Communication across Borders: Translation & Interpreting

CABTI

CABTI

Communication across Borders: Translation & Interpreting (CABTI) is a double-blind peer-reviewed academic journal published by JHK Press. The four annual issues contain sections with open submission academic articles in the field of cross-cultural communication and translation studies. The journal invites contributions representing innovative and critical views on the theory and practice of translation studies in all its aspects, including but not limited to: the theory, history and practice of translation studies.

CABTI publishes papers related to literature and translation, including:

- Intercultural Communication
- Cultural Studies
- Film and TV Translation
- Community Interpreting
- Translation and Globalization
- Literature Translation
- Non-professional Translation
- Interdisciplinarity in Translation Studies
- Cognitive Translation Studies

CABTI uses double-blind review: the reviewers' identities remain anonymous to authors and vice versa. Manuscripts submitted to the journal first go through an initial screening by the editorial team. Those that clear the screening are then sent to at least two experts for peer review. Email address for submitting your manuscript: cab@jhkpress.com.

Table of Contents

A Reception Study on AVT: A Literature Review

Yuxuan JIN

School of Foreign Languages, Southeast University, E-mail: jinooyx613@163.com

Abstract

This paper reviews and collates studies on AVT reception conducted inside and outside China since the beginning of the 21st century, summarizing general trends and differences in this field over the past 20 years. It is found that AVT reception studies in China tend to focus on the text analysis of cultural expression and digital humanities. In contrast, AVT reception studies abroad are dominated by variable-oriented comparative empirical research, with translation mode and country of translation serving as the main variables. In terms of audiovisual works selection, scholars both inside and outside China are increasingly focusing on the reception of subtitle translation in online educational videos. Additionally, foreign countries are more aligned with the growing trend of game localization, audio descriptions and subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing. This paper, by reviewing the commonalities and differences in AVT reception studies inside and outside China over the past 20 years, offers insights into the application of experimental and questionnaire methods in AVT reception studies and broaden the analytical perspective within this field.

Key Words: Audiovisual Translation, reception study, digital humanities

1. Introduction

In China, AVT reception studies began at the start of the 21st century, but in their initial stages, these studies primarily focused on text analysis without employing empirical methods to directly analyze audience attitudes. Ou (2006) is a representative example from this early period, examining audience perceptions of subtitle translation and treating it as a psycholinguistic activity. Using psycholinguistic theories on word and sentence reception and understanding, the study analyzes subtitle translation from three perspectives: textual reduction, syntax, and lexical expression. While this dissertation marks an early attempt to study audience reception of subtitle translation in the early 21st century, the lack of theoretical and technical support during that time limited the study to a textual level, resulting in only nominal reception analysis without empirical exploration of audience attitudes.

It was not until 2007 that Chesterman introduced the distinction of three types of translation reception—reaction, response, and effect (repercussion), collectively referred to as the 3R model. However, while Chesterman outlined these concepts, he did not apply them to audiovisual works nor to specific cases. At that time, the application of the 3R model to explain AVT phenomena was largely absent.

Audiovisual translation serves as a relatively promising and evolving perspective within translation studies, though has not yet become mainstream in reception studies, either domestically or internationally. Despite the long history of translation reception studies, the German functionalist approach, as outlined by Nord (1997), emphasizes the importance of receptionists, who possess specific cultural background knowledge, expectations, and communicative needs, as a key component of translation behavior. Yet, reception studies in translation have not gained widespread attention within the field. Even among the various forms of translation, audiovisual translation—despite its potential as a novel focus—remains on the periphery of reception research, both inside and outside China. Over the past 20 years, there have been 354 domestic and international studies in this area, with a peak in 2018, as shown in Figure 1. However, in the special issue on audiovisual translation in *Perspectives* (2022), A. Valdeón (2022) identifies reception studies as one of the emerging trends in AVT research.

This paper aims to systematically review the existing body of AVT reception research from a diachronic perspective, summarizing historical trends and significant achievements in the field. By analyzing and evaluating literature both inside and outside China, this paper seeks to offer new insights and methodologies for future studies in AVT reception research.
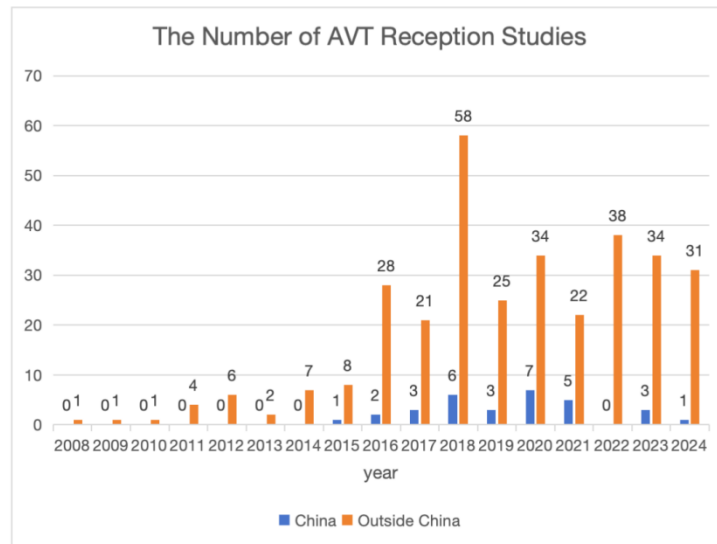
Figure 1. Development in the number of audiovisual translation reception studies (2000-2024)

2. Overall Trends

Through investigation, it has been found that the mainstream trend in AVT reception studies in China focuses on cultural expression, with a growing shift toward digital humanities in recent years. In contrast, outside China, the dominant trend is empirical research, often using translation mode or country as key variables. Table 1 outlines the total number of AVT reception studies in each region and highlights the proportion of studies following these main trends. This section will summarize the representative works within each trend and their distinguishing characteristics.

Table 1. The number and proportion of trends in audiovisual translation reception studies (2000-2024)

Rank	The total number of AVT Reception Study	Trend	Numbers	Proportion
China	33	AVT Reception Study on Cultural Expression	16	48.48%
		AVT Reception Study in Digital Humanities Turn	9	27.27%
Outside China	321	AVT Reception Study as Variable-oriented Empirical Study	284	88.47%

2.1 Domestic Trends: AVT Cultural Expression Reception Study and Digital Humanities Turn

Domestic scholars have primarily focused on the reception of specific elements such as humor and cultural expression in translated works, proposing various methodologies from the theoretical perspective of digital humanities, though empirical studies remain limited.

Humor translation, a key aspect of audiovisual translation, has garnered significant attention from domestic scholars in recent years. Shen (2017) examines humor-loaded cultural expressions in the Renren subtitles of the first season of *The Big Bang Theory*, using a questionnaire to analyze audience comprehension of humorous segments. The study concludes that audience understanding of these humor-loaded expressions is generally low. Similarly, Wang (2018) explores audience attitudes toward humor translation in AVT, again using *The Big Bang Theory* as a case study to assess audience psychology via questionnaire. Wang's longer study categorizes verbal humor into four types based on humor theory, finding that humor related to science is the most comprehensible to the audience. These two studies, as typical examples of AVT reception studies focused on humor translation, reflect the trend toward empirical research in domestic AVT, shifting from text analysis to investigating

audience attitudes. However, both studies are limited in their selection of texts and subjects, as they primarily involve college students and focus on American sitcoms.

Over the past five years, three major trends have emerged in domestic AVT reception studies: audience-oriented, export-oriented, and digital humanities-oriented approaches.

Zhu (2021) is a representative AVT reception study directly targeting public audience attitudes, using a questionnaire to analyze audience responses to the subtitles of *Emergency Call*. While it retains the traditional focus on textual analysis, this study finds that annotations are a favored addition for Chinese audiences. A notable aspect of this study is its use of questionnaires, which not only rely on the Likert scale but also incorporate text cases from audiovisual works. However, its focus on a specific audience and a single film limits the generalizability of the findings.

While most scholars have examined the introduction of foreign film and television works, Liang (2022) presents a typical export-oriented study on the reception of subtitle translation in Chinese science fiction films. This study introduces cognitive reception methods, such as eye-tracking technology and multimodal corpus analysis, to explore the reception of Chinese works abroad. Liang's research marks a rare study on the international reception of domestic works in recent years.

Influenced by the digital humanities trend, Li and Zhang (2023) have expanded the methodologies used in AVT reception studies. They propose using bibliometric tools and corpus analysis to quantitatively examine audience reception, and suggest integrating geographical information systems to track the dissemination of audiovisual translations. Additionally, they encourage scholars to use programming languages to analyze audience comments and attitudes. These theoretical advancements offer multiple pathways for future AVT reception research.

2.2 Foreign Trends: Variable-oriented Empirical Study

In contrast to domestic scholars' focus on text analysis and cultural expression, foreign AVT reception studies tend to prioritize comparative empirical research, with translation mode or country as key variables.

Several scholars have examined the reception of dubbing versus subtitling, comparing how audiences respond to each. Perego et al. (2016a) uses eye-tracking and questionnaires to test audience reception of dubbing and subtitling, analyzing whether the complexity of AV products affects viewers' scanning strategies. It is found that cognitive processing of subtitled material is as effective as that of dubbed material. This study combines behavioral data and eye-tracking technology, focusing on Italian audiences—a population from a dubbing country. However, the short AV clips used may limit the authenticity of the results. Similarly, Matamala et al. (2017) conducts a comparative study in Spain, another dubbing country, examining audience attitudes toward dubbing and subtitling. This study divides participants into dubbing and subtitling groups, using evaluative and cognitive questionnaires. While it does not incorporate eye-tracking, the extended AV segments made the results more realistic than those of Perego et al. (2016a).

Foreign scholars have also considered how AVT traditions vary by country and how audience nationality affects reception. Perego et al. (2016b) examines nationality as a variable, selecting participants from Italy, Spain, Poland, and Dutch-speaking Belgium. As in Matamala et al. (2017), participants are asked to complete evaluative and cognitive questionnaires during the viewing process. The results show that in traditional dubbing countries (Italy and Spain), participants primarily consume dubbed content but are increasingly comfortable using subtitles. This experiment highlights the importance of considering individual differences, such as nationality, in AVT reception studies, as countries with dubbing traditions may have distinct viewing habits compared to those with subtitling histories.

