefore, brief reviews of diplomacy and discourse will be conducted. It will be argued that implicitness in diplomatic discourse stems from its interpersonal prominence, i.e., interpersonal concerns about both the production and translation of diplomatic discourse.

1.1. Diplomacy

In *A Dictionary of Diplomacy* (2nd edition), Berridge (2003) gives a comprehensive definition of diplomacy, a term first coined by Edmund Burke in 1796 for the traditional norm that governs its operation (i.e. the first category in the definition). Berridge (2003: 69-70) regards diplomacy

as consisting of four categories:

> Diplomacy: (1) The conduct of relations between sovereign states through the medium of officials based at home or abroad, the latter being either members of their state's diplomatic service or temporary diplomats. Thus diplomacy includes the stationing of representatives at international organizations. But the backbone of diplomacy has … been the dispatch of diplomatic missions to foreign states … As states are notional persons, they cannot communicate in the manner of individuals, but must do so through representative human persons. … Diplomacy is therefore the principal means by which states communicate with each other, enabling them to have regular and complex relations. (2) The use of tact in dealing with people. Diplomacy in this sense is a skill which is hugely important in the conduct of diplomacy. (3) Any attempt to promote international negotiations (particularly in circumstances of acute crisis), whether concerning inter- or intra-state conflicts; hence 'track two diplomacy'. (4) Foreign policy. The use of the word 'diplomacy' as a synonym for foreign policy, which is especially common in the United States, can obscure the important distinction between policy and the (non-violent) means by which it is executed.

What point (1) in the definition reveals about diplomacy, in a traditional and yet very significant sense, is that diplomacy is in principle a *means of international communication* via human representatives of states for the sake of "enabling regular and complex relations" among nations. Regardless of the mode and location in which diplomacy occurs, the *human factor* in diplomacy plays a significant role. It is the human agents that carry out the communication tasks, after all. The second point in the definition further confirms the human factor by observing the employment of tact in dealing with people when diplomacy is conducted. These two entries for diplomacy in the dictionary clearly indicate the interpersonal characteristic of diplomacy. Point (3) explains when diplomacy is needed ("in circumstances of acute crisis"), and Point (4), while distinguishing foreign policy from diplomacy in a vague manner, indicates that diplomacy is viewed as a peaceful alternative for resolving a conflict by force.

Thus, *diplomacy is featured as human communication, particularly when crisis emerges, with the aim of achieving a possibly pacific settlement of conflicts.* By stressing human agency and the conflict-resolving nature of diplomacy, of course, I do not wish to downplay its routine and procedural aspects. In such circumstances as establishing formal diplomatic ties, initiating joint peace-keeping projects,

signing trade and tariff agreements, and issuing joint statements on safety and legal matters, diplomacy takes on a less confrontational and more cooperative look.

1.2 Diplomacy as an interest-bound dynamic verbal activity

Researchers and practitioners of diplomacy agree that diplomacy is a complex activity that is difficult to explain in just one phrase or sentence. Though not immediately informative, the definitions offered in some other dictionaries are indicative of the activity nature of diplomacy. For example, Watson (1982: 10-11) found two dictionary definitions of diplomacy: "the management of international relations by negotiation" (the *Oxford Dictionary*) and "the conducting of relations between nations" (the *Webster's Dictionary*). In light of these definitions, it can be seen that diplomacy involves the management of international relations (via negotiations). As management of international relations is at its core, diplomacy is an operation dynamic in nature (ibid.).

This dynamic nature finds its representations in verbal communication. For instance, Watson (1982) regards diplomacy as "a dialogue." Agreeing with Berridge's first point, Watson (1982: 33) stresses the verbal characteristics of diplomacy, which he defines as the following:

> [S]tates or political entities which wish to retain their independence, whether within their existing boundaries or by forming a community or union with some of their neighbors, are fated to communicate with other states and unions outside their own. *This negotiation between political entities which acknowledge each other's independence is called diplomacy.* (italics original)

A more detailed account of diplomatic means, agents, and task is put forward by Barston (1997). For Barston (1997: 1), diplomacy is concerned with the management of relations between states and between states and other actors. For a given state, diplomacy is concerned with "advising, shaping and implementing foreign policy." As such, it is the means by which states through their formal and other representatives as well as other actors "articulate, coordinate and secure particular or wider interests, using correspondence, private talks, exchange of views, lobbying, visits, threats and other related activities" (ibid.). The central task of diplomacy, asserts Barston (1997: 215), lies in "contributing to the pacific settlement of

disputes between involving states and/or other actors."

