Political Cuteness!

Charting News Narratives of China's Panda Diplomacy in Recipient Countries of Australia, Scotland and Canada

By

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A thesis submitted to
Auckland University of Technology
In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree
Of
Master of Communication Studies (MCS)

July 14, 2017

School of Communication Studies

ABSTRACT

Panda diplomacy is a unique animal diplomacy practice of China yet it has received little academic attention and seldom dissected in the literature. This research quantitatively measures and qualitatively analyses the achievement of this diplomacy practice reflected in the local news production regarding the panda in three select panda host countries (Scotland, Canada and Australia), and charts narratives of concurrent events corresponding to each panda loan deal with information extracted from the news content. Journalism terms such as news values, framing, and narrative theory are used as theoretical tools to examine the news content to understand the influence the journalistic process exerts on the mental association formed among the readership regarding the panda. Findings of this study suggest that while the panda is perceived to have a wide range of news values by the media outlets of all three studied countries, the portrayal of the image of the animal as well as the levels of success of the panda diplomacy varies significantly. Scotland shows a high level of diplomatic achievement, with unanimous recognition of the political value of the panda as a goodwill ambassador from the Scottish media, public and government. In the case of Canada, while the journalists hold sceptical views towards the symbolic values of the panda in the development of the Sino-Canada relationship, the cuteness of the image of the panda was nevertheless portrayed, separately from the political dimension. Finally, Australian media outlets demonstrate the least amount of enthusiasm in the panda, yet a critical concern was kept in the journalistic focus on the economic dimension of the loaned animal.

The data coding method designed for the research may be applicable for analysts of journalism when investigating news content in terms of the frames, tones and viewpoints employed in the journalist process that are intended to exert an influence on the perception and ideas formed among the readership in regards to

the news subjects. The narratives charted from the data provide diplomacy practitioners with insights for use in adjusting public diplomacy activities in order to generate enhanced publicity.

Key words: soft power, public diplomacy, panda diplomacy, animal diplomacy, mediated diplomacy, mass media, news value, framing, narratives, hard & soft news, the chain in news communication.

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare this submission to be my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Signed:

Hanze Zheng

July 14, 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following:

My mum

My maker and my selfless supporter, I promise to live a life that will do justice to all the sacrifices you have made.

Frances E. Nichol

My closest friend and a shaper of my character, you taught me to be a better human being.

Professor Geoffrey Craig

I'm deeply grateful for your ever insightful advice that guided me through this journey.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background and Rationale

"Don't be a racist. Be like a panda. It's black and white and Asian."

As a famous meme often shared on social media by the younger generation to counter racism demonstrates, the word *panda* has a rich variety of semiotic meanings, which give the animal a flexible iconicity. The application of the image of the panda in incorporation with other cultural products in contemporary society has attached amplified cultural aspects to the word *panda* to the extent that in most contexts when people encounter this word, they associate it with its attributed meanings, such as cuteness, racial cohabitation, its country of origin China, prior to the herbivorous mammal itself.

I am from Chengdu city in southwest China, where the Giant Panda Breeding Research Base is located. I grew up harbouring a closer association with the panda than Chinese people from other regions of the country. Naturally, people are indifferent to the norms in their life. The word panda means something utterly different to me than for most people in that it takes my mind to the experience of repeatedly taking visiting relatives and friends to the panda base to fulfill my duties as a host. Admittedly, my personal primary mental association with the panda is not all that pleasant. After I came to this country I soon began to be addressed as Panda by a few local friends after I disclosed my background information. The idea that people would use the word as a term of endearment, with a sense of affection and curiosity, led me to realise the difference in the perception and sentiment of different culture groups in relation to the bear, and raised the question, what factors shape people's ideas of the panda?

The panda has always been a political animal and has been exploited and sent to foreign countries in the hope of presenting a different side of China and counter the stereotypically critical image of the Chinese government. The academic discourse on the panda diplomacy in the existing literature mainly focus on introducing this less known diplomacy practice and its development. Virtually no articles could be found that concerned the impact after the pandas been loaned to host countries, the reception they garnered among the local media and public, and ultimately the success of the diplomacy practice.

This research aims to examine the achievements of panda diplomacy in three countries, Australia, Scotland and Canada, by treating panda diplomacy as a type of mediated diplomacy. The rationale of this research lies in the famous chain of news communication (Figure 1.) proposed by Norwegian researchers Galtung and Ruge, that the selection and distortion in the news production exert a definitive influence on the perception of the reader with regards to the news subjects. The interpretations and emotions we attach to subjects are formed by a series of ideologies and frames extracted during information exchange with the outside world, mainly the media environment we are immersed in in the contemporary era. Therefore, whether the loaned pandas are able to achieve any substantial diplomatic success greatly depends on their portrayal in the local news content that the publics are exposed to. If the pandas were described as cute, harmless, endangered animals from an awe-inspiring Asian country with a long, sophisticated history, an outline of a culture dimension of the pandas, the readers would likely to develop a more positive association with them, hence facilitating the goal of the diplomacy practice. On the contrary, if the local media interpreted the pandas as an extension of the one-party autocracy's external propaganda approach, a purely political tool utilised to improve its national image, one can imagine that the readers would less likely to develop fondness for the pandas, consequently hindering the achievement of the panda diplomacy.

Based on this rationale, this research employs a series of journalism terms, such as news value, framing and narrative theory as theoretical tools to investigate news content concerning panda related events collected from the Internet. It explores the primary tones expressed in the narratives, salient frames that are attached to the portrayal of the panda events and other indexes of the news production that would exert an impact on the ideology of the panda formed among the readership. While the interest in this study lies with a qualitative understanding of the success of China's panda diplomacy, the research employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and coding in order to avoid the subjectivity of the researcher. Appropriate methods are designed for data collection and coding, and content analysis is preferred as a method of data analysis.

1.2 Research Question

What is the relationship between China's panda public diplomacy strategies and news media reportage in the recipient countries of Australia, Scotland and Canada? The thesis charts the narratives of the reportage over time, examining the types and framing of news stories, the use of news values, and degree of correspondence between the perceived diplomatic goal of China's panda strategies and the news media reportage.

1.3 Thesis Construction

This research is composed of seven chapters with a number of sections under each chapter. The first chapter introduces the research. It elaborates on the research background and rationale, which aims to give an explanatory guide of this study. The research question is stated in this chapter.

The second chapter reviews the literature on the two core diplomacy concepts, soft power and public diplomacy, that need to be understood in relation the research context. Their theoretical definitions and the academic debates surrounding them will be evaluated followed by a discussion on the applicability and validity of these two terms in the Chinese context.

The following chapter is an introduction to panda diplomacy. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the special diplomatic phenomenon this research intends to investigate. It first reveals the history of how pandas came into the attention of modern Chinese diplomacy practitioners, and then explores the rationale behind using the panda as an ideal soft power resource as well as the criteria that make panda diplomacy a superior diplomacy practice. At the end of the chapter, an introduction of the development of China's panda diplomacy practice with discussions of the characteristics of each stage of it is presented.

The fourth chapter presents the theoretical tools of this study as well as a more detailed discussion of the rationale behind the research question. Literature on journalism terms such as news values, hard and soft news, frames and narrative theory will be reviewed.

The fifth chapter imparts the rationale in the selection of the three countries,

Australia, Scotland and Canada, as the subjects of the study. It illustrates the specifications of the data, the data collection and coding methods. A brief literature review on content analysis as the preferred methodology of this study is also presented together with a discussion on its appropriateness.

The sixth chapter presents the research result of this study. It gives details of the coding result, an analysis of the coding result and analyses of the research results of the three studied countries respectively.

The last chapter is the conclusion of this research. It provides a summary of the research results by discussing the traits and patterns found in the news content across the three studied countries, as well as the characteristics of panda diplomacy that fundamentally work in its favour. At the end is a discussion of the limitations of this research in the hope of providing insights for future research and the contributions of this study to the existing body of knowledge.

CHAPTER 2: SOFT POWER & PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

This chapter gives an overview of the literature on two core concepts relevant to the research context, soft power and public diplomacy. The chapter is structured in two main sections with a number of subsections under each of them.

The first section of this chapter introduces the concepts of soft power and public diplomacy. Each subsection addresses a different topic relating to the two terms: their origin and development, academic debates, as well as the relationship between them. The second section presents the adaption of these two concepts to the Chinese context, how they are discussed in the Chinese discourse and how scholars deem their applicability and validity when imbued with Chinese characteristics. This chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the potential soft power resources of China that can be deployed in public diplomacy practices, which leads the main subject of the next chapter, the panda diplomacy.

2.1 Delving into the Discourse: Concepts and Debates

2.1.1 Origin: Symbolic Power

Just like many other basic words we use, the definition of power is abstract and contested. The meaning of the word is merely silhouetted, and it varies in contexts and in people's perceptions. Another example is love. "My love is six times more than his" doesn't quite give off a concrete expression. Only when the word is put into a context, such as your love for a family member trumps your love for food, does the meaning crystallise.

Having similar characteristics, power seems to only carry meaning when put into perspective. While, in most cases, the majority of us would agree that power is

the ability to make or resist changes, and to pursue preferred outcomes (Boulding, 1990), it is usually defined by the actor that exerts it, or the effect it could engender. In other words, we tend to understand power in relation to its resources or its behavioural outcome (Nye, 2011).

For example, when we describe a merchant as powerful, we are actually referring to power's resources, the wealth of the merchant. In this sense, power is perceived as the assets that could generate influence and cause changes. When defining power by its effect, we often attribute power to items such as a catastrophic earthquake or the highest cards in a poker game for the results and changes they could achieve, hence power is defined by its relational behaviour outcomes.

Thompson views power as the "ability to act in pursuit of one's aims and interests, the ability to intervene in the course of events and to affect their outcome", as well as "a pervasive social phenomenon that is characteristic of different kinds of action and encounter" (Thompson, 1995, 12-13). To cater to different social contexts, Thompson developed his theory of power, which divides power into four different major types. They are "economic", "political", "coercive", and lastly "symbolic" power. According to Thompson, the rationale for the distinctions between the four types of power principally lies in three aspects: their distinctive analytical characteristics, their reflections of the different typical activities in which human beings engage, as well as the different sorts of resources people resort to in exercising them.

With the resources of the former three types of power largely being fiscal reserves, policy-making and military force, symbolic, or cultural, power derives from the "activity of producing, transmitting and receiving meaningful symbolic forms". Thompson suggests that communication is a form of action and "symbolic activity is a fundamental feature of social life" (Thompson, 1995, p. 16).

During symbolic activities, such as broadcasting, educating and communicating, individuals express themselves and interpret others' expressions; hence information is produced, exchanged and received. Actors accumulate prestige, recognition and respect, i.e. symbolic capital, through symbolic activities. The accumulated symbolic capital can be drawn on to obtain the ability to "perform actions which may intervene in the course of events and have consequences of various kinds" (Thompson, 1995, p. 16).

2.1.2 Concept: Soft Power in Contrast to Hard Power

Applying power in the context of global affairs, American political scientist Joseph Nye developed and introduced the international relations term "soft power", which shares a great similarity with Thompson's symbolic power in terms of the resources that engender it. In Nye's book, *Bound to lead: the changing nature of American power*, Nye initially referred to the concept as "the second face of power". While not going into an in-depth explanation of the full range of faces of power in this book, he applied the concept in his argument under the framework of country power positioning. "This aspect of power [...] might be called an indirect or co-optive power behaviour. It is in contrast to the active command power behaviour [...] Co-optive power [...] set the political agenda in a way that shapes the preference that others express." This concept of power behaviour, which Nye termed as co-optive power, is the rudimentary concept of what Nye later called "soft power" (Nye, 1990).

Before introducing the term soft power in detail in his book *The Future of Power*, Nye first demystified the various faces of power in his logical system. There are three different aspects of power: commanding change, controlling agendas and establishing preferences. Commanding change is the first aspect of power and most commonly how power is perceived and used by people. "This aspect of power focuses on the ability to get others to act in ways those are contrary to

their initial preferences and strategies" (Nye, 2011, P11). In cases of commanding power, the party that is being forced to change, either by coercion or inducement, is aware of the power inflicted, as that is how the effect of change is achieved. Here's a scenario that exemplifies the situation.

A is looking forward to playing a football game next week. To prevent him from going, B uses threats or rewards to force A into changing his mind. A is cognisant of the power of B and also aware of the situation.

The second face of power, which was the concept Nye deployed in his previous work and named as co-optive power, focusing on the framing and agenda-setting dimension of power. "If ideas and institutions can be used to frame the agenda for action in a way that makes others' preference seem irrelevant or out of bounds, then it may never be necessary to push or shove them" (Nye, 2011, P12). In other words, instead of pressing direct interfering, power is used to alter others' preferences and strategies by influencing on their range of choices, prospects of what is desirable or attainable, or shifting the legitimacy in their expectation of the outcomes. In cases of controlling agendas, the others may or may not know the causality of the situation and be aware of the power being inflicted.

A is looking forward to playing a football game next week. To prevent him from going, B exercises his power to make the other team members exclude A from the game, or changes the date of the game to a day that's forecasted to rain so the game is cancelled. A may or may not know this and be aware of B's power.

More invisible and sophisticated than the first two faces, establishing preferences as the third face of power is also an indirect way of exercising power in terms of correlation. Power can be performed to change situations in order to change other's preferred strategies. Furthermore, not merely changing the

situations, power can be also exercised over others by fostering ideas, perceptions, basic believes in the first place to determine their initial preferences. In cases of establishing preferences, the party being exercised power over is unlikely to be aware of the bigger picture of the cause and effect (Nye, 2011, P13).

B exposes A to a basketball-driven sports culture, creates basic beliefs, perceptions and interest in basketball for A, so A would never have an initial preference for football. A is unlikely to be aware of this or to realise B's power.

According to Nye, the three faces of power is the theoretical basis of nation power positioning theory, as well as the rationale based on which an assessment of the current American power position can be demonstrated. Applied in the context of global affairs, the first face of power exercised by nations can be perceived as equivalent to Thompson's coercive power. It is the ability countries possess to obtain the outcomes that they desire by affecting others through threats and coercion, or inducements and payments, namely "the carrot and the stick", the hard power of a nation (Nye, 1990; Nye, 2008). Hard power is conveyed through the military force and the economic strength of a nation. In contrast to using bullying command-type and inductive bribing behavior to get other countries to do what another country wishes them to do, the notion of soft power put forth by Nye is a persuasive approach to manipulate international relations. It "rests on the attraction of one's ideas or on the ability to set the political agenda in a way that shapes the preferences that others express" (Nye, 1990). Pursuing the same outcome – other countries change their behaviours or strategies in accordance with another country's preference – in the application of soft power the effect is achieved because they have agreed to a system that produces such effects (the second "co-optive" face of power) or because they simply want to follow the system (the third face of power) because they are attracted to it.

In Nye's view, in the world of politics, it is important to be able to set the agenda, attract and aspire others than to merely force other countries to change through the use of hard power.

2.1.3 The Resources of Soft Power

According to Nye, there are three primary resources that a country can draw on to enact soft power; they are its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them domestically and internationally), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority) (Nye, 2004; Nye, 2008; Nye, 2011). This is in line with Thompson's "symbolic capital", in that they are produced and accumulated in the process of expressing oneself and perceiving others'. Nye also emphasises the point that the receiver's views are key to soft power that "soft power is a dance that requires partners" (Nye, 2011). Because whether soft power will work is determined by the view and perception of the target, in other words, if the resources used are seen as attractive by its audience. Consequently, the conditions mentioned in the parentheses above are crucial in qualifying potential soft power resources.

Culture is dynamic and interacts with different groups in different ways. A culture that appears appealing to one nation may be seen vexing to another, or is even subject to polarised views from different social groups within the same society. For example, while western pop culture has large popularity among the younger generation in Islamic regions, it is a fatal taboo from the perspective of the mujahedeen.

The leadership effect of political values is not to be disregarded as a powerful influence in the international community. However, legitimacy and attraction only manifest when its behaviour is seen as consistent with its praised values. The frequent crackdowns in Tibet and Xinjiang provinces in China, as well as on

activists such as Liu Xiaobo, who received the Nobel Peace Prize shortly after being imprisoned, are in total contrast with the country's propaganda in which it claims to respect human rights and constrains China from utilising its political values as a type of soft power resource.

On the other hand, China has been altering and exploiting its foreign policy in recent years to activate soft power, such as the successfully staging of the 2008 Olympics and the export of its endangered national treasure, the panda, for scientific research purposes (which will be introduced and analysed in detail in this paper), are seen as legitimate and of morality and have added contributions to China's softer power gains.

To sum up, if a country's culture, political values and foreign policies are perceived as appealing, proper and creditable, or if any single one of them is, there are opportunities for this country to exploit soft power to achieve its diplomatic objectives in global affairs, which is less costly than resorting to hard power. In the view of Nye, soft power is the more delicate, though harder to wield, type of power that a country can exercise to achieve its goals in the international community, because "when you can get others to admire your ideas and to want what you want, you do not have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction" (Nye, 2004).

2.1.4 The Backdrop of the Coining of Soft Power

Nye coined the diplomatic term at the end of the twentieth century. In the post-Cold War context of the 1970s, the American colossus that had been on the rise since the Second World War was beginning to see a contraction in its global military power, a weakening in its dominant position in the international political system as well as a drop in economic growth. The United States' share in gross world product decreased from 33 per cent of the total in the 1950s to 23

per cent in 1980, and it shifted its position from the world's biggest debtee to a country somewhat laden with debts. It was believed by the public that the nation was in decline (Nye, 1990). Scholars and commentaters diagnosed the phenomenon as a situation resembling what Britain had experienced in the late nineteenth century, believing that it was typical of decline due to "the imperial overstretch that has occurred throughout history" (Nye, 1990). Nations that see dramatic economic growth naturally strengthen their military power to protect their economic interests, however, gradually the cost of expanding and maintaining this ever-growing military power depletes their resources and eventually those countries go into decline.

This theory led to a corresponding solution from scholars and politicians that the United States ought to alter its foreign policy and reduce its large military expenditure and many international commitments in accordance the nation's declining strength. In contrast with these negative predictions and analogies in the debate about the decline, Nye argued that the solution was mistaken. Cutting down on expenditures used to project overseas military is not the answer it might appear to be. On the contrary, retrenchment will be more likely to further weaken the already weakening American power. Pulling back from international commitments would be difficult in the contemporary global political system in which countries are all so intricately intertwined. Drawing back would simply harm the United States' international influence without any of the mending that was sorely needed in the domestic economy. In Nye's view, before proposing any responses or solutions to this theory of decline based on historical analogy, an assessment of the current American power position needed to be carried out.

2.1.5 Evaluation of Soft Power

Since Nye proposed this new way of looking at international power positioning in the 1990s, scholars of political science and international relations have

extensively debated the notion of soft power, primarily its legitimacy as well as practical utility.

Proponents widely and routinely integrate soft power into their own theoretical frameworks and policy-making. Thussu (2013) argues the concept of soft power has been adapted and utilised by countries worldwide as a "component foreign policy strategy" in academic and political circles. In his book *Communicating India's Soft Power*, he stated: "India has an abundance of soft power" led to wide exposure in the US via *the Economist* article entitled "Can India become a great power?" (The *Economist*, 2013).

Rawnsley refers to soft power strategies as the solution that offsets the lack of official diplomatic relations with dominating players of Taiwan in the world's political system. In his research analysing Taiwan's engagement in the international community, Rawnsley pointed out that Taiwan has been locked in a dilemma in the current international structure and faces "challenging arrangements over which it has little control or influence". In its diplomatic construction, the Taipei government should incline towards cultural, rather than political, "thematic strategic choices" which will have "profound effect" on Taiwan's success in international communications (Rawnsley, 2014).

While being largely espoused in academic literature and political documents, some scholars and researchers see Nye's soft power theory as an utterly misleading notion, and that its nature is no different to any other kind of power as traditionally perceived. Noya's research analysing the public perception of state power in Spain shows that the average citizen does not share the same view of soft power. Because citizens view the power of nations as hard power, in a realistic way, they do not see any conflict between the resources that Nye claims generate soft power and those that produce hard power. Noya takes the view that soft power "is not a type of power at all", for the reason that any type of

power resource could be mined for soft power, so the soft and hard classification of power resources is illogical. "Military capabilities, can be soft inasmuch as it is perceived as legitimate to an end, for example, humanitarian aid". Noya furthermore criticises the constraints in the applicability of soft power. Even though the concept has functioned to stimulate the growing consensus on the importance of public opinion in contemporary international politics, it is after all a result of the increasing democratisation in Western societies. Therefor, it only reflects the values of the most developed, post-modern countries (Noya, 2006).

Li suggests that the concern should be on the behavioural approach when debating the notion of soft power. In line with Noya's view, Li says that coercive resources, military and economic strength, can be used to activate soft power as well when appropriate. So a more logical way of interpreting soft power is to concentrate on how power resources are used, rather than bluntly group resources as hard and soft. In Li's view, soft power is simply the "soft use of power" (Li, 2009).

Echoing Noya's opinion that soft power only reflects values of more advanced, democratic countries, Greenwald asserts that foreign policies based on "the soft power fallacy" of collaboration and conciliation only work when the other countries share American values and are willing to cooperate. The supposed benefit of soft power is actually the mirror cost, as the use of force has simply become too costly. However, soft power is only applicable between countries that share a consensus in values and opinions with the States. For example, Washington might be able to reach mutually beneficial outcomes with other democracies through negotiation, with the premise that all parties are willing to negotiate. America's opponents, such as Russia under the Putin government, do not want "the same sort of world" as America does, so Moscow will not compromise what it sees as its "traditional sphere of influence" and thaw its relations with the States (Greenwald, 2010).

Holding a view utterly in contrast with the common interpretation of soft power, Mattern argues that soft power is not "soft" at all. Nye views soft power as the ability to achieve desired outcome through attraction rather than coercion. Mattern denies the feasibility of attraction in the context of world politics. In her assertion, "it makes far more sense to model attraction as a relationship that is constructed through representational force – a nonphysical but nevertheless coercive form of power that is exercised through language". According to Mattern, countries are afraid of this "representative force", and dare not to violate the constructed norms, hence actors can use soft power achieve their preferred outcome. Soft power should not be put as parallel to hard power but understood as a different form of it (Mattern, 2005).

More arguments focus on the practicality of soft power, with many scholars holding sceptical attitudes towards the possibility of resource conversion of soft power theory. D'Hooghe points out Nye remains "rather vague on how the transformation (during which the power resources change into attraction and behavioural outcomes) works" (D'Hooghe, 2014). Ding also notices that Nye fails to "provide a clear or persuasive model to explain how state actors convert their potential soft power resources to realised power" (Ding, 2008).

To these critics, Nye only introduced the concept of soft power and its possible resources, such as culture and political system, however, he failed to provide instructions how to mine these intangible power assets and make practical use of soft power. For Nye and the supporters of soft power theory, however, doubts about soft power relating to how it can be exploited to generate tangible outcome are miniature. They have managed to give rationale and formulate instructions for the transformation of named resources into substantial policies, by seamlessly interweaving the concept of public diplomacy into their theoretical framework.

2.1.6 Solution to Realise Soft Power: Public Diplomacy

In 2004, Nye first pointed out in his book that states employ public diplomacy to convert one country's soft power resources into government policies (Nye, 2004), and went on further to state that public diplomacy has been long used as a tool to activate and promote one country's soft power, and "was essential to the winning of the cold war" (Nye, 2008). Cull echoes Nye's comment on America's practice, and described the links between soft power and public diplomacy in American international lexicon as frequent (Cull, 2008). D'Hooghe declares in her study of China's foreign policy that China's soft power is growing as its culture, the government is constantly adjusting and expanding its public diplomacy. In the practice of China, soft power and public diplomacy have "rapidly developed into a complex tangle that is difficult to unravel" (D'Hooghe, 2007). Hayden (2012) describes public diplomacy as "a policy label with a historical trajectory that has converged with the salience of soft power's practical implications", while Gilboa (2008) asserts that "public diplomacy is presented as an official policy translating soft power resources into action". It is indisputable that Nye and his proponents strongly recommend wielding public diplomacy as an accommodating means to develop preferred policy outcomes out of soft power resources, hence inevitably incurs a brief discussion on the notion and development of public diplomacy.

2.1.7 The Notion of Public Diplomacy

The existing literature points to Edmund Gullion as the first person to add public diplomacy to the diplomatic terminology in 1965 during his attempt at shedding light on the conceptualisation of communications in international relations. In a brochure Gullion drafted when he was working as the college dean at Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, he described public diplomacy as the communication among those who work in the field of foreign

correspondence and communications, such as diplomats and ambassadors, noting that it "encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy" and "deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies". According to Gullion, there are three characteristics of public diplomacy, "the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries", "the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with another", and lastly "the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy" (Cull, 2008, p117; Public Diplomacy Alumni Association, 2008).

Since its emergence, the importance of the practice of public diplomacy has been widely recognised and it is considered "one of the most salient political communication issues in the twenty-first century" (Snow & Taylor, 2009, p. ix). Despite this, there is no standard concept or characteristics that have been universally agreed upon. Scholars tend to comprehend public diplomacy through a framework in relation to their individual field of expertise and concerns. However, one evidently shared consensus is that despite public diplomatic interaction primarily involving non-government organisations and individuals, it's still exerted in the interest of one particular country.