3. Differences in the Media

3.1 Differences in AVT Products Selection

In terms of AVT product selection, in addition to film and television works, Chinese scholars pay more attention to the reception of online educational video subtitle, while foreign scholars' product is more diverse and specific. Ren (2018) focuses on the reception of subtitle translation in online educational videos, with the online athlete training videos from the International Olympic Organizing Committee as materials, to analyze the audience's reception according to the existing subtitle quality standards. It is found that the existing online educational video subtitle translation should improve the vigilance of misspellings and the accuracy of proper nouns. The study focuses on audience reception, expanding the scope of AVT's materials to include online educational videos, not limited to film and television works. But the focus remains on the processing of text. It does not directly touch the audience, but only makes error corrections according to the existing subtitle translation standards.

Scholars outside China not only analyze the text, but also adopt the method of empirical study to pay attention to the audience attitude of other AV products except film and television works. Mangiron (2016) conducts a small-scale reception study on

video game captioning through eye-tracking technology and questionnaire survey. The subjects are divided into hearing users and deaf users and are under two surveys before and after playing games with the eye tracker. This exploration expands the product types of audiovisual translation reception study. Hu (2020) adopts Gambier's reception model and, with eye tracking and questionnaire survey, respectively put perspectives on MT subtitle translation of MOOCs. Compared with Chinese students' raw machine translated subtitles, fully post-edited machine is more widely accepted. This study also expands the product types of AVT to be studied and it follows the current trend of machine translation with MT taken into consideration rather than simply official subtitles or fansubbing subtitles and the experiment design is based on a concrete reception model.

3.2 Differences in AD and SDH Reception Studies

In China, Xiao Weiqing is a leading expert in audio description (AD) reception studies. Xiao and Dong (2020) shifts the focus from subtitle and dubbing translation to AD reception studies. Their study, based on two comparable episodes of *When Will There Be a Moon*, uses questionnaires to analyze audience attitudes toward speech synthesis and human voice dubbing. The results indicates a preference for human voice dubbing, though speech synthesis is also considered a viable option due to its efficiency. This study, which employs eye-tracking technology, represents a rare example of AD reception research in China. The research design is comprehensive, with pre-experiment interviews conducted with users, and the study stands out for its detailed literature review, clear text expression, and rigorous quantitative data.

Compared to just two AD reception studies in China, there are 37 such studies in foreign countries—more than 18 times the number in China. The methodologies used in foreign studies are also more mature. Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the quantity of studies and the year of publication inside and outside China. Fernandez-Torne et al. (2015) analyzes the reception of text-to-speech in dubbed films in the Catalan context, using questionnaires based on the Mean Opinion Score (MOS) test. The study finds that most blind or visually impaired audience members accept text-to-speech audio descriptions, particularly those with synthetic feminine voices. Chmiel and Mazur (2022) also examines audience attitudes toward AD, dividing subjects into groups based on congenital blindness, non-congenital blindness, and low vision. This classification allows for more specific analysis, and the universal nature of AD in foreign countries leads to more diverse experimental materials and longer experiment durations, resulting in more authentic findings.

In contrast, less attention has been paid to subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH) in AVT in China, though relevant reception studies exist in other countries. Aleksandrowicz (2019) guides participants through a Differential Emotions Scale questionnaire based on film fragments, revealing that all subtitling methods—whether they included musical descriptions, the title of the composition and performer's name, or no information about the music—effectively convey the mood of the film score. This study, which focuses on background music subtitles in films, represents a rare example of SDH reception research, a subject often overlooked by scholars.
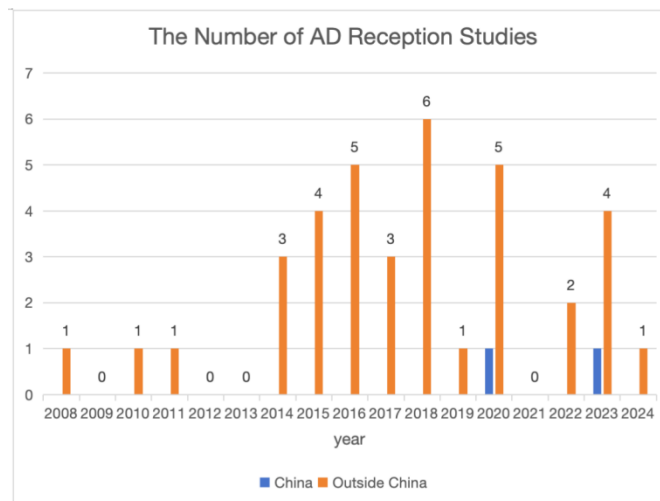

Figure 2. Development in the number of AD reception studies (2000-2024)

4. Conclusion

Through a review and analysis of relevant literature, this paper identifies significant differences in AVT reception studies inside and outside China.

In terms of overall trends, China remains more focused on the study of cultural expression reception and text analysis. Although some scholars, within the context of digital humanities, have proposed using geographic techniques, programming languages, corpora, eye-tracking technologies, and other methods (Liang, 2022; Li & Zhang, 2023), research still tends to emphasize theoretical approaches, with relatively few empirical studies. In contrast, other countries focus more on variable-oriented empirical studies, examining factors such as the nationality of subjects, the type of subtitle producers (machine translation or not), and the listening status of subjects. Experimental methods, questionnaires, and interviews are commonly used to assess audience reception of audiovisual works across different variables.

In terms of the reception of AVT products beyond film and television, Chinese scholars typically rely on relatively simple materials, such as online educational videos, and concentrate on textual analysis. Meanwhile, foreign scholars are also following the trend of game localization, employing eye-tracking technology, questionnaires, and other methods to explore the gaming experience or video-viewing experience outside China.

AVT research encompasses not only video works, online videos, and games but also includes studies on audio description (AD) and subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH). The review finds that, due to the prevalence of AD outside China, there is a greater volume of AD studies in foreign contexts, with more diverse research perspectives. Some studies focus on sound sources, while others emphasize text content, with more specific classifications of subjects. Foreign SDH reception studies also adopt more novel perspectives, such as tracking subtitle reception for film soundtracks (Aleksandrowicz, 2019). However, recent work by the Chinese team led by Professor Xiao has begun exploring these aspects, offering promising developments in this area.

References

Aleksandrowicz, P. (2020). Can subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing convey the emotions of film music? A reception study. *Perspectives*, 28(1), 58-72.

Chesterman, A. (2007). Bridge concepts in translation sociology. *Benjamins translation library*, 74, 171.

Chmiel, A., & Mazur, I. (2022). A homogenous or heterogeneous audience? Audio description preferences of persons with congenital blindness, non-congenital blindness and low vision. *Perspectives*, 30(3), 552-567.

Nord, C. (1997). *Translating as a purposeful activity: Functionalist approaches explained*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Fernández-Torné, A., & Matamala, A. (2015). Text-to-speech vs. human voiced audio descriptions: a reception study in films dubbed into Catalan. *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, 24, 61-88.

Hu, K., O'Brien, S., & Kenny, D. (2020). A reception study of machine translated subtitles for MOOCs. *Perspectives*, 28(4), 521-538.

Li, C. H. & Zhang, Z. (2023).A Research Paradigm for Audiovisual Translation Based on Digital Humanities. *Foreign Language Research*, (01),61-67. [In Chinese, 李崇华 & 张政. (2023). 基于数字人文的视听翻译研究范式与理路. 外语学刊.]

Liang, H. W. (2022). On the Cognitive-Receptive Study of Traslation of Chinese Science Fiction Films. *Translation Research and Teaching*, (1),95-100. [In Chinese, 梁昊文. (2022). 中国科幻影视作品翻译接受研究说略. 翻译研究与教学.]

Matamala, A., Perego, E., & Bottiroli, S. (2017). Dubbing versus subtitling yet again? An empirical study on user comprehension and preferences in Spain. *Babel*, 63(3), 423-441.

Mangiron, C. (2016). Reception of game subtitles: an empirical study. *The Translator*, 22(1), 72-93.

Ou, M. (2006). Studies on Film Subtitle Translation from the Perspective of Audience Perception (Master's thesis, Sichuan University). [In Chinese: 欧苗. (2006). 从观众接受角度研究电影字幕翻译 (硕士学位论文，四川大学).]

Perego, E., Orrego Carmona, D., & Bottiroli, S. (2016). An empirical take on the dubbing vs. subtitling debate: An eye movement study. *Lingue e Linguaggi*, 19, 255-274.

Perego, E., Laskowska, M., Matamala, A., Remael, A., Robert, I. S., Szarkowska, A., ... & Bottiroli, S. (2016). Is subtitling equally effective everywhere? A first cross-national study on the reception of interlingually subtitled messages. *Across Languages and Cultures*, 17(2), 205-229.

Ren, X.(2018).The Quality Standard of Online Educational Videos Subtitling within the Perspective of Reception Theory (Master's thesis, CUP). [In Chinese: 任新. (2018). 基于接受理论的在线教育视频字幕翻译质量标准探究 (硕士学位论文, 中国石油大学(北京)).]

Shen, W. J.(2017).Audiences' Reception of Subtitle Translation for Verbal Cultural Humor: Taking The Big Bang Theory as an Empirical Case. *Journal of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies*, (3),61-67. [In Chinese, 沈渭菊. (2017). 影视字幕翻译策略与言语文化幽默接受——基于情景喜剧《生活大爆炸》的接受研究.广东外语外贸大学学报.]

Valdeón, R. A. (2022). Latest trends in audiovisual translation. *Perspectives*, 30(3), 369-381.

Wang, R. Q.(2018).The Reception of Humor Translation in Sitcom Subtitling (Master's thesis, Chongqing University). [In Chinese: 王仁勤. (2018). 情景喜剧字幕翻译中幽默翻译的接受研究 (硕士学位论文, 重庆大学.]

Xiao, W. Q. & Dong, L. N.(2020).New Developments in Audiovisual Translation: The Application of Speech Synthesis in Audio Description-- Based on the Acceptance Experiments and Surveys of Visually Impaired People. *East Journal of Translation*, (2),24-30. [In Chinese, 肖维青 & 董琳娜. (2020). 视听翻译新发展：语音合成在口述影像中的应用——基于针对视障人士的接受实验与调查. 东方翻译.]

Zhu, L.(2021). On Subtitle Translation from the Perspective of Reception Theory (Master's thesis, Sichuan International Studies University). [In Chinese: 朱琳. (2021). 接受理论视角下的字幕翻译分析 (硕士学位论文，四川外国语大学).]

Canton Embroidery and the Maritime Silk Road: The Fusion of Intangible Cultural Heritage Traditions and Modern Values

Jing TIAN

Faculty of Foreign Languages, Guangdong Baiyun University, Guangzhou, China. Email: oldcat6702024@163.com

Abstract

Canton Embroidery, one of the Four Famous Embroideries of China, is not only an important cultural symbol along the ancient Maritime Silk Road but also carries rich historical and cultural significance. This paper explores the historical role of Canton Embroidery on the ancient Maritime Silk Road, its inheritance, and its innovation in modern society. It analyzes its contemporary value as an intangible cultural heritage (ICH) in promoting cultural and economic exchanges within the framework of the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road". Through the study of its historical development, technical characteristics, current status, and paths for its inheritance and export, this paper examines the productization of ICH represented by Canton Embroidery. It argues that the modern preservation of traditional ICH crafts should be achieved through innovative design, modern marketing methods, and trade as a means to enhance economic value and foster regional economic development.