The accounts of and reflections on diplomacy suggest that diplomacy is in essence an interpersonal activity that involves negotiation aimed at a possibly peaceful settlement of disputes. However, this peaceful aim does not rule out the role of force in practice. In 1954, former Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai explicated that "All diplomacy is continuation of war by other means" (Freeman Jr. 1994: 102). Prussian diplomat Frederick the Great once declared "that diplomacy without power was like an orchestra without a score" (Watson 1982: 53). Bosnian scholar-diplomat Drazen Pehar (2001) observes, "*diplomacy is primarily words that prevents us from reaching for swords*" (italics original). Pehar substantiates his observation by arguing that diplomats should be aware of their power of materializing their aims. Bearing Pehar's warning in mind, a diplomat buttressed by swords could utilize the (exchange of) words, which might seem aimless and empty at times, to maximize the potentiality of fulfilling their agendas and make swords dispensable. Pehar's metaphor implies that words (or language) play a crucial role in "simulat[ing] real acting …. [and] creat[ing] a different and healthier atmosphere in international relations" (ibid.).

Although the interpretation of Pehar's "different and healthier atmosphere in international relations" is of an individualistic case-by-case nature, his discussion of the relations between "words" and "swords" once again illuminates that diplomacy is an alternative for armed conflicts, a more subtle and more pleasant way of achieving particular goals in handling international relations. Similar views are expressed by researchers and practitioners of diplomacy such as Watson (1982: 20-21, 50) and Freeman Jr. (1994: 4) on how verbal power, in lieu of firepower, serves as an instrument in creating and retaining a more civilized world for the common welfare of human beings.

Diplomatic disputes occur simply because goals pursued by different diplomatic agents bifurcate in times of a diplomatic emergency. In essence, diplomacy is the extension and exercise of internal politics and power in the international arena by independent states and/or political entities to maximize their own interests (Schier 2000:73). The interests vary in degree and kind with different world situations and internal circumstances. With an aim of pacific settlement of disputes or one seemingly so as a cover-up for employment of swords, a diplomatic event is idiosyncratic of dialogues and negotiations, which is analogous to a battle, though this battle is fought with words rather than swords.

Kurbalijia (2001) also notes the significance of this verbal battle. He

maintains that "text is central to diplomacy." According to him, diplomatic text is "the immediate or ultimate result of most diplomatic activities." These activities include negotiations, representations, diplomacy-related social encounters, and relevant media coverage. All these dynamic interactions are "crystallized in diplomatic documents" that represent the "richness and complexity" of diplomacy (ibid.).

Impressions of and responses to the textual representations of diplomacy range from "Diplomacy is the expression of national strength in terms of gentlemanly discourse", "Diplomacy is to speak French, to speak nothing, and to speak falsehood," to that diplomacy is to lie and deny in an honorable and patriotic mode for one's country. Since the art of deceit for lubricating the "wheels of international relations" labeled as patriotic is equated with diplomacy (Freeman Jr. 1994: 101), it follows naturally that certain properties in the texts of diplomacy should be held responsible. In the next part, I will look at what diplomatic discourse is and explore possible textual properties that have made diplomacy synonymous to a pack of honorable lies for one's country.

1.3 Discourse and diplomacy

1.3.1 Discourse

The definition of discourse given in the *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics* is the following: "A general term for examples of language use, i.e. language which has been produced as the result of an act of communication" (Richards, Platt and Platt 2000: 138). In the definition, discourse is referred to as covering a larger stretch of language use, spoken or written. It is a larger language unit that could be paragraphs, conversations and interviews instead of the smaller language units that grammar deals with, such as phrases, clauses, and sentences. Discourse analysis is thus the study of discourse, which for some linguists can be further broken down into conversational analysis for the study of spoken discourse and text linguistics for analysis of written discourse (ibid.: 139).