The United States Information Agency interprets public diplomacy from an American point of view, noting that it "seeks to promote the national interest of the United States through understanding, informing and influencing foreign audiences" (Public Diplomacy Alumni Association, 2008).

Echoing the original concept raised by Gullion, Leonard, Stead and Smewing state in their research report that public diplomacy is about "building relationships; understanding the needs of other countries, cultures and peoples; communicating our points of view; correcting misperceptions; looking for areas where we can find common cause". Furthermore, they summed up the three

characteristics of public diplomacy as laid out by Gullion into more practical base conceptualisations: "relationship building", "strategic communications", and "news management" (Leonard, Stead, and Smewing, 2002, p. 8).

According to Merickova (2014), "public diplomacy is used in various domains, from cultural to political fields, in order to accomplish goals which can no longer be achieved by classical approaches in (official) diplomacy [...] due to changes in the international environment" (p. 351). Public diplomacy is on-going and evolving within the context of the development of the world's political structure. How public diplomacy works in politics can be understood in a similar way to how public relations is utilised in practice in the field of marketing -- compared to adverting, good public relations practices often achieve better branding results and are more cost-effective.

"Public diplomacy is [...] political communication, that manifests beyond the interaction between public structures and contains dimensions of international relations, beyond traditional diplomacy, as forming by the governments of the public opinion from other countries [...] unlike official diplomacy, [...] public diplomacy is the way that international political actors (governments or the international organisations), communicate with other's states citizens" [*sic*]. From the explanation given by Grigorescu and Fawaz (2014), three traits of public diplomacy can be inferred. First, public diplomacy is between governments and audiences in foreign countries: the communication takes place between the authorities of one and the citizens or organisations of another, and is initiated by the former; secondly, the communication is political yet unofficial; finally, public diplomacy features communication and interaction between both participants rather than a one-sided broadcast.

Emphasising on the correlation between public diplomacy and soft power, Nye

put forward a theory that defines public diplomacy as a tool that governments employ to activate soft power resources to communicate and attract the publics of target countries (Nye, 2008, p.95). This aim of public diplomacy can be explained in a more explicit way, that is, to "reduce negative clichés and prejudices, generate sympathy and understanding for its nation's ideals, goals, (foreign) policies, its institutions, culture and model of society, to build a positive image and relationships and in consequence to make the achievement of international policy goals easier, facilitate closer political ties or alliances […]" (Ilmenau Centre of Public Diplomacy, n.d.).

Based on aforementioned analysis and literature, the formula developed and espoused by Nye and his supporters – the wielding of public diplomacy to convert soft power resources into behavioural/ policy outcomes – appears to be logically practical and persuasive. Public diplomacy tools are essentially channels that allow one country to approach foreign publics, through which they can convey and communicate its soft power resources. They direct the attention of the target audience to these soft power resources – which in Nye's theory are attractive culture, lived up political values and legitimate policy – and substantially help and adjust the national image formed by the target audience and projected by traditional and official diplomacy. Appropriate public diplomacy strategies win hearts and minds, which results in a growing influence on the target state to come up with policies that benefit the country exercising public diplomacy. Hence soft power resources are successfully converted into favourable policy outcomes.

2.2 When Adapted into the Chinese Context

2.2.1 Public Diplomacy in the Chinese Discussion

The divergence in the understanding of public diplomacy in the Chinese context primarily lies in its nature and legitimacy. While some scholars, such as Shambaugh, suggest that "Chinese diplomats still have a lot to learn about public relations and public diplomacy" owing to the fact that current Chinese public diplomatic strategies are simply an extension of the Chinese government's external propaganda, picked up from their study of the Soviet and other totalitarian states' propaganda techniques (Shambaugh, 2007, p. 50), an abundance of researchers give recognition to Beijing's prompt initiation and engagement in public diplomatic activities, its eagerness to improve its diplomatic practices, as well as the effect that has been achieved overseas so far.

Cull notes that China has been actively resorting to public diplomacy to rebuild its image in the international community after its reputation crumbled when the notorious Tiananmen Square crackdown broke out in 1989. Though it seems China's skills are still fledging in exercising this new type of diplomatic policy, the ideology of it can be traced back to the country's vast history of political culture. For example, Confucius referred to attracting through virtue while teaching his students, and argued, "an image of virtue and morality was the foundation of a stable state" (Cull, 2008, p. 126-128).

Chang and Lin assert that communications between states are becoming more visible and sophisticated around the world in the age of digitalisation and the Internet, so that the rise of global media and mediated public diplomacy provides China with multichannel tools to promote and expand its approaches to overseas audiences. It is evident that "China has been transformed from a country

associated with international propagandistic activities to one that is engaged in public diplomacy to promote its own images, ideas or national interest". China has benefited from this transition in its diplomatic policy practice and this gradual change works in China's favour as "it loses the ideological baggage that had dominated the country's international image" (Chang & Lin, 2014, p. 457)

Acknowledging the Chinese government's prompt adoption of and involvement in public diplomacy practices in recent years, as well as the increasing attention public diplomacy has been receiving from Chinese academia and even the highest level of the authoritarian government, Wang points out that China's rise also necessitates the country to resort to public diplomacy to facilitate a stable international environment for lasting development. Traditionally, China's foreign diplomatic policy concentrates on high politics and leaves grassroots politics unattended, which results in foreign publics forming biased perceptions of China according to their own domestic narratives. If China is to gain foreign support and acceptance for its rapidly developing economy and international influence, then Beijing is challenged to come up with public diplomacy strategies to boost its international image, quash the so-called China threat theory, and make the rise of Chinese power seen as peaceful, friendly and appropriate in the global arena (Wang, 2008).

2.2.2 The Goal of China's Diplomacy

Although scholars hold differing views on the nature and legitimacy of public diplomacy in the Chinese context, the current literature shows an overlapping consensus when it comes to conceptualising the objectives and aims of China's public diplomacy strategies. During the 10th Conference of Chinese Diplomatic Envoys Stationed Abroad, held in Beijing on August 30, 2004, the then Chinese president Hu Jintao made a speech stressing that "the fundamental task and basic goal of China's diplomatic work at present and a certain period in the years

to come is to strive for a peaceful and stable international environment, a good-neighbourly and friendly surrounding environment, an environment for equal and mutually beneficial cooperation, and an objective and friendly publicity environment" (People's Daily, 2004). For those researchers and scholars that acknowledge and confirm this definition, the objectives of China's public diplomacy can be summarised as: an enhanced communication of the Chinese government's opinions and stances to the external world, seeking better understanding and acceptance of its political structure; to regain a positive and desirable image of the state as a stable, reliable and responsible economic partner; to quash distorted international reports and stereotypical misconceptions about China, facilitating an external environment that sees China as a trustworthy, non-threatening community member; and ultimately to exert influence on the foreign policy-making of other countries towards China (D' Hooghe, 2014; Hartig, 2016; Wang, 2008; Zhang, 1998).

2.2.3 Soft Power in the Chinese Discourse

Observers of Chinese political trends could not possibly fail to notice the perfervid discourses on "soft power" since it's been introduced to Chinese scholarly circles. With frequent reference made to this relatively new political term by the top leadership of the country in recent years, the focus of Chinese discourse on soft power has shifted from analysing and evaluating the nature of the concept itself, to assessing the Chinese soft power practice during its rise, critiquing Nye's original conceptualisation and redefining the scope of soft resources in relation to Chinese context. The popularity of soft power and the attention it has attracted has resulted in heated discussion among Chinese scholars, media and pundits.

Most scholars view soft power as fundamentally instrumental in facilitating the right external environment for China's rise, and that soft power strength has

become an indicator of a country's political status and influence in the international community (Men, 2007). To be a great power in the contemporary world, a country must process not merely rich material resources, hard power, but also soft power, so that it can be flexible in dealing with diplomatic relations and stay in a favourable position in the shifting international alliances (Li, 2005; Huang & Yue, 2006). Hard power factors – China's economic and technological development and military force – have grown in leaps and bounds since reform and opening up policies were launched in 1980, yet its soft power resources have stayed inert. This imbalance leads to misperceptions of the comprehensive power of China in world external to it, which hampers China's integration into major positions of power in the international structures (Wang, 2007). Many scholars urge the integration of soft power development into China's state strategy to create a strengthened soft power that accommodates China's strengthened power, status and influence (Zhao, 2004).

Li claims despite the prevalence of discourse devoted to soft power in the media and scholarly writing by Chinese practitioners, China's practice of soft power is still in its embryonic stage and is the weak link in the country's pursuit of comprehensive national power. Unlike Nye's exclusive focus on the efficacy of soft power in achieving international political goals, in Chinese discourse soft power has a different dimension and frequently refers to a domestic context, speaking to a mission to maintain an internally harmonious society (Li, 2008).

The results of Chen's research echo Li's argument that in China's search for effective soft power resources, successful international mega events such as the 2008 Beijing Olympics and 2010 Shanghai World Expo have undisputedly managed to connect the organiser, the Chinese government, to the positive image created by the events among the global audience. The findings reveal that these internationally-oriented global events are also national image boosting tools working on China's internal audience, as strengthening its domestic

legitimacy and creating a harmonious social atmosphere which has always been an inalienable component of Beijing's mission to maintain a stable society (Chen, 2012).

2.2.4 Discussion on China's Soft Power Resources

Corresponding to the three primary resources that can be tapped for soft power, as an ancient civilisation with rich history, Chinese culture has been the first factor explored in the discourse by scholars in their search for accommodating resources in the Chinese context. Culture is attributed great importance by "culture school" scholars, and is seen as the "core of China's soft power resources" (Glaser, & Murphy, 2009, p. 13). China's traditional cultures, such as Taoism and kung fu, are seen by scholars such as Chen (2007) as irreplaceable national treasures that can be tapped through public diplomacy tools to attract an external audience. However, Wang (1993) argues that while China's ancient culture and ideology can be advantageous and is appealing in the eyes of westerners, soft power doesn't automatically grow out of static traditions without intentional processing. Genuine culture admiration is not a form of exotic novelty seeking. It should not be merely an obsession with the laissez-faire theory of Taoism, or a yearning for obtaining Buddhism wisdom, or a hobby of collecting oriental antiques, but an acceptance of the spiritual aspiration and basic values of the country. If Chinese culture is to be effectively converted into soft power, it needs reform and evolution to remain appealing.

In discussing China's potential soft power resources, most scholars conform to Nye's conceptual framework yet are inclined towards the opinion that the China's soft power resources are not constrained by the scope he delineated. Li asserts that even though most Chinese scholars are faithful to the parameters proposed by Nye and follow a central culture thesis that views the traditional culture as the most valuable of China's soft power resources, "the discussion in

China is wider in scope and sometimes emphasizes areas that Nye paid little attention to" (Li, 2009, p. 25).

Noticing the inadequacy of applying Nye's theoretical framework to China's diplomatic efforts in building relations with African and Latin American countries, Men (2007) expanded the range of options and suggested three additions to the Chinese soft power armoury: its successful economic developmental model, expansive international institutions, and international image as a rising great power.

Gill and Huang acknowledge that China's advantageous soft power resources are underpinned by its predominant history, and then went further to argue that these great resources are hard to promote in the external world as to implement this expansion of Chinese culture calls for a relaxed atmosphere that inspires and encourages freedom of speech and a free-flowing dialog between China and target publics. However, the contrast between China's increasingly sophisticated foreign policy and its still rigid and suppressive domestic media environment and central controlled political system is an obstacle for the practice of its pillar soft power resource. The economical and military rise of China might be ineluctable, but the nation still has a long way to go in growing its soft power (Gill & Huang, 2006).

Cull notices the prominent appearance of Chinese starlets that garner admiration and fandom on global scale in China's national image campaigns launch overseas, and innovatively asserts that utilising the fame of the first generation of Chinese celebrities that have become truly internationally famous is the newest approach in the projection of the Chinese government's soft power. Basketball athlete Ming Yao and Chinese Hollywood actress Ziyi Zhang are both born and bred in China yet have been successful in their career expansion in the American market. Both have been associated with international children's charities, and were

goodwill ambassadors for the 2008 Beijing Special Olympics. Deploying the attractiveness of their positive personal profile in the promotion of China's national image has efficaciously ameliorated China's reputation during the post 2008 Beijing Olympics period (Cull, 2008). Observing the same phenomenon, Ding concludes that Yao is the "exact personification of China's growing soft power – affordable, strong, confident without being arrogant, and focusing on success" which represents "what Beijing wishes to be seen as synonymous with a rising China" (Ding, 2008, p. 70).

Cull and Ding correctly give credit to contemporary Chinese stars for their contribution to boosting their mother country's international image: it is evident that the ancient oriental nation comes off as more pleasant when linked to Yao rather than the dictatorial government. However, in spite of Cull and Ding's scholarly achievement in recognising and praising the Chinese government's creative approach in drawing on reputable Chinese citizens as a way to greenwash the national image, neither of them managed to see the shortcomings of such a soft power resource, hence fail to incorporate one similar yet much more unique and powerful resource into their argument.

As much as a positive influence Chinese celebrities, such as Yao and Zhang, can call forth by layering their personal success onto the nation's reputation, the total number of Chinese celebrities whose charm is truly perceived and appreciated among China's external audiences is admittedly limited. These rare cases are not substantial enough to sustain the urgent mission of China's soft power quest. Moreover, the impact celebrities can exert upon their followers' opinion is maximised only during the heyday of their relatively short occupational life spans, and the different fields in which stars are dominant and famous – culture, films or sports – constrains their fame to that particular area and limits their reachable audience. In short, Chinese celebrities, when looked to replenish China's soft power resource pool, suffer from small quantity, lack of

universal appeal as well as an unsustainability, making them unable to fulfil China's long-term public diplomacy objectives.

Unquestionably, Chinese scholarly discourse on public diplomacy, soft power and the scope of China's soft power resources has tremendously refined the existing literature by bringing in Chinese characteristics. The existing analysis of the adaptability and limitations of these terminologies applied to the Chinese status quo provides the Chinese political elite with theoretically examined and debated guidelines for policy making and improved diplomatic practice, as well as thoughts for alternative potential soft power resources. While the Chinese celebrities show drawbacks when regarded as new type of soft power resource, there is one important resource that has long been drawn on in practice by Chinese political pioneers, yet that has scarcely discussed in scholar circles: an animal that drives a global mania.

In his book discussing animal symbolism in contemporary culture, Baker makes the insightful point that it is evident that there's a security or fixity between a country and its animals, and that "animal symbolism" can be drawn on to express its possessing country's image. According to Baker, historically, animal symbolism has been utilised as emblems of nations or cultures in identity visualisation. The security of animal symbolism for a country lies in the fact the imagery doesn't age or change, and isn't only associated to certain events (Baker, 1993). Hartig (2013) suggests that when countries desire to establish reciprocal relationships, they tend to begin with presenting adulating gifts. With the exclusively corresponding image and association that a nation's particular animals can call forth for the receivers, "fauna and diplomacy have long been closely linked and the practice of using animals as diplomatic tools can be traced back several centuries" (p. 53). Sharing the same exclusive image association generating effect as a country or culture's celebrities, the attractiveness of animals is owing to their natural physical features and geographical limitations,

yet not bound to occupational success or linked to particular fields.

As a country that covers one of the largest areas of earth, China is renowned for its abundance of natural resources. Among all its fantastic creatures there is one animal that, owing to its irresistible cuteness and unique ownership of China, has been successfully integrated into public diplomacy practices by China's sage political leaders long before the coining of the terminology itself – the panda. The universal appeal of the giant black and white bears that only inhabit a few high altitude mountain areas in Southwest China has time and time again been shown to win over the hearts and minds of China's target publics.

Summary

In order to answer the research question regarding the level of success achieved by China's panda diplomacy practice as reflected in the local media reportage in the recipient countries, this chapter mainly introduced two significant terminologies that need to be addressed: soft power and public diplomacy, as well as the relationship between the two, their academic evaluation in the current literature, and their adaption to the Chinese context. In the next chapter, a detailed discussion will be devoted to the emergence of the panda onto the world stage, the rationale of using panda as a soft power resource, and the development of its deployment by previous and current Chinese governments.

CHAPTER 3: CHINA'S PANDA DIPLOMACY

Following the introduction of the two main diplomacy concepts, soft power and public diplomacy, presented in the previous chapter, this chapter concentrates on the particular diplomatic practice of China in utilising its unique animal, the panda, as a remarkable soft power resource.

Based on extensive review of the existing literature and research in the field of modern history, animal symbolism, as well as related news reports, this chapter presents a conceptualised overview of "panda diplomacy" by exploring the emergence of the giant panda onto the world stage, analysing the criteria and rationale of the panda as an ideal soft power resource for China, and lastly elaborating on the different forms and stages of the Chinese government's panda diplomacy practice in three separate sections.

3.1 Panda Comes into the Spotlight

3.1.1 The Change of China's Animal Symbol

Throughout China's five thousand years of historical and cultural development, there has been many different animals that have represented China as symbols to the rest of the world. Many of these animals became symbols of China because they came from and represented the many aspects of China's rich history and culture. These range from the widely known metaphor for Chinese ethnicity as "descendants of the dragon", to different animals that embody different aspects of the nation's culture such as the *qilin* (the dragon's ninth son), associated with fortune and made into jewellery for daily grooming, and tortoises and cranes,

which are seen as symbols of longevity and carved on window frames in traditional Chinese architecture. However, after the founding of the People's Republic of China under the Chinese Communist Party, a new animal, which has little historical relevance in the traditional culture of ancient China, has become a symbol of China in today's domestic and foreign media. That animal is the panda.

Pandas have been elevated to national image status through over-saturating media coverage to the extent that it has not only changed China's national image among Chinese people, changing the self-image from "the descendants of dragon" to "hi, I'm a panda", but also skewed ideas of what is associated with Chinese history and culture in foreign eyes. China, which was once known for its many significant contributions to world development progress (e.g. the four ancient Chinese inventions) as well as its rich culture and history, has now been relegated to the homeland of cute pandas in the eyes of many foreign media. The panda, now listed as "vulnerable" in the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List of Threatened Species (The IUCN, 2016), has been given excessive attention compared to its ecological importance. The panda has been made to seem the sole animal worth protecting even though there are other far more endangered animals in China. Because of the panda's elevated media image, these animals have received far fewer resources and are in greater need of funding for conservation efforts for their survival. These animals include the Bactrian camel, of which there are 650 left in the wild, as well as the Chinese Yangzi alligator, of which there are 150 left in the wild (Cao, 2015).

Pandas are sent to select foreign countries as a friendly gesture by the Chinese government in the history and contemporary age. Funding is allocated and disbursed by the central government to establish conservation areas for pandas and research in panda husbandry, breeding and reintroductions to the wild. There is fierce competition among prestigious zoos around the world who want to rent pandas from the Chinese government to enrich their animal collection. All

of the above involve the Chinese government and its approval. It is evident in the current literature that the Chinese government has played a major part in this "panda fever" and been deploying the pandas as a diplomatic tool. China's conservation efforts in restoring the number of the once endangered animal does not merely concern the panda's research and conservation values, but also its political values. Yet, how did the black and white bear that has little reference in the traditional Chinese culture come into focus?

3.1.2 The Emergence of the Panda in the Modern Era

As previously mentioned, the panda is a rare species that's unique to China and has now become the global image of China. However, the panda has never had a prominent position within traditional Chinese culture and has only emerged as a national image after the foundation of the People's Republic of China. This begs the question: How did the panda end up stepping into the limelight?

Pandas inhabit only in a few high altitude (2500 to 3000 metres) bamboo forests in the Sichuan, Shanxi and Gansu provinces of southwest China, and feed almost exclusively on bamboo ("Scientism: introduction of giant pandas," 2013). While it is impossible to unearth the history of the moments when the mountain villagers first encountered the white and black patterned bears in the wild, however, from a taxonomic point of view, the first time pandas were recorded by modern humans can be traced back to 1869. This recording was made by a French priest and naturalist named Armand David, who was stationed at the only cathedral at the time in Dengchi county, Sichuan province (Nicholls, 2014; Tan, 2009).

On March 11, 1869, on his way back from collecting flora and fauna specimens in the mountains, David was spending the night in the house of a local family. Next to the fireplace, an intact animal fur with a peculiar black and white pattern hung

on the wall attracted his attention. David was sure that it belonged to a species that he had never seen in his life. The host told him the fur was that of a bear that lived in the depths of the bamboo forest and that it was called *huaxiong* among locals (Chinese, translated as "patterned bear"). About ten days later, the villagers managed to capture a huaxiong cub upon David's request. Unfortunately, the cub did not survive the journey to David, and it was already dead when David received it (Tan, 2009).

Strictly following the rules of zoological taxonomy, David decided the evidence of the animal's fur or even corpse of the cub was not adequate to conclude it as a finding of a new species. On April 1 of the same year, a huntsman captured a live panda and presented to David, and on the same day David examined the fascinating black and white fur bear and wrote a report to the head of French national Museum of Natural History Alphonse Milne-Edwards who, based on David's description and the animal's hair and skeleton, tentatively proposed the Latin name *Ursus melanoleucus*, literally, black-and-white bear, for the newly found species. Later on, in order to avoid conflict with the already known bamboo-eating bear found in the Himalayas in 1821, the other panda (widely known as the red panda), the zoologist decided to name the black and white bear the "giant panda" (Nicholls, 2014; Tan, 2009).

3.1.3 The Global Mania for the Panda

David's "discovery" of the giant panda gave the ancient Chinese animal a place in modern zoology and brought it official acknowledgement and scientific significance. The news of the finding of unusual patterned bears in remote regions of "exotic" China aroused the interest of scientists and taxidermists in the West. In the following decades, explorers and zoologists scrambled to China eager to probe the southwest territory with the hope of capturing a panda. The sons of the then American president, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. and Kermit

Roosevelt, were among these enthusiasts. In 1926, the Roosevelt brothers arrived in Baoxing county, Sichuan province, traveling under the guise of "searching for unicorns" but in fact secretly hunting for pandas. Soon the two brothers succeeded in capturing a giant panda and transported it back to the US. Unfortunately, the panda didn't survive the long journey and died before reaching the States. The Roosevelts had the corpse made into taxidermy and the stuffed animal is now still on display at the Field Museum in Chicago (Hou, 2013; The Field Museum, n, d). A news headline marked the event: "Roosevelts Bag a Panda. Cat-Footed Bear of the Himalayas First Shot by White Men" (Beech, 2016, p. 43).

According to Hou (2013), the Roosevelt sons were the first to capture giant pandas, a feat that had never before been accomplished by westerners, and their specimens were the first giant panda specimens brought to the US. The Roosevelts' panda hunt sparked a cultural phenomenon: western researchers raced to China and started hunting the rare Chinese creatures. During the decade between 1936 to 1946, all together there were more than 16 giant pandas who were captured alive and transported out of China, and more than 70 panda specimens were collected and shipped to museums scattered in different regions around the world.

In 1936, a widowed clothes designer and socialite, Ruth Harkness, went to the southwest region of China without any outdoor exploration experience determined to accomplish her late husband's unfulfilled wish of capturing a live panda. Her expedition resulted in a spectacular success and she became the first person to bring back a live panda to the United States. The male Panda's name was Su Lin (Heller 2015; Sullivan, 2008).

"In the weeks before Su Lin's arrival, American newspapers reported each detail about his trip across the Pacific, [...] From the first moment Su Lin was carried out into Grand Central Station and reporters instantly trumpeted the news of America's first panda, celebrity clung to his coat". According to Heller (2015), this was the event that first aroused the national interest and affection for the cute panda bears among the American public.

Twenty years after the Americans got their hands on their first panda, another panda ended up in London and, after a series of ownership changes, became the property of London Zoo. In 1958, an Austrian animal dealer named Heini Demmer obtained a female panda called Chi Chi by exchanging with Beijing zoo "a fine collection of African hoofstock". After a brief rest in Moscow Zoo, Chi Chi was transferred to Tierpark Zoo, Berlin. By then Chi Chi had already been purchased by Brookfield zoo in Illinois. However, the American treasury department stepped in and announced that the US trade embargo on goods from China extended even to pandas. Chi Chi was thus refused entry to the US. Eventually, after been rented by and displayed in a series of European zoos, London Zoo bought Chi Chi at the price of £12,000 in September of the same year (Morris & Morris, 1981, p 93-111).

Chi Chi was of far greater historical significance than just the first panda imported to the UK, as she was the inspiration of the world-famous symbol of the Worldwide Wildlife Fund (WWF). "Famous as the only panda residing in the Western world at that time, its uniquely recognisable physical features and status as an endangered species were seen as ideal to serve the organisation's need for a strong recognisable symbol that would overcome all language barriers" ("WWF in the 60's" n.d.).

Armand David, the Roosevelts, Ruth Harkness and Heini Demmer all factored

into the tale of how the Western world fell in love with the oriental animal. Historical events seem to have interacted with each other and pushed the pandas to the front of the stage of modern world. However, there is scientific explanations of why among all the attractive, unique animals, pandas happened to be the "chosen one" that's found itself in the spotlight. Like Chris Heller said in his article, "there's something about the pandas that stir people to love them" (Heller, 2015). From an aesthetic perspective, evolution has endowed pandas with all of the physical features that win the hearts and minds of humans. The panda's universally appealing appearance gives it a charm that no one can resist, which is the fundamental and primary rationale behind the panda diplomacy that has been wisely practiced by pioneering Chinese politicians to serve to project a positive image of the nation and promote interactions with the public in target countries.