Keywords: Canton Embroidery; Intangible Cultural Heritage; Maritime Silk Road; Modern Inheritance

1. Introduction

With its unique artistic style and rich cultural symbols, Canton Embroidery is not only a significant carrier of Lingnan culture but also an outstanding representative of Chinese traditional culture. It has been recognized as one of the first National Intangible Cultural Heritages. Due to the rise of the Canton Trade System during the Qing Dynasty, Canton Embroidery became a leading force in the export of silk embroidery products. It not only successfully introduced traditional Chinese art to Europe but also actively absorbed Western painting techniques, forming a distinctive blend of Chinese and Western art styles. In the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road strategy, Canton Embroidery can continue to promote mutual understanding and respect between different cultures.

2. Canton Embroidery as a Cultural Symbol of the Maritime Silk Road

The Ancient Maritime Silk Road refers to the maritime communication route that connected East Asia and Southeast Asia through the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and the eastern part of the Africa, utilizing traditional navigation technology (Jiang, 2023). This route facilitated not only maritime trade, but also the exchange of cultures, science, technology, religion, and ideas. It significantly enhanced cross-cultural communication between East and West, deepening mutual understanding and appreciation through the exchange of commodities.

Guangzhou, China, as one of the starting ports of the Maritime Silk Road, became a key center for economic and cultural exchange between China and the West at an early stage. As early as the Qin and Han Dynasties, *the Book of Han – Geography* recorded that Guangzhou's Panyu was the hub of maritime trade at the time: "Near the sea, there were many rhinoceroses, elephants, tortoiseshells, beads and guillotines, silver, copper, fruits, and cloth, which enriched Chinese merchants and trades. Panyu, one of its capitals." During the Tang Dynasty, Guangzhou maintained its position as a maritime trade center, as recorded in the *New Book of the Tang Dynasty – Jia Tan Zhuan*: "Guangzhou was a center of maritime trade." In the Song and Yuan Dynasties, as ocean trade flourished, the imperial court established the Shi Bosi (Bureau for Foreign Shipping) in Guangzhou to oversee sea transportation. Merchant ships from Guangzhou continuously exported Chinese commodities to Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and even to the wider world.

In the Ming and Qing Dynasties, due to alternating policies of "sea bans" and "open sea" policies, Guangzhou gradually became the only foreign trade port. In the 23rd year of the Kangxi period, the Qing government established the Guangdong Customs to manage foreign trade, leading to the formation of Guangzhou's unique maritime trade system, with its "one port for all traders" policy. This system gave rise to the Thirteen Factories of Canton, which specialized in foreign trade affairs.

Silk fabrics (embroidery), as a daily artwork with Chinese characteristics that integrates aesthetics and utility, have always been an important trade commodity and cultural carrier of the Maritime Silk Road. As early as the Han and Tang dynasties, maritime trade in silk fabrics (embroidery) flourished, with Chinese silk fabrics (embroidery) being exported from Guangzhou to Southeast Asia and spreading along the Straits of Malacca to West Asia and Europe. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, with the vigorous development of maritime commodity trade, the role of Silk weaving (embroidery) products underwent a

remarkable transformation—from being used mainly for personal use or small quantities as tribute, to evolving into bulk commodities for export (Lan, 2018). Due to Guangzhou's leading position on the Maritime Silk Road and its advantageous location, the embroidery factories and workshops in Guangzhou flourished, and the traditional Canton Embroidery techniques became increasingly refined and sophisticated.

In the ninth year of Zhengde of the Ming Dynasty (1514), the Portuguese purchased embroidered dragon robes pieces in Guangzhou, which were highly appreciated by their king upon return. In the twenty-eighth year of Wanli's reign (1600), Queen Elizabeth I of England became enamored with the gold and silver thread embroidery exported from Guangdong and personally advocated for the establishment of the British Embroidery Guild. It can be said that the export of Canton Embroidery directly promoted the development of silk embroidery craftsmanship in Europe.

The solid trade relations and trade patterns established by the Thirteen Factories of Canton during the mid-Qing Dynasty further provided a favorable external environment for the development of the silk embroidery trade. According to *Argot's Diary of the Guangzhou Merchant House*, a Spanish manuscript, among the commodities purchased from Guangzhou by European and American merchant ships at that time, raw silk and silk accounted for a considerable volume (Tang & Tian, 2024). However, in the 24th year of Qianlong's reign (1759), the imperial court imposed a "silk ban" on the export of Zhejiang lake silk, citing the reason that "the price of silk was getting higher and higher". As a result, Guangzhou silk and satin became the primary export products of raw silk from Guangdong ports. The silk embroidery industry in Guangzhou, including Canton Embroidery, gradually expanded, making Canton Embroidery a significant export product in the late Qing Dynasty. Not only was overseas demand for silk fabrics substantial, but they were also highly popular in the domestic market.

Canton Embroidery, once a popular export product, rose to the status of imperial tribute. Examples include the collection of Canton Embroidery pieces at the Palace Museum in Beijing, such as *Canton Embroidery of Landscape with Fishing and Reading*, *Canton Embroidery of Singing Birds*, *Canton Embroidery of Cranes and Deer in Spring*, *Canton Embroidery of Red Phoenix in Morning Sun*, *Canton Embroidery of Spring Comes in Full Form* (white satin ground), and *Canton Embroidery of Double Phoenix on Bamboo and Stone*. The demand from both foreign and domestic markets caused the Guangzhou silk weaving industry to thrive, a momentum that continued into the early years following the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Benefiting from Guangzhou's advantageous position as a key node on the Maritime Silk Road, Canton Embroidery—the bright pearl of Chinese embroidery art—demonstrates not only its excellent craftsmanship and rich cultural heritage but also serves as a vivid testament to the exchange and mutual understanding between Chinese and Western cultures. It symbolizies a significant cultural bond that promotes the progress of civilization between East and West.

3. Canton Embroidery as the Shared Cultural Memory of China and the West

Canton Embroidery, often referred to as the folk embroidery technique centered in Guangzhou and extending to the Pearl River Delta region including Shunde and Nanhai, is one of China's Four Famous Embroideries, alongside Suzhou, Hunan and Shu embroidery. As a representative of Lingnan culture, Canton Embroidery carries the collective memory of the history, region, and social customs of the Chinese nation. In June 2006, Canton Embroidery was included in the first group of China's National Intangible Cultural Heritage (NICH), underscoring its significance in Chinese culture and its recognition and protection by the state and society. As an Intangible Cultural Heritage, Canton Embroidery is not only a representation of traditional Chinese embroidery techniques but also a carrier of the historical and cultural memories of the Lingnan region. Simultaneously, it bears witness to the shared cultural memories between China and the West along the ancient Maritime Silk Road.

3.1 Shared Cultural Memory of Decorative Arts

Centered in Guangzhou and circulated throughout the Pearl River Delta region, Canton Embroidery features strong regional characteristics. "The colors used in Canton Embroidery have always been vibrant, with contrasting red and green tones, reflecting the folkloric and Lingnan flavors." notes Hu and Lei (2019). This vibrant color scheme is closely related to the southern subtropical monsoon climate of the Lingnan region, known for its abundant light, moist soil, and diverse plants and animals. In addition to the colorful palette, Canton Embroidery frequently features flowers and fruits as motifs, with allegorical patterns symbolizing prosperity. For instance, lychee, a characteristic fruit of Lingnan, has long been a distinctive element in Canton Embroidery, and the peacock, a common bird in the subtropics, is a skillfully depicted and favored motif.

In terms of technique, Canton Embroidery is renowned for its varied stitches, even stitching, and the skillful use of texture to express the materiality of objects. The bright colors, intricate compositions, exquisite craftsmanship, and rich textures make Canton Embroidery one of China's most famous traditional arts, long celebrated for its beauty and cultural significance.

During the Canton Trade System period, the Thirteen Factories of the Qing Dynasty, including the silk embroidery represented by Canton Embroidery, sparked a "China Craze" in Europe, directly influencing Western art aesthetics. Westerners recognized the skill and artistic achievement of Canton Embroidery, commenting, "The Chinese are skilled in embroidery, and the people of Guangdong are particularly good at it. ... Canton Embroidery is mostly imported into Europe" (Sun, 2007). Eighteenth-Century *Chinese Export Works of Art* details the popularity of Canton Embroidery and other silk embroidery in the United Kingdom. Canton Embroidery's complex double-sided scarves were particularly favored by British noblewomen, some of whom, via East India Company ships, even sent clothing or fabric pieces to China, commissioning Chinese embroiderers to decorate them. From the 17th to the 18th centuries, Canton Embroidery was also favored by European royalty. The British royal family was especially keen to decorate their homes with various "Chinese-style" wall hangings, carpets, and porcelain to create "Chinese rooms". In France, the center of European fashion and culture at the time, the influence of Chinese art was profound. Louis XIV not only adorned the Palace of Versailles with bedspreads and draperies from China but also hosted a ball called the "Emperor of China", where men and women dressed in "Chinese-style" embroidery patterns. Since then, "Chinese-style" embroidery has become a matter of pride in France. The demand for beautiful and exquisite Canton silk embroidery exceeded the supply, greatly stimulating the European imagination about Oriental aesthetics and prompting a transformation in European art.

Notably, Chinese embroidery, especially Canton Embroidery, played a role in the transition of European art and decorative styles from the grand and majestic Baroque style to the soft and delicate Rococo style. The "Chinese style" Rococo style thus became an important element of Western artistic aesthetics.

3.2 Shared Cultural Memory of Textile Technologies

The Chinese embroidery represented by Canton Embroidery during the Ming and Qing dynasties set off a trend in the West for Chinese-style textiles, spreading across Europe from the late 16th century to the 18th and 19th centuries. This trend promoted the common progress and development of Chinese and Western textile technologies.

Early Chinese silk exported to Europe was primarily jacquard fabric, but due to the Qing Dynasty's Canton Trade System, jacquard silk produced in Jiangnan was more expensive to transport. Consequently, the production of hand-painted and embroidered silk from Guangzhou for export increased rapidly. In response to market demand, Europe began innovating its textile processes to reduce shipping costs. After the invention of roller printing in Scotland in the 18th century, machines could print various patterns directly, leading to a decline in demand for hand-painted silk. However, embroidered silk, including Canton Embroidery, with its exquisite technique, continued to meet Western aesthetic demands and remained a standout product.