There have been more efforts in defining discourse analysis than making sense of *discourse*. The reason might be as Schiffrin (1997: 1) explains, "Discourse analysis is a vast and ambiguous field." However, the definition of discourse can be elicited from what discourse analysis means to different linguists, although they adopt various approaches for the

"analysis." Brown and Yule (2000:1) emphasize that discourse is "language in use" and direct our attention to studies of discourse on its function rather than structure. Stubbs (1983:1) regards discourse as "language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore…larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts." Leech (1983: 10) takes a pragmatics perspective and believes discourse is "the communicative use of language."

Discourse therefore can be regarded as a language unit above the sentence level in communicative use to perform specific function(s). Discourse analysis, as Schiffrin (1997: 1-3) notes, is a vast and ambiguous field due to the various study goals linguists pursue, for example, sociolinguistics and pragmatics, among others. The diverse goals and approaches found in discourse analysis might be both a curse and a blessing. On the one hand, a discourse analyst in a hunt for an analytical toolkit might wander into a scholarly terrain under the same label that seems to be brand new. On the other hand, the specific approaches linguists take in discourse analysis might be partial in others' views but could be of interest to attempts at presenting a comprehensive profile of discourse analysis. For the purpose of our study, as the interest-bound, verbal activity of diplomacy is dynamic, our study of diplomatic discourse will be grounded in the functionalist approach.[1] This functionalist approach adopted for our investigation will include linguistic analytical tools that are capable of analyzing our data, and more importantly, addressing our research question, that is, translational treatment of implicitness in diplomatic discourse generated around the Hainan Air Collision Incident, regardless of their origins.

1.3.2 Diplomatic discourse

Thus far, I have identified the dynamic, verbal nature of diplomacy and decided to take the functionalist approach to discourse analysis. Before I attempt to provide a definition of diplomatic discourse, I will discuss the notions of *text* and *discourse*, as their definitions often refer to the same language unit but from different perspectives, i.e. formalist and functionalist views of language.

Functionalist Schiffrin (1997: 3) takes the following key assumptions as central to language:

- Language always occurs in a context.
- Language is context sensitive.

- Language is always communicative.
- Language is designed for communication.

The assumptions about language boil down to two key elements: communication and context. These two elements are crucial in our understanding of text and discourse, both of which are larger language units than the sentence. Cook (1994: 24) defines text as "the linguistic forms in a stretch of language, and *those interpretations of them which do not vary with context*" (italics mine). For him, discourse is "a stretch of language in use, *taking on meaning in context for its users, and perceived by them as purposeful, meaningful, and connected*" (Cook 1994: 25, italics mine). If Cook's (1994) differentiation is acceptable, then text is static with a fixed meaning independent of context and discourse is a stretch of language use that is dynamic, context-sensitive, and producer-designed. Therefore, audience-centered interpretations of discourse can be oceans apart from discourse producers' intended meaning, especially when an audience is deprived of the knowledge of context and the discourse producer's intention.

In light of this demarcation offered by Cook (1994), it seems appropriate for us to modify the four assumptions given by Schiffrin to the following:

- Text always occurs in a context.
- The meaning of a text is context sensitive.
- Language is always communicative.
- Language helps communication in that a stretch of it or a text can be designed for communication in a given context.

Language is simply a tool that helps communication among human beings. It is language use instead of language that occurs in a context. The stretch of language that is used can be taken as a text as it carries meaning, which may or may not be the same as found in the context where it is used. An utterance of "You bad boy!" literally means the addressee is a boy who is bad at the moment of assertion. If, however, the sentence is uttered in an affectionate way by a girl to her boyfriend in a romantic setting where a nice gift from the boy comes as a surprise, the line will mean something that is contrary to the literal meaning indicated by the combination of the words, or the text. There is no doubt that language communicates. The stretch of language, before its application to a context, can be regarded as a text. But when that stretch of language is used, it must be used in a context for a communicative purpose such as the girl's, as shown in her affectionate

calling of the boy. This calling is by design rather than by accident.

The example above suggests that text and discourse are interwoven. A meaning-anchored text can be utilized for a particular communicative act to bear meanings other than the usually perceived one and hence becomes a discourse. Since no stretch of language in use exists independent of a context, the notion of a text is actually something that one imagines. The meanings of a text are then those widely accepted and associated with the stretch of language in use in most generic settings. If a discourse is designed to mean something other than the "text" meaning, it is not unusual that its audience are more or less at a loss as to what the discourse means. The audience remains bewildered until further information becomes available to aid their disambiguating efforts. In other words, a text is a stretch of language in use that is interpreted by its literal (or surface) meaning associated with the settings where it is most frequently used, while a discourse is the employment of text for a communicative purpose whose interpretation vary with producer intentions, the audience's world and contextual knowledge, and their access to necessary information for clarifying.