3.2 Why the Panda? The Rationale behind Panda Diplomacy

3.2.1 The Adorable "Baby Schema"

Friendly, vegetarian, cuddly, fluffy, playful, round, non-threatening, and child-like: the panda seems to be endowed with all the ideal qualities that humans look for in animal companions. Not just children but even adults are liable to spontaneously marvel at how cute these animals are when seen first-hand. The panda has literally become a synonym for cuteness in the present-day world. The irresistible appeal of these oriental bears has time and time again been proven to capture the attention of the public and the media. Their exterior features seem to have an innate capacity to call forth humans' caring instincts and feelings of tenderness. Based on analyses done by psychologists, anthropologists and zoologists on the subject of animal attractiveness to humans, this section attempts to dissect how the cuteness of pandas is able to be transferred into attraction and hence be tapped as one of China's prominent soft power resources.

Mullan and Marvin (1987) argue that the panda "is a unique animal in the sense of its almost universal appeal" due the fact that the panda resembles a naughty child, as "humans have a tendency to associate animals as juveniles and infants" (Mullan & Marvin, 1987, p. 24 – 25). The ability of pandas to usually elicit a special affection and sense of cuteness in humans is due to the fact that their facial and bodily features fit exactly within the framework of the "baby schema", and it is to a large extent through this attributed juvenile character that people relate to them. "Baby schema" is a pattern of human infant characteristics, developed by Konrad Lorenz in 1943. This series of baby characteristics has the power to induce cuteness perception and parental protective responses in humans. Lorenz proposes that the baby schema is a physical configuration that

consists of the following traits: a high and slightly bulging forehead; large brain case in proportion to the face; relatively large eyes; rounded cheeks; short stubby extremities. Humans and animals with features that accord to this infant-like pattern are likely to be seen as cute in people's perceptions and evoke a sense of caretaking (Glocker et al, 2009; Kalikow, 1983).

Veterinary surgeon and anthropologist Elizabeth Lawrence has introduced the concept of "neoteny" to explain the factors behind people's tendency to juvenilise animals. According to Lawrence, neoteny refers to a "condition in which there is retention of youthful characteristics in the adult form". Human beings are as a matter of fact a neotenous species, as we maintain certain features after we grow into adulthood, which were foremost juvenile traits in other primates. Besides the physical evidence of neoteny, humans also show behavioural neoteny such as the drastically extended childhood of the human race that demonstrates both biological and social neotenous traits. Lawrence argues "our sense of symbolic power over creatures deemed to be of lesser status delights us and envelops us in benign and patronising mirth". Unconsciously, people tend to develop a nurturing reaction to cute animals that exhibit juvenile traits (Lawrence, 1986), such as kittens and pandas.

3.2.2 Morris's Research

Despite there being only thirty-six living species ever exhibited outside of China at the time, the panda managed to rank in an opinion poll carried out by Ramona and Desmond Morris in the UK in 1961. A survey of 4,200 selected children, made up of equally of 2,100 boys and 2,100 girls, showed that the panda was chosen by both genders as the fifth most loved animal upon such slender acquaintance. Data from the poll result shows that children of younger ages groups are particularly fond of pandas compared to relatively older children. According to the Morris's theory, this is due to children of very young age

tending to see animals in the role as "omnipotent parent figures", while older children, who are starting to become rebellious and compete with their parents, mirror their parents' behaviours and see animals as they are in their care-needing infant stage. Just as how they are cared for by their parents, older children in turn desire to care for animal babies. The panda's big size and vertical sitting posture makes it easily comparable to the parental figure and hence naturally appeals strongly to younger children, while smaller animals such as dogs and bushbabies are more in favour with older children, which corresponds to their steady increase in popularity from four to fourteen age groups in the poll result (Morris & Morris, 1981, p.171).

Morris's poll also shows another interesting finding about people's perceptions of pandas is that they are seen as genderless among children. Unlike most other animals that in their exterior features strongly imply a gender, which makes one gender of humans particularly inclined to develop affection for them while the other less likely to relate to them. For example, with its fierce and masculine image, gorillas are predominantly viewed as males regardless of their true gender. However, the friendly, cute and playful characteristics of the panda show no gender tendency, therefore in the eyes of humans, they can be either sex or neither. This genderless perception of the panda maximises its popularity with both genders of its human fans and is reflected in Morris's poll result, as almost the exact same number of children of both genders gave pandas their votes, with a significant difference in the figures for nearly all the other animals that find a place in the chart (Morris & Morris, 1981, p.172).

As for adult fans, Morris's argument mainly focuses on the elements of the panda's exterior that enable it to be easily interpreted in human terms. Pandas are largely viewed as cute due to the fact that their physical features fit in the baby schema, and to Morris, the easier an animal can be anthropomorphised in human cosmetic measurements, the better chance they have to win the hearts

and minds of humans. Here's a few points given by Morris that work in favour of an anthropomorphic appreciation for the panda:

1. It has a flat face.

The human face is flattened compared with most animals, and any species that resembles humans in this way is at an advantage.

2. It appears to have large eyes.

Big eyes give an animal an innocent, child-like quality. Actually giant pandas do not have large eyes, but the black eye patches nevertheless convey this impression.

3. It has little to no tail.

Human beings are tail-less and any species with a similar condition, or with a short, inconspicuous tail, are at an advantage.

4. It sits up vertically.

Man is an upright species and any creature that regularly assumes the vertical position scores strong points, anthropomorphically. Penguins, for instance, are the most vertical of birds and are also one of the most popular.

5. It can manipulate small objects.

The famous sixth 'claw' of the giant panda gives it a unique anthropomorphic advantage over other species. To be able to sit up and lift small food objects up to its mouth gives it very human qualities indeed.

6. It is a killer turned vegetarian.

Many carnivores are beautiful and popular animals, but they lose points because in order to survive they have to kill their prey. The lion poses a difficult problem in this respect. It is such a beautiful and dignified creature that it ranks among

the top ten most loved animals, but it also attacks charming little antelopes and gazelles, with the result that it also ranks among the top ten most hated animals. The lion is the only animal to find a place on both lists. The ambivalence lions cause is not present in the case of the panda. Here is a species that is not only predominantly vegetarian, but has actually evolved from flesh-eating ancestors. Symbolically, the panda has seen the light and mended the wicked ways of its ancient predecessors.

7. It is harmless and friendly towards human beings.

8. It is genderless.

9. It is playful.

Human beings play a great deal and so do pandas: given a tyre, or a hose-pipe, or a step-ladder, a giant panda will quickly invent a whole series of gymnastics, just like a human child. Many animals never play and this works against them.

10. It is clumsy.

This gives it all the appeal of a small child whose muscles have not yet fully matured.

11. It appears to be very soft.

Babies are soft to their mother's touch and vice-versa. Softness in animals is always appealing.

12. Its outline is rounded.

A rounded animal wins on the same principle as a soft one. Babies are rounded and the mother's breast is rounded.

13. It is black and white.

Any powerful colour contrast attracts human attention.

14. It is a giant.

The animal is not only big, which is a help in itself, but it is also specifically a giant.

15. It has an easy name.

The word "panda" is pleasant to say. A child can mouth it at very early age.

16. It has an historical precursor, the teddy bear.

The teddy bear was already winning friends and influencing people before the living panda came to the scene.

17. It is rare.

18. It comes from a remote and mysterious habitat.

The almost impenetrable mountain forests where it makes its home are surrounded by mystery. This gives it an attractively romantic quality that a more home-grown species can never hope to acquire.

19. It has had a strange history of discovery.

20. It is immensely valuable.

In terms of hard cash, a living panda is worth as much as if not more than any other wild animal known to science today (Morris & Morris, 1981, p.173-179).

Together all the properties mentioned above explain the rationale behind the tendency of humans to develop a special affection for the giant pandas, and they are also the predominant and fundamental rationales behind panda diplomacy. Factually, the applicability of the Chinese government's panda diplomacy stems

from human beings' innate preference for neoteny and anthropomorphism. The panda's universal appeal makes it an impeccable tool for approaching a wider range of audiences in target countries across age, gender, cultural, and social barriers. This makes panda diplomacy unique and different from other public diplomatic practices.

3.2.3 Cute Hence Newsworthy

The visual identity of the panda doesn't merely put panda diplomacy at advantage from the anthropological point of view, it also furthers the objective of China's public diplomacy, to ultimately exercise influence on target countries' foreign policy making as discussed in the previous chapter, by generating publicity.

As press editors skimming through piles of pitches looking for space in print, searching for stories that have the potential to provide entertainment, amusement or excitement for their audience, one journalistic principle they always follow is that, pictorial stories of babies and cute animals always evoke a good response. It is imaginable that this rule of practice also finds root in the human's subconscious craving for neoteny, but in practice in the newspaper industry it is labelled with "news value" by Walter Lippmann when he suggested a series of attributes and conventions in the selection of news items to be published in 1922 (Caple & Bednarek, 2013). These attributes and conventions are a series of criteria that determine how much success a news story can hope to achieve and therefore how much news value it has. For Aggarwal (2006, p.11), one quality stories that are newsworthy share in common is that they are interesting to readers and appeal to people's instinctive curiosity, sympathy, suspicion, or pleasure. Owning to the cuteness that stirs up people's natural affection for neoteny and anthropomorphism, the panda gains news value and is seen as an attractive subject in the eyes of news editors, which gives the ability

to always stand out in the pile of pitched stories and get into print. Therefore, as the origin country of these cute bears, China can always manage to receive a large amount of publicity in its target countries by practicing panda diplomacy.

3.2.4 Advantages of Being the Zoo Star

Being able to arouse public interest and receive attention from press editors is not the only ways that panda diplomacy benefits from the animal's irresistible charm; the fact that the pandas are essentially animals with high exhibition value, as well as the way in which they are presented to the target audience, is another crucial rationale that facilitates panda diplomacy.

Looking at zoos, all of the pandas that live outside of China are hosted in highly famous zoos. Despite the tremendous cost of renting pandas from the Chinese government and the subsequent facility maintenance and animal husbandry costs - the rental for a pair of pandas alone is one million US dollars per year (Fa, Funk, & O'Connell, 2011, p. 80) - zoos around the world still want a place in the long queue, competing for the opportunity to get a piece of the panda pie and negotiating with the Chinese government for years to get them. Nicholls suggests that the causality of this phenomenon is that "the real value of captive pandas lies not in their identity as pandas but in the colossal symbolic importance we humans have invested in this remarkable species. Any zoo that can boast the face of global conservation among its inmates will only enhance its standing as a serious conservation concern" (Nicholls, 2011).

When pandas are being wielded as a soft power resource through public diplomacy activities, the diplomatic goal, to win the hearts and minds of foreign audience, can only be achieved when majority of the audience has easy access to scenes of the pandas. The fact that the pandas are displayed in prestigious zoos strongly enhances the impact of panda diplomacy. In their analysis on the topic

of zoos and their educational objectives, Mullan and Marvin's research shows that although no zoo director would suggest that the primary purpose of their zoo is to provide entertainment and amusement, but more a kind of conservation education and a "getting in contact with nature" experience, zoos are traditionally a popular place for public entertainment. Unlike other places of public education such as museums or art galleries, where the collections on display are rather recondite and abstruse to the understanding and enjoyment of the general public, or require a certain level of specific knowledge to relate to, animals in zoos can be appreciated without any cultural, linguistic or educational barriers. People can simply go to the zoo for a good time without having to make the effort to interpret the culturally intimidating collection on display. This characteristic of zoos makes them different and stand out from other public education institutions and facilitates them being visited by a much wider range of public from different levels of the social hierarchy (Mullan & Marvin, 1987).

Furthermore, owing to its "low-culture" quality, experiences with zoos are generally delightful, enjoyable, and most importantly to this study, shared. In the case of zoos' high-culture counterparts, museums and art galleries, visitors often go there to browse through the collection, spending relatively longer on items that they perceive or appreciate more, before sitting down and pondering on the experience on their own. This experience is reverential and individual, and does not need to, or is rather difficult to, be shared, as it's often a very personal interpretation of the display from the individual's own specific intellectual and emotional framework. Zoo experiences seem to be something that is better when shared. Zoos are not places to be visited by individuals, people go to zoos in family or group units, for a fun shared experience, where "animals are spoken about, marvelled at or laughed at with others" (Mulland & Marvin, 1987, p. 132).

Due to these non-intimidating, group-visit and sharing qualities, the appeal of zoos goes beyond age, cultural and educational gaps, and zoos receive more

visitors both in quantity as well as social stratums. In this sense, zoos are capable of engaging a broader audience and exposing them to the cute attractive image of the panda, which effectively helps to strengthen the effect of China's panda diplomacy. To sum up, owing to the fact the pandas are on display in zoos, compared to other tools in China's soft power resource arsenal, such as exhibitions of antique china collections from the Beijing Palace Museum, panda diplomacy is more efficient at harvesting positive opinions.

3.3 Panda Diplomacy Practice

3.3.1 Gifting Away as Goodwill Ambassadors

Panda diplomacy can be traced back to the Tang dynasty and the government of Empress Wu Zetian. In 685, the female ruler gifted the Japanese royal family a pair of pandas (Chew, 2013). That gift is generally agreed to be the first practice of panda diplomacy before the modern era (Buckingham, David, & Jepson, 2013; Lin, 2009). When it realised Su Lin and Chi Chi's superstar power and success in becoming a universally appealing animal in the eyes of the western public, the Chinese government decided to take advantage of this special public diplomacy tool to build up strategic alliances by gifting pandas (Buckingham et al., 2013).

From 1957 to 1983, the Chinese government gifted 24 pandas in total to other nations as a "goodwill ambassador" (Buckingham et al., 2013). However, pandas were not given away to random states, and the selection of countries to present pandas to changed over time, and up to a point, the changing pattern of panda distribution tracks the development of the Chinese government's foreign policy in the corresponding stage. In the 1950s, as a newly founded state, China generally targeted allies in the socialist camp. The first panda was given away to the Soviet Union in May 1957 (Nicholls, 2011). Chairman Mao saw the Soviet Union as the only ally strong enough to protect the new communist country from possible threats of nuclear attack from the US, as well as the only existing model for socialist development. While it's debatable how much of a contribution the panda had actually made, Chairman Mao's trip to Moscow in October of the same year turned out to be fruitful. Visiting Russia upon the invitation of Soviet Union leader Khrushchev, the two leaders signed a confidential agreement that Soviet Union would provide China with atomic bomb technology for its national defence.

Although the Soviet Union received another panda in 1959, Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated in the 1960s (Wang, 2009). Meanwhile, Sino-US relations saw extraordinary developments. After decades of favouring China's political rival Taiwan for diplomatic relations, the US president Richard Nixon visited China in 1972 and normalised bilateral relations with the long-reviled communist country (Beech, 2016). However, the attitude of the public and media in the US "remained highly sceptical about China", and China was therefore "in need of improving its image in the US and approaching the American public to change their negative views of the PRC" (Xing, 2010, p. 39). China once again reverted to its panda diplomacy. The national zoo in Washington, D.C. received two pandas that same year. The American public was so zealous about the two bears that Nixon labelled the reaction "Pandamonium" (Byron, 2011).

After this first diplomatic restoration with the West, China opened up its foreign policy and changed its tradition of only sending pandas to communist allies. Pandas were also sent to countries in the Western camp such as Japan, the UK, Mexico, Spain, France and West Germany (Schaller, 1993). The distribution of the gifted pandas speaks to China's foreign policy in this phase. As Lin (2009) points out, a discernible pattern could be drawn among those seven countries. The United States is the only super power in the world and by far has received the biggest number of pandas; both the United Kingdom and France traditional developed countries and permanent members in the United Nations Security Council; Japan and Germany are the two largest economies right behind the US. To sum up, a prominent characteristic of the first stage of the panda diplomacy is gifting pandas to either allies or formidable powers that China desire to thaw rigid relations with.

3.3.2 Short-term Lease: Lucrative Business

With the rise of Deng Xiaoping in 1978, China pursued economic reforms that featured an "open-door policy" (to Western investment), and established special economic regions that adopted capitalist principles. Such principles were adopted in China's panda diplomacy as well. After a phase of gifting pandas without strings attached to countries that China desired to establish diplomatic relations with, panda diplomacy developed from a purely diplomatic gesture to an animal-for-hire business. Pandas were lent to foreign countries as "commercial goods" (Lin, 2009). In this new, the second, phase of panda diplomacy, the black and white bears were "treasured more for their display value than for themselves; they had become business." (Schaller, 1993, p. 236) The pandas were rent out for short stints for overseas exhibitions from 100 to 200 days at the price of US$300,000 to US$500,000 (Hill, 1990, p. 249; Schaller, 1993, p. 236). However, touring means moving pandas around for exhibitions in different cities, and even in different countries in some cases. For example, two pandas that were rented to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic games were transferred to San Francisco to be exhibited further. Another pair that was shown to the public in Australia for its two hundred year anniversary was later sent to New Zealand (Schaller, 1993, p. 237). The renting business became so popular, as well as lucrative, even zoos outside of China started lending their pandas to zoos abroad. Mexico City Zoo, for instance, obtained a collection of animals such as one gorilla and two orang-utans by renting one of its pandas to Memphis Zoo for a month (Schaller, 1993, p. 237). While the "vigorous jostling by North American and European zoos to obtain pandas for exhibition" (Schaller, 1993, p. 235) culminated, the practice started to garner more and more criticism from environmental activists over animal welfare concerns. Under pressure from international environmental organisations, as well as to meet obligations in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora of 1975, China had to cease its second phase of panda diplomacy in which pandas were treated as a profitable commodity.

3.3.3 Loaning in the Name of Conservation Collaboration

The international animal welfare concern did not stop China from practicing its panda diplomacy, but it functioned more of an impetus for the practice to further evolve to stay accommodating. Replacing the short-term exhibition loan with long-term leases (at least one year in order to allow breeding) in the name of scientific research, China's panda diplomacy thus developed again and entered its third and current phase (Lin, 2009). The common practice in this phase is to sign panda loan contracts with other countries in the name of international conservation collaboration. Loan deal Contracts normally include the following clauses: host zoos on average sign a ten-year lease for a pair of pandas at the rental fee of US$ one million each year; if any cubs are born overseas, they automatically become the property of China and should be returned to China when they are two years old. The cubs are also subject to rental at US$500,000 a year each (Lin, 2009).

The US, the UK, Japan, South Korea, Germany, Australia, Singapore, Canada and France are some of the countries that have obtained pandas through this approach (Buckingham et al., 2013).

In spite of the hyperbolised scientific research value of the international panda loans, it is evident in the literature that panda loans take place side by side with political events rather than in order of the queue of applications. Spain received its requested pair of pandas after King Juan Carlos visited China in June 2007 (Lin, 2009). Then Chinese President Hu Jintao promised to loan a pair of pandas to Australia while his counterpart Australian Prime Minister John Howard was visiting China in September 2007 (Lai, 2007). Then Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper disclosed to the media that China would lend two pandas to Canada when he was wrapping up his visit to China in 2012 (Wyld, 2012). The final confirmation of the panda loan deals is always announced in tune with

events that involve high level politic affairs, usually during lead politician visits or summits between the two countries. This phenomenon renders the pandas loans pervaded of both diplomatic and political senses. The pandas are not only sent out to wow the public of the recipient countries, but also the apt timing of the signing of panda loans make them a political token of good relationship between the two countries. Conversely, the panda deals can also function to articulate disapproval of the Chinese government. In 2010, after Obama held an official meeting with the exiled Dalai Lama disregarded the Chinese government's warning, China recalled a giant panda from Washington National Zoo, which made it the first recall instance in the history (Lamb, 2010). In 2014, after the Flight 370 of Malaysia Airline vanished with majority of the passenger on-board being Chinese citizens, the scheduled export of pandas to Kuala Lumpur was aborted (Beech, 2016).

Oxford professor Buckingham published a research concerning the current stage of the panda diplomacy in 2013. In her study, she claims to detect new patterns in the more recent development of the diplomatic practice. Her findings are the inspiration of the study and will be elaborated in Chapter Four together with data collecting and analysis, as it provided analytical clues to this study and is more appropriate discussed in research design.

Summary

This chapter presented a comprehensive introduction of the less-known public diplomatic practice of China, panda diplomacy, which is the main research subject of this study.

The chapter started by presenting the emergence of the animal in the contemporary era and the tremendous enthusiasm it has garnered internationally, which drew the attention of early Chinese diplomacy

practitioners and consequently started the practice of panda diplomacy. The second section was a detailed dissection based on an understanding of soft power and public diplomacy, which explored the rationale behind the practice, the criteria that made the animals so ideal as a soft power resource, as well as the traits of panda diplomacy that render it superior to other diplomatic practices. This chapter concluded with a presentation of the development of panda diplomacy together with an analysis of the different political and diplomatic meanings in the exporting of pandas during different stages of the practice.

The next chapter will be an overview of the theoretical tools that are required to answer the research question, the level of success achieved by China's panda diplomacy practice as reflected in the local media reportage in the recipient countries. Journalistic terms, such as news value, hard and soft news, framing as well as narrative, which need to be addressed in order to analyse the data from this research will be reviewed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: FROM EVENTS, TO NEWS, TO PERCEPTION

This chapter introduces and reviews a series of journalistic terms that need to be applied to the research context. It serves to present the theoretical tools that are required to analyse the research data of this study, news content, as well as to impart the rationale behind the research question.

The chapter has two main sections. The first section aims to explain how the correspondence between the perceived success level of China's panda diplomacy practice and news production can be examined, by demonstrating the famous chain of news communication proposed by Norwegian researchers Galtung and Ruge as a rationale. The second section is an analysis of five key journalistic terms that are at play in news production. Different theories, ideologies and dimensions will be introduced and discussed.

4.1 The Chain of News Communication

As mentioned in the section dissecting the rationales behind China's panda diplomacy in the previous chapter, one of the advantages of utilising the panda as a soft power resource is that the animal possesses intrinsic news values in its cuteness. This value derives from its exterior features that have the capacity to call forth affection and sense of protection among human beings. Being easily pitched to the press is one of, if not the most, useful qualities of panda diplomacy and renders it an extremely efficient public diplomatic practice to harvest the hearts and minds of the target audience. However, being newsworthy is not exactly equal to generating facilitating news contents.

It may be instructive here to review the famous chain of news communication Galtung and Ruge introduced in their 1965 paper to explain how news content

impacts an individual's perception of the events happening around the world.

Figure 1. The Chain of News Communication.

world events → media   → media → personal   → personal
                 perception ↑ image   perception   ↑ image
                      selection   selection
                      distortion   distortion
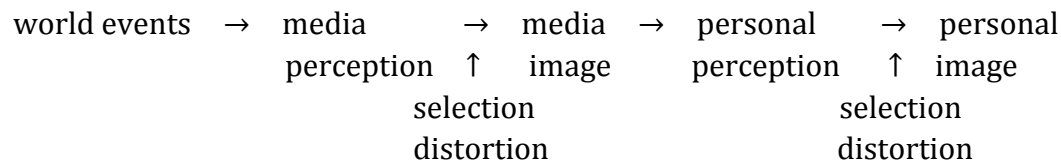
From this chain, it is demonstrative that the target audience's perception and mental image of events are primarily directed and influenced by the interpretation of the event by news media. Therefore, the intrinsic cuteness of pandas and their news values is not the only factor determining whether the goal of panda diplomacy could be achieved. Whether this diplomatic practice can reach any level of success also depends on how pandas are portrayed, framed and narrated in the news reports of the media in the recipient countries. For example, if the image of pandas is primarily discussed with the hefty cost of loaning them, readers would probably not develop a positive mental association with China, as their exclusive country of origin, opposed to if the pandas are reported from an angle that amplifies their cute clumsy characteristics and their suitability to be cared for as humans' best animal companion. Or in a more extreme hypothetical scenario, if pandas are reported as purely a political tool wielded to rebrand China's national image and that panda loan deals are the result of the Chinese government's external propaganda machine, uncontestably, the desired diplomatic goal could not be achieved at all among the readership; it would only further strengthen some of the stereotypical images of the one-party dictatorship of the Chinese Communist Party.

One of the goals of this paper is to examine the degree of correspondence between the perceived diplomatic goal of China's panda policy and the news media reportage in the panda recipient countries, namely, to investigate if the

types and framing of news stories and the news value of the panda loan deals achieve the perceived aims. Therefore, a discussion of some journalistic terms, such as news value and framing, is warranted and will be presented in this chapter.

4.2 Journalistic Tools

4.2.1 News Value

Based on a review of the existing literature in media and journalism studies, there appears to be a drastic polarisation among scholars regarding the normative theory of the term "news value". The divergence predominantly lies in the definitive recognition of the intrinsic nature of the term, whether viewed as objective or subjective. Some perceive news value as a set of criteria that objectively exist in the selection of news - that the more points an event scores, the greater its significance, and the more likely it is to be converted into news- because news value is *adhered to* by practitioners of journalism and derives from the nature of events, therefore, the events select themselves (Donsbach, 2004; Harrison, 2010, p 248; Palmer, 2000, p 45). For others, news value is shaped and mediated by the subjectivity of an individual practitioner's practices and knowledge gained from the individual's personal occupational experience, in other words, they are distinctive values that exist in each journalist's mind, are utterly external to the nature of the events and are *applied* in the news item selection and text construction progress; on this side of the argument, practitioners select events (Westerståhl & Johansson, 1994, p 71; Palmer, 2000, p 45). While an au fait dissection on this problem will lead us too far afield, an interpretation proposed by Harrison (2006, p 135) could serve as a summary of the prevailing approach to the term news value. Harrison portrays news value analysis as "a form of content-based research which makes judgements about the production process by attempting of identify the way in which a property of an event ［…］ increases its chance of becoming 'news' ".