The craze for Chinese-style textiles, represented by Canton Embroidery silk fabrics, also encouraged the Western textile industry to imitate Chinese export textiles. The local silk weaving industry in Europe thrived by adopting oriental motifs or imitating Chinese clothing styles. Queen Elizabeth I, who adored Cantonese gold and silver thread embroidery, founded the British Embroidery Guild in 1600, importing Chinese silk threads for the nobility's clothing. Charles I encouraged silkworm cultivation and the development of the local silk industry. In France, Louis XIV established factories specializing in hand-painted or printed silk fabrics in oriental styles, designing embroidery patterns that combined Chinese and Western elements, which influenced global trends at the time.

The combination of Chinese-style textiles with traditional Western garments and decorations led to innovative developments in both Chinese and Western textile techniques. For instance, European tapestries incorporated many Canton Embroidery patterns. The Canton Embroidery Manila shawl, which fit the daily attire of the Spanish, elevated the shawl to an art form and gradually incorporated into Western fashion.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, the Western textile industry advanced significantly, driven by a fascination with Chinese-style textiles led by Canton Embroidery silk fabrics. In the 19th century, following the Opium War, many Western silk fabrics, enhanced by integrating Oriental techniques, entered the Chinese market, diversifying and enriching Chinese textiles. For instance, European "exotic style silk" inspired by Canton Embroidery patterns and combining traditional Western, Indian and Ottoman Turkish motifs, was sold back to China, where it was admired and imitated as "Western brocades". The Beijing Palace Museum still houses fragments of this "Western brocade" and two imitations. As printing and dyeing technology in Europe advanced, "Chinese style" printed cotton with Oriental patterns, incorporating Rococo elements, gradually influenced the Chinese silk textile composition and design (Tang, 2021).

3.3 Shared Cultural Memory of Modern Large-Scale Production and Trade

In Chinese history, silk embroidery was traditionally a status symbol for princes and nobles. However, during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Canton Embroidery became closely linked to large-scale commodity production with strong "commercial

attributes". Canton Embroidery product categories were subject to market demands, appealing not only to the court, nobility, and bureaucrats but also to landlords, merchants, and the general public. Its style reflected the "civic literature and art" of the time (Lan, 2018).

For example, the design of Canton Embroidery drawings combined originality and spontaneity. "The design of Canton Embroidery drawings is largely unrestricted: the creation is spontaneous, and the images are generally arranged in a fuller way, emphasizing festivity and liveliness". The vibrant, full compositions catered to the public's aesthetic preference for complexity. Traditional Canton Embroidery also often featured religious or auspicious themes, such as lion dances or patterns symbolizing blessings and good fortune. Popular designs included "Birds toward the Phoenix," "Peony and Phoenix," "Pine and Crane," "Deer and Crane in Spring" and "Peacock in Flowering Screen," all of which reflected the folk belief in good luck and happiness (Hu & Lei, 2019).

As demand for Canton Embroidery grew domestically, industry guilds were established. In the 58th year of Qianlong's reign (1793), Guangzhou founded an embroidery guild—Jinxiu Hang—with a refined division of labor. This allowed for innovation and adaptation to market changes, ensuring Canton Embroidery remained relevant and evolving with the times. The development of Canton Embroidery as a commercial product mirrored the history of modern capitalist mass production in China.

Facing Western markets, Canton Embroidery was the first to become closely associated with modern commerce and trade. To meet overseas demand, Canton Embroidery and other traditional Chinese embroidery styles integrated more Western artistic elements, such as a focus on the background depiction, perspective, and light refraction. This led to the use of brighter colors and a flashier aesthetic. As the Maritime Silk Road expanded during the Ming and Qing dynasties, Canton Embroidery evolved into a unique fusion of Chinese and Western art styles, blending Western painting techniques with traditional Chinese brush painting. Techniques like "using light and shadow to express three-dimensionality and perspective to show depth and distance" became common (Hu & Lei, 2019). This integration not only enhanced Canton Embroidery's expressive power but also made it more appealing to Western tastes.

Through the establishment of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), UNESCO has emphasized the key role of intangible heritage in promoting cultural diversity, enhancing social cohesion, and maintaining of sustainable social development. In contemporary society, Canton Embroidery serves as both a bridge between the past and future and as an important medium for global cultural exchange and mutual understanding. As a unique cultural resource and handicraft with deep roots in both traditional Chinese culture and local characteristics, Canton Embroidery should be integrated into the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road development strategy. Its participation will not only promote economic growth and regional integration along the maritime trade routes, but also facilitate cultural exchange and mutual learning between different civilizations.

4. The Heritage and Export Path of Canton Embroidery in the Context of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road

Canton Embroidery has a rich history along the ancient Maritime Silk Road. In the history of cultural exchanges between China and the West, Canton Embroidery has served as an indispensable "ambassador" for fostering cross-cultural communication. In the construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, this intangible cultural heritage (ICH), represented by Canton Embroidery can play a vital role by promoting multi-level and multi-channel interactions between China and the countries along the route, helping to establish a harmonious and win-win international relations, that foster mutual respect and shared prosperity among different cultures.

In terms of foreign exchanges, it is crucial to fully utilize the common cultural symbols of China and the West, such as those carried by Canton Embroidery on the ancient Silk Road, to establish cross-cultural platforms that strengthen humanistic ties between countries along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. This would promote the interaction of Chinese and Western cultures for mutual prosperity. For example, the creation of ICH cultural innovation zones based on the shared cultural memory of the ancient Maritime Silk Road has been proposed. These zones could establish cultural cooperation organizations, hold regular cultural exchanges and conferences, and vigorously develop the cultural industry system (Ma & Xu, 2019).

The inheritance and development of the traditional art are indispensable in promoting ICH, like Canton Embroidery, in the context of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Although Canton Embroidery was once known as "China's gift to the West" for its unique aesthetics and decorations, contemporary technology has posed significant challenges to its traditional production process. The complex techniques of Canton Embroidery face the risk of being lost due to a lack of inheritors—an issue common to many ICH traditions.

Firstly, modern lifestyles have made the inheritance and preservation of ICH programs more challenging. For instance, many young people are more inclined to pursue modern lifestyles and entertainment, showing less interest in traditional folk arts and skills.

Secondly, as noted in the UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (2003), safeguarding ICH relies on strengthening its links with communities, groups and individuals (UNESCO, 2003, Article 2). In the context of globalization, it is complex to protect ICH characterized by local features, while preserving cultural diversity. Alongside developing appropriate policies and legislation to protect these heritages, innovative methods and technologies should be employed to document and disseminate these intangible cultural assets. Moreover, there should be a deeper understanding of global standards to enhance the safeguarding and transmission of this valuable heritage (Stefano et al., 2012).

The current Canton Embroidery cultural and creative products largely follow traditional design ideas, lacking the innovation and modern elements required to attract contemporary consumers, particularly younger generations. "Existing Canton Embroidery cultural creations mainly follow traditional thinking patterns, making it difficult to capture consumers' attention" (Yi, 2024).

However, with globalization, opportunities still exist to continue passing down the ICH represented by Canton Embroidery. With the improvement of living standards and the growth of cultural consumption, demand for traditional culture is increasing. By developing distinctive ICH products and services, this demand can be met, further promoting the inheritance of ICH and contributing to the economy. For instance, the cultural platform of the Maritime Silk Road could offer both online and offline experiences of Canton Embroidery and other ICH, creating unique multi-sensory immersive experiences that attract younger generations to the charm of Canton Embroidery. Additionally, Guangdong's rich cultural heritage of the Maritime Silk Road could be leveraged to foster collaboration between universities in Guangdong and those in other countries along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, facilitating research in the humanities and social sciences while cultivating a pool of ICH talents (Jiang, 2024).

Canton Embroidery, as a representative of ICH in the marketplace, should focus on innovative design and the reconstruction of modern life. By integrating modern design and technological advancements, Canton Embroidery can develop cultural and innovative products with both contemporary appeal and market competitiveness. This integration can inject new vitality into Canton Embroidery, while also providing fresh inspiration for modern design and other fields. For instance, cross-border techniques could merge Canton Embroidery with modern decorative painting art, preserving the bright colors and traditional patterns while contrasting them with the simpler colors and styles of modern decorative art (Chen, 2024). The high efficiency and accuracy of digital technology could also be harnessed to innovatively reconstruct Canton Embroidery's traditional patterns and colors, blending cultural symbols of ICH with modern aesthetics to achieve a "living inheritance" in daily necessities.

In terms of marketing, a strategy combining ICH with e-commerce, online and offline, could be adopted to promote Canton Embroidery through short videos, live broadcasts, and social platforms. This approach would help increase consumers' understanding and appreciation of ICH. E-commerce platforms could also facilitate the sale of ICH products, integrating marketing efforts to boost both heritage preservation and market growth (Wu & Hu, 2024).

5. Conclusion

Canton Embroidery, a treasure of Lingnan culture, not only integrates the artistic aesthetics of China and the West but also plays an essential role in fostering mutual understanding between civilizations and contributing to shared cultural memory. Its historical legacy offers valuable insights and inspiration for the construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Canton Embroidery's influence in overseas markets, particularly its historical popularity in Western societies and its reciprocal impact on China after being embraced by the West, has facilitated both the circulation of goods and the deepening of cultural understanding. Through Canton Embroidery, China's traditional craftsmanship has been merged with Western aesthetic principles to create a unique artistic style. The spread of this style has helped build harmonious and mutually beneficial international relations, enhancing mutual respect and appreciation among different civilizations.

In contemporary times, Canton Embroidery should continue to serve as a cultural bridge, providing new opportunities for Guangdong—and China's ICH more broadly—to go global. By deepening cultural exchanges among countries along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, Canton Embroidery can strengthen both national unity and cultural confidence while fostering shared cultural memory and cultural community between China and the West. Through Canton Embroidery, the power of traditional ICH transcends time and space, connecting past and the future, East and West.

References

Chen, H. (2024). Innovative Design and Performance of Modern Cantonese Embroidery Subjects under Cross-border Integration. Design (09), 35-38. [In Chinese: 陈贤昌. (2024). 跨界融合下现代粤绣题材创新设计与表现.设计 (09),35-38.]

Hu, D. & Lei, D. (2019). Aesthetics of Traditional Cantonese Embroidery. Beijing: China Light Industry Press. [In Chinese: 胡大芬 & 雷动.(2019).传统广绣美学. 北京: 中国轻工业出版社.]