The differences between text and discourse provide a lens to examine the causes of the accusation of diplomacy as patriotic lying and denying for one's country (cf. Freeman Jr. 1994: 101). A working definition of diplomatic discourse (DD), based on our discussions of diplomacy and discourse so far, can be put forward as *a language unit above the sentence level in communicative use with representatives from a foreign nation or political entity to achieve pacific settlement of disputes, and above all, to serve the interest of one's country.* As a given DD is a larger language unit that comprises smaller ones that grammar deals with, the analysis of contextual factors and producer intentions necessarily incorporates (functionally) grammatical studies below, at, and beyond the sentence level, so that the linguistic components can be accounted for to do justice to the DD analysis.[2]

The approach I have discussed for DD analysis so far seems to be in concordance with *text linguistics*, or written discourse analysis, put forward by de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: xiv), for it is "intended more to complement traditional ones than to compete with them," and "*Probablistic* models are more adequate and realistic than *deterministic* ones" (italics original). The rationale given to the approach is as follows:

> Dynamic accounts of *structure-building operations* will be more productive than static descriptions of the structures themselves. We should

> work to discover *regularities, strategies, motivations, preferences*, and *defaults* rather than *rules* and *laws*. *Dominances* can offer more realistic classifications than can *strict categories*. *Acceptability* and *appropriateness* are more crucial standards for texts than *grammaticality* and *well-formedness*. *Human reasoning processes* are more essential to using and conveying knowledge in texts than are *logical proofs*. It is the task of science to systemize the *fuzziness* of its objects of inquiry, not to ignore it or argue it away. (de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981: xv, italics original)

The preference of probablistic models over deterministic ones in the rationale corresponds to the communicative and context-dependent nature of discourse analysis. An analytical model that takes acceptability and appropriateness as crucial standards suits the need of our study of DD, because the meaning of which is dynamic and varies with contexts and producer intentions. As such, the model should be able to account for the linguistic features of a given discourse in a probablistic manner for interpretations and analyses of the discourse. It is, after all, the disparities between the generally-perceived meanings of texts and the specific, intended implications of the discourse that make discourse analysis a fascinating yet controversial arena of scholarly efforts. A characterization of DD as a specific genre of discourse to identify its textual properties is thus in order.

In order to examine the textual properties, I need to narrow down my focus to the most prominent feature of DD. For that purpose, a review of features of DD is necessary. In what is to follow, I will look at two examples of DD that seem artfully misleading before an examination of features of DD.

2. The design/scripted feature of DD

Since diplomacy involves international participants, cultural factors find their representations in linguistic forms. The Japanese culture is a “collectivist, high-context” one and people in the culture are more comfortable with the grey area between “yes” and “no” (Cohen 1991: 113). Cohen (ibid.) illustrated his point with recourse to an anecdote on the international diplomatic scene. During Richard Nixon’s Presidency, the Japanese Prime Minister Sato made a visit to Washington in 1969. In reply to President Nixon’s request of exercising a tighter government export control, the Japanese Prime Minister said after an upward glance, “*Zensho*

shimasu," which literally means "I will do my best" in English. Nixon believed that the Japanese Prime Minister had given him an affirmative response to the demand. When the Japanese government failed to adopt the expected substantive measures on curtailing exports, Nixon naturally denounced Mr. Sato as a liar. A lack of cultural awareness gives rise to Nixon's misinterpretation of Mr. Sato's classic "No way" response capsulated in the apparently positive linguistic expression (ibid.). Nixon's misinterpretation stemmed from, in Donahue and Prosser's (1997: 79) terms, different "cultural logic": that is, "different patterns of thought or logic" which "range from everyday thoughts and common sense to behavioral patterns," i.e. Sato's heavenward glance as an indication of a negative answer.