American author and newsman Walter Lippmann, famous for being one of the first to introduce the concept of 'cold war' (Lippmann, 1947) and coining the

modern psychological term 'stereotype' (Lippmann, 1922), is widely acknowledged to be the first to introduce the theoretical term in his extensively published book *Public Opinion.* Lippmann talks of "news value" when discussing selection procedures as the bedrock upon which journalists fetch events and convert them into news. According to Lippmann, news values are a set of attributes or characteristics of events that make events outstanding and more probable to be selected and publicised (Lippmann, 1922, p. 344).

However, the most influential paper researching news value has been that of a pair of Norwegian researchers Galtung and Ruge. In their research analysing news value, they posit an approach concentrating solely on how events become news. They propose a series of news selection criteria that an event simply "either possess ... or does not possess" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 71): the higher an event scores the more likely it would be made into news. The set of selection criteria put forth by Galtung and Ruge has been routinely cited and referred to by subsequent research on news value. It has been regarded as the "foundation study of news values" (Bell 1991, p. 155), the earliest attempt to provide a systematic definition of news worthiness (Palmer 1998, p. 378), and promised "to become a classic social science answer to the question 'what is news'"(Tunstall 1970, p. 20). Since more than three decades after the publication of their paper, Galtung and Ruge's study still remains the "most influential explanation" of news value (McQuail, 1992, p. 270), sufficient space will be given to introducing their study in detail before discussing derivative research developed from it by later researchers.

The central goal of Galtung and Ruge's 1965 paper is to investigate how events become news. In pursuing this goal, they are especially concerned with how major international events succeed in making an appearance in the Norwegian press as foreign news. To explore this question, they initially put forth a set of factors that are created through an analogy to radio wave signals, based on

"common-sense perception psychology" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 66). They talk about how these twelve factors are taken account in evaluating whether an event is worthy reporting as news at any time in journalism. Simply, an event either possesses these newsworthiness factors or it does not possess them (Galtung &Ruge, 1965, p. 71). Thus it appears that the events' intrinsic qualities render them newsworthy.

Galtung and Ruge's twelve factors

F1. Frequency: The closer the frequency at which an event unravels is to a news medium, the more probable it will be selected as news.

F2. Threshold: Events have to reach certain intensity to be recorded at all.

F3. Unambiguity: The less ambiguous, the more likely it is to become news.

F4. Meaningfulness: The greater the cultural proximity of an event, the more likely it is to be selected as it fits into the news selector's frame of relevance.

F5. Consonance: Events that coincide with the news selectors' mental "pre-image" of things they predict to happen are more likely to be reported.

F6. Unexpectedness: The more unpredictable and rare an event, the greater chance it has of becoming news.

F7. Continuity: Once an event becomes news, its subsequent development is likely to be continuingly reported, as it has become familiar and easy to comprehend.

F8. Composition: An event may be reported less because of its newsworthiness

than its fit into the overall composition of a medium. E.g. Soft news balances hard news.

F9. Reference to elite nations: The actions of powerful countries are more consequential than other nations, hence are more likely to be included as news. The definition of an elite country will be determined variously as per individual countries' cultural, political and economical relevance.

F10. Reference to elite people: The actions of elite people may be seen of more consequence, hence are more likely to be selected. The identification and definition of the elite stratum also varies from country to country.

F11. Reference to persons: News has a tendency to present events as the actions of named people rather than a result of social forces.

F12. Reference to something negative: Negative news is more consensual and less unambiguous, generally unexpected (otherwise would have been prevented) and occurs during a shorter period of time than positive news.

According to Galtung and Ruge, the first eight criteria are based on fairly lucid reasoning about what promotes or hampers perception of news contents, and are applicable in all social-cultural environments, as they are not expected to "vary significantly with variations in human culture". In contrast to the universal applicability of the first eight factors, the remaining four are to be read as culturally bounded. To Galtung and Ruge, it's hardly surprising that press are elite-centred in reporting, both in terms of nations and people. However, the definition of elite nation or stratum is socially, politically and culturally determined in different countries in different ways. Lastly, negative references are open to perception. Events that impact negatively on one group of people or nations might be perceived as beneficial by another (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p.

68).

In making sense of how these twelve factors are at play and impact on the selection of news and consequentially a person's image of the world created through news reporting, Galtung and Ruge introduced their "chain of news communication" (Figure 1.) which illustrates the processes by which information is created and transmitted from the moment the event happened to the readers' perception. Based on this, they propose three hypothesises:

1. The more an event satisfies the newsworthy factors – the authors note that "no claim is made for completeness in the list of factors" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 64) – the more likely it will be registered as news – selection.

2. Once a news item has been selected, the factors that make it newsworthy will be accentuated – distortion.

3. Both the processes of selection and distortion take place at all steps in the chain from event to reader – replication.

By applying these three hypothesises to the chain of news communication, it becomes clear that the "cumulative effects of the factors should be considerable and produce an image of the world that is different from 'what really happened'"(Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 71). This theory suggests that the image of the world as projected in news reportage is one that has been repeatedly recreated in each step due to the fact that the information extracted from previous stage is selected, distorted and replicated by many different individuals' personal perceptions and voices. Claiming there's "no base-line of direct reports on 'what really happened' on which this can be tested" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 71), the authors change their focus to pursue how the factors relate to each other in substantialising the newsworthiness of the event by its very nature. They go

on and propose two further hypotheses.

Additivity hypothesis 1: The higher the total scores of an event, the higher the probability that it will become news, and even makes headlines.

Complementarity hypothesis 2: If the event is low on one dimension or factor it may compensate for that by being high on another "complementarity" dimension, and still make the news.

They do not test the Additivity hypothesis, as they claim it is "almost too simple to mention" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 71). For other assumptions, Galtung and Ruge carry out a content analysis examining the news content of three selected overseas crises as reported in four mainstream Norwegian newspapers. The textual analysis is designed to code the units, i.e. news clipping of the four newspapers, in accordance to the presence or absence of the twelve proposed factors. For example, they would look at if there were the presence or absence of elite nation or people, and whether the "mode" of the report is positive, negative or neutral. They also discuss the combinations of the twelve factors at play. For example, if the events those are more distant, less unambiguous or have higher cultural proximity and consonance factors. From the discussion part of the study, it is clear that their focus is not merely on the texts per se, but also context in which these news reports are generated, such as the political stance of the press and their radical or conservative leanings. Galtung and Ruge end their paper with an open conclusion that "there is probably such a phenomenon as complementarity of news factors" and urge that further research on this matter is needed. As in regard of their twelve news factors, they emphasise that "the present article hypothesises rather than demonstrates the presence of these factors, and hypothesises rather than demonstrates that these factors, if present, have certain effects among the audience" (Galtung & Ruge, 1965, p. 85).

Galtung and Ruge's paper has enjoyed great resonance and support in media and journalism studies, and is regarded as *the* study of news value (Harcup & O'Neill, 2001, p. 264). The two names of the Norwegian authors have become "as associated with news value analysis as Hoover with the vacuum cleaner" (Watson, 1998, p.117). Sophia Peterson, professor of Political Science at West Virginia University, conducted a series of investigative interviews with journalists on *The Times* (London) during a two-week period. These interviews aimed to examine the news factors influencing the selection of international news for publication as put forth in Galtung and Ruge's study. Comparisons were made between published and unpublished news events in the study and its conclusions were much in support of the Norwegian researchers' hypothesis. "The result suggests strongly that news criteria shape a picture of the world's events as characterised by erratic, dramatic and uncomplicated surprise, by negative or conflictual events involving elite nations and persons" (McQuail, 1992, p.217).

Notwithstanding the authors emphasis that the series of selection factors are hypothesises, Galtung and Ruge's seminal work has set a trend of perceiving news values ideologically as a set of objectively existing criteria. Many later researchers have adopted similar approach taking the same determinist perspective while analysing news values, namely that newsworthiness is derived from the properties or qualities exist within events themselves, and it is these qualities that determine the likelihood of events whether to be selected and subsequently published as news. These are at play both with regards "first to the 'event' that has taken place and whether it is to be selected for investigation by a journalist, and second to the 'story' as it competes with other stories to be selected for publication in the limited space of print newspapers and TV/radio bulletins" (Caple & Bednarek, 2013, p.3).

Palmer, for example, while approving of Galtung and Ruge's hypothesises that

"by referring to the importance of the event, we are still essentially in the realm of the 'universal' news criteria listed above (as in the news factors put forth by Galtung and Ruge)" (Palmer, 2000, p.31), he goes on to suggest that analysis needs to be taken one stage further in the relation to the context during which the news factors are to be understood, as "an event is only important in a particular context, or – if you prefer – it is important because of some dimension of an event" (Palmer, 2000, p.31), in other words, "news value consists of that aspect of an event which is in accordance which the timelines, interest, importance, etc., of the event's relationship to its context" (Palmer, 2000, p.33).

To Conley and Lamble, news value exists in the "chemistry of an event, comment or circumstance that combines to produce news" (Conley & Lamble 2006, 42), and they also hold a determinist view in their interpretation that "news values will determine whether stories are to be pursued. They will determine whether, if pursued, they will then be published. They will determine, if published, where the stories will be placed in news presentation. Having been placed, new [sic] values will determine to what extent the public will read them" (Conley & Lamble, 2006, 42).

While attributing enormous significance to Galtung and Ruge's study, Harcup and O'Neill argue that the list of news values posited in their study "should be regarded as open to question rather than recited as if written on a tablet of stone" (Harcup & O'Neill, 2011, p. 277). They also point out that there is a need to adjust and update the original list of criteria mainly due to its out-datedness to contemporary journalistic practices. In the new list of news factors they propose, they suggest adding "entertainment" as one important news factor as their research result shows that modern tabloid papers in the UK are lean towards being more entertaining, in order to be interesting to public, rather than informative. Harcup and O'Neil also remove "frequency" and "unambiguity" from the list because "frequency" is becoming less important for newspapers as they

are increasing outpaced by electronic media, and journalists are trained to be able to pick an unambiguous angle even to a complex unclear event (Harcup & O'Neill, 2011, p. 277).

As much approval and significance as scholars endow to Galtung and Ruge's work, it has also been widely criticised and challenged since its publication, and a number of drawbacks have been identified. Tunstall presents a comprehensive series of critical comments on a few aspects of the landmark study in his 1971 book. First, Tunstall points out its limited analytical data in that two authors' chose to include only four Norwegian newspapers and exclusively assess news coverage of overseas crises as they were presumed to be of recognised newsworthiness, ignoring coverage of more trivial yet day-to-day events with less political significance but with more commonly shared analytical importance. Secondly, the authors completely ignored the visual aspect of the content and no reference was made to the relationship between the visual elements, such as caricatures and dramatic photos, and the construction of the analytical contents (Tunstall, 1971, p. 21).

Besides the analytical flaws of the study, a school of researchers take their criticism further and focus on the author's claim that the first eight factors are free of cultural-bound idiosyncrasy. In her study exploring the convergences and divergences of Chinese and Western perceptions of news value, Guo (2012) argues that the Chinese perspective of identifying news value elements is an audience-oriented approach, "the value of news is materialised only when the news is read" (p. 30). Supporting Guo's opinion that there are disparities between Chinese and Western perceptions of news value, Masterton (2005) also questions the "universal applicability" of news factors and goes further to protest that "［…］in Asia［…］practitioners there realised that the values they considered innate in their societies and their journalism were suffering from intrusion from the West and by creeping – perhaps vaulting – globalisation" (p. 41).

Research critical of the 'culture-free' quality of news values also explores the ideological aspect of the term. For example, to Hall, the news factors Galtung and Ruge claim to establish based on "common sense psychology" and present as a set of neutral routine practices are in fact a form of "professional ideology" (Hall, Crutcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Roberts, 1978, p. 249). While applying them to empirical work it is needed to see "news values as an ideological structure – to examine these rules as the formalisation and operationalisation of *an ideology of news*" (Hall, 1973, p. 182, italics in original), as "the prestigious are part of the necessary spectacle of news production – they people and stabilise its environment. But the very notion of 'elite persons' has the 'routine knowledge of social structures' inscribed within it ［…］ 'Elite persons' makes the news because power, status and celebrity are monopolies in the institutional life of our society" (Hall, 1973, p. 183).

While acknowledging that news factors provide us with insights into what kind of events might survive the selection process, Hartley emphasises that we should constantly be mindful that identifying news factors tells us more about how news stories are constructed than why they are being selected in the first place. He confirms Hall's argument that news values "are neither natural nor neutral". They form an ideological code by which the events happening in our world are perceived in a rather biased way, as news values are man-made and they "have been developed, of course, by white, middle-class men, generation upon generation of them, forming opinions, imposing them, learning them and passing them on as Holy Writ" (Hartley, 1982, p.80). Along this line of argument, Hartley develops the theory further and suggests taking organisational needs, political as well as economic structures into consideration when examining the ideological perspectives on news values, as they are important "ideological determinants" that news values actually disguise. Commenting on the widespread reporting on an obscure theoretical term as an attempt by the press to clarify a dispute at the University of Cambridge in the early 1980s, Harley states, "The way the dispute

was reported did exploit a number of our news values like personalisation, negativity, reference to elite persons and institutions, but the news values themselves give little clue as to why the story was deemed newsworthy in the first place" (Hartley, 1982, p.79).

All in all, as the current literature presents, the analytical approaches to and perceptions of the term 'news value' is a potpourri of different conceptualisations. News values/factors can mean very different things to researchers in the field. As Caple and Bednarek (2013) urge, there is indeed a need to consolidate a list of news values that take into account of news factors proposed by subsequent researchers and the development of journalism practices after the seminal work of Galtung and Ruge, as well as to distinguish more clearly between the different approaches to the term 'news values' according to the different theoretical aspects and in different news processes. While 'news value' itself can be approached from at least three different perspectives: *news writing objectives*, the general goal of news writing per se, such as literacy skills, being informative as public "gatekeeper", accuracy, etc.; *selection factors*, any factors impacting on whether an event is to be selected to be published, not limited to values but also exterior factors such as the media's corporate needs; and finally *news values*, which are to do with newsworthiness, it is still generally helpful to reserve the term 'news values' for the last perspective for the benefit of general perception.

4.2.2 Hard News & Soft News

As a ramification of news values, scholars have carried out copious research on the conceptualisation of what we call "hard news" and "soft news" since 1973 when Tuchman's famous paper brought the dichotomy to widespread attention (Tuchman, 1973). These terms are usually employed to identify journalistic characteristics of both singular news items as well as media formats, and they

are also often associated with social function assumptions of news media in democratic countries (Zaller, 2003).

According to the literature, even though it is clear that the terms hard news and soft news initially came into use in US journalistic practice and became widely adopted in both journalistic and academic language, there is no exact "scientific origin" of the terms (Reinemann, Stanyer, Scherr, & Legnante, 2012, p. 223). Notwithstanding the large body of academic studies concerning the dichotomy, and the fact most researchers and journalism practitioners seemingly to have an empirical understanding of it, there is no universally researched consensus of what exactly hard news and soft news are, or how they should be defined and measured. Similar to news values, the yet to be consistently conceptualised journalistic term can mean something utterly different to different scholars. As summarised in the Reinemann, Stanyer, Scherr and Legnante's paper, the differences between the definitions of hard news are "fundamental and not negligible". Hard news and soft news are not just used to describe one single characteristic but sets of characteristics on different dimensions, and to make matters more complicated, combinations of different characteristics from different dimensions are often used in studies even when the authors tend to concentrate on "a uni-dimensional notion" in their attempts to categories news (Reinemann et al, 2012, p. 224).

Informed by the two principles in the psychological functioning theory of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, Schramm, in his 1949 paper exploring the nature of news, proposed a method to distinguish news into two types: delayed-reward and immediate-reward (Schramm, 1949). Schramm's method of bisection makes him one of the first American researchers to contemplate on the categorisation of news from the readers' perspective, and his method largely matches the dimidiate division between hard and soft news. About three decades after Schramm's paper, Tuchman published her famous

industry study concerning the same matter from the perspective of the journalism practitioners (Tuchman, 1973). Tuchman examined how hard news and soft news are understood and applied in the daily practice of journalists, and at the end of the paper come to the conclusion that there's significant ambiguity in the use of the terms. However, Tuchman's warning did not prevent this questionable dichotomy from gaining in popularity, and her paper was extensively cited in later work addressing the same problem, and scholars in the field became more and more accustomed to using the terms hard and soft news to distinguish between different kinds of news.

To give an impression of the various conceptions and associations scholars adopt when using the term hard news and soft news, the following is a collection of a few different concepts the researcher has come across in the literature.

To Lehman-Wilzig and Seletzky (2010), the distinction between hard news and soft news derives from the newsworthiness of the news item, simply, hard news has a high level of newsworthiness and opposed to it, soft news has a low, if any, level of newsworthiness. Hard news, due to its high news value and short lifespan, demands immediate reporting to inform the public of the matter and leaves time and space for corresponding commentary and analysis to take place. Soft news, on the other hand, doesn't need to be reported in a very timely fashion due to its low intrinsic social importance, if it has any at all. This dividing principle also applies to the different formats of media that usually carry the two types of news, broadsheets and tabloids. Lehman-Wilzig and Seletzky's view echoes Smith, Wright, and Ostroff's argument in their 2009 book that hard news stays relevant or newsworthy for a certain period of time, while soft news can be reported at any time due to its quality of staying valid for any length of time (Smith, Wright, & Ostroff, 2009).

Instead of tying the concept to newsworthiness, the conception of which itself is

controversial, in the definition provided by Shoemaker and Cohen (2012), only one dimension is focused on when dividing news into hard and soft, that is its timeliness. "Hard news items are urgent occurrences that have to be reported right away because they become obsolete very quickly. ［…］Soft news items ［…］ are usually based on nonscheduled events. The reporter or media organisation is under no pressure to publish the news at a certain date or time – soft news stories need not be 'timely'".

On the other end of the complexity spectrum is the definition given by Patterson (2000). "Hard news refers to coverage of breaking events involving top leaders, major issues, or significant disruptions in the routines of daily life, such as an earthquake or airline disaster. Information about these events is presumably important to citizens' ability to understand and respond to the world of public affairs ［…］. Soft news ［…］ has been described ［…］ as news that typically is more personality-centred, less time-bound, more practical, and more incident-based than other news". Patterson first dives in from the perspective of topicality and gives his perception of the distinguishing difference, then in addition to that, he proceeds to discuss the different categories in a different dimension, "Finally, soft news has been described as a change in the vocabulary of news. The news is said to have become more personal and familiar in its form of presentation and less distant and institutional." Clearly Patterson has taken a multi-dimensional approach to hard news and soft news, viewing it at least from two angles: topicality and news presentation.

Such a multi-dimensional approach may be seen as too complex and unnecessary by scholars that tend to stick to a single and more straightforward approach. However, Curran et al suggest in their 2010 paper that it often turns out problematic when researchers try to provide a definition using a narrowed-down, single dimension approach. In the study, hard news is deemed to be news items reporting politics, economics, science, technology and other

social development-related subjects, as opposed to soft news which is reportage covering celebrity gossip, sports, offbeat event and stories that serve as public entertainment rather than inform. The author argues within the proposed category of crime that it would be inappropriate to pre-judge the hard or soft character of the story without an analysis of the contents. Hence, they urge scholars to pay attention to how the story is contextualised and associated, "if the report referred to penal policies or to the general causes or consequences of crime – it was judged to be a hard news story assimilated to public affairs. If, however, the main focus of the report was the crime itself, with details concerning perpetrators and victims, but with no reference to the larger context or implications for public policies, the news item was judged to be soft" (Curran, Salovaara-Moring, Coen, & Iyengar, 2010).

According to Curran's concept, it is not only the intrinsic characteristic of the news items, such as newsworthiness or topic, that render it a hard news or soft news, but also the framing that the story is given in the process of journalistic production that plays an equally decisive role. In some cases, the topic and newsworthiness, like the reporting on pandas at the beginning at this chapter, only serve as indicators of the relevance of the story. The panda loans can be linked to a few dimensions that render the item newsworthy: as a diplomatic tool from a political angle; beloved of human beings all over the world to allow a cultural framing; the pandas' appearance increasing the gross revenue of the zoos provides good material for a local economic report; and the conservation value that pandas embody and bring to the hosting zoos can easily get into the pages on natural history and animal conservation. It's true that in order to investigate the level of success of China's panda diplomacy according to how the news is reflected in the local news reportage of the recipient countries, the attributed framing of news items needs to be examined in detail, and the next section will be devoted to a brief introduction of framing in journalism.

4.2.3 Framing

Framing in social science refers to a series of concepts and theoretical perspectives on how individuals perceive and communicate the reality they live in (Goffman, 1974). Frames in thought are a schema of mental representations, interpretations, and simplifications of reality, a collection of anecdotes and stereotypes built up based on one's experiences and value system, that individuals rely on to make sense of and respond to information received from the outside world. In other words, through education, information absorbed from the mass media, life experiences, biological influences and cultural influences from contact with the outside world in general, individuals build their own series of mental "prisms". Through these prisms they scrutinise and make sense of the world. Hence the perception and choices of responding they then make are impacted by their creation of a prism. (Adams & Goffman, 1979). Here is an example to illustrate the principle of frames. In the statement "he is hot", different minds develop different psychological associations depending on the frame they attach this sentence to. Some may relate it to a pure physical frame meaning that "he is hot" temperature-wise, while others might place it under an appearance frame and extract the meaning that he has an attractive appearance.

Adapting the concept of framing into journalism and media studies, media framing refers to the way journalists employ certain frames through which information is presented to its readers when constructing news content (Cissel, 2012). Entman (1993) incorporates this social science term into agenda-setting and intended bias in modern journalism practices, and states that framing in the media means "to frame a communicating text or message is to promote certain facets of a 'perceived reality' and make them more salient in such a way that endorses a specific problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or a treatment recommendation" (p.51).

Against the backdrop of the omnipresent news media in modern society, the media's effects on social life can be described as "social constructionism" (Scheufele, 1999, p. 103), and mass media present the social reality that's happening around us by "framing images of reality ［…］ in a predictable and patterned way" (McQuail, 2002, p. 331). To some scholars, "media discourse is part of a process by which individuals construct meaning, and public opinion is part of the process by which journalists ［…］ develop and crystallise meaning in public discourse" (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). So in this sense, framing certainly can be used as a tool by the media to make salient points that steer the readers' attention to a desired perspective, and certain cultures and values can be planted into the public perception through the deployment of framing, agenda-setting and deliberate bias in the media. As Budd, Craig and Steinman (1999) pointed out, "media meet recommended or endorsed bias at the most fundamental levels: consistent framing in favour of capitalism, patriarchy, heterosexism, individualism, consumerism and White privilege, among other deeply entrenched values that help allocate power in ［…］ society".

Inspecting the term from the practical angle of how frames are manipulated in modern journalism practices seems to impart it with negative connotations. However, framing, in the social theory itself, is neither positive nor negative. It exists in every process of news construction, even if unintended or unrecognised, as journalists perceive the information gathered from journalistic investigation through their own set of frames, through the same process as how everyone else makes sense of the world, and the frames they relate to amplify the corresponding parts of the story they construct. Indeed, framing is actually "a property of a message, a frame limits or defines the message's meaning by shaping the inferences that individuals make about the message. Frames reflect judgements made by the messages creators" (Hallahan, 1999), and as a result, by trimming off the excessive ways of comprehending the information, it helps people understand and attach meaning to complex issues and events (Bach &

Blake, 2016). Enhanced framing techniques, which can be employed as a type of professional literacy skill by journalism practitioners, help to reduce the ambiguity of intangible topics by contextualising the information in such a way that readers can relate to what they already know, and perceive what is intended to be perceived.

The ubiquitousness of framing in news production corresponds to the chain of news communication (Figure 1.) proposed by Galtung and Ruge, and works as the fundamental principle of its mechanism. In Galtung and Ruge's theory, the news values that render an event newsworthy (selection) will be accentuated in news construction (distortion), and this will repeatedly occur at every step while the news information passes down the chain (replication) (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). While scholars argue over the definition and ideology of news values, in this case, the attributed news values of the selected news events are essentially the frames existing in the news selector's mind: when it comes to qualifying whether an event is news, journalists first subconsciously perceive the event using their cognitive ability which is built upon a series of existing frames created through each individual's life experiences. To this already filtered, digested and altered information generated through subconscious perception, they then consciously apply a set of news values, which are also a range of frames that vary from mind to mind, to make a final decision. So even if news selectors have no comprehension of what framing is, framing still happens at every step of their work. Naturally, the longer the chain between the events to the reader's perception, the more voices get involved and the more distortion accumulates, which results in creating widespread bias in media discourse. Entman and Rojecki (1993, p. 166) assert that bias is "consistent patterns in the framing of mediated communication that promote the influence of one side of conflicts". However, applying framing to the chain of news communication we can understand that information gets distorted and eventually forms bias while passing down the chain regardless of the intention of the actors involved in the

process.

Considering the vast body of ramifications and academic notions that go under or relating to news values and the limited space of this paper, two more concepts will be briefly discussed as theoretical tools, the narrative theory and mediated public diplomacy, due to their relevance to the context the research.