Jiang B. (2023). A Peek at the Maritime Silk Road. Secretarial work (11), 73-76.[In Chinese:姜波.(2023).海上丝绸之路管 窥.秘书工作(11),73-76.]

Jiang, Y. (2024). Implications of the Ancient Maritime Silk Road for the Construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Western Journal (14), 22-25. [In Chinese: 姜越. (2024). 古代海上丝绸之路对"21 世纪海上丝绸之路"建设 的启示.西部学刊 (14), 22-25.doi:10.16721/j.cnki.cn61-1487/c.2024.14.039.]

Lan H.(2018). Historical Development and Cultural Qualities of Canton Embroidery. Lingnan Literature and History (02), 72-76+80. [In Chinese: 蓝海红.(2018).广绣的历史发展与文化特质.岭南文史(02),72-76+80.]

Ma, J. & Xu, H. (2019). Cultural Interaction and the Construction of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road in Guangdong. Jinan Journal (Philosophy and Social Science Edition) (05), 72-83. [In Chinese:马建春 & 徐虹.(2019).文化互动与 广东"21 世纪海上丝绸之路"建设.暨南学报(哲学社会科学版)(05),72-83.]

Sun, P. (2007). History of Chinese Embroidery. Beijing: Beijing Library Press. [In Chinese: 孙佩兰. (2007). 中国刺绣史. 北 京：北京图书馆出版社.]

Stefano, M. L., Davis, P., Corsane, G., Denes, A., Cummins, A., Dixey, A., ... & Bedekar, V. H. (Eds.). (2012). Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Boydell and Brewer.

Tang, K. & Tian, Y. (2024). Mid-Qing trade between China and the West and the history of the Thirteen Houses of Guangzhou as reflected in the Spanish manuscript Argot's Diary of the Guangzhou Merchants' House. Studies in Qing History (03), 1-21. [In Chinese: 汤开建 & 田一言.(2024).西班牙文手稿阿戈特《广州商馆日记》所反映的清代中期中 西贸易和广州十三行史料.清史研究(03),1-21.]

Tang Z. (2021). 17th-19th Century "Chinese Style" Textiles and Intercultural Communication between East and West (Master's thesis, Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology). [In Chinese: 唐子璇.(2021).17-19 世纪"中国风"纺织品 与东西方跨文化交流研究(硕士学位论文,北京服装学院).]

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2003). Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. https://www.unesco.org/en/legal-affairs/convention-safeguarding-intangible-cultural-heritage

Wu, Ch., Zhang Ch. & Hu, L. (2024). A study on the marketing strategy of "non-legacy + e-commerce" of Guangqiu embroidery stores on Jittery platform. China Collective Economy (01), 105-108. [In Chinese: 伍洲言,张传芹 & 胡 玲玉.(2024).抖音平台上广绣店铺的"非遗+电商"营销策略研究.中国集体经济(01),105-108.]

Ye Y. (2024). Bibliometric-based visualization and analysis of the broad embroidery knowledge graph. Heritage Identification and Appreciation (06), 107-111. [In Chinese: 叶茵怡.(2024).基于文献计量的广绣知识图谱可视化分析.文物鉴 定与鉴赏(06),107-111.]

Exploring Chinese Economic Discourse and Translation Strategies in the Era of AI: A Digital-Tech Approach

Junchao WANG

Journal Department of GDUFS, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, E-mail: 201510091@oamail.gdufs.edu.cn

Abstract

Chinese economic discourse, often underexplored, serves as a comprehensive reflection of the country's economic reforms and national governance system, while also epitomizing China's unique developmental trajectory. This paper employs a digital-tech approach to conduct an in-depth analysis of the database from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* (Vols. I to III), investigating the linguistic characteristics of Chinese economic discourse and its translation strategies. The objective is to provide strategic insights for the global dissemination of this discourse. Through both quantitative and qualitative analyses, the study identifies key terms such as "people," "reform," "opening-up," "development," and "security" that are prevalent in Chinese economic discourse. Additionally, it reveals that the discourse is rich in conceptual metaphors and culture-specific metaphorical expressions. Furthermore, the findings highlight the significant role that artificial intelligence can play in interpreting and promoting this discourse internationally.

Key Words: Chinese Economic Discourse, ChatGPT, digital-tech approach, post-editing, AIPE, global dissemination

1. Introduction

In the wave of globalization, the advent of the era of artificial intelligence presents unprecedented opportunities and challenges for China's national discourse analysis and its translation. Chinese economic discourse is not only a comprehensive reflection of China's economic reforms and national governance system but also a concentrated demonstration of the experiences and successes derived from China's developmental path. It encompasses a wide range of topics, including economic policies, reform and development, socio-cultural issues, and ecological civilization, forming an integral part of China's national discourse. However, due to the unique nature of China's political system and the prevalent depiction of Chinese politics by mainstream international media, Chinese economic discourse is often marginalized in international communication and fails to fully showcase its unique value and appeal. With the significant enhancement of China's international status and comprehensive national strength, countries around the world, particularly developing nations, have shown a keen interest in drawing lessons from China's remarkable economic achievements. This not only provides a vast platform for the international dissemination of Chinese economic discourse but also raises higher demands for the translation strategies associated with it. Therefore, this study aims to adopt a digital humanities and translation studies perspective to conduct an in-depth analysis of the database of "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China (Vols. I-III)," exploring the linguistic features of Chinese economic discourse and its translation strategies. The goal is to provide strategic guidance for the global dissemination of Chinese economic discourse.

2. Literature Review

With the enhancement of China's comprehensive strength and the elevation of its international status, the dissemination of Chinese national discourse—both domestically and internationally—has attracted significant attention from scholars in both China and abroad. This has emerged as a new perspective and a hot topic in the study of "China." Research on domestic and international dissemination has evolved from a focus on domestic communication to the construction of international discourse power, with much of the international research examining China from political and diplomatic dimensions.

2.1 Research within China

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the construction and interpretation of the Chinese political discourse system, as well as its international dissemination, have received high-level national attention (Wang & Zhang, 2017; Qin & Kong, 2019; Xun, 2019; He, 2020; Zhang, 2022; Zhang & Zhang, 2024). According to China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), there have been a total of 1,685 research papers over the past 70 years related to the translation and dissemination of Chinese political discourse/texts/literature. Over half of these focus specifically on the translation of political works by Party and state leaders (i.e., 864 papers). The primary research perspectives include studies on the types of Chinese political discourse from the viewpoint of discourse genres, interpretations of Party and state leaders' discourse within a hermeneutic framework, linguistic features of Chinese

political discourse from a linguistic standpoint, and translation studies of Chinese political discourse from the perspective of communication and translation.

From the perspective of communication studies, research has focused on both the intrinsic translation (e.g., translating from Chinese to ethnic minority languages) and the interlingual translation (e.g., Chinese to English, Chinese to Japanese), including studies on external translation dissemination strategies, translator decision-making, translation norms, and international acceptance or effectiveness (Si & Zeng, 2021; Zhao & Zhao, 2022; Wang, 2023a).

In terms of textual data, most studies focus on *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China*. Existing research often centers on issues related to the language and translation of specific volumes of the book, addressing topics such as metaphor translation, classical allusions, classical poetry and prose, subtexts, community of shared future for mankind, idioms, causative sentences, cognates, pragmatic markers, terminology standardization, culture-loaded terms, diplomatic discourse styles, euphemisms, and China-specific terminology (e.g., Zhang, 2020). Many studies leverage theoretical perspectives such as translation studies on external propaganda translations, German functionalism, post-editing, ecological translation studies, relevance theory, narratology, and reception theory to discuss translation strategies, methods, and principles related to the transformation, rephrasing, explicit strategies, creative translation, foreignization, and interpretation of Chinese political and diplomatic discourse (e.g., Zhong & Fan, 2018). However, research driven by corpora in the context of external propaganda translation remains scarce, with notable exceptions such as Ye and Zhu (2022) and Wang (2023a).

These diverse studies provide valuable insights, particularly reflections and suggestions for the international dissemination of Chinese political discourse within communication studies (Guo, 2020). However, research within China is largely constrained by modern Western disciplinary boundaries, with few scholars systematically exploring the translation publication and international dissemination of Chinese economic reform discourse from interdisciplinary or digital humanities perspectives (Wang & Li, 2024). There is a pressing need for research focused on the significance of Chinese economic reform discourse and the construction of its international discourse system.

2.2 Overview of International Research

According to the Web of Science (WOS) database, international research on Chinese political discourse began later and remains relatively sparse. Sydney (1998) highlighted the identity construction issues concerning ethnic minorities within Chinese political discourse, drawing academic attention. Since the 21st century, international political and cultural researchers have increasingly discussed themes such as democracy, gender, development, environment, diplomacy, the "Belt and Road Initiative," and territorial issues from a post-colonial perspective (Demirtepe & Ozertem, 2013; Noesselt, 2016; Goron, 2018; Bertulessi, 2024). However, very few studies have examined the international role of Chinese economic discourse (exceptions include Munyrith & Jiatai, 2020). The relevant works published by Chinese scholars internationally primarily belong to the linguistic domain, focusing on corpus-driven political discourse analysis or research on translation strategies (Wang, 2017; Chen, 2020; Wu & Cheng, 2022; Pan & Wang, 2021).

Research combining the fields of publishing dissemination and translation studies is extremely rare. Furthermore, the international translation studies community has begun to pay attention to the recent hot topics concerning the translation and dissemination of Chinese political discourse, even dedicating special sections for calls for papers, such as the theme for *The Translator* in 2024.

International research is gradually transitioning from cross-cultural perspectives to interdisciplinary studies, which is significant in providing guidance and promoting progress. However, much of it tends to deconstruct Chinese political discourse and distort the image of its leaders from a Western discourse framework, often leading to a narrow focus that fails to recognize the international publication and dissemination of economic discourse within the Chinese political discourse system. Consequently, this has hindered the formation of theories, strategies, or methods intended to guide the dissemination of economic discourse and China's reform experiences.

3. Language Features and Translation Strategies of Chinese Economic Discourse

By collecting bilingual corpora from *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China (Volumes I to III)*, we established a parallel database comprising over one million Chinese characters and more than 700,000 English words. These three volumes include 79 significant works (arranged in 18 chapters) from Xi Jinping published between November 15, 2012 and June 13, 2014, 99 important works (in 17 chapters) from August18, 2014 to September 29, 2017, and 92 important works (in 19 chapters by topic) from October 18, 2017 to January 13, 2021.

3.1 Keywords in Chinese Economic Discourse

In the era of big data and artificial intelligence, we can conduct comprehensive and systematic visual analysis of the Chinese economic discourse database by adopting the data-digital approach (Wang, 2023b). The total word tokens for Volumes I to III are 753,318 and 481,751, respectively. The high-frequency words are summarized in Table 1.

