

Supplementary File 2: Team reflections

General reflections on the autoethnographic process:

The team was keen to embark on the autoethnographic process. All members of the translation team embraced the opportunity to discuss their experiences translating the interviews and freely shared the positives and negatives. The project lead (XW) was very supportive of the work as him and VH had previously conducted a collaborative autoethnography reflecting on a project process and found the experience to be important for the team, as a point of sense-making, and a way to understand the ways in which we research. This work had a similar effect of creating space for team members to offer suggestions for process improvements in future and also reflect on their positionality and the ways in which they engage with global health work. Further, the process offered an important opportunity for interested translation team members to learn more about the qualitative research process and come together to learn and apply new skills.

Reflections from co-author, translator (BPL):

I am a fourth-year undergraduate student involved in the translation process of this work. I was born in China and immigrated to Canada at 10 years old. Having lived and studied in both Chinese speaking and English-speaking countries, I am aware of and is influenced by the differences in culture. My mixed backgrounds and fluency in both languages have allowed me to utilize these advantages to translate findings from Chinese to English in an interpretable and meaningful way. Reflecting on the translation process, I believe my cultural and educational background in China have allowed me to interpret traditional Chinese idiomatic expressions, which are often employed by participants, and understand the context by which they are used in. As such, I strive to translate expressions with a deeper layer of meaning that reflects the original piece. In addition, I grew up in an autonomous region of northern China (non-Tibet) and realize the challenges faced by minorities in terms of language and geographic barriers that may limit their optimal recovery.

Reflections from co-author, translator (SG):

I am a Singaporean Canadian, Mandarin and English-speaking MD candidate who played a role in translation and process evaluation. Through this experience, I have reflected on how our experience with language can influence our interpretation of texts and experiences that can influence how qualitative data is analyzed. Navigating the limbo between the east and west of my own personal background, I have been able to utilize my linguistic knowledge to ensure that our study's participants are heard in a way that is accurate and authentic. However, I am also aware of the gaps of experiential knowledge, which may influence how a text or statement is interpreted. I am continuing to learn from my colleagues and study participants, and most importantly, their unique lived experiences and allowing their message and voice to be heard in a way that is representative and meaningful for them.

Reflections from co-author, translator (JZH):

I am a first-generation Chinese Canadian immigrant, speaking both Chinese and English at relatively native-speaker level. I joined the research process during the fourth year of my undergrad in life science, as a member of the translation team I was responsible for the

translation of first-hand interview transcripts (Chinese – English). Throughout the translation process, I have been aware of the limitations in my language translation skills as translating word-for-word and translating meaning-by-meaning can be often, quite contradicting. In the autoethnographic process, I have reflected extensively with the team on how communication with each other as well as translation discussions are critical throughout the translation process due to the difference in cultural, education, and familial backgrounds within the team. Although I have sought to borrow skills and knowledge from my Chinese Canadian cultural and linguistic background as much as possible, I acknowledge that limitations still exist in my efforts as some details are inevitably lost in translation when making inter-linguistic jumps. Fortunately, by working extensively with my colleagues, both Canadian and Chinese, I am confident that we, as a team, tried our best make sure that our participants are heard on paper.

Reflections from co-author, translator (LS):

I am a Tibetan-Canadian, Tibetan-speaking undergraduate student serving as a member of the translation team responsible for assessing the accuracy of the translation work. Over the course of this project, I was aware of my limited experience in the Tibetan Autonomous Region's public health system and discourse relevant to the region's healthcare system. This awareness of the gap in my knowledge pushed me to dedicate additional effort towards recognizing lived and cultural nuances expressed by participants in my analysis and translation work. As a member of the Tibetan community, I strongly felt morally obligated to ensure that the translations captured the subtle cultural nuances to the best of my abilities. Having been born and raised in exile, I have never had the opportunity to visit Tibet. And because of this, being able to participate and asynchronously engage with fellow Tibetans and assist them was a privilege.

Reflections from co-author, translator (HH):

I am Chinese, and I am fluent in speaking Mandarin, Cantonese, and English. I was in my last year of BSc during the translation process. VH and ZZ provide us (the translators) with a multi-national and multi-lingual friendly environment where we can receive help and feedback in a short time. Furthermore, my father and my grandfather are active frontline doctors working for the Chinese health care system, and as such I was able to infuse my personal experience into the translation process based on my knowledge of the medical system and the perspective of health providers. This also help me develop and refine my process and tone during translation. I am aware that the medical education systems are very different between China and the western world, so I added notes to elaborate on the Chinese system or provide contextual information in English. It is important to me to ensure that experiences with the Chinese healthcare system are shared and to be a part of the process to help doctors in China communicate their experiences with their peer around the globe.

Reflections from co-author, Research Coordinator (ZZ):

I am Chinese national that has international work experience in Canada. My role is the research coordinator for this project. I led the on-site data collection with local researchers in Tibet, introduced the interview skills and purpose of each question to them in a way that the local staff can understand the interview questions proposed by the Canadian team. On the other side, I

provided the context and implementation details to the Canadian team so that they can understand more about the logic of the responses and unify the translations. I have used my knowledge and work experience in both China and Canada to link the relevant participants to reduce the gap in language and understanding of the context.

Reflections from co-author, Research Coordinator (VH):

I am a Canadian, English-speaking PhD candidate and researcher coordinating the translation team and leading on the process evaluation which the data is supporting. Throughout this process I have been keenly aware of the gaps in my linguistic and experiential knowledge, as well as the racial and cultural differences between myself (a white Canadian woman) and my team members. This includes the ways in which my perspective, understanding and worldviews inform my analysis and interpretation of the texts. I have reflected extensively on the foreign gaze in global health (and the harms that come from it) and have had many discussions with XW and ZZ about the research setting and how my skills can be best used to meet local goals. This includes evolving work to identify how I can best support my colleagues, as the team on which I work is majority Chinese-speaking and undertaking projects in China. I have sought to use my skills and the privileges ascribed to me by my race, location, experiences and language to contribute meaningfully to the team, in ways that meet their needs, both in Canada and in Tibet. This work includes an ongoing process of developing and fostering authentic relationships with my team mates, pursuing research questions and methods (such as this) that excite us, ensuring their recognition in our research outputs, and engaging in knowledge exchange with them to develop and expand our skillsets.