4.2.4 The Narrative Theory

Narrative theory as a subject enjoys a major thriving interest throughout the world, which is derived from the presupposition that when it comes to certain fundamental concepts of our life, such as time, experience and development, narrative is a basic method mastered by humans to make sense of them. And from there, theorists forge ahead to research on the distinctive nature of narratives, from other literacy forms such as poems, lyrics, and arguments; and its different structure, elements, functions and impacts (Herman, Phelan, Rabinowitz, Richardson, & Warhol, 2012).

Narrative theory advocates the view that humans create symbols in rhetorical narration and interact symbolically through the process. Each individual human being is a storyteller, as well as participants in the creating and reviewing of the symbolic discourse. Through the mass body of created symbols, shared meanings and experience stand out and become amplified; hence narrative theory accentuates dialogs and mutually dependent communication. And by being part of the interaction, participants establish identifications and group up with each other, through relatable perception of messages. Consequentially, associations and connections are formed through stories, which allow individuals to access a greater context of life. The stories construct tribes of shared interest and meanings that uphold that the symbols, which created these stories, are relatable and discernible in individual's separate lives (Fisher, 1987).

The repeated emphasis on the symbolic property of the interaction and the manifestation of shared meanings relating up is detectable in many other scholars' work. In his book discussing fact and context in journalism, Koch (1990) echoes with Fisher's theory and describes narratives as systems made up of information, which transfer messages into "universal stories". To achieve so, narratives harvest common knowledge through dialogic communications, during which association and relations are established between individuals. These associations and relations become meaningful within the self-recognition that individuals together constitute a larger story. Much in resemblance, in Deslauners's research exploring narration as a form of knowledge carrier, he asserts that narrative is "the primary form by which human experience is made meaningful. ［…］ Narrative meaning is a ［…］ process that organise human experience into temporally meaningful episodes" (Deslauriers, 1992).

The ability of narratives to build up meaningful connections between people that share common characters relies on accuracy and integrity. As the way Fisher (1987) puts it, life can be perceived as a composition of intertwined, on-going stories with each one have its own unique characters and plots. In this sense, each on-going narrative would not precisely reflect its corresponding life experience without consistency as a property. Hence, Fisher proposes two fundamental principles of a good narrative – coherence and fidelity. Coherence is referring to the importance of the legitimate order of components that make up a narrative, while fidelity emphasises the "truthfulness of the story and its reasoning and values". According to Fisher, as long as coherence and fidelity are achieved – narrative components are constructed with consistence and accuracy in a logical consecutive order – the narrative is more capable of forming connections with strong contextual and cultural pertinence.

Holding a view closer to news production, Griffin (1993) gives a succinct

definition of narrative from an even-structure analysis perspective that narratives are analytic colligations that "unify a number of past or contemporaneous actions and happenings ［…］into a coherent relational whole that give meaning to and explain each of its element and is ［…］constituted by them". According to Griffin, narrative holds shared meanings of the different elements of a story in order to help the public understand and follow the sequences in the story, which otherwise could be viewed as disparate or discursive. Ultimately, readers identify with the information constructs of the stories, and behind this correlation is the reason why social narratives are dominantly employed in news production to disseminate information (Koch, 1990).

By pointing out the similarities in the information disseminating methods between news reports and how scientists and scholars promote values, explain concepts and represent believes throughout human history, Lule (2001) asserts that both processes use inherent contextual patterns to inform the public through accurate stories of public interest, and proposes that news is reported and becomes meaningful through storytelling.

Fox (2001) emphasises on the importance of literacy skills in storytelling that "strong narratives are built on compelling movements, graphic description, interesting dialogues and the writer's ability to identify with his or her subject – in short, the tools of the novelist". In her study analysing narrative in digital media, Ryan (2002) describes the power of narratives as such a grip on human minds that the key to the success of media lies in their ability to deploy vocabulary in their storytelling. Uncontestably storytelling, namely good narratives, is a determining element in the circulation of news.

4.2.5 Mediated Public Diplomacy

It's not cryptic from the name that mediated public diplomacy is a part or a form, depends on the theoretical perception, of public diplomacy which is discussed in fine detail in Chapter Two on its ideology and association with soft power. Mediated public diplomacy amplifies the media aspect of public diplomacy which links with one of the aims of this paper, to examine the degree of correspondence between the perceived trade and political goal of China's panda strategies and the news media reportage, hence making it a necessity to give a brief separate introduction.

Public diplomacy, different from formal diplomacy, deals with the influence of public attitude on the foreign policy making and uses media communications together with other tools to build up dialogs with the target audience to achieve so (Cull, 2008). It serves to the long-term diplomatic goal of the practicing country and "works best with a long horizon" (Melissen, 2005). Another close concept, media diplomacy, was put forth by Gilboa (2002) in his paper concerning global communication and foreign policy, which he defined as "uses of the media by leaders to express interest in negotiation, to build confidence, and to mobilise support for agreements" (p. 741). Robert Entman, a researcher and professor in the area of politics and media whose definition of framing has been widely accepted and cited in related studies, focuses on the differentia between mediated public diplomacy and the two mentioned above, the goal and the media aspect of the term and defines it as rather short term strategies with more specific target effort, by using mass communication, including the internet, to build up positive association, in the hope of promoting the practicing country's specific foreign policies among abroad audience (Entman, 2008). From this sense, Entman's idea of mediated public diplomacy, comparing to public diplomacy, is more idiographic. It deals with short-term goals, hence more achievable and measurable, and it is strategies responding to the facilitating of specific foreign policy, hence less broad and more executable. In other words, if public diplomacy of a country is its long-term war in the field of building up positive national

image overseas, mediated public diplomacy is the individual battle that needs to be conquered to ultimately win the war. And in this sense, media diplomacy can be perceived as a tool that is used in the war, a weapon, to achieve the goal of cultivating positive image and support through manipulating media rather than other forms such as brochures, courses, and culture exchanges.

In the case of his mother country, the US, Entman (2008) brings in the term of framing as the key aspect of media and specifically defines the mediated US public diplomacy as "attempts by a president and his foreign policy apparatus to exert as much control as possible over the framing of US policy in foreign media", However, despite the seemingly lucid definition he provides, Entman repeatedly emphases the difficulties researchers are facing in establishing a conceptual framework to help build theories in the study due to the lack of a theoretical infrastructure in public diplomacy. No theory so far fully explains how media coverage and other forces influence public opinion towards the country's foreign policy making, with papers appearing to be restricted in analysing successes, shortcomings and failures of public diplomacy in practice.

Summary

By presenting the concepts of news value, framing, and narrative theory etc., this chapter reveals the relationship between an event and a reader's perception of it, and how the journalistic process impacts news production, which results in the mediated world we form in our minds. It explains the rationale and prospects for understanding the success of China's panda diplomacy by examining the related news content produced in the recipient countries. The theories and ideologies of these terms give theoretical support to this study, and will also be utilised in the data analysis as fundamental theoretical tools.

The next chapter outlines the research design, data collection methods and

coding methods. The reason for the selection of three countries, Australia, Scotland and Canada as the study subjects, as well as the choice of a content analysis as research methodology will be explained.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and methodology. It explains the rationale in the selection of the three countries of this study; elaborates on the methods of data collection, coding and analysis and outlines their suitability and the reason for the choice.

This chapter first explains that Australia, Scotland and Canada were selected as the three subjects of this study as they are the three countries in the new pattern of panda diplomacy proposed in Buckingham's 2013 research, which is an inspiration for this research. In the second section, the research design section details the specifications of the data of this research, the choice of data collection medium, the methods constructed for data collection as well as coding. Content analysis is employed in the data collection, coding and analysis process, which is briefly discussed at the end of this chapter together with its appropriateness.

5.1 Rationale of the Research Design

As mentioned in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, whether the Chinese panda policy is able to achieve the anticipated effects and produce any diplomatic results depends heavily upon how the panda loan events, as well as the portrayal of the pandas themselves, are shaped in domestic news coverage in the recipient countries. Hence, in order to answer the research question of this study, which is to examine the degree of correspondence between the anticipated goals of China's panda diplomacy and the actual impact the news media reportage might produce, namely, the perceived success of China's panda diplomacy, the contents of the news stories pertaining to all the panda loan events in the three selected countries as the subject of this study will need to be examined in terms of their dominant frames, perceived news values and importance, viewpoint, and

narrative tone.

In Buckingham, David and Jepson's 2013 research, the catastrophic 2008 Sichuan earthquake happened during the third stage of the panda diplomacy. This earthquake was eight on the Richter scale and permanently destroyed an estimated 5.9% of panda habitat, while affecting 67% of the panda's total habitat (Ouyang et al., 2008). The earthquake has served as an impetus for further transformation of the country's famous animal diplomacy practice. According to Buckingham, the natural disaster badly damaged the Wolong Nature Reserve and Breeding Centre, rendered its 60 pandas homeless and in need of rehousing; their complex husbandry requirement presented "something of a crisis" for the Chinese authorities. As a response to this problem, China decided to expand panda loans, which partially resolved the need to rehouse these panda refugees, and more importantly, would bring lucrative funds in the form of rental fees to assist the rebuilding of the damaged panda habitat and the Wolong breeding centre.

According to Buckingham's theory, there are two patterns discernible in the new nations that China negotiated panda loans with after the earthquake. First, they involved close Asian neighbours that have signed free-trade agreements with China, and second, they involved countries possessing the natural resources and advanced technologies that China desires (Buckingham et al, 2013).

Buckingham's theory is enlightening when seen in light of China's development and reminds us to be mindful of the broader context of China's panda diplomacy. In the first stage of the panda diplomacy back in the 70s, a period in which China's urgent task was to thaw frozen relationships with the West in order to facilitate its way back to the international community, pandas were gifted away with no strings attached to major nations in the Western camp as goodwill ambassadors.

When panda diplomacy evolved into its second stage in the 80s, pandas were rented out on short-term leases for lucrative profits. In this stage, zoos all over the world that were simply able to afford to pay the rent could have the chance to exhibit pandas, not necessarily directly from China, but from other countries that possessed pandas. The political and symbolic value of the pandas sent abroad was much reduced during this stage, yet the animal's economical value was amplified in tune with capitalism characterised "open-door" to Western investment economic reform China launched during the same period.

Then when panda diplomacy moved into the early part of the third stage in the mid 1990s, bounded by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), pandas could only be sent abroad for long-term leases, to allow breeding in the name of scientific research. However, looking at the list of nations that succeeded in signing a panda loan deal with China, it becomes overt that the majority of panda recipients were elite nations or strong economies that China desired to align with.

The correlation behind this phenomenon is not hard to tease out. Seemingly, that pandas are loaned only to developed countries is partially a result of China's selective panda diplomacy, but also the prohibitively high cost of renting a pair of pandas and the advanced husbandry facilities and technology required to house them, which renders pandas a luxury for only world-class zoos in developed countries.

Panda diplomacy continues to develop. Buckingham points in a new direction with patterns showing in the distribution of pandas in the post 2008 earthquake period, during which time panda loan deals happened hand in hand with the signing of major trade agreements or when goodwill needs to be shown in collaboration with a country. This interesting trend identified by Buckingham inspired this study and inevitably corresponds with another concept that's often

associated with China that is the ascent of China as a major world power.

From national goodwill ambassadors in the 70s, to lucrative profit generators in the 80s, and then being rented in the name of scientific research, finally used to show approval of China's trading partners, China's panda diplomacy has adapted and evolved. In each period, the panda's political or symbolic value is being exploited to fulfil the missions of the different eras of the development of China and the country's needs.

Given the time and space limitations of this study, three countries obtained pandas from the post 2008 earthquake period have been selected as the subject of research. They are: Australia, Canada and Scotland. The selection of these three countries primarily lies in the relevance of the significant trade agreements they have signed with China, which all included the panda loan deals. Both Scotland and Canada's trade agreements with China took place alongside a contract in alternative energy technologies or resources. Edinburgh succeeded in renting pandas while negotiating contracts valued at US 2.6 billion for the supply to China of salmon, Land Rover cars, and petrochemical and renewable energy technology (Hui, 2011). In the case of Canada, the panda loan deal coincided with another stack of contracts to provide China with a long-term uranium supply and the purchase of oil-sand of US 2.1 billion by a Chinese state oil company (Cattaneo, 2011). The last of the three Commonwealth nations selected, Australia, possesses the world's largest uranium reserves and obtained its pair of pandas early in 2009 (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2009). The link between the panda loan deals and China's future alternative energy development is discernible. At the moment, over 75% of China's power generation replies on coal, which contributes to its ever-worsening smog problem. As a response to that, as well as to provide the energy needed for the its rapid development, China is conducting a major nuclear power expansion, increasing the number of nuclear power plants at the speed of six to eight new plants per year from 2015 with the aim to

have 110 plants in operation by 2030 (Yang, 2015). In order to sustain its nuclear power expansion, China is in need to establish long-term, trustworthy trade partnership with countries that possess the energy recourse. Once again, the oriental giant resorted to its panda diplomacy.

This strategic plan and collaborations with the three Commonwealth countries that are providing the resources and technologies it needs render these countries significant trading partners for China. Therefore, investigating the effect of panda diplomacy in these three countries increases the value of this study.

5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

5.2.1 Data

The data for this study was the textual content of news extracted from news items pertaining to each respective panda loan deal in the three countries. The pictorial and video context will not be included in this study as the purpose of this study is to investigate the textual content of news reportage.

5.2.2 Data Collection

To ensure objectivity, a quantitative approach to data collection is preferred for this study. An equal fixed period of time has been set as the time frame for collecting news from each country based on the date on which the corresponding pair of pandas was received (detailed as below). The same search key words, *panda* plus the name of each nation, were used to search for news items released during the set time frame. All related articles on the first ten pages for each

country have been collected for analysing.

The arrival dates of each of the loaned pair of pandas were determined through Internet research:

Australia: Nov. 28 2009

Scotland: Dec. 4 2011

Canada: Mar. 25 2013

Based on these dates, a period of one month before and two years after was set as the time range for the news item search for each country. For all three countries, the searches were done with the same key words, *panda* plus the name of the nation. For example, in the case of Australia, the time range of the news search was set to between October 28, 2009 to November 28, 2011, and the search were conducted by searching the key words "Panda Australia".

In order to avoid being caught up in the vast infinite content on the Internet, only those news items that appear in the first ten pages, which should be statistically most relevant, were taken as sources for data collection. All articles on the first ten pages were read through, scrutinised and filtered. Only articles that directly or primarily concern giant pandas were selected as analytic data. To be more precise, the data are news articles that contain the below content:

Type 1. News articles reporting on the received pandas,

Type 2. News articles reporting on events that concern giant pandas in general.

The reason for considering the Type 2 articles is that all panda related news articles are part of the picture that is shaped and impacts people's frames in relation to the panda, hence they are worthy being analysed. When the coverage

of the original news event is unlikely to increase due to its limited amplitude, adding relevant information on the same subject, information that does not even have to originate in the event, provides a method for ensuring continued attention to the original event (Hartley, 1982, p. 76). In the case of this study, because of the panda loan deals, other panda related events, which normally would not reach the threshold of newsworthiness, were made to dramatise the news in order to "keep the pot boiling". Hence, articles those do not directly concern the panda loan deals are still broadly influential in that they keep the events in the public's attention, and consequentially take part in the picturing of the panda to the readership as well.

Regardless of publication, all articles that fell into the two types were included for examination, which means news articles in the search results released by foreign media outfits were captured as well. News articles from foreign press offer an alternative view of the event and are normally more critical, based on the researcher's experience carrying out trial tests of the data collection. Local audiences also have access to all the articles that appeared in the search results, and they play a role in the shaping of panda diplomacy as well.

Google News was used as the sole platform for collecting news items. Before deciding on Google News, the researcher carried out experiments on other platforms such as Factiva and the official websites of media outlets with the largest circulation in each of the selected countries. However, the tests on these platforms all resulted in drawbacks that significantly hampered the data collection process. Searches on Factiva, for example, did not yield an adequate number of articles to examine. Even when the search term was narrowed down to merely 'panda', Factiva didn't provide more than three news articles within the set time frames. The news databases on the official websites of prestigious local newspapers of the three countries were also considered, yet tests conducted on these platforms suggested that the official website of major

presses do not usually provide public access to their database or they charge fees for advanced searches, which is problematic due to the limited funding and time available for this research. Therefore, despite *Google News* having certain flaws, such as its results being influenced by the imperatives of search engine optimisation, it was still selected as the sole data collection platform due to the quantity of results and practical concerns.

5.2.3 Data Coding

Three different coding methods were applied to the data to analyse the different journalistic characteristics of the articles.

1. Length: The importance of a news article can be signified by its length. Research shows that there is a significant relationship between the length of an article and its perceived importance by the publication (Cissel, 2012, p. 71). In order to understand the value of the panda recognised by the media, and how important media sources felt the panda loan deals are or should be regarded by their readers, all articles were coded into three groups based on their length. They are: short, below 200 words; medium, 400 to 800 words; and long, over 800 words.

2. Tone: In order to capture the predominant tone in the news production on panda deal events in each country, another analysis carried out concerned the tone of the articles. Articles were categorised into three groups, positive, neutral and negative based on the primary tone in their narratives, which is reflected in their expressions: whether there were the presence of words or expressions that impart particular sense, such as approval/ disapproval, underlining/ downplaying or emphasising/dismissive, in the storytelling.

3. Frame: The frames applied in the news articles were analysed in order to get

an impression of the variety of different types of news values the media attribute to the panda, as well as the degree of "hard" or "soft" coverage of pandas and related topics. Four major frames are pre-set into four categories; they are:

A. Political frame: The political value of the pandas or the political backdrop of the loan deals.

B. Economic frame: Frames that shed light on the panda loan deals or pandas in general from an economic aspect, such as the cost of the complex husbandry and housing for the pandas, or the economic growth that was brought to the zoo or local area by the addition of the pandas to the zoo collection.

C. Conservation frame: The animal conservation value or scientific value of the pandas.

D. Cultural frame: Frames that feature a salient aspect of human affection for the pandas.

Each article was read, the number of times the above four frames appeared in the article was counted, and the dominant frame selected. Then, for each country, the number of times each frame appeared in total was calculated, and the dominant frame for the country was that which appeared the greatest number of times. The classification of these four types of frames was informed by the different types of news values that are commonly perceived in the panda. As elaborated in the Chapter Three, the panda's ability to call forth human affection and the fact that it is a rare and unique animal to China give it its cultural and conservation news values. The panda deals are also often happening in hand with high political profile events and the high cost of hosting these fastidious bears, which also imbues them with tremendous political and economic news values. The balance between the four common types of news values in the news

presentation directly impacts the reader's mental image of the pandas and hence determines whether the diplomatic practice can achieve its goals. Hence, these four types of frames are the focus to be teased out, coded and analysed.

5.2.4 Methodology

A content analysis was conducted to code the data. Content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique and defined, in brief, as "the systematic assignment of communication content to categorize according to rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those categories using statistical methods" (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005, p. 3). Conventionally, it is utilised to deal with the "objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication" (Berelson, 1952, p.18). The application of content analysis has evolved with time that some scholars accommodatingly proposed to use this method to investigate latent content (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). Weber (1990), as a supporter of this employment of content analysis, advocates that content analysis is essential to finding patterns and it manifests the attitudes and frames contained implicitly in communication. In this research, to understand the news articles' influence on the readership's perception of the news subjects requires the researcher to examine the tones and viewpoints expressed in the selection of vocabulary in the textual data, as well as to measure the frames formed of specific clusters of messages. A content analysis enables the researcher to evaluate news contents for such purpose, thus is a well-suited method in this research context.

Each selected article was read through critically, with considerations of the journalism theoretical concepts outlined in the previous chapter. Networks of subtle emotion-suggestive words were detected and used to identify the primary tone of the articles; frames involved in total within each article and as dominant frame were calculated by analysing the concerns expressed in the narratives, for

the purpose of understanding media perception of the panda's newsworthiness of the three different countries. Furthermore, writing structures and styles were also analysed, it reveals the extent of hardness/softness of the news contents which can also be used as an index to understand the news values perceived in the panda by news outlets.

Summary

While the study provides a qualitative understanding of the success of China's panda diplomacy reflected in the recipient countries' news coverage, the research employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection and coding in order to avoid the subjectivity of the researcher as much as possible when conducting the research. Content analysis was preferred as a method of data analysis, which was also implemented in the process of data collection and coding as this research primarily deals with textual content.

The next chapter will present the coding result as well as the analysis of the results of this research.

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings of the coding process, analysis of the coding data as well as an analysis of the results of this research.

In the first section, a table containing the coding result is presented with four categories of statistics from the three different coding methods: article length, primary tone in the narrative, and the number of times of each frame appeared in total and appeared as the dominant frame, for the three subjects of this research. It provides an overview of the differences in news production in the three countries reporting on panda related events. Following that is a brief interpretation and discussion of the table to help put the numbers into perspective.

The second section of this chapter is the main research result of this study. It is divided into three subsections, and each of the three studied countries is given space for a detailed analysis of the research result and corresponding narratives using information from the data regarding the panda loan deal. The striking characteristics and outstanding patterns reflected in the coding result are identified for discussion and analysis together with representative articles chosen from the database, separately for each country as well as in comparison. The research results suggest that there is a wide variation in the three coded aspects of news production between the three countries, which reveals considerable differences in the level of success of the panda diplomacy in the three recipient countries. While Scotland and Canada score remarkably higher on indexes that imply a positive journalistic reaction to the panda-related news that facilitates panda diplomacy, Australia shows a low level of enthusiasm in reporting panda related events and a tendency to be over-critical, which hinders its readership from forming positive associations of the pandas.

6.1 Coding Result

	Scotland		Canada		Australia	
Total articles	97		64		25	
Length						
Short	10	10.3%	12	18.8%	3	12%
Medium	30	30.9%	21	32.8%	14	56%
Long	57	58.8%	31	48.4%	8	32%
Tones						
Neutral	65	67%	36	56.3%	16	64%
Negative	7	7.2%	7	10.9%	5	20%
Positive	25	25.8%	21	32.8%	4	16%
Frames (number of times appeared in total)						
Political	15	15.5%	26	40.6%	5	20%
Economic	24	24.7%	13	20.3%	9	36%
Conservation	86	88.7%	45	70.3%	16	64%
Human interest	57	58.8%	33	51.6%	15	60%
Dominant Frames (number of times appeared as dominant)						
Political	6	6.2%	16	25%	0	0%
Economic	7	7.2%	6	9.4%	4	16%
Conservation	66	68%	29	45.3%	11	44%
Human interest	18	18.6%	13	20.3%	10	40%

The table above contains the total number of collected data and the results of three coding methods for each of the three countries. From the statistics listed in the table, an overall idea is presented of the differences in the perceived importance, reporting angles and frequently attached frames by the media of the selected three countries when it comes to reporting on the panda and related events.

Among the three selected analytical countries, British media demonstrated the highest enthusiasm in their reporting of panda-related events, while Australian media shows a comparative level of nonchalance. This fact is not only reflected in the number of total news articles generated during the pre-set time frame of equal length, with 97 articles collected from the Scotland case comparing to the other end of the spectrum of merely 25 for Australia, but is also displayed in the average length of the collected articles. In the 25 Australian texts, medium length articles accounted for 56% of the total and that is the largest category of article length for Australia, while the long length category represents the largest proportion for both Scotland and Canada. The lower number of articles and larger percentage of medium length texts demonstrates a lack of perceived newsworthiness in the pandas as well as a lack of depth in the related reportage of the Australian media outlets. Among the Scottish data, only 10% of the articles are less than 200-words in comparison to almost 60% crossed the 400-word count threshold and therefore were coded as long length. This phenomenon is beyond expectation as one would expect soft news subjects of cute animals, or events surrounding zoos' efforts to enrich animal collections, to be published as brief blurbs in tabloid papers rather than elaborated front page stories on the BBC website. However, the fact that in two of the three countries of study, long length articles took up the majority of data collection represents the highly-recognised news values in the panda by the worldwide media. Veritably, it is a smart move on the part of the Chinese government, by deploying pandas as a resource of soft power to influence the foreign mass media.

Besides the low degree of enthusiasm Australian media presented in comparison to the other two countries, there is also a noticeable difference in the perspectives of which news has been reported on, which is represented in the coding of tone. Surprisingly, 20% of the total Australian articles used overtly negative descriptive language in their portraying of the pandas, which is twice as much as Canada, who placed second out of the three countries in this category. Regarding the British media, the neutral articles (which accounted for 67%) seem to be met with rational expectation and are representative of the professionalism of mainstream news outlets. British media appear to remain neutral in the reporting in terms of language use, regardless of the negative/positive nature of the subject. On the other hand, judging from the tone section alone, it also seems puzzling where the negativity could be arising from in the reporting of these attractive animals of high conservation value.

Taking the dominant frame section into account can provide some answers to the question above. In almost twice as many cases than Scotland, economic factors are portrayed as the main frame in 16% of the total Australian articles, which shows a journalistic focus on the financial aspects of the pandas. These animals are loaned to foreign countries in the hope to boost revenues for the hosting zoos, which has been met with varying degrees of success by zoos in different regions of the world. In most cases, the universal appealing features of the pandas do function as an economic impetus and sharply stimulate the number of tourists in the initial period after their arrival, yet the increase does not last as the novelty of the pandas gradually wears off. However, while the revenue increase drops, the hefty rental and excessively high husbandry fee of keeping the bears remain the same. Consequentially, in some cases the pandas become "white elephants" and place the hosting zoos into a financial dilemma. So seen from this perspective, it could be natural in the journalistic instincts of Australian media to have focused on the financial performance of the pandas,

which became the source of negative tone in their reporting.