Table1. High-Frequency Words in the Bilingual Database

Chinese Corpus			English Corpus		
Rank	Word	Freq.	Rank	Word	Freq.
1	人民	2085	1	people	2129
2	国家	1653	2	China	2057
3	经济	1518	3	development	1999
4	社会主义	1334	4	Party	1823
5	问题	1293	5	Chinese	1636
6	社会	1185	6	work	949
7	政治	1054	7	reform	883
8	制度	1037	8	economic	821
9	全面	997	9	system	695
10	世界	980	10	build/s/ing/built	636
11	特色	851	11	CPC	604
12	领导	788	12	security	489
13	体系	683	13	culture/al	458
14	群众	641	14	growth	456
15	思想	553	15	need	451
16	文化	552	16	leadership	419
17	精神	506	17	interests	404
18	道路	392	18	economy	392
19	生态	383	19	progress	391
20	法治	366	20	long	384
21	事业	366	21	develop	359
22	政策	358	22	opening	337
23	机制	339	23	market	311
24	科技	332	24	innovation	310
25	市场	328	25	peace	290
26	政府	301	26	poverty	260
27	深化	287	27	environment	232
28	风险	279	28	education	217
29	利益	273	29	stability	205
30	力量	265	30	resources	200

Using an online word frequency statistics tool (https://www.lzltool.cn/word-frequency), we can visualize the high-frequency words to understand the topics present in the economic discourse of the original texts. This visualization aligns closely with Table1, indicating that the high-frequency content words in Chinese economic discourse include: people, socialism, economy, country, issues, system, comprehensive, characteristics, leadership, system, spirit, path, reform, mechanism, development, deepening, stability, and resources among others.

Figure 1. Visualization of High-Frequency Words in Chinese Economic Discourse

3.2 Rhetoric and Translation Strategies of Chinese Economic Discourse

Chinese economic discourse features distinctive Chinese expressions, terminological specificity, metaphorical usage, allusions, poetic qualities, and Xi Jinping's particular wording style. Consequently, it embodies a high degree of economy, literary quality, philosophical depth, and experiential insight into China's economic development. Due to space constraints, we will focus on metaphorical expressions within the economic discourse found in the database, employing AI to compare the translations of professional translators with those generated by AI to explore how technology can better serve the international dissemination of Chinese economic discourse in the AI era.

(1) Keywords of Chinese Economic Discourse: Reform

China's national discourse system has undergone significant shifts, evolving through revolutionary discourse, construction discourse, and reform discourse. The reform discourse is a central reflection of China's economic development (Wang & Li, 2024). Metaphor is a commonly used rhetorical strategy in articulating Chinese economic discourse, allowing for a vivid conveyance of the implications of economic policies and development ideas, thereby exerting a more powerful and far-reaching persuasive effect on readers. By exploring the database, we can identify a plethora of metaphors utilized to explain core terms in Chinese economic discourse, including "reform" (e.g., deep water zone, tackling tough battles, hard nuts to crack, opening green lights, etc.), "development" (e.g., dual-wheel, dual wings, new normal, new track, baton, quality revolution, artisan spirit, supply-side reform, etc.), "innovation" (e.g., mass innovation, sharp blade), "regulation" (e.g., fine-tuning, expansive stimulus, strategic resolve, targeted regulation, timely regulation, precision regulation, "six ensures" and "six guarantees," etc.), "ecology" (e.g., declaring war on pollution, building a beautiful China, "green mountains and clear waters are as valuable as mountains of gold and silver," blue sky defense war, "five-in-one" strategy, scientific policymaking, treatment of both symptoms and root causes, strong-armed governance, green consumption, carbon peak, carbon neutrality), and "outcomes" (e.g., building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, targeted poverty alleviation, lifting out of poverty, designation of poverty alleviation efforts, rural revitalization, sustained efforts).
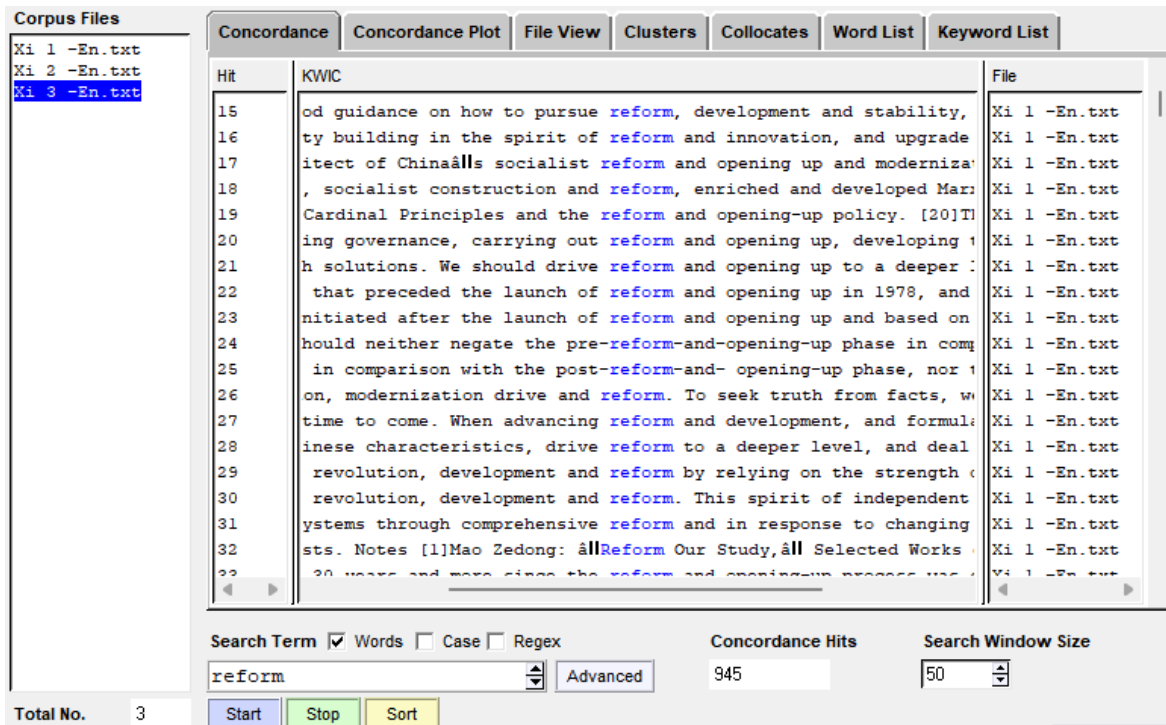
Figure 2. Visualization of Keywords in Chinese Economic Discourse: Reform

In the Chinese database of Volumes I to III, "深化改革" (deepening or furthering reform) appears 210 times, while "reform" appears 883 times in the English database, with occurrences of 425, 260, and 260 in Volumes I, II, and III, respectively. This keyword is concentrated in the early parts of each volume but runs throughout the economic discourse of the text. By further analyzing its collocates, we encounter the following constructs:

- **Verb + reform**: drive ... to a deeper level, promote ... in all respects, continue ... in all areas, carry out, launch, advance, further, achieve, support, center on, initiate, carry forward, uphold, introduce, keep on, uphold, ensure, push forward, integrate, seek, extend, adopt, etc.

- **Noun phrases**: Reform and Opening up, the reform and opening-up policy, the reform and opening-up initiative, the reform and opening-up drive, the reform and opening-up move, the reform and opening-up effort, the reform and opening-up period, the reform and opening-up process, the pre-reform-and-opening-up phase, the post-reform-and-opening-up phase, reform and development, reform and innovation, etc.

- **Adj. + reform**: comprehensive, progressive, systematic, integrated, coordinated, economic, structural, social, financial, supply-side, SOE (state-owned enterprise), all-round, continuous, continued, overall, deeper, profound, etc.

Figure 3. Concordance Plot of the Keyword "reform"

(2) Conceptual Metaphor Network of "Reform"

Contemporary metaphor studies generally propose that metaphors are not just rhetorical devices enriching language expression but are crucial cognitive modes underlying human thought (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Chinese economic discourse contains rich metaphorical expressions that vividly describe and elucidate the nuanced meanings behind China's economic reform and development. By "close reading" the context of the 883 occurrences of "reform" in the database, we can derive a collection of conceptual metaphors related to the discourse of "reform": ∑REFORM IS X = {REFORM IS ACTION, REFORM IS TRAVELLING, REFORM IS MARCHING, REFORM IS SAILING, REFORM IS DRIVING, REFORM IS GRAZING, REFORM IS FLYING, REFORM IS PLAYING, REFORM IS GARDENING, REFORM IS BATTLING, REFORM IS EATING, REFORM IS ILLNESS, REFORM IS NAILING, ...}.
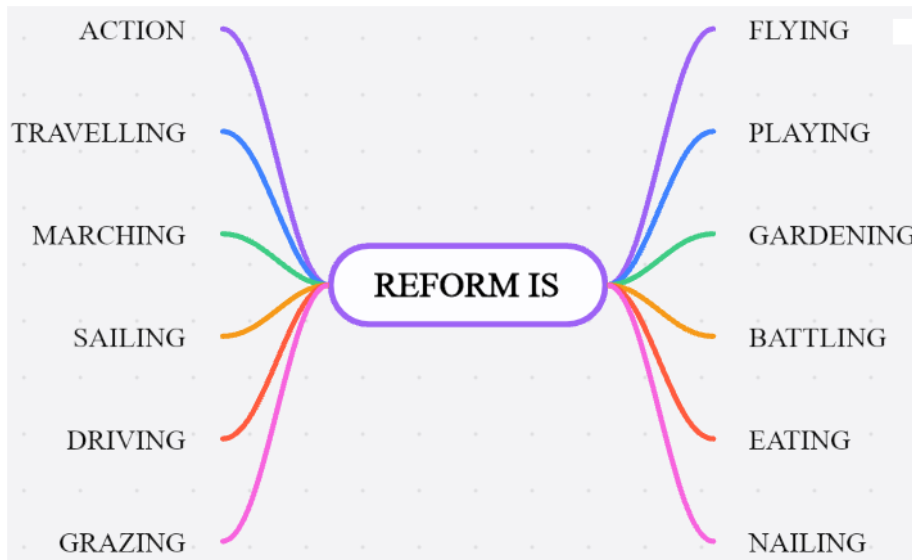

Figure 4. The Conceptual Metaphor Network of Reform

(3) Metaphorical Expressions and Translation Comparison

In Chinese economic discourse, the rhetoric of "reform" contains both shared conceptual metaphors between Chinese and English and unique metaphorical expressions within its specific context. We contend that universally shared conceptual metaphors are relatively easy to understand and translate, and AI can provide appropriate translations. However, for metaphorical expressions that are unique to the context of Chinese reform and culture, AI can assist in enhancing our understanding and rendering of the source texts from Xi Jinping: The Governance of China (Xi, 2014, 2017, 2020).