Cultural logic varies to a great extent from nation to nation in accordance with distinct national histories and backgrounds. As a result, political or ideological disagreement aside, DD as discourse *per se* produced by a government on a particular occasion may be well received among some nations while causing resentment among others. Different cultural logics play a role in the divergent reception of DD, but for some DD that seems to be "illogical and immoral" to a certain portion of the audience, "conflict of interest" shall be the premise in our judgment on the influence of cultural logic (cf. Donahue and Prosser 1997: 80). In Sato's response to Nixon, the indirection of the Japanese culture undoubtedly played a part, but the export trade assumed such a paramount position in the Japanese economy that it would be unimaginable if Sato had decided to cut its country's outgoing trade volume with the United States. Given this thought, the possibility of Sato's skillful maneuver of the culture-specific trait of indirection in his linguistic representation of intention cannot be ruled out.

In his book of ten diplomatic anecdotes, the former Chinese Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Qian Qichen (2003: 155) gives an example of employing implicit language to convey subtle messages regarding the establishment of formal diplomatic ties between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea. In previous press conferences, Mr. Qian's answer to inquiries about the possibility of a China-R.O.K. diplomatic tie would always be as follows:

1. 中国的立场没有变化，我们不会与韩国发生任何官方关系。

1.a. China's stand no change; we will not with the Republic of Korea happen any official relationship.
(Word for Word Translation)

1.b. China’s stand has not changed; we will not establish any official ties with the Republic of Korea.[3]
(Translation)

However, in a press conference just before the formal establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations, Qian’s response became:

2. 我们与韩国建交没有时间表。
2.a. We and the Republic of Korea establishment of diplomatic ties no timetable.
(Word for Word Translation)
2.b. There is no timetable for the establishment of diplomatic ties with the Republic of Korea.
(Translation) (Qian 2003: 155)

Literally, this new response implied that establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the Republic of Korea was true or at least possible, although the negation imposed on the “timetable” attenuated the affirmativeness of the statement. Without any prior knowledge of what Qian was hinting at, this response can be interpreted in the following ways:

a. There is no timetable because we have not yet considered establishment of diplomatic ties with the Republic of Korea.
b. There is no timetable because we have considered it and decided that the time is not ripe for establishing diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea.
c. There is no timetable because we don't need it, as the establishment of diplomatic ties with the Republic of Korea is already under way.

The message Qian implied was c. in the list, as proven on August 24, 1992, just five months after his statement by the sudden declaration of diplomatic recognition of the Republic of Korea by the Chinese government, followed by rapid developments of official ties and cooperation between the two nations. In 2003, the two nations have already enjoyed “an all-round cooperative partnership” (Department of Policy Planning 2004: 257-258). As shown in the three possible interpretations, Qian’s statement is elusive in meaning. The elusion was achieved by declaring “no timetable” for the establishment of diplomatic ties while withholding the information concerning why there was no timetable. In so doing, the existential clause (example 2.) was utilized for its syntactical capability of purposefully

covering up the key information required for understanding the implied meaning. The motive of Qian's evasion stemmed from a consideration of China's long-term friendship with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is technically on a truce with the Republic of Korea, and the subtle influence a diplomatic tie with the Republic of Korea would exert on the situation in East Asia and the world at large.

For Qian, the meaning of his statement was set. He expected the journalists at the press conference to note his different version of answer to the question and therefore to beware of the change of China's foreign policy regarding the issue of diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea (Qian 2003: 155). Qian's expectancy can be understood through what I would term the "design (or scripted)" feature of diplomacy (cf. Korchilov 2000: 115, Chen 2003: 6, Cohen 1991: 66, Nathan and Gilley 2003: 173). That is, language used in diplomatic communication is already scripted through careful reflections. Off-track linguistic representations could be either mistakes or errors. The mistakes and errors could be further categorized as intentional or accidental, or in other words, voluntary or erroneous. Mistakes and errors are more often observed in spontaneous speeches that, if accidental, would usually be clarified by the producer shortly and called a slip of tongue. For the written discourse concerning diplomacy and politics, however, mistakes or errors are rare, and if wordings do change, it is all about manipulation for a certain purpose, which can be interpreted in speech act theory as the producer's illocutionary intention (cf. Chapter Seven for a discussion). As seen in the example, the changed wording may not be totally different in its possible interpretations from that of the previous. What matters is the change itself.