Canada is the only country in the three with positive tone articles exceeding one third of the total. In the dominant frame section, politics as dominant frame is detected in 23% of the total collected stories, which is extraordinarily high in comparison of the corresponding numbers of the other two countries, with 6.2% for Scotland, and none for Australia. In later part of Chapter Six it will be elaborated that the success of signing panda loan deal contract was released to the media by the then Prim Minister Stephen Harper when he was wrapping up his official visit to China. The news was sensational at that time, the relevance between the two pandas and Harper's fruitful trading achievements on his trip to China was routinely referred to in the news. The fact that Harper, as the Prime Minister, himself personally announced the seal of the panda loan deal attributed these two pandas a strong sense of political importance before the bears even touched down on Canadian soil. As a result, the political frame was prominent in continuing reporting of related events.

As a remarkably world-famous endangered animal, the pandas' news value derives from its rarity as an endangered animal unique to remote regions of China, as well as humans' affection for it, primarily owing to its universally appealing exterior features that no other animal can match. Hence, in the section of total number of frames across the three countries, a consensus was researched that conservation was the most commonly attached frame in the reporting of the panda, with the human-interest frame placing a close second. Especially in the case of Scotland, under the pen of the British media, the conservation frame could be found in almost 90% of all articles. Meanwhile, the same outlets provided a comparatively low appearance of a political frame, accounting for only 15.5% of the total articles. The prominent fervour on the conservation aspects of the panda, together with a low political relevance, formed an ideal combination for the facilitation of panda diplomacy. Maximising

the portrayal of the panda as a cute personable and harmless animal of high conservation values, with minimised political tool framing, could foster more positive mental association among readership towards China, the panda's unique origin country, therefore resulting in a dilution of the discreditable stereotypical images associated with China, such as its human rights issues, domestic pollution and autocratic political system. Yet, this is certainly not the only formula of media environment for implementing panda diplomacy. In the case of Canada, with the political frame being highly attached to 40.6% of the total, and as dominant in 25% of the data, the positive tone in the description of the panda events also scores highly. In this situation, the heated discourse on the political dimension of the pandas did not seem to interfere with the ability of the bears to call forth human affection. While commentators were voluntarily attempting at interpreting the political symbolical meaning of the of the pandas, on the grassroots level of the society the pandas were still wining over the hearts and minds of Canadian people hence achieving a high level of public diplomatic success.

6.2 The Case of Australia

6.2.1 The Arrival of the Pandas

Male giant panda Wang Wang and his companion female Funi touched down at the airport in Australia's southern city of Adelaide on November 28, 2009. After clearing customs, a specially appointed police escort delivered the two glamorous Asian guests to their new southern hemisphere residence for an extended stay of ten years. The two bears arrived at Adelaide Zoo by lunchtime. After a strict period of quarantine, on January 12, 2010, Wang Wang and Funi were released from their AU$8 million glass enclosure into the open air. As government representative, then Climate Change Minister and South Australian senator, Penny Wong attended the event and gave the order for the doors keeping the pandas inside to be opened. Adelaide's most famous new residents were finally breathing fresh Australian air and on show to the public.

In line with the modern anti-racial discrimination symbolism attributed to giant pandas popular among young generations - they are white, they are black, and they are Asian – Wong unveiling the pandas on behalf of the Australian government also projects quite a progressive image of diversity in Australian government circles. She was the first Asia-born cabinet member in Australian history, and also the first female openly LGTB Australian federal parliamentarian and federal government cabinet minister. The aptness of her unveiling the pandas to the public seems to radiate an intention of the Australian government to counteract any sceptical opinions of the Chinese bears. However, this is the only political relevance or perception that can be extracted from the 25 articles gathered from the Internet for the Australian case.

6.2.2 Reading of the Coding Result

With merely 25 articles gathered in total, the Australian media demonstrated a rather apathetic attitude towards the pair of pandas received by Adelaide Zoo when compared to the British and Canadian media, which generated 97 and 64 articles respectively in the time range following receipt of their pair. Looked at in terms of article length and story narrative, the same conclusion could again be drawn, as Australia was the only country for which the majority of texts had a medium length, while the other two counties, long length texts were the majority. Even in the eight long-length articles, only four concerned the two pandas' loan from China; the rest featured news related to the animal's entertainment value such as "Panda power inspiring a new wave of kung fu cubs" and "Panda poo to be used as fertiliser for the world's most expensive tea". In terms of news frames, a particularly noticeable phenomenon in contrast to the other two countries is that very rarely was there a political frame included in articles from Australia, with only five articles in total including a political perspective and none with politics as a major frame. While the political relevance of pandas to the bilateral relationship between China and the host country were often analysed in the British and Canadian reports, there was virtually no commentary of the same in the case of Australia.

The variety of the news themes that pandas generated in the news production, such as the 'kung fu panda' or panda poo as tea fertiliser, demonstrated the rich semiotic meanings of the animal. Pandas can be rendered political and scientific, as well as peculiar and anecdotal, and this flexible iconicity bestows them a wide range of news values. Yet in the Australia case, the inclination of the journalists to exploit the entertainment aspect of the pandas suggests they were not deemed as serious news subjects. The lack of long length articles further confirms the low level of recognition of the significance of the panda related events per se by the media outlets.

6.2.3 The Overt Lack of Political News Value

The rarity of the political frame suggests the news topic suffers from a shortage of political perspectives. Events that have an influence on society or are closely related to the public interest, such as politics, are generally perceived as hard news value sources to which journalists often attribute a high level of significance in the reporting. Therefore, the phenomenon presented in the Australian data of a small number of long articles and the rare appearance of political frame seem to relate to each other. The general dearth of political news value in the events resulted in the perception of low importance by Australian journalists. Although pandas themselves are of extraordinarily high conservation value, which could also be a source of hard news value as some scholars argue, yet the rarity of the endangered bears has long been exploited and is familiar to the public. For this reason, journalists might find some panda events, such as being loaned to other countries as a part of a conservation project, newsworthy enough to get into print, yet not meriting a great deal of space if the events do not involve other news value factors.

Take the two articles that reported the touchdown of the pandas as an example. They are respectively short and medium length, both coded with conservation as the major frame with no appearance of a political frame. In the short article, AA10, it described the arrival event as "[pandas] touched down at Adelaide Airport and are clearing customs ahead of a waiting police escort to deliver them to their new home", with the only name mentioned being the zoo's spokeswoman, who informed the reporter that the pandas were expected to arrive around lunchtime. AA09, the medium length article, described the event as "they [pandas] received a warm welcome with gifts of bamboo from state and zoo officials" and cited zoo chief executive Christ West's speech that the pandas were to be placed in quarantine for 30 days. Neither article referred to any political events. The pandas received a rather aloof welcome from the Australian government, with no notable personality making an appearance at the airport, and no other political event that could be related to the arrival of the pandas. In

other words, no political relevance or political news value placed on the event.

However, as a comparison to the touchdown of the Australian pandas, the other two pairs of pandas included in this study received different treatment. Then Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond publically stated that he saw a great deal of significance in Scotland's strengthening relationship with China and the growing friendship between the two countries symbolised by the Chinese government's approval of the panda loan. Salmond was also in China on his third visit to the country to promote cultural and business links while Scotland received the pandas in the presence of then Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and Edinburgh's Lord Provost George Grubb. Then Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the success in the securing of a pair of pandas at the end of his official visit to China, which was jokingly reported by some media as the most substantial achievement during his trip. He also made an appearance at the airport with his wife to receive the Chinese bears. In contrast to the hype-worthy politicians and surrounding high-news value events, the Australian pandas were received in rather quiet circumstances. As no major visits were paid to China by any top Australian politician in that period, no major trading contract was signed off to coincide with the panda deal, and no notable personnel from the Australian government showed up at the airport to receive the pandas. The event was treated as a purely conservation-related event by the Australian media.

Another factor that contributed to the lack of political relevance in the Australian case is the sequence in which the pandas were sent out during that period, as the timeline of the development of the panda diplomacy made it impossible for Australian media to relate their pandas to their latent political symbolic value. The theory proposed in Buckingham's research states that panda diplomacy has evolved into a new phase characterised by a pattern in which the pandas are now being used by the Chinese government as a symbol of highly-valued friendship and long term strategic trading partnerships. In this theory, China

sends their pandas to countries such as Australia, Scotland and Canada that provide them with alternative energy resources and related technologies which are urgently needed for the country's rapid domestic development. Australia, which received its pair in November 2009, was the first nation in this sequence to receive pandas from China under this new phase of panda diplomacy. Scotland and Canada obtained their pandas respectively in November 2011 and March 2013, and Buckingham's research was published in September 2013. Hence, it's understandable and reasonable that political commentary journalists in Canada were inspired by Buckingham's research, which led to political frames being prominent in the Canadian reports. No similar phenomenon could be found in the case of Australia, as it was the first country in line, and at the time the deal took place, the pattern discerned by Buckingham had simply not formed yet. For this reason, the pandas didn't strike the Australian media as relating to any political issues that were happening at the time.

However, extended research into this matter uncovered information that firmly supports Buckingham's theory of the panda and alternative resource supplies. According to World Nuclear News (2008), Australia and China signed bilateral safeguard agreements that laid the legislative foundation for Australia to supply uranium to China as early as 2006. The agreements put into place strict safeguards to ensure China will only use imported Australian uranium exclusively for the production of electricity within designated nuclear power plants. Both countries ratified the agreements through an exchange of Diplomatic Notes in Beijing during January 2007. Yet, exports could not start straight away because Australia's total uranium production was already fully committed. In November 2008, Energy Resources of Australia announced sales contracts with China that were signed off and entered into force. One year later, a pair of Chinese pandas touched down at Adelaide Airport.

So, the infrequent political frame applied in the Australia case reflected in the

coding result is caused by the inconspicuous connection and time gap between the panda loan deal and its corresponding political event. Furthermore, because Australia was the first country in the sequence of the new phase in panda diplomacy, the Australian media had not yet fostered sensitivity towards this political phenomenon. It is not that they were not critical enough in the reporting of this matter, on the contrary, this study argues the exact opposite: that the Australian media are in fact rather sensitive and critical. In fact, as will be shown, they could potentially be labelled over-critical in terms of informing the public about going-ons in government and institutions when it comes to reporting the Chinese bears.

6.2.4 The Salient Economic Perspective

36% of the Australian articles applied an economic frame, and 16% of the Australian articles' dominant frame was also economic. These two numbers are the highest in those particular columns across the three countries studied and they speak volumes for the scrutinising nature of the Australian journalists. Instead of the human affection and entertainment values of the pandas, their focus is placed rather on the rational concerns of the public, in essence, the financial impact of these two animals that came with a loan attached. The data presented one predominant phenomenon, in that the four articles that had economics as a major frame all concerned the same theme, which is the financial performance of the zoo after having received the pandas.

Two distinctive facts in the Australia case drawn from the media reports are unusual compared to the two other countries, which consequently served as the source of the economic news value that attracted the media's attention. First, unlike the payment practice of panda loans that took place in other countries, the rental fees for the pair of pandas residing at Adelaide Zoo were paid by Australian government. Despite the normal support and help from top level of

the host country's government that is essential in the negotiations with China to secure a pair of the Chinese national treasure, the loan contracts are still signed between the corresponding government department of China and the host zoo, the rental fees are also paid by the zoo, or its owning entity. However, news content from the Australian media suggests that the Australian Federal Government bore the charges of renting Wang Wang and Funi, instead of the zoo. Second, the zoo appeared to be caught in massive debt after having started housing the pandas, and the government had to step in and provide a financial bailout to ensure the zoo could continue to operate.

These two economic events have strong news value, and are also at the same time panda related, which is also a popular subject in the eyes of journalists. Linking the dominant hard news aspect of these economic events to the entertainment value of the pandas can multiply the news value of the events, so the Australian media combined them together in news production to sensationalise the matter and explicitly blaming the pandas for pushing the zoo into huge debts, which resulted in amplified economic frames appearing in the reporting on panda diplomacy-related events. Hence news titles such as "Pandas will leave Adelaide Zoo in debt for a decade", "Zoo finds pandas hard to bear" which radiate strongly misleading meanings, were generated in reports on the panda's host zoo debt event. However, in contrast to the dramatised news titles, the content of the texts actually suggested that to say the pandas were the cause of the zoo's debt is actually muddling a few things together, and the zoo being caught in financial straits and hosting pandas are rather two separate events.

According to information gathered in the data, a picture of what really happened to Adelaide Zoon can be painted. Then Foreign Minister Alexander Downer brokered the loan deal for the zoo with the Chinese government and brought the pair of pandas to Adelaide Zoo at a cost of $10 million for a ten-year stay, which is the fairly standard approach. The Australian Federal Government paid the

rental fee at $1 million per year, and Downer at the time promised the zoo another $5 million for the construction of a new panda enclosure with the necessary equipment for imitating the climate of the panda's natural habitat in the chilly mountainous region of Southwest China, which are the mandatory requests of the Chinese side in the contract. In 2009, the state government came through with one-off capital of $18.9 million, which is the largest ever given to the zoo, in addition to the annual $3.126 million funds provided to the zoo to assist its operations. In the same year, Adelaide Zoo took on a major infrastructure upgrade which involved building a new entrance, fence, gift shops and a conference centre and spent $8 million on building the panda enclosure. The pandas arrived in November 2009. In December 2010, after housing the pandas for an entire year, Adelaide Zoo was reported in the news as having borrowed $6.7 million to build the new panda exhibit, which was a loan more than the zoo's business plan, and the time-frame to pay off the debt would be closer to ten years rather than the planned five. The deficit was largely due to the $5 million promised by Downer falling through as Labour won the 2007 federal election. Half a year later in June 2011, the Zoo SA (Zoological Society of South Australia), the owners of Adelaide Zoo, hit the news with a debt of $24.4 million. Zoo SA chief executive Chris West, said the zoo spent a total sum of $27 million on renovating and upgrading the zoo infrastructure, and ran into trouble securing private sponsorship as the amount raised fell well short of the projection largely due to the impact of the global financial crisis. The then Minister for Environment and Conservation Paul Caica, announced in parliament that the government had advanced $2 million of its 2011-2012 allocation to help maintain its operations, and was carrying out an inspection of the economic management and financial performance of the zoo, involving the zoo's board and Westpac Bank, in order to construct a framework which would help the zoo get back on its feet as well as develop an appropriate financial management plan to prevent similar financial crises from occurring again in the future. No further information on the result of the assessment could be extracted from the data.

On the other hand, the data suggest that the pandas have notable positive impact on boosting the zoo's, as well as the local region's economic gain in the first panda year. According to then Tourism Minister John Rau's speech in December 2010, the pandas were driving a healthy rise in number of visitors from outside South Australia coming and spending money in the state. Since the pandas arrived at zoo in 2009, they have been a major drawcard for the zoo, increasing visitor numbers by 70% from 349,000 a year to 595,000 for the first year, 30% of which were interstate or overseas visits which brought an estimated $192 million dollars to the state. The pandas have also helped the zoo to increase revenues in the form of a rise in sponsorships, memberships and events.

From the facts above it's clear that it's a rather forced correlation to say the pandas are the cause of the financial black hole of the zoo. The zoo suffered from financial hardship mainly due to the failure of the delivery of the $5 million promised by Downer when Labour won, and the $27 million cost of upgrading zoo facilities which had little or nothing to do with the pandas. As a side note, Adelaide Zoo had other economic advantages in housing their pandas compared to other international zoos. First, as mentioned before, the $1 million annual rental fee of Wang Wang and Funi was borne by the federal government instead of the zoo. Second, the cost of providing bamboo for the pandas, which is the primary maintenance cost of hosting the bears, was also kept at a minimum in the case of Adelaide Zoo as the zoo has its own bamboo plantation, whilst most other zoos have to spend hefty fees on bringing in the panda food due to unsuitable climate for growing bamboo.

These two facts together make Adelaide Zoo probably the least economically burdened panda host zoo worldwide. Yet in the event of the zoo's financial hardship, Australian media utilised the news value of the pandas to further sensationalise the scandal of the event to give the report a higher entertainment value, which as a result created a negative economic frame associated with the

panda for the readership, rendering its public image as an economic black hole. This phenomenon reveals the nature of the journalistic reportage that framing is essentially a tool that works for the ultimate goal of the publications. While framing can be used to facilitate communications with readers, it also confines the readership to the mediated "truth".

6.2.5 Analysis of the Prominent Negative Tone

The comparatively high number of negative articles in the Australian case, 20% contrasting to 7.2% and 10.9% in the other two countries, also suggests that a negative tone and viewpoint is often used in the reporting in order to leverage the panda's public popularity to make the news events into scandals, hence magnify the entertainment value of the articles, even where there's only a tangential connection, such as Adelaide Zoo's hosting of the pandas and the zoo being caught up in debt.

AA01, a medium length hard news article concerning the zoo's financial hardship, was coded as negative tone with an economic dominant frame. The title of the article states "Pandas will leave Adelaide Zoo in debt for a decade" which explicitly indicates a causality between the pandas and the zoo's financial hardship, and instantly creates a derogatory frame regarding the pandas. The subtle use of the verb "leave" works as a pun and implies that despite the zoo's financial efforts in housing the pandas, the bears will always remain properties of the Chinese government and eventually leave the zoo, hence portraying the panda loan as wholly undesirable to its readership. The author went on to describe the situation as "[the zoo] borrowed $6.7 million to turn the dream into reality". By drawing a metaphor between hosting pandas and a dream, the author went further to emphasise the unrealistic nature of the investment in the panda loan. The body of this piece first focused on elaborating the links between the pandas and the zoo, then dived into details on the financial background of the

event, stating that there was a promised loan that was never delivered which resulted in the zoo's mounting debt. The anticlimactic narrative steers the readers' attention away from the actual cause of the zoo's debt and places more emphasis on the connection between the pandas and the zoo, hence creating a strong relationship between the debt and the pandas.

AA02 is another hard news article pertaining to the zoo's debt. Coded also as a negative tone article with an economic dominant frame, its title "Zoo finds pandas hard to bear" makes an allegation from the zoo's perspective to deny the practicality of the pandas by attaching a remorseful frame. The witty pun "bear" in the title is unusual, as the body of this article was written in a typical hard news fashion, and points to the intention of the author to increase the entertainment value of the article. In the first sentence of the body, the article emphasised that the pandas were "lent by China", which accentuated the commercial and foreign nature of the pandas, hence creating a frame of untrustworthiness. The author finished the sentence by adding "[the pandas] failed to provide a financial bonanza for the zoo" which is a false economic performance of the pandas, as in fact the zoo's revenue boomed in the first panda year, and renders the pandas the cause of the event.

AA06, as another negative tone article, concerns the complaint of the Chinese community that the name of the male panda, Wang Wang, is pronounced incorrectly by news presenters in their reporting. The title of the piece "Is Wang Wang w(r)ong w(r)ong?", a pun which indicates the intention of the author to create an perception among the readers that what is wrong might not be just the pronunciation of the name but also the bear himself. Throughout the article, the author described the attention given to the two pandas as "[having] reached absurd heights", called the bears "over-exposed and under sexed" and ended the article with a comment on the furore that "it all ends up as a case of pandering to the masses". These expressions together apply a dismissive frame to the nature

of the events, which, when consistently used through the article, results in the downplaying of the importance of the pandas.

6.2.6 Summary

The negative tone highlighted in the reporting, the focus on economic events and the low level of perceived importance of political events all together indicate that the Australian media held a rather sceptical view of the loaned pandas. They didn't see the pandas as friendship ambassadors as their hyperbolised image created by their mother country, but as an untrustworthy and overpriced Chinese tool that creates a doubtful boost to the local economy. Journalists obviously are very aware of the news value of and public affection towards the pandas, but somehow their interest does not lie in reporting their cuteness or their over-exposed conservation value, which are the two qualities of the bears that render them an ideal soft power resource. When more concerning economic events that bear connection with the pandas took place, the Australian media promptly emphasised the link between the pandas and the news event in order to further dramatise the event and attract more attention, which resulted in applying a questioning frame to the pandas and hence negates the public image of the pandas, consequently hampering the level of success of panda diplomacy in Australia.

6.3 The Case of Scotland

6.3.1 The Arrival of the Pandas

On December 4, 2011, a specially painted Boeing 777 aircraft dubbed FedEx Panda Express touched down just after one o'clock in the afternoon with Edinburgh Zoo's new star residents, female panda Tian Tian and her male counterpart Yang Guang. After being seen off by then British Consul-General Simon Lever in Chengdu, China, the pandas arrived in Edinburgh with messages and artwork made by more than one thousand Chinese children as good luck wishes for their long stay in Scotland. On the tarmac, Tian Tian and Yang Guang were welcomed by a high profile reception drawn from Scottish political circles. Then Secretary of State for Scotland Michael Moore, then Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, and then Edinburgh's Lord Provost George Grubb all made an appearance at the airport to pay respects to the hard-won Chinese national treasure. The arrival of the pandas coincided with the third visit of then Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond to China to promote cultural and trade links. Salmond said he'd thank the then Chinese Vic Premier Li Keqiang, the Chinese politician that granted the approval of the panda loan, in a meeting that was to take place in Beijing. Members of the Edinburgh public gathered at the zoo to welcome the pandas and get a first peek of them. Zoo bosses said the bears would go on display to visitors after a two-week settling-in period in their £250,000 enclosure.

With all the noteworthy names above, reporting on the arrival event as extracted from the data certainly portrayed the eminently honored guest status of the pandas. The animal loan, essentially an extension of the international conservation project to help protect the panda's natural habitat in China, gained an extravagant amount of attention from different spheres of the Scottish

government, which shows the high level of political value and significance seen in the pandas by the Scottish politicians. The Scottish pandas were bestowed a great amount of human affection and perceived as a significant landmark in the cementing relationship between China and Scotland from the very beginning of their long stay in Edinburgh, which is reflected in the bounteous media attention lavished on them.

6.3.2 Reading of the Coding Result

Liang (2011) points out in his analysis of panda diplomacy that the celebrity characteristic of the panda allows it to easily take advantage of the guiding principle of mass communication, the ideal tool to generate an enhanced impact of public diplomacy activities through media coverage. Aided by the political symbolic value attributed to the panda in the Scottish case, the pandas' attractiveness to the media is further strengthened and Liang's theory is fully tested and verified. As the coding result shows, there are 97 articles reporting panda related events gathered in the set time frame. The British media generated more news content than Australia and Canada combined together. This statistic alone speaks volumes for the broad and extensive news value of the panda as perceived by the British press and the keen interest the pandas evoked among the British journalists, who relentlessly followed up on every trivial event that involved pandas. Looked together with the length coding result, more than half of the British articles gathered are long length articles, suggesting the British reportage was not just focused on a broad range of news events, but also informative and in-depth. Lastly, with a high percentage of neutral tone detected in the news content, the coding results present an ideal media environment for panda diplomacy, with relatively illuminating, balanced information and viewpoints in reporting on panda related events.

6.3.3 The Shared Furor of the Media and the Public

In 1936, when the first panda Su Lin was brought to America, the spectacular event made front-page news on the *Chicago Tribune* for nine consecutive days, a record in the history of the news press - no one has since managed to provoke media rapture on the same scale (Croke, Raver, & Books on Tape, Inc, 2008). In the contemporary age, with information spread and updated at rapid speed due to the digitalisation of the news industry, it is hard for any event to be the subject of such lengthy and intense focus in the news anymore. Such hyperbolism of a single news event may never happen again. Yet here as the coding result and data present, the amount of enthusiasm for the panda as demonstrated by the British media as well as the British public is not far removed from that. Their passion for the black and white bear was not limited to the pair they received at Edinburgh Zoo; events concerning pandas that were loaned to other countries or new cubs being born at the Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding Base also were captured in the British reports. In terms of event scales, or the perception of newsworthiness, the British media doesn't have a particular inclination. Any panda-related affair seems to interest journalists and the British public. This phenomenon, noted in the Scottish case, vividly reflects the news value upgrading theory brought up by Hartley (1982, p. 76), that when one news subject with an enormous amount of perceived news value hits the news, it attaches news value to related events which in themselves are not normally deemed to meet the threshold of newsworthiness. Hence, lesser events are included and dramatised into news in order to extend the newsworthiness of the original news subject and retain the public focus and interest in the event. In Hartley's words, "to keep the pot boiling". As presented here in the data for the Scottish case, while hard facts, such as the details of the panda loan or the panda's performance in boosting the host zoo's revenue, were widely reported, British media outlets also created news stories on rather trivial details of the panda's daily life and peculiar anecdotes. Every birth, death, sickness, possibility of pregnancy, arrival anniversary, even just Yang Guang scrolling in the snow and Tian Tian climbing up trees, were all routinely announced by the British

media.