> Source text 1: 改革开放只有进行时、没有完成时。(习近平，2018)
> Source text 1 Romanized: gǎi gé kāi fàng zhǐ yǒu jìn xíng shí, méi yǒu wán chéng shí.
> Target Text: Reform and Opening up is always ongoing and will never end. (Xi, Vol. I)
> AI ChatGPT-4o: Reform and opening-up is an ongoing process, never a completed one.
> AIPE: China's reform and opening-up is an ongoing process rather than a completed one.

Here, the conceptual metaphor of "REFORM IS ACTION" is applied, making the source text easy to understand. Both versions effectively capture the intended meaning and convey it clearly. However, the official translation (TT$_1$) is slightly softer and more nuanced in terms of the tone, as the AI translation highlights a more gradual and developmental perspective. By post-editing it, we can produce a refined version, i.e., the AIPE version.

Source text 2: 中国改革已进入深水区，可以说，容易的、皆大欢喜的改革已经完成了，好吃的肉都吃掉了，剩下的都是难啃的硬骨头。(习近平，2018)

Source text 2 Romanized: zhōng guó gǎi gé yǐ jìn rù shēn shuǐ qū, kě yǐ shuō, róng yì de, jiē dà huān xǐ de gǎi gé yǐ jīng wán chéng le, hǎo chī de ròu dōu chī diào le, shèng xià de dōu shì nán kěn de yìng gú tou.

Target Text: China's reform is sailing in uncharted waters with tough challenges. It can be said that the easy part of the job has been done to the satisfaction of all. What is left are tough bones that are hard to chew. (Xi, Vol. I)

AI ChatGPT-4o: China's reforms have entered deep waters. It can be said that the easy and widely welcomed reforms have already been completed; the good and juicy parts have been consumed, and what remains are the tough bones that are hard to chew.

AIPE: China's reforms are navigating challenging waters. It can be said that the easy and widely supported reforms—akin to the juicy parts—have been completed, leaving behind the tough bones that are hard to chew.

Compared with the official translation, the AI version stays closer to the original meaning while maintaining clarity and flow; it effectively captures the metaphor of undertaking a challenging phase of reforms, making it accessible to and resonate well with a broader readership. However, considering the sentence structure of AI translation is a bit repetitive and redundant, we post-edit into a refined version.

Source text 3: 在推进这"四个全面"过程中，我们既要注重总体谋划，又要注重牵住"牛鼻子"。(习近平，2017)

Source text 3 Romanized: zài tuī jìn zhè "sì gè quán miàn" guò chéng zhōng, wǒ men jì yào zhù zhòng zǒng tǐ móu huà, yòu yào zhù zhòng qiān zhù "niú bí zi".

Target Text: In implementing this strategy, we should attend to both general planning and specific, critical problems. (Xi, Vol. II)

AI ChatGPT-4o:"In promoting these 'Four Comprehensives,' we must focus on overall planning while also paying attention to key points."

AIPE: In promoting these "Four Comprehensives," we must strike a balance between the broader picture and the finer details.

Comparatively speaking, both the official and AI translations lose the metaphorical depth of the original text, and thus are less poetic. By looking in the dictionaries and chat with AI, the original metaphor can be rendered into "cut off the head of the snake" or "take the bull by the horns", both of which are slightly different from the nuanced meaning underlying the source text. By adopting a more balanced and metaphorical approach, we post-editing the AI translation into a more metaphorical expression that conveys a sense of diligence in planning while also focusing on critical aspects.

Source text 4: 中国对外开放，不是要一家唱独角戏，而是要欢迎各方共同参与；不是要谋求势力范围，而是要支持各国共同发展；不是要营造自己的后花园，而是要建设各国共享的百花园。(习近平，2017)

Source text 4 Romanized: zhōng guó duì wài kāi fàng, bú shì yào yī jiā chàng dú jiǎo xì, ér shì yào huān yíng gè fāng gòng tóng cān yù, bú shì yào móu qiú shì lì fàn wéi, ér shì yào zhī chí gè guó gòng tóng fā zhǎn, bú shì yào yíng zào zì jǐ de hòu huā yuán, ér shì yào jiàn shè gè guó gòng xiǎng de bǎi huā yuán.

Target Text: China's opening up is not a one man show; it welcomes joint efforts from other countries; it is not a fight for spheres of influence, or a means of building a "garden" in its own backyard, but to support the common development of all countries or build a "park" that can be shared by the international community. (Xi, Vol. II)

AI ChatGPT-4o: China's approach to opening up to the outside world is not about staging a one-man show, but rather inviting all parties to participate; it is not about seeking spheres of influence, but supporting the development of all countries; it is not about creating its own exclusive backyard, but building a garden shared by all nations.

The AI version not only vividly conveys the metaphors, but also reproduces the tone and intention of the original text, that is, by repeating the "not about, but rather" structure thrice, it expresses the original text's reaffirmation of the purpose of China's reform with a serious tone.

Source text 5: 要拿出抓铁有痕、踏石留印的韧劲，以钉钉子精神抓好落实，确保各项重大改革举措落到实处。(习近平，2020)

Source text 5 Romanized: yào ná chū zhuā tiě yǒu hén, tà shí liú yìn de rèn jìn, yǐ dìng dīng zi jīng shén zhuā hǎo luò shí, què bǎo gè xiàng zhòng dà gǎi gé jǔ cuò luò dào shí chù.

TT5: In the spirit of "leaving a mark in the iron tools we clutch and footprints in the stones we tread", we should resolve problems with force and tenacity as a hammer drives a nail, and ensure that all major reform measures are implemented to the letter. (Xi, Vol. III)

AI ChatGPT-4o: We must demonstrate the perseverance of leaving marks even on stones and the resolve to see things through, applying a spirit of dedication similar to driving a nail into wood to ensure that all major reform initiatives are effectively implemented.

Here, the AI translation is disadvantaged in terms of preserving the original imagery, formality, and tone. The official version worked out by the translation team not only maintains the original imagery and metaphors, but also creates a serious and formal tone, thus effectively communicating the seriousness of the message regarding reform and the necessary perseverance.

4. Conclusion

With the development of globalization and the continuous advancement of artificial intelligence technology, the translation and international dissemination of Chinese national discourse have increasingly attracted widespread attention in academia. Nevertheless, research on the external promotion of Chinese economic discourse remains relatively scarce. In the context of the digital humanities era, we are capable of conducting more in-depth analyses of the linguistic features, rhetorical strategies, and translation methods of Chinese economic discourse through data visualization, providing new perspectives and approaches for enhancing its international dissemination.

This paper establishes a comprehensive database of Chinese economic discourse and employs both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods to visualize and explore the key characteristics of this discourse. We systematically analyze the core keywords of Chinese economic discourse, the conceptual metaphor network of reform discourse, and metaphorical expressions. Additionally, this paper compares the strengths and weaknesses of official translations and AI-generated translations, revealing the significant auxiliary role that artificial intelligence plays in understanding and optimizing the translation of Chinese economic discourse. AI can not only improve the efficiency of translation but also help us better grasp the complex economic discourse and its underlying cultural meanings.

Looking ahead, as China's international status continues to rise, the learning and imitation of China's economic development experiences by various countries, especially developing nations, will become increasingly profound. To more effectively disseminate Chinese economic discourse, future research can be done by integrating the strengths of digital technology and the humanities, continuing to explore how to systematically and scientifically enhance external translation and dissemination strategies. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration will also serve as an essential means of promoting the international dissemination of Chinese economic discourse. By deeply integrating the humanities with information technology, we can better communicate China's unique economic development concepts and enhance their influence and recognition on a global scale. Therefore, in-depth research and practical application of the translation and dissemination strategies for Chinese economic discourse will provide strong support and guarantees for us to address the problems occurred in the process.

Declarations and Acknowledgment:

References

Bertulessi, C. (2024). Terminology, popularisation and ideology in contemporary China. *Terminology*, 30(1), 58-80.

Chen, J. (2020). Analysis and Application of Translation Strategies for China-Specific Terminology in the English Translation of The Governance of China. In *Proceedings of the 6th International Symposium on Social Science* (ISSS2020). Beijing Language and Culture University, (8). DOI:10.26914/c.cnkihy.2020.011166.

Demirtepe, T., & Ozertem, S. (2013). China's Soft Power Strategy vis-a-vis Increasing Threat Perceptions: Policies and Limitations. *BILIG*, (65), 95-118.

Gee, S. C., & Shy, P. F. (2020). Future Expectations for China: Book Review of the Third Volume of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China. *China Report ASEAN*, 5(10), 60-61.

Goron, C. (2018). Ecological Civilisation and the Political Limits of a Chinese Concept of Sustainability. China Perspectives, 4(SI), 38-51.

Guo, Z. (2020). New challenges and innovative strategies for China's external communication. *External Communication*, (1),13-15. [In Chinese: 郭镇之. (2020).中国对外传播面临的新挑战及创新对策.对外传播]

He, Y. (2020). The authoritative work on the latest developments of Xi Jinping's Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era - Study of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China Volume III. *Study Monthly*, (8), 4-7. [In Chinese: 何毅亭. (2020).习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想最新发展成果的权威著作——学习《习近平谈治国理政》第三卷.学习月刊]

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Munyrith, C. (2020). Insights on China's Governing Philosophy: A Cambodian Translator on Xi Jinping: The Governance of China. *China Report ASEAN*, 5(9), 54-55.

Munyrith, C., & Jiatai, M. (2020). China's Experience of Reform and Opening up and Poverty Alleviation is a Great Treasure for the World: On Studying and Reading Xi Jinping: The Governance of China. *International Understanding*, (Z2), 69-72.

Noesselt, N. (2016). Chinese Discourses on Democracy: Governance imaginations in the national and international context. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, (51), 535

Pan F., & Wang, B. (2021). Is interpreting of China's political discourse becoming more target-oriented? A corpus-based diachronic comparison between the 1990s and the 2010S. Babel-Revue Internationale De La Traduction-International *Journal of Translation*, 67(2), 222-244.