It is normative for diplomatic agents to stick to pre-arranged scripts. Nathan and Gilley (2003: 175), for example, find that Chinese President Jiang Zemin's 1993 Seattle talk with U.S. President Bill Clinton "stuck so closely to the remarks he was given" by senior Chinese leaders such as Deng Xiaoping that his conversations worked "to the consternation of the U.S. side." This observation and Qian's expected understanding of his delicate change in wording endorse the argument that accidents in diplomacy are rare. Diplomatic rituals, ceremonies, etiquettes, negotiations, even seating around a negotiation table and how many steps a person in a diplomatic setting should take to shake hands are all strictly dictated. Simply put, in diplomacy, sternly following fixed rules and common practice in the diplomatic community is normative whereas exceptions and violations of rules of accepted diplomatic rules always imply delicate and subtle changes in the relationship of involved parties.

The design feature finds evidence in both the production and translation of DD involving various diplomatic agents. For instance, near the end of the year 1997, in discussion for a resolution concerning the situations in Iraq, the five countries on the standing committee of the UN Security Council held a heated debate over the wording that urged the Iraqi government to comply with previous resolutions. The United States and the U.K. suggested that if the Iraqi government fails then it would face "the most serious consequences." The other three nations, China, France, and Russia, out of fear that this wording might be interpreted as an authorization of use of force, insisted that the definite article in the superlative form was improper. After lengthy discussions, two agreements were reached: 1) the wording was finally settled as "most serious consequences" in the original English version; 2) interpretation of this wording should be decided by each nation based on translations into their own languages or on the original version if the native tongue is English (Chen 2003: 8).

Igor Korchilov, a long-term English-Russian interpreter for Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, the president of the former Soviet Union, gives many examples from a DD translator's perspective. On a state visit to the United States in December 1987, Igor Korchilov noticed that President Ronald Reagan, in his welcoming speech for Gorbachev, said something to the effect that Gorbachev's visit represented a case of adversaries instead of allies coming together. The American interpreter rendered "adversaries" into "competitors," which was then adopted by the Soviets in later publications of the speech. Korchilov regards the translational treatment as a clear case of overall precedence of diplomatic concerns over fidelity of linguistic transference (Korchilov 2000: 34). During the state visit, Korchilov was personally grateful to Colin Powell for letting him use a copy of aide memoire when he acted as the interpreter for an arms-control talk, because, for example, the Russian phrase, ***v tselyakh*** could be justifiably translated into five English versions, but he was supposed to stick to the version that had been agreed upon so that neither side would suspect a shift of position in the talk. Colin Powell's lending of the copy was, according to Korchilov, out of the same concern (Korchilov 2000: 114-115).

3. The design feature makes DD interpersonally prominent

The prevalent design/scripted feature of DD helps to earn it the infamy of being "honorable lies." Once a mode of wording is created and authorized for release, it should be followed verbatim in all situations regarding the

issue unless a new version is authorized. Qian's different answers to questions on the establishment of formal diplomatic relations with the Republic of Korea and his explanations for doing so suggest that there is such a discipline for diplomats to follow (Qian 2003: 155). With this discipline, most verbal diplomatic responses and statements regarding sensitive issues may seem to be unclear, irrelevant, or even totally nonsensical (Chen 2003).

The Taiwan question looms large in Sino-US relations (cf. Department of Policy Planning 2004: 316-318). Discourse produced concerning this sensitive issue, at times, is diplomatic. The press conference given by Spokesman Li Weiyi at the Taiwan Affairs Office of the Chinese State Council on December 26, 2007, bespeaks the delicacy. In the CCTV (China Central Television) live broadcast, for four times, Taiwanese journalists enquired about the Chinese government's attitude towards relocating the sepulchers of late Taiwanese leader Jiang Jieshi and his son Jiang Jingguo back to their hometown in the Chinese Mainland, as proposed by Jiang's family in Taiwan.[4] Li's initial response was:

3. 我们看到了有关报道。
3.a. We see arrive (le completive particle) relevant report.
(Word for Word Translation)
3.b. We have read relevant reports.
(Translation)

Two minutes later, he was asked the same question, to which he answered:

4. 我还是刚才的那个回答。
4.a. I still just now (de possessive particle) that answer.
(Word for Word Translation)
4.b. My answer is the same as before.
(Translation)

When, for the third time, another Taiwanese reporter asked if Jiang's family had good timing in lodging this request and what procedure needed to be taken, Li fell back on his first reply:

5. 还是，我们看到有关的报道。
5.a. Still, we see arrive (le completive particle) relevant (de possessive particle) report.
(Word for Word Translation)

5.b. Still, (my answer is) we have read relevant reports.
(Translation)

Hearing this, a persistent reporter with the Phoenix Star TV followed up by asking Li's response to the reports. And he answered:

6. 我刚才已经做了回答。
6.a. I just now already made (le completive particle) answer.
(Word for Word Translation)
6.b. I have already given an answer just now.
(Translation)

Li's four responses are just responses for response's sake. The replies, as the title of the news report (The National Taiwan Affairs Office Evades the Topic of Jiang's Sepulcher Relocation Four Times in a Row) indicates, are a case of evasion. The evasion found in Li's answers by the general public is close to de Beaugrande & Dressler's (1981: 34) "non-text." The non-text is a discourse in the form of a text but in defiance of the standards of textuality, resulting in what de Beaugrande & Dressler epitomize as "total absence of discoverable cohesion, coherence, relevance to" the situation (ibid.). The lack of discoverable cohesion, coherence, and relevance between questions and answers in this example attests to Donahue and Prosser's (1997: 19) hypothesis that a diplomat could utilize a "non-text" as a filibuster.

Diplomats' strict observation of instructions regarding information-giving is largely responsible for evasive remarks, which includes non-texts, especially when questions addressed to a diplomat fall out of the scope of instructions. Even when information is available to a diplomat, evasion would still be his choice unless instructed otherwise in his response to inquiries. The reason is, as Le Trone observed, that diplomacy "is an obscure art, which hides itself in the folds of deceit, which fears itself to be seen, and believes that it can exist only in the darkness of mystery" (Freeman Jr. 1994: 103). As previously discussed, diplomacy is regarded as an alternative for the use of force in resolving conflicts; therefore, what diplomacy prevents weighs heavier than what it achieves, which requires "moderation, tact and compromise when possible" (Freeman Jr. 1994: 104).

With the design feature of DD and a natural fear that clear verbal expressions might "give hostages to fortune, or give offence" (Scott 2001), evasion bears such significance for diplomats that it found its way into *The Diplomat's Dictionary*. For a diplomat, evasion is "the prudent man's way

of keeping out of trouble; with the gallantry of a witty remark he is able to extricate himself from the most intricate of labyrinths." Technically, Lord Malmesbury instructs diplomats on how to be evasive:

> If, as frequently happens, an indiscreet question which seems to require a distinct answer is put to you abruptly by an artful minister, parry it either by treating it as an indiscreet question or get rid of it by a grave and serious look; but on no account contradict the assertion flatly if it be true, or admit it as true if false. (Freeman Jr. 1994:138)

Lord Malmesbury put a high demand on diplomat's verbal competence. When evading, a diplomat is not supposed to give a sheer lie, yet he is to carry out verbal communication and cover up information. In a critical and volatile diplomatic situation, rather than lying in some cases, diplomats are left with the option of communicating verbally, non-verbally (as suggested in Lord Malmesbury's instruction) and yet, incompletely. For the diplomat, the diplomatic communication occurs simply out of the ritualistic communicative need when evasion has to be their communicative strategy.

In Halliday's functional grammar, language fulfills three major functions: ideational (experiential and logical), interpersonal, and textual.[5] The ideational function transacts information; the interpersonal function maintains social/interpersonal relations; and the textual component performs the enabling function, i.e. creating a text and making sense of it through establishing connections with previous texts and with the situation. Although language fulfills the three functions simultaneously, the functions are usually not evenly represented in a given piece of discourse. As found in our examples, when diplomats evade, both DD production and translation are interpersonally prominent. They are interpersonally prominent because 1) the evasion is usually done through suppressing transaction of ideational information, which may be detrimental to cohesion at the sentence level and coherence at the discursive level; 2) the DD that evades mainly deals with constituting social, interpersonal, and international interactions. The aims of the interactions, on the part of the speaker or the "honorable liar," are to maintain the honorability of the country the person represents. As a linguistic unit designed for the aims, the formal aspects of the DD in question can be used as evidence to account for the aims pursued. As Halliday (1973: 107) observes, the mood, modality, person, and intonational components of the syntactic form can indicate its producers' attitudes, evaluations, and judgments as well as their relationship with its receivers.

The interpersonal prominence is achieved at the cost of ideational