The media efforts devoted to reporting every single detail of each panda event has undeniably contributed to the excitement for the bears among the British public, which is clearly reflected in the narratives presented in the data. Upon the arrival of the pandas in Edinburgh, the Scottish Registrar of Tartans approved a specially designed tartan to commemorate the coming together of Scottish and Chinese culture and heritage, as well as to show thanks to China for the gift bestowed upon Scotland. A specially designed tartan is the ultimate traditional Scottish honour. Giving it to the pandas reveals the official approval of the pandas as Chinese national treasure by Scottish officials. In SA73, the news story concerned a girl named Panda from the central Scottish city of Perth, who was allowed some alone time with Yang Guang and Tian Tian at Edinburgh Zoo. Panda's parents are panda lovers, and they named their daughter after the black and white bear before Scotland even landed their pair. The fact that some citizens would go to the length of naming their offspring after the panda shows the extraordinary ardor people have developed over time. A public opinion poll conducted by the BBC suggested the same. In 2011, BBC included Tian Tian as one of its Faces of the Year – The Women, as one of the "women" that generated extensive media impact that year. This selection evoked some criticism from the British elite, and was deemed ridiculous on the grounds that Tian Tian is not technically a woman, and that her selection belittled the achievements of the other women on the list. In response to this, the BBC carried out an opinion poll on its website on whether it was inappropriate to select Tian Tian as one of the women of the year. More than half of the poll participants seconded the broadcaster's decision by ticking "No" as their answer.

These are just three of the large body of stories that reflect the affection of the British public for pandas, which stands out among the three cases in this study. Take into account that not all of the British public have personally been to the

zoo, and that Tian Tian and Yang Guang were the first pair of pandas to arrive in the UK in 17 years, it can be concluded that it was the media efforts that were influential in shaping the public image of the pandas. Because the general public has restricted access to personal experiences of the panda, the narratives that built up their mental associations of, as well as affection towards, the semiotic meaning of the pandas, rely entirely on information drawn from the outside world, primarily the media environment that shrouds them.

6.3.4 The Facilitating Application of Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism is one notable rhetorical method embedded in the media coverage on pandas. While anthropomorphism is a literary method used to attribute human characteristics to objects so they can be comprehended easier in a human context, it severely devalues the seriousness and actuality of the news subjects, consequentially softens the news article. There has long been an industrial trend of media outlets softening their products to enhance entertainment value to meet marketplace challenges. With the ascent of the tabloid papers in the 1920s, the popularisation of feature journalism in the 1970s, and the upheaval of digitalisation in news production in contemporary times, the use of anthropomorphism has become more and more common and has even started to make an appearance in hard news articles. There has been broad criticism of the blurred line between hardness and softness in news production. In his paper investigating the seriousness of animal news featured in *The Times*, Enrlich (2016) argues that the emphasised cuteness of anthropomorphised cats featured in *The Times* "presents everything journalism is not and should not be". Barton (2014) also holds a gloomy attitude towards the softening trend and notes that "if real news dies, there's no way people will be able to intelligently discuss issues and ideas with their fellow citizens". However, in the case of the panda event reports, this study argues that the use of anthropomorphism, and the resulting softening of the news, works for, rather

than against, the conservation news value of the articles.

One of the general news value criteria that Galtung and Ruge put forth is the meaningfulness of the news item, which means the easier it is for an event to be perceived rationally and deemed meaningful by the news selector, the better chance it has of being included in news production. Claims to have been developed based on "common-sense perception psychology", all elements of newsworthiness proposed by Galtung and Ruge are at play in every link of the chain of news communication (Figure 1.). Based on this principle, the meaningfulness criterion is applicable to the relationship between the news item and the reader's personal selection criterion. That is to say, the easier it is for the news article to make sense to the reader, the more likely the reader is to select it when browsing the news, and further more, become interested enough to read to the end once selected. In most conservation related news, the narratives concern subjects such as animals, plants or other non-human entities, whose being and behaviors are hard to relate to and be perceived from a human perspective by the readership. The difficulties of extracting meaning from this kind of articles lead to a low resonance among readers. As a result, the practical news value is deceased, even when in fact the event is of high scientific value. Constructing anthropomorphic meanings through rhetorical methods around non-human news subjects helps journalists to engage the readership in a human context and attribute value to their characteristics, hence makes it easier for them to create conservation meanings that do speak to people through their cultural expectations and emotional connections.

As the data presents, anthropomorphism and personification were very often utilised in the portrayal of the panda in the writings of the British journalists. While predictably the tabloids employed this rhetorical method to a greater extent, it is also not rare in hard news articles released by broadsheet outlets. SA01 is a news article covering the panda arrival event published by BBC. It was

coded as a long neutral news item and covered all four frames with conservation being the major frame. The article was written in a typical inverted-pyramid hard news fashion. A factual tone approach was applied throughout the whole piece with the lead of the body stating the subject, time, location and event. The body part elaborated on the prominence of the event by listing the political figures presented at the event, and quoted the then Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg's comment on the event. At the end, for the purpose of providing more balanced viewpoints of event, it also included an opposing opinion on the panda loan from animal welfare campaigners who criticised the event being primarily a commercial deal. Yet in such clear-cut hard news report, the author still managed to employ an anthropomorphic approach in describing the pandas, which as an effect gave the tedious conservation/political frame applied to the event a light-hearted touch. In the first part of the body, the pandas were introduced with human features through a method of personalisation. "Yang Guang is very fond of a roll around in the snow, the conditions should be to his liking ［…］ the female is more coy and shy, whereas the male is more outgoing ［…］neither is aggressive, they are both easy going［…］". By specifying the male bear's leisure preference, and directly attaching human temperament characteristics to them, the author attributed personhood to the two bears, through which a more approachable emotional attachment was made possible for the readers. Compared to an inanimate, factual tone, such as introducing the pandas as carnivorous mammals that became herbivorous over time, the personification approach and the anthropomorphised human traits made it easier for the readers to relate to the pandas, hence promotes a relationship between the readers and the rigid conservation aspects of the pandas.

SA71 is one of a series of follow up reports on the lenghty efforts of the zoo devoted to panda reproducing (so far no luck). In contrast to the pure conservation value of the nature of the event, which predominantly relates to scientists collaborating internationally on boosting the number of the

endangered bears, the article took an anthropomorphised angle and framed the entire event as a humanised romance ended in vain. The title of the article, "Nice Try Sunshine… see you in 12 months: Edinburgh Zoo pandas fail to mate". "Nice try" indicated the failure of the event and instantly humanised the male panda as crestfallen husband figure, which called forth sympathetic emotions for it. Instead of addressing the male panda by its formal name, the author chose to use the English adoption, Sunshine, which reveals the softness of this piece and stirs up a stronger relationship between the panda and the English speaking readers than its original foreign name, Yang Guang. In the body of the news, the author used a series of human romantic terms as metaphors for the courtship of the bears to dramatise the narrative. The preparation period of the breeding process was described as "(the pandas spent) months of making black eyes at each other". The announcement that the female panda Tian Tian had ovulated was phrased as "they were ready for love". At the end of the article, the author drew a metaphor to the repeated failure of the zoo's efforts at reproducing them as "a series of encounters [that] failed to unite the couple in wedded bliss." The customary romantic terms applied to the panda mating process throughout the entire article, created a strong human culture frame that conveys the conservation value of the event into a dramatised love affair that readers can easily perceive through their social ideologies. Hence it turned the rather dull conservation news article into a comic story, which is much more gripping to the readership.

SA28 is remarkably successful in using literary personification methods to increase the entertainment value of a conservation article, an excellent example of the application of anthropomorphism as a powerful tool for enhancing the conservation value in news production. Rather than listing the dreary facts and statistics about giant pandas as a species, the author completely humanised the newly arrived pandas by making up distinctive personalities and voices for them. With the made-up characters, the author constructed a made-up interview with them in the narrative. Through this literary modification, the conservation facts

related to the pandas are turned into more digestible news content.

The article titled "We meet the Edinburgh zoo pandas Tian Tian and Yang Guang", which is slightly cryptic, as it does not have much substantial meaning. Yet the use of the verb "meet" suggests the humanised rhetorical treatment. The subheading "The chance to get the innermost thoughts of Scotland's hottest new arrivals to Edinburgh Zoo" reveals the idea of the article: that it is going to present the panda's conservation information through the pandas' own articulation of their "innermost thoughts". The title and subheading replaced the conservation frame of the article with a celebrity scandal frame, which gives it an airy touch and a typical tabloid gossip style that whips up the readers' craving for entertainment. In the main body, the author started off by introducing the two pandas by the English translation of their names, Sunshine and Sweetie, which added more relatability to the bears in an English context. In the interview, the author, as the interviewer, asked twelve questions with regards to different aspects of the pandas, such as the panda's natural habitat, their diet, their eating habits, and their physical feature. The pandas' answers to these questions were drafted in a humorous fashion, yet informative of what the author intended to express. The article's conservation aspects were disguised under talk-show expressions, which made the made-up interview more natural. For example, in the first question, the interview asked, "having arrived days before Hurricane Bawbag hit Scotland, how are you coping with the weather?" which was a very smooth question led to an answer that contains information of the climate of the natural habitat of the pandas. In its response, Yang Guang first described the high latitude, misty and rainy mountains from where they came, stated that these weather conditions are quite similar to Scotland's, and from there joked, "So Hurricane Bawbag, huh? Bring it on!"

The characters of the pandas were moulded with the typical British dry humour. Witty lines and sassy comments were incorporated with conservation

information in their answers, which points to the author's efforts to magnify the entertainment value of the article for the local audience. In one of the questions about the pandas' eating habits, Yang Guang said, "A panda eats while sitting up and it resembles how you humans sit on the floor, particularly the fat ones." To the question in regards to the panda's reproductive challenges, the author also included a sassy tone in the answer for Yang Guang, "We are not celibate, I just have to hope the missus doesn't have a headache those two days of the year we are scheduled to mate, or I'm screwed. Not literally." The typically slightly offensive yet very humorous twists at the end of all the answers create a comic flow, which is approachable for the audience, significantly increasing reader engagement in the otherwise rather boring and plain animal facts. Through the twelve questions and answers, almost every conservation fact regarding the Edinburgh Zoo's new star animals was conveyed smoothly to the audience in a much more interesting and enjoyable way, rather than just listing the facts as on the information board outside the panda enclosure.

6.3.5 The Focused Conservation Aspect

The British media seemed most inclined to report on the conservation of the pandas, with the conservation frame making an appearance in 88.7% of all articles, and 68% having it as the major frame. This can be seen as a very beneficial focus of the media coverage for China's panda diplomacy. Due to the factuality and objectivity required of their narratives, conservation articles are primarily coded as neutral in terms of tones. In the Scottish case, the high 68% appearance rate of the conservation frame as the major frame resulted in a correspondingly high overall neutral tone of 67%. While the high conservation frame appearance rate did not help increase the positive tone rate in the data, however, out of the four preset frames, it is the only one that cannot lead to a negative tone in reporting when applied as the dominant frame. A news outlet or a journalistic practitioner often has a personal opinion over political, economic

or human-interest issues, which is consciously or subconsciously expressed in the expressions in the news. When it comes to conservation events, the tone often remains neutral, because conservation events in their nature are factual and rigid, with less space for biased emotions or varied viewpoints (yet there are voices in the data that hold that pandas should be left alone and go extinct, but they are rare and negligible). Compared to articles with other frames that can easily contain opinionated journalistic views, the qualities of conservation events make them much safer subjects for the goal of panda diplomacy as they keep readers away from opinions. Also the media focus on conservation events keeps the attention of the public on the positive aspects of pandas as an endangered species of remarkably high conservation value, and ultimately benefits the shaping of China's national image among the readers as the panda's country of origin. The exclusive focus on pandas' animalhood eliminates discussions that relate pandas to the negative China-related issues that are normally presented in the international media, such as its human rights situation, domestic environment and the suspicion about the rise of Chinese power.

6.3.6 The Promoting Efforts of the Government

The common presence of conservation in the Scottish case resulted in the political frame seeming underreported. If viewed from the perspective of the panda diplomacy, it is a positive sign that the pandas are reported with less political framing as it means the public's attention is more likely to stay focused on the panda's rarity and cuteness. Yet, in the Scottish case, as the arrival event suggests, the pandas are deemed to be of high diplomatic value even by the Scottish government. The glorification of the pandas by the Scottish officials can be found in many reports, with officials often referring the pandas as a *gift*. In SA01, when interviewed about the arrival of the pandas, then First Minister Alex Salmond said, "the great *gift* of these giant pandas symbolises the great and growing relationship between Scotland and China [...]". In SA64, Edinburgh Zoo

chief executive, Hugh Roberts, commented on the specially designed tartan for the pandas as, "(the tartan) making it the perfect way to commemorate the *gift* of two giant pandas that China bestowed upon Scotland". While the Scotland officials saw the pandas as a gift symbolising the cementing ties between China and Scotland, the UK government also took it as a diplomatic gesture from China and referred the pandas as a gift. In SA02, a spokesman of the FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) commented on the arrival of the pandas, "We see this as a very serious *gift* and a good indication of a strengthening of our relationship (the UK) with China". SA06 is an article concerning the custody of the pandas becoming an issue in the Scottish independence debate and that Scotland might loose the bears if it broke from the union. In the news, unionists claimed that custody of the giant pandas could be in question because the pair was a *gift* from China to the UK government.

It is interesting that the pandas were referred as "a *gift*" by government officials as it is no secret that Chinese pandas are in fact loaned to Edinburgh Zoo for rather hefty fees. The term "gift" was used so emphatically and often in advertisements published by the Scottish government on Edinburgh Zoo's new addition, as SA38 reported, the adverts were banned by the Advertising Standards Authority on the grounds that the panda loan was essentially a commercial arrangement, and a sum of six million pounds was paid by the zoo to bring the bears in, the terms "gift" and "gifting" were simply misleading. Although it's understandable in that the panda loan took place as a symbolic gesture of strengthening relationship between China and Scotland, and approving the panda loan is the Chinese government's special form of acknowledging Scotland as a trustworthy long-term partner, it definitely remains erroneous to omit the commercial aspect and frame it as a purely diplomatic deal. This incident points to the Scottish government's efforts to "greenwash" the panda loan, as well as in pandering to the Chinese government.

China is the world's second largest economy and also the world's largest importer of seafood. According to Buckingham's search, in relation to the panda loan, trade deals were signed between China and Scotland for salmon and renewable energy technology imports. In 2009, the year before the signing of the panda loan, just five tonnes of Scottish salmon was exported to China. Yet after receiving the pandas - an official approval as trade partners - the figure had risen to 9,709 tonnes in 2013, a gargantuan increase of 194,080%. Then First Minister commented on the colossal export increase that even if one per cent of the people in China decided to eat Scottish salmon, Scotland would have to double production. On a different note, the panda loan happened against the backdrop of the run up to the 2014 Scottish independence referendum. At the time the Scottish government was seeking to establish independent trading relationships with countries that used to deem Scotland a part of the UK. Widening business links with China and acquiring the Chinese government's approval as a long-term strategic trading partner would help prop up the country's economy if it broke from the UK. Based on the above, the lengths Scotland's government went to deepen cultural links with China, and to shape a positive image of China within its domestic environment is understandable. Interestingly, in this sense, the pandas were also utilised as tools by the Scottish government to implement its domestic propaganda, to build a friendly cultural atmosphere towards China among the Scottish public in order to promote relationships between the two countries. This could be seen as an extension of panda diplomacy.

6.3.7 Summary

All in all, the Scotland case shows the highest level of success for the panda diplomacy across the three countries studied. As the coding results show, the Scottish media produced the largest number of total news items, the largest percentage of long articles and the lowest negative tone in reporting. All the statistics show a strong journalistic interest in the pandas, as well as a positive

focus on the conservation value of the animals that is ideal for shaping a less politically or economically biased image of the pandas' country of origin. In contrast to the Australian media's focus on the economic impact of the pandas, the British media were much more laid back on similar news topics, which is reflected in the less frequent appearance of panda related news reports. This could be partially because the pandas were directed loaned by the zoo and the Scottish government was not involved in the payment. Also, the panda loan was signed off together with a series of high value trading contracts, rendering the pandas an explicit symbolic gesture of the deepening trading partnership between the two countries, and the British media were therefore much less critical of the pandas from an economic perspective. As a result, the media presented a more concentrated focus on the conservation of the pandas, which was facilitating for panda diplomacy. Lastly, the willingness and efforts of the Scottish government to promote positive cultural links between its public and China also played a big role. Together with the favourable media environment, a positive public image of the panda was established and led to a high level of success for panda diplomacy in Scotland.

6.4 The Case of Canada

6.4.1 The Arrival of the Pandas

On March 25, 2013, the Panda Express, a FedEx Canada MD11 aircraft specially outfitted with an image of a panda, landed at a Toronto airport, marking the realisation of a deal personally brokered by then Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on his official visit to China over a year before. After the lengthy flight, the female panda, five-year-old Er Shun, and her prospective mating partner, four-year-old Da Mao, touched down in Canada for a five year stay at the Toronto Zoo before being relocated to the Calgary Zoo for another stay of the same length. The pandas loaned to Canada had been the subject of the mass media long before they stepped foot on Canadian soil. Since Harper announced the success of securing the deal a year prior to their arrival, media enthusiasm was aroused and grew in expectation of the pandas. At the time, the announcement of the panda loan met with a very positive media response; the *Toronto Sun* headlined their article on the event as "Unbearable panda wait is over" (Kent, 2012). Upon their arrival in Toronto, the pandas were accorded a grand welcome ceremony befitting their world famous and iconic reputation and showcased the significant symbolic value of the widening Sino-Canada relationship that was seen in them by the Canadian government. Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his wife, the Chinese ambassador to Canada Zhang Junsai, and Mayor of Toronto Rob Ford were among the dignitaries on hand to greet the pandas. As some observers commented, the animals arrived in Canada in the sort of fashion not often experienced even by two-legged diplomats. Harper personally received the pandas and praised them with high levels of diplomatic bearing as "symbols of peace and friendship with all Canadians."

"What's in it for the pandas? Global recognition and education about

conservation issues. We want to showcase giant pandas and get people connected to Er Shun and Da Mao [...] it's all about the conservation message." said Maria Franke, Toronto Zoo's curator of mammals. Although the pandas were loaned from China to overseas zoos in the name of scientific research in the form of international conservation collaboration, it was still rather a one-sided line of thinking for the zoo boss to describe panda loans as "all about the conservation message", particularly in the case of the pair sent to Canada. As mentioned before, the then Prime Minister Harper was personally involved in the negotiation of the panda deal on his visit to China, and announced the signing of the loan contact. The panda loan was established with strong diplomatic overtones. Harper's personal engagement in the deal and active promotion of it rendered the deal a high-profile political act in the media and public perception. So, in contrast to the conservation message, the Canadian panda deal was seen rather as a reflection of the developments in the Sino-Canada relationship, and tied closely to its political dimension in the media discussion.

6.4.2 Reading of the Coding Result

As the coding result demonstrates, Canada's media coverage of panda related events contained clear political concerns, with a 40.6% political frame appearance rate for all the articles, with 25% of the articles having politics as the major frame. Both percentages are far higher than the other cases with 15.5% and 9.2% for Scotland, and 20% and none for Australia. The Canadian pandas were treated as having high political news value and put under close media scrutiny as a diplomatic gesture.

6.4.3 The Non-strategic China Policy of the Harper Government

News outlets routinely made reference to Harper's visit to China and the achievements he made on the trip in reports covering panda related events.

Political commentaries promptly and explicitly analysed the significance and symbolic meaning of the arrival of the pandas in regards to how they played into Canada's relationship with China. In the Canadian media discourse presented in the data, pandas were notably used as a prism to examine the Sino-Canada relationship, and, more specifically, the performance of the Harper government. In their articles, Canadian commentators and scholars primarily held a rather suspicious attitude towards the pandas as a symbol of enhanced bilateral relationship between Canada and China, as well towards the efforts and desire of the Harper government to promote Sino-Canada friendship, taking in account its previous attitude of being utterly opposed to dealing with the Asian country. As information collected from the data suggest, the Harper government, from when it first came into power, had not been consistent or strategic in their stance towards China, and the arrival of the pandas somehow triggered a review of the relationship and the urging in media commentaries for a better-defined China engagement strategy from the federal government.

Back in the 2006 when the Conservatives first came to power, relations between Canada and China were chilly. Harper implemented a more activist foreign policy emphasising ties with democracies, and the country's relationship with China cooled. The Harper government kept a high profile on its firm stance of advocating human rights and expressing criticism of non-democratic countries. In November 2006, at the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation conference) in Vietnam, the then Chinese leader Jintao Hu was originally scheduled to hold a private meeting with Harper, however after some initial official talks between the two countries, Hu backed out of the plan. Harper commented on the incident and stated his belief in "important Canadian values" over "almighty dollars" and that his government wouldn't tone down criticism of China's human rights record to improve business links with Beijing. From there, Ottawa made a few moves that further offended China. For example, awarding an honorary Canadian citizenship to the Dalai Lama, accusing Beijing of commercial espionage, delaying

a planned meeting between the foreign ministers and increasing Canadian involvement with Taiwan. In 2008, Harper personally boycotted the opening ceremonies of the Beijing Olympics by notably not attending.

While some scholars feared Harper's strong attitude on human rights issues could jeopardise business interests, the global recession that began at the end of 2008 had an effect on Canada, while China's economic status remained robust. Harper began to see China as a dynamic country with its own complexity, full of investment and trading opportunities for Canada, which led to the Harper Government reducing its criticism of China in order to amend relations. A number of high level official visits took place after the official change of attitude towards China, and Harper personally visited China twice, in 2009 and 2012. On his first trip in December 2009, then Chinese Premier Jiabao Wen commented that too long a time had elapsed without a visit to China by a Canadian Prime Minister. After meeting, Wen and Hu agreed to build stronger relations, particularly in the economic sphere. During his second official trip to China in February 2012, Harper's amending efforts became fruitful with the signing of a series of contracts worth more than US$ 3.1billion, including agreements to ship additional oil sands, uranium and other products to China, and an agreement for a pair of China's giant pandas to go to Canada for a ten-year loan.

In the autumn of the same year, after the two trips to China to promote business links, the Chinese state-owned company CNOOC (China National Offshore Oil Corporation) was given a green light to expand its holdings in Canada's oil industry with a CA$15.1 billion buyout, the largest acquisition of Canadian oil and gas wealth by a Chinese company. However, the green-lighting of the deal sparked widespread opposition among Canadians and Harper responded to this by announcing a ban on further foreign state-owned firm takeovers in Canada's oil sands industry. Approving the CNOOC deal while announcing that no state-owned company would be allowed to acquire a stake in the oil sands

industry, suggested that Harper adopted the populist opinion of viewing Chinese state-owned investments as a threat to the Canadian national security, which again stimulated intense criticism of Harper's political instincts and his government's unsystematic strategies in dealing with China.

So while Canadian politicians were speaking highly of the pandas as a sign of the improvement achieved in the relationship between the two countries, Canadian news commentators did not buy the hype or see the arrival of the pandas as in any way indicating that the Harper government had developed a balanced, well-coordinated diplomatic strategy vision regarding China.

6.4.4 Journalistic Scepticism

While the arrival of Er Shun and Da Mao wowed the media and public by being so charming, the political interest garnered in them created an impetus in the Canadian media to review the performance of the Harper government on its official diplomatic relations with China, which led to a widespread scepticism of it. In contrast to the pandas being recognised as a symbol of strengthening mutual ties by both the government and the media in the Scottish case, the Canadian case presents a different situation, in that while the media perceived a high level of political news value in the pandas, they remained unconvinced of the symbolic value of the pandas as token of growing collaboration, as well as to whether panda diplomacy was going to work in Canada's favour. The scepticism was vividly conveyed through journalistic measures in panda related coverage.

CA01 "How do pandas play into Canada's relationship with China?" is an event commentary concerning the panda loan deal, which showed the typical scepticism the journalists held towards the pandas. Released on the day the pandas arrived, the article covered a wide range of information about the event in order to paint a more complete picture of the deal for its readership, from the

pandas' political meaning, economic impact on the operating cost of the zoo and the conservation value, to the warm media and public interest they received upon arrival. Four frames were all included with an overt dominant political frame. While the article offered rather balanced information, certain viewpoints and tones employed in it expressed its mistrust. The question proposed in the heading directly emphasised the arrival event as a purely political affair and indicated the upcoming dissection of the political phenomenon. In the body part, before presenting details of the arrival event, the author first cited comments on the panda event by two experts in the Chinese cultural field, Yuen Pau Woo, president of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, and Gordon Houlden, director of the China Institute at the University Alberta. In his words, Woo pointed out the undefined role the pandas play in the Sino-Canada relationship, stating that "(they) will be a doorway or a window for Canadians to learn more about other aspects of China which are perhaps not quite as cuddly", yet he acknowledged the important value and potential of the pandas in areas other than business or politics, by saying he "hope[s] they jumpstart a crucial educational process". Houlden provided a less optimistic view of the Sino-Canada relationship, and commented that regardless the arrival of the pandas, "there's always going to be frictions, such as human rights concerns […] if only a drumroll of negativity between Canada and China exists, that will create its own problems." While the two viewpoints applied in the article saw the role of the pandas differently, neither of them gave recognition to the symbolic value of pandas as envoys of friendship that the government was advocating. By citing these two doubtful, unconvinced expert sources, the author expressed their own scepticism in the pandas through louder voices.

The subtle use of a series of terms in the later part of the body covering the arrival event further revealed the author's subjective scepticism of the government's view of the arrival of the pandas. The author first described the event with the phrase that "Harper was among the dignitaries on hand to greet

the newest Chinese diplomats in Canada." Definitively referring to the pandas as "Chinese diplomats" suggests the strong indication of the author to frame the event as a political affair worthy of critique and advised the readers to be cautious of the news subject. The author carried on to paraphrase Harper's speech on the pandas, during which two verbs were subtly employed in the text to further enhance the sceptical frame. "Five-year-old Er Shun, a female panda, and her four-year-old male companion Da Mao [...] were touted by Prime Minister Stephen Harper as a symbol of Canada's deepening relationship with China", "(Harper) described the pandas as 'symbols of peace and friendship with all Canadians'." The use of the two verbs "touted" and "described" instantly framed the symbolic meaning of the pandas as Harper's personal view and emphasised that the semiotic nature of the pandas is largely open to interpretation, placing the readers at a distance from Harper's viewpoint. As a result, the article promoted a subtle scepticism towards the event among the readers.

CA05 is another article also covering the arrival event that expresses the author's critical and depreciating tone to an extreme extent. It was written in a hard news fashion, mostly stating the facts of the event rather than applying a large amount of the author's personal explanatory notes or quoted commentary on the event. However, informal descriptive words with strongly suggestive meanings were woven throughout the whole text, which together create an entertaining soft news flow that explicitly demonstrates the author's intention to downplay the event through the article. In the first paragraph, the author described the event as "The high-school brass band struck up *O Canada*, officials scurried about distributing press kits, and the dignitaries on the tarmac shivered on their hard-backed chairs as the arrival of the two very important pandas approached [...] (the pandas) were greeted at the sprawling FedEx terminal by a thicket of TV cameras and microphones and a sea of reporters." The series of exaggeratedly descriptive words of the band, officials and news reporters

together create a dramatically hectic image of the scene, which strongly contrasts with "dignitaries shivered on their hard-backed chairs". By portraying the event as a dramatised farce, the author rendered the event as an unworthy fuss and expressed his mocking and dismissive intention.

The author carried on to dramatise the politician's reaction to the arrival of the pandas. "(Harper) lauded the bears as 'national treasures' of China, [...] Mr. Zhang was no less ebullient, voicing the hope that the hard-to-breed bears would reproduce here [...] both heaped praise on the happy event, hailed the arrival of the pandas as a symbol of goodwill and strong mutual ties." By exaggerating the reaction of Harper and Chinese ambassador, the author vividly expressed his criticism of the scale of the reception the panda was accorded as well as his doubt in the "lauded" symbolic value of them. The inflated enthusiasm in the description of the politicians on hand to receive the pandas reinforces the exasperated frame that the article is using to describe the event and further demonstrates the author's intention to downplay the event in the text. At the end of the article, the author went further and expressed his disbelief in the reproduction prospects of the pandas by wrapping up the article with "the two [who] did not know each other before their big Canadian adventure, will be gradually introduced, in hope they will breed." By denying both the political and conservation value of the pandas, the author clearly expressed his utter mistrust of the two Chinese bears, which represented a certain voice that holds a wary and suspicious attitude towards the arrival of the pandas in the Canada case.

6.4.5 Impetus of Buckingham's Research

Another notable event that contributed to the high rate of appearance of overall political frames in the Canadian case is the publication of Buckingham's research. The pandas arrived in Toronto in March 2013, and half a year later, in September, Buckingham published her research proposing a theory of economic expansion

of China featuring the new phase of panda diplomacy. While the explicit relevance between the panda loan and the Harper government's series of diplomatic moves with China had already largely steered media's attention to the political significance that the deal was expressing, the Buckingham's research further increased the awareness of the panda diplomacy among the Canadian media and stirred their journalistic instincts to scrutinise the deal purely on its political elements following the clue she provided. Among all the articles gathered online for the Canada case, there are all together nine commentaries that directly concerned panda diplomacy. Of those, five cited Buckingham's work as the inspiration of their articles, and examined the panda deal, as well as China's economic development priorities, following up the panda-uranium clue proposed in the research. Hence we get titles of commentaries in the Canadian case such as "Panda-monium: panda diplomacy continues for Canada", "Pandas for uranium: China uses pandas as natural resource bargaining chips" or "A long history of Animal Diplomacy (It's not just pandas!)" These articles introduced panda diplomacy as a phenomenon to their readership, directly analysed panda diplomacy in the Canadian context and as a result added, or enhanced, the idea of the political nature of the pandas to Canadians. As a result, they helped to form a more informed and balanced semiotic image between the four frames that are attached to the pandas among Canadians. Unquestionably, Buckingham's impactful work has pushed the high appearance of political frame in the coding result.

6.4.6 Cute Trumps Political

However, despite the heated investigation of the official diplomatic relationship between China and Canada triggered by the arrival of the pandas, the news content suggests that from a public diplomacy perspective, the pandas were definitely wining the hearts and minds of the Canadians. Just like the two opinions cited in CA01, the arrival of the pandas does not necessarily represent a

qualitatively changing development in the relationship between the two countries on a fundamental level as there is always going to be friction deriving from the bedrock principles of the two nations, such as the political system and human rights concerns, which will create its own problems. However, even detracting the symbolic meaning of the pandas for official diplomatic progress, the pandas function as a soft power resource that provides Canadians with another lens to view and learn about China from a cultural dimension, other than the normal news coverage concerned with rather negative aspects, which is exactly how the Chinese government wants to modify and enhance its national image, namely, the goal of panda diplomacy.

Notwithstanding the high rate of the appearance of the political frame, the coding result also shows an outstandingly high positive tone rate in the data with more than one third of the gathered news articles talking about the pandas in favourable terms. The pandas' capabilities for universal appeal once again proved to be the perfect soft power resource for its nation. A perfect example could be found in CA26, a political dominant frame article concerning a government memo revealing the progress of how Harper secured the panda and corresponding trade deals. In it, after an analysis of all the hard political facts, the author concluded the article with "I want to be snarkier about all this panda-monium, but look how cute that panda is!"

Just like the Scotland case, the Canadian journalists reacted to every event related to the pandas and promptly added to the panda-monium news production. From the detailed descriptions of the customised facilities and services on the plane they flew in on, to the long series of follow-up reports tracking the progress the zoo bosses have made in conquering the panda reproduction challenge, every action was captured to "keep the pot boiling". Even the pandas rolling around on the ground could call forth the affections of observers, which indeed shows the enormous entertainment news value in the

pandas. In the Canadian data, six articles out of 65 reported on the same event, that of the male panda rolling around in the snow in Toronto Zoo. That such a trivial action was capable of generating news production points to the strong newsworthiness of the pandas and reveals another successful episode of the panda diplomacy. While the frigid winter climate in Toronto kept members of the public from braving the cold to visit the pandas, consequently adding to the zoo's financial problems, the ice storms did not put the brakes on the panda's ability to create news events. After a video caught on security camera of Da Mao playing in the snow was uploaded onto the Internet by zoo stuff, it soon created a news frenzy. Within hours of the video's release, Da Mao's tobogganing moment began to make an appearance on television and went viral on social media. After three days the video has garnered more than half a million views on the video website YouTube. The video was also reposted heavily on Facebook and Twitter, generating discussions with comments expressing amazement and squealing at the cuteness of the panda. Soon, the entertainment value in the unique feature of the bears, with the help of snow in this instance, magnified the news value of a trivial event and made it into news production. So we see headlines such as CA48 "Toronto Zoo panda's adorable snowy tumble will melt your heart." Once again, the power of being cute proved the superb quality of the pandas as a soft power resource in taking advantage of the mass media.

6.4.7 Summary

In a way, the Canada case proves the legitimacy of the soft power concept proposed by Nye, and demonstrates the necessity in the practice of public diplomacy of an ambidextrous approach with balanced official and public diplomatic measures, which is the key to constructing proper foreign policies that best work in the nation's favour. While the dominant factors that are at play in the official relations between two countries are the perceived national interests as defined by each nation, the clever execution of soft power through

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public diplomacy measures can still achieve an impact at the grassroots level of society which is separately defined and not necessarily interfered with by the former. The pair of pandas that was loaned to Canada, on one hand generated debates on the rocky formal relations between the two countries, which led to the scepticism towards the claim to have improved the friendship between the two countries and the symbolic meaning attached to the pandas. On the other hand, from the perspective of the public affections, the pandas were still engaging the Canadian media and public in a positive way, winning the hearts and minds of people who may consequently associate the bear's cultural dimension with the image of China, and hence nonetheless achieving the goal of panda diplomacy.

Summary

As this chapter demonstrates, the big number of news production found in the three countries studied proves the high newsworthiness perceived in the panda by the journalism practitioners. Owing to its wide range of semiotic meanings, the panda possesses a rich variety of news values, and this quality renders it a remarkable soft power resource for mining international publicities.

While the pandas managed to evoke a media response in all three countries, the level of journalistic enthusiasm and amount of news content generated varied significantly. The Scottish media produced more articles than Canada and Australia combined, with the majority of the texts coded as long length articles, which suggests the pandas were treated with a high level of perceived importance by the Scottish media. Together with the comparatively high percentage of positive tones in the media reports, this points to a high level of success for the panda diplomacy in Scotland. On the other end of the spectrum, the Australian media showed the lowest level of enthusiasm for the pandas with the lowest total number of articles and the smallest percentage of long length

texts. The higher percentage of negative tones in the Australian case also suggests a more critical approach when reporting panda related events.

There are also salient differences in the angles the journalists took and the dominant frames used in the reporting in the three countries. Canadian journalists focused on the political dimension of the pandas, which was the result of the political backdrop against which the panda loan deal was secured. The pandas loaned to Canada were deemed a reflection of the efforts Harper government had made to enhance relations with China and routinely discussed in media content together with reviews of the Sino-Canada relationship as well as the performance of the Harper government. Yet the high political news value did not interfere with the panda's entertainment news value. With the highest positive tone among the three countries, Canadian media generated a relatively positive image of the pandas that facilitated the success of the panda diplomacy.

The pandas' host zoo in Australia hit the news due to its debt crisis after the arrival of the pandas, which gave rise to serious economic concerns relating to the panda loan and resulted in an economic frame being prominent in the Australian media's reporting on their pandas. Even though an analysis of the narrative tracked in the data suggests that the pandas had little to do with the financial hardship of the zoo, journalists promptly drew connections between the pandas and the zoo's debt in order to take advantage of the panda's entertainment news value to sensationalise the zoo's financial performance. As a result, a critical image of the pandas as providing a doubtful economic boost was portrayed in the Australian case and which hindered the success of the panda diplomacy.

Lastly, in the Scotland case, the Scottish media demonstrated a strong interest in the conservation dimension of the pandas, which was reflected in the high rate of appearance of the conservation frame in the coding result as well as the efforts in

reporting on the zoo's attempts at reproducing panda babies, a narrative charted from the data. The focus on the conservation values, particularly in regard to the prospect of panda babies, helped to shape a less politically or economically biased image of the pandas. Together with the efforts of the Scottish government to promote a trade relationship with China, and the specially designed tartan for the pandas etc., the panda enjoyed a positive media environment with concurrent events that facilitated its news values, consequently generating better results for the panda diplomacy.

The next chapter is the conclusion of this research. It will summarise the research results of this study, as well as the traits and features of panda diplomacy as a special public diplomacy practice of China. Following that, the limitations of this research, such as the flaws in the research rationale and the drawbacks of the research design will be discussed for the benefit of future research.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This chapter is the final part of this research and prevents a conclusion of the research result as well as a brief discussion of the limitation of this study.

The first section of this chapter summarises the research result into three points that make the panda diplomacy a superb diplomacy practice. The popularity of the pandas worldwide ensures there's never lack of audience of the panda diplomacy; the commercial nature of the panda loan deals makes recipient countries not only active participants of this diplomatic practice of China but also funders of it. Lastly, the wide range of news values the panda possesses provides them easy accesses to news production, hence more approachable to the target audience. Although, the salient aspect of the pandas in the reflection of the news is not always its cuteness and rarity, and is highly dependant on the concurrent events that interact with the panda events, the latter nevertheless enhances the newsworthiness of the panda and adds masses to the publicity.

The second section is a brief discussion of the limitation and drawbacks of the research. It starts by stating the flaw in the rationale of the research question and goes on to list the shortages of the research design in the hope to provide inspiration for future research. At the end, the contribution of the study to the field is discussed.

7.1 Conclusion of the Research Result

Although loaning giant pandas to foreigners is rather a small area of China's diplomatic approach, and less dissected in the academic discourse, the three cases studied in this research clearly demonstrate the political and diplomatic

dimensions of the panda loans deals, and reveal varied levels of success achieved across the three countries. As suggested by the narratives of each panda deal charted in the data, it is clear that in the current stage of the panda diplomacy, pandas are sent to countries that provide China with the valuable resources and technologies that it needs for its domestic economic growth. Panda loans are normally signed hand in hand with trade deals with the involvement of the top-level governments of the recipient countries. Pandas are sent out as symbols or gestures to show appreciation for the recipient countries, as China's trustful, reciprocal, long-term trading partners. Although no official discourse released by the Chinese authorities on the practice of the panda diplomacy in terms of its development or intended goals could be found in literature, the patterns in the three cases and the similarities of their corresponding trade deals are clearly discernible.

As the research results suggest, while the degrees of success varies across the three countries, a few fundamental characteristics of panda diplomacy make it overall an optimal public diplomatic practice could be concluded from the similarities shown.

First, the popularity of the pandas on a global scale facilitates the diplomatic practice. The universal appeal of the exterior features of the black and white bears ensure there is never a lack of enthusiasm for the pandas, not just from the public, as well as from the zoos. Just like Scotland, international zoos went to extraordinary lengths and leveraged all aspects of society in order to secure a pair of pandas. The international community's passion for the pandas inspired the diplomatic practice to the Chinese government so it does not even have to actively approach target nations to initiate the loans. The high demand of the bears from overseas zoos renders the pandas more valuable, hence the granting of the panda deals generates a more powerful impact and expresses clearer political and diplomatic meanings.

Second, cost free and economic incentives. In fact, to call it cost-free is understating the economic efficiency of panda diplomacy. Unlike other public diplomacy practices that China exercises, such as the expansion of the Confucius Institutes, pandas are loaned off for hefty fees by the recipient countries, which are redirected back into China's own conservation program to maintain the species. The smart deployment of the pandas does not just result in China's international partners being willingly to engage in its public diplomacy, even better, they fund its activities. In most cases China is not the only winner, as the pandas also produce an extraordinarily positive impact on the zoo's revenues as well as the development of the local tourism industry. This economic benefit has given the pandas a reputation as a zoo cash cow, which further strengthens the panda's popularity among zoos, hence making them much-welcomed diplomats.

Some scholars such as Xing and Hartig argue that the high rental costs restrict the flexibility and practicality of the panda diplomacy in targeting less developed countries. However, information extracted from the data shows the terms and conditions of the loan contracts are not exactly the same but rather negotiated case by case. For example, while the standard approach of a panda loan deal is a ten-year contract with annual rental of US$ 1 million, as some articles suggest that the payment provisions were drafted differently. The federal government bore the expense of renting the pandas in the Australia case, but in Scotland and Canada, the loan fee was paid directly by the zoos. Also, the one million US dollar rental fee was paid in pounds at a fixed exchange rate for the ten-year contract period for Scotland, yet in the case of Canada, the Chinese authority insisted on costs being paid in their own legal tender at real time exchange rate, which led to Granby Zoo dropping out. Granby Zoo was one of three zoos that were involved in the initial negotiations and decided to quit the deal fearing that the potential future strength of the Chinese currency would become a financial risk for the zoo. Rental fees were also reviewed and reduced for San Diego Zoo after the zoo made an official appeal. Some articles also reveal information about the pair of

pandas lent to Thailand that the loan fee was set at US$ 270,000, considerably less than the amount normally charged for first world countries. These differences in the contracts suggest that the Chinese authorities do not see panda loans as primarily a lucrative business opportunity, rather, loan fees are negotiable and provision are flexible. Each deal is different, and panda diplomacy is implemented accommodatingly so as to avoid monetary restrictions.

Lastly, the enormous news value the panda possesses affords it easy access to the target publics. While the panda's ability to call forth an affection and sense of protection among humans, which derives from its human-like juvenile exterior features, bestows it with an irresistible entertainment news value, its scarcity as an endangered species only found in the remote mountainous southwest region in China, far from the recipient countries, also gives it great conservation news value. These values in the nature of the bear render it a hot news subject in the eyes of journalistic practitioners, consequently every event concerning the pandas draws the attention of the press and make into news production. Although entertainment and conservation are the two types of news values primarily perceived in the panda, it would be naive to expect the media, which of an investigative nature, to only concentrate on the cuteness and endangered status of the bears. As the collected data suggests, media concerns and viewpoints towards the pandas vary significantly across the three countries. What stands out in the news production on pandas highly depend on the concurrent events in the backdrop. With the magnified economic scandal frame in the Australia case, the salient political relevance in the Canada case and the unanimous enthusiasm of the public, media and government in the Scotland case, the news values of the pandas were perceived in concert with the newsworthiness of events and incidents that happened at the same time as the panda loans, and each pair of pandas caused sensations in very different dimensions. This is the main cause of the varied degrees of success of panda diplomacy reflected in related media coverage in the recipient countries. While a

higher appearance of the conservation and human interest frames in the reports seem to better facilitate panda diplomacy in reaching its goal of "winning minds and hearts", as they steer the public's attention to the more attractive and less controversial aspects of the bears, the political and economic frames don't necessarily hinder the shaping of positive images of them either. All the corresponding events further enrich the semiotic meaning of the pandas and render them more newsworthy.

7.2 Limitation and Future Research

This research is established on the understanding that the success of public diplomacy, that is, diplomatic practices exercised by one nation's government to target the public of another, relies heavily on the coverage of events by local news outlets. That is because, as mentioned in previous chapters, the information that we receive and that forms our perceptions of the world is all mediated. Whether the diplomatic practices, or its subjects, such as pandas in the case of this research, can actually achieve their goals greatly depends how they are portrayed and framed in news production. If the pandas were portrayed positively in news content, the readership, as the target audience of the public diplomacy, would likely form positive associations with the pandas and consequently associate China with more cultural aspects rather than the normal criticism found in international news media. Hence, the public diplomacy practice could be said to reach a certain level of success. However, this postulate, which holds up this research, is also the primary drawback. The news content, the data of this research, was investigated and coded through the subjective mind of the researcher, yet how the news would be perceived and incorporated into a mental schemata by each individual reader entirely depends on their own different ideologies of the news subjects and content. Hence, to accurately understand whether the local news content had a positive impact on the image formed of the pandas as well as China, their country of origin, and if yes, to what extent and how that was linked to the frames, a reception study for the selected articles in this research is required, which would produce a more sound and objective conclusion on the degree of success of panda diplomacy in the three countries.

Besides this, there are other drawbacks of this research which lie in the research design and methodology and need to be taken into account for future research.

First, as for all qualitative research using content analysis as preferred methodology, this research suffers from the subjectivity and unintended bias of the researcher. Second, there were all almost 200 articles selected to be included in the data for the research, and the coding process lasted for a period of weeks. Despite the researcher setting robust criteria for each coding category, there may still be a certain degree of unavoidable inconsistency in the coding process over time. Third, this research exclusively examined the textual content of the selected news and eliminated other news elements that could also have strong impact on the audience's perception, such as image and video contents, which resulted in an incomplete analysis of the news content. Fourth and last, this research did not take any exterior factors that could affect the data collection or analysis into consideration. Using Google News as the sole platform for data collection could have limited the news sources, the differences in the media landscapes of the three countries could be a cause of the differences in the total numbers of collected articles, and the different political stances of the media outlets could also have impacted on the tones in their news reporting. The compromise of deciding to not dissect these factors was mainly due to the limited space, time and financial support for this research. Future research into this subject of study could take these shortages into account in terms of research design and methodology for an improved analysis result.

Despite the drawbacks listed above, this research still contributes to the literature of the field in terms of providing a method for examining the success of public diplomacy activities, by demonstrating that the domestic news production in the target nation reporting the diplomatic activities is a key indicator as well as facilitator of their success. It also provides a better understanding of China's panda diplomacy practice in terms of its history, status quo and the rationale behind it, which contributed to the academic analysis of this prominent form of animal diplomacy. While other researches on panda diplomacy in the literature are more concerned with the nature of the political phenomenon, the patterns

and development of the practice, this research concentrates on what has happened after the pandas were sent out of China and whether or not they were able to fulfil their diplomatic goal. Also, the narratives that were generated concurrently with the panda loans and tracked with information collected from the data provide a more complete picture of the factors at play in the news production of the diplomatic activities, which could be used as reference for public diplomacy practitioners when formulating future policies and strategies.

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Appendix:

Access to Australian Articles	
AA01	Pandas will leave Adelaide Zoo in debt for a decade
	http://www.news.com.au/national/wang-wang-leaves-giant-panda-debt-for-adelaide-zoo/news-story/5343297f1eecacffe317de04bac374c2
AA02	Adelaide zoo finds pandas hard to bear
	http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/pandas-appeal-zoo-debt-hard-to-bear/news-story/7c5c496a2872c323ca9ec8e1fa41d976
AA03	Adelaide zoo $24m in debt
	http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2011/06/21/3249843.htm
AA04	Zoo debts total $24 million after panda enclosure fails to attract sponsorship
	http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/ipad/zoo-debts-total-24-million-after-panda-enclosure-fails-to-attrac-sponsorship/story-fn6bqpju-1226079599269
AA05	Panda poo gets gardener' thumbs-up
	http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-12-01/panda-poo-gets-gardeners-thumbs-up/1164394
AA06	Is Wang Wang w(r)ong w(r)ong?
	http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-12-09/is-wang-wang-wrong-wrong/1175916?pfmredir=sm
AA07	Panda "princess" Funi celebrates fourth birthday at Adelaide Zoo
	http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/panda-princess-funi-celebrates-fourth-birthday-at-adelaide-zoo/news-story/4d93c6a9e714f601ab5f9327d134969a?sv=e5b7b25a9aa69e0b9c04f716f94bf3bb
AA08	Less-than-real pandas appear at zoo
	http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-12-10/less-than-real-pandas-appear-at-zoo/1177398
AA09	China giant pandas safely arrive at new Australian digs
	http://english.cctv.com/program/worldwidewatch/20091129/101236.shtml
AA10	Wang Wang and Funi touch down
	http://www.smh.com.au/national/wang-wang-and-funi-touch-down-20091128-jxo4.html
AA11	Pandas down under: Wang Wang and Funi move from China to Australia's Adelaide Zoo
	http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/unleashed/2009/12/pandas-down-under-wang-wang-and-funi-move-from-china-to-australias-adelaide-zoo.html
AA12	Penny Wong unveils pandas Wang Wang and Funi Adelaide Zoo
	http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/penny-wong-unveils-pandas-wang-wang-and-funi-at-adelaide-zoo/news-story/918cfd5c53e5d75b6e7cfeb5d46c7b03
AA13	Panda poo for sale
	http://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/panda-poo-for-sale-20100310-pyt8.html
AA14	People get paid to track down panda doo doo in China
	https://www.gizmodo.com.au/2011/06/people-get-paid-to-track-down-panda-doo-do

	o-in-china/	
AA15	Genome Study finds pandas similar to dogs	
	http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2009/12/15/2771949.htm	
AA16	Viral sneezing baby panda clip to become mockumentary	
	http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/viral-sneezing-baby-panda-clip-207133	
AA17	Adelaide United throw their support behind giant pandas	
	http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/adelaide-united-throw-their-support-behind-giant-pandas/news-story/5345fb0c4670d8730a2f62f1cbda8a8e	
AA18	Pandas Wang Wang and Funi celebrate birthdays at Adelaide zoo	
	http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/pandas-wang-wang-and-funi-celebrates-birthdays-at-adelaide-zoo/news-story/72d4b12761c9153b305b257395098749	
AA19	Panda power inspires new wave of kung fu cubs	
	http://www.smh.com.au/national/panda-power-inspires-new-wave-of-kung-fu-cubs-20110708-1h6t1.html	
AA20	Pandas get lessons in survival skills	
	http://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/pandas-get-lessons-in-survival-skills-20100725-10qhx.html	
AA21	Going gaga over Wang Wang	
	http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/ipad/punch-a-panda-feel-good/news-story/73133fb7337d8d670f79eac768b607ab	
AA22	Sixteen other zoos around the world to see giant pandas	
	http://abcnews.go.com/Travel/zoos-world-giant-pandas/story?id=9249217	
AA23	The world's most expensive tea: made from panda poo?	
	http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/lifestyle/2011/11/the-worlds-most-expensive-tea-made-from-panda-poo/	
AA24	Tea made from panda faeces expected to be most expensive brew in the world	
	http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/eats/tea-made-panda-feces-expected-expensive-brew-world-article-1.978191	
AA25	Panda poo to be used as fertilizer for world's most expensive tea	
	http://www.mnn.com/food/beverages/stories/panda-poo-to-be-used-as-fertilizer-for-worlds-most-expensive-tea	

	Access to Scottish Articles
SA01	Giant pandas arrive in Edinburgh from China
	http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-16023328
SA02	Revealed: How Scotland landed the giant pandas
	http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/revealed_how_scotland_landed_the_giant_pandas_1_1990588
SA03	Giant pandas arrive in Scotland after 11-hour flight from China
	http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/giant-pandas-arrive-in-scotland-after-1088561
SA04	Pandas Tian Tian and Yang Guang arrive in Scotland
	http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/pandas-tian-tian-and-yang-guang-280231
SA05	Giant pandas arrive in Edinburgh
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