Qin, H., & Kong, L. (2019). An analysis of the overall status of the overseas dissemination of Chinese political discourse. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching*, 40(4), 21-34. [In Chinese: 秦洪武&孔蕾. (2019).中国政治话语海外传播总体状况分析.山东外语教学]

Si, X., & Zeng, J. (2021). Translation of external political discourse: principles, strategies, and effectiveness - A case study of the English translation of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China. *Shanghai Translation*, (2),18-24 .[In Chinese: 司显柱&曾剑平. (2021). 对外政治话语翻译:原则、策略、成效——以《习近平谈治国理政》的英译为例.上海翻译]

Wang, J. (2017). Representations of the Chinese Communist Party's political ideologies in President Xi Jinping's discourse. *Discourse & Society*, 28(4), 413-435.

Wang, J. (2023a). A ChatGPT-driven Study of Translating and Post-editing Chinese Enterprise Publicity Materials. *Modern Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics*, (2), 7-17.

Wang, J. (2023a). Tapping into the Present Political Translation and Editing in China: Problems and Pathways as Reported by Multi-players. *International Journal of Chinese and English Translation & Interpreting*, (3), 1-18.

Wang, J. (2023b). A Cognitive Comparison Analysis of Chinese and American Corporate Names Based on Python: A Study on the Restructuring of Corporate Image under the Digital-tech Approach. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, 31(4), 106-111. [In Chinese: 王俊超. (2023). 基于 Python 的中美企业名称认知对比分析——翻译数智论下企业形象重构研究. 西安外国语大学学报]

Wang, J., & Li, M. (2024). Brand transcreation as multimodal configuration: The (re)making of text, context, and meaning in brand semiotics. *Babel-Revue Internationale De La Traduction-International Journal of Translation*, 70(1-2): 89-110.

Wang, L., & Li, Z. (2024). The Connotation, Theoretical Basis, and Research Focus of Chinese-style Economic Discourse. *Foreign Language and Literature*, 40(5), 17-27. [In Chinese: 王立非&李昭. (2024).中国式经济话语的内涵、理论基础与研究重点. 外国语文]

Wang, S., & Zhang, W. (2017). On the cognitive construction of China's political discourse system: A case study of Xi Jinping's two speeches in Switzerland in2017. *Journal of Nanjing Normal University (Social Science Edition)*, (5), 146-153. [In Chinese: 汪少华&张薇. (2017). 论中国政治话语体系的认知建构——以习近平 2017 年瑞士两场演讲为例.南京师大学报(社会科学版)]

Wu, Z., & Cheng, Le. (2022). Exploring Metaphorical Representations of Law and Order in China's Government Work Reports: A Corpus-based Diachronic Analysis of Legal Metaphors. *Critical Arts-South-North Cultural And Media Studies,* 36(5-6), 96-112.

Xi, J. (2018). *Xi Jinping: The governance of China (Vol.1).* Beijing: Foreign Languages Press. [In Chinese: 习近平. (2018). 习近平谈治国理政. 外文出版社]

Xi, J. (2017). *Xi Jinping: The governance of China (Vol.2).* Beijing: Foreign Languages Press. [In Chinese: 习近平. (2017). 习近平谈治国理政. 外文出版社]

Xi, J. (2020). *Xi Jinping: The governance of China (Vol.3).* Beijing: Foreign Languages Press. [In Chinese: 习近平. (2020). 习近平谈治国理政. 外文出版社]

Xun, Q. (2019). Elements of traditional culture in Xi Jinping's thoughts on ecological civilization. *Journal of Fujian Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, (6), 1-9+167. [In Chinese: 郇庆治. (2019).习近平生态文明思想中的传统文化元素.福建师范大学学报(哲学社会科学版)]

Ye X., & Zhu P. (2022). Research on the Japanese Translation of Homographs in Political Literature Based on Corpora: A Case Study of Volume One of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China. *Journal of Tianjin Foreign Studies University*, 29(4), 62-74+112. [In Chinese: 叶栩邑&朱鹏霄. (2022).基于语料库的政治文献中日同形词日译研究——以《习近平谈治国理政》第一卷为例. 天津外国语大学学报]

Ye, X., & Zhu, P. (2022). A corpus-based study of homographs in political literature: A case study of Volume I of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China. *Journal of Tianjin Foreign Studies University*, 29(4), 62-74+112. [In Chinese: 叶栩邑&朱鹏霄. (2022). 基于语料库的政治文献中日同形词日译研究——以《习近平谈治国理政》第一卷为例.天津外国语大学学报]

Zhang, G. (2022). "Concept creation" in international communication: A political discourse analysis of Xi Jinping's foreign speeches (2012-2021). *Journal of Journalism and Communication Research*, 29(3), 5-18+126. [In Chinese: 张广昭.(2022).国际传播中的"概念创造"——基于习近平涉外演讲文本的政治话语分析(2012-2021).新闻与传播研究]

Zhang, M., & Zhang, W. (2024). A dual examination of the effects of political discourse translation in China: translator expectations and reader feedback - A case study of the English translation revision of the core concept "self-revolution" in Xi Jinping: The Governance of China. *Foreign Language Research*, 41(4), 82-87. [In Chinese: 张泪&张威. (2024).中国政治话语译介效果的译者期待与读者反馈双重检验研究——以《习近平谈治国理政》核心概念"自我革命"英译修订为例.外语研究]

Zhang, W. (2020). A study of Korean translation strategies for Xi Jinping's use of classical references from a narratological perspective. *Cultural Studies Journal*, (7), 189-191. [In Chinese: 张婉仪. (2020). 叙事学视域下习近平用典的韩译策略研究.文化学刊]

Zhao, X., & Zhao, C. (2022). A study on translator decision-making and subjectivity in the English translation of Chinese political discourse. *Foreign Language Teaching Theory and Practice*, (4), 11-21. [In Chinese: 赵祥云&赵朝永. (2022).中国特色政治话语英译中的译者决策及其主体意识研究.外语教学理论与实践]

Zhong, H., & Fan, W. (2018). Characteristics and interpretation of Xi Jinping's diplomatic discourse style. *Shanghai Translation*, (3), 46-51. [In Chinese: 钟含春&范武邱. (2018).习近平外交话语风格特点及传译研究.上海翻译]

Research on an Integrated Translation Teaching Model Based on *The Governance of China Database*: A Case Analysis of the President of GDUFS's Speech to Freshmen

Jie LÜ

School of English for International Business, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, E-mail:1833904290@qq.com

Abstract

The Governance of China Database (*The Database*) is a comprehensive platform for both research and teaching. This paper establishes an integrated teaching model based on the principles of Embodiment-Cognition-Construction, leveraging *The Database* to enhance translation education. With the aid of *The Database*, students can access numerous reference examples to refine their translations of a speech delivered to freshmen by the President of GDUFS. Both the model and *The Database* are applicable to similar discourse translations.

Keywords: Teaching Model; *Governance of China Database*; Embodiment-Cognition-Construction

1. Introduction

Contemporary translation teaching must meet various educational objectives: beyond improving students' translation skills, it should also foster ideological and political awareness. It should align with the "three entries" (curriculum, textbooks, and classrooms) to help students deepen their understanding of national development, become familiar with national discourse, and enhance their ability to share China's stories effectively. The English translations of *Xi Jinping: The Governance of China* (hereinafter referred to as *The Governance*), published from 2018 to 2022, have attracted considerable interest in translation studies. According to Zhou and He (2023), research on *The Governance* primarily explores translation strategies, methods, and the handling of specific language phenomena, with limited application in teaching.

An Integrated platform of Multilingual Database of Xi Jinping: The Governance of China[1] (hereinafter referred to as *The Database*), developed by the Institute of Corpus Research at Shanghai International Studies University, serves as a high-level database for state political discourse. Since the release of version 2.0 in June 2022, university teachers have actively explored methods for integrating the Database into their teaching. However, current practices and research indicate that the application is still suboptimal, as most teachers have not yet found the most effective way to incorporate it.

2. Translation Teaching Based on *The Database*

The Database comprises a Corpus, a Knowledge Base, and a Literature Base, with the multilingual parallel corpus being its most essential component. Bilingual parallel corpora aid students in understanding source texts and translating them more fluently into target languages (Zanettin, 1998). Second language learners often lack familiarity with national discourse, a gap the *Understanding Contemporary China* textbook series aims to address. When translating texts reflective of Chinese contemporary discourse, students often struggle with comprehension and expression. The abundant language data and examples in *The Database* help students overcome these difficulties.

Wang (2004:28) argues that corpus tools are particularly valuable when translating from one's mother tongue into a foreign language. He also notes that parallel corpora can facilitate the search for specific translation strategies, enhancing accuracy, authenticity, and providing multiple translation options that go beyond what bilingual dictionaries offer. One of *The Database*'s primary goals is to support translation education. Li and Hu (2021:87), developers of *The Database*, assert that "Through observation and analysis of extensive language data, students improve through self-discovery and self-exploration" and that it "provides more data support for teaching political text translation, allowing for a more objective and scientific approach to language teaching." *The Database* should therefore provide robust support for translation instruction.

There are two main approaches to incorporating *The Database* into translation education: directly applying the platform content in teaching or using the platform as tools in a more tool-oriented approach. The former approach is straightforward—for example, the "Teaching Module" within *The Database* offers translation strategies and techniques, such as conversion, domestication, specification, omission, perspective change, alienation, addition, and more. The "Terminology Library" and

---

[1] http://imate.cascorpus.com

"Allusion Library" in the Knowledge Base can also serve as translation course materials. However, this method tends to be criticism-oriented, and the platform's limited case selection can make the teaching process monotonous, reducing both teachers' and students' enthusiasm.

Teachers should emphasize the second approach: toolizing *The Database* and embedding it into teaching. Research in this area remains sparse. For instance, Wang and Liu (2023) built a corpus based on *The Governance* and applied it in teaching, guided by constructivist teaching theory and using a scaffolding model for Chinese-English translation instruction. Zhang (2023) developed an ideological and political approach in translation courses based on *The Database* by integrating content with language instruction. To effectively toolize *The Database*, it is necessary to combine specific teaching philosophies and designs to achieve holistic integration.

3. An Integrated Teaching Model

3.1 Theoretical Bases

With extensive teaching experience, the author has developed an integrated teaching model of "Embodiment-Cognition-Construction," grounded in experiential philosophy, cognitive linguistics, and constructivism. These three theoretical foundations have been combined to guide translation teaching and studies. For instance, Zeng (2011, 2013) proposed an Embodiment-Constructivism Model, suggesting that constructivism requires experiential cognitive perspectives to reveal the essence of translation across language, thought, and mind, with the two theories having complementary effects. Wang (2021) proposed Embodiment-Cognition Theory, asserting that translation is a cognitive activity based on multiple interactions. Translators thoroughly understand the meanings expressed in the original text, which relate to both the real and cognitive worlds, and use various methods to map these meanings into the target language, constructing and conveying them through creative imitation. This paper aims to integrate experiential philosophy, cognition, and constructivism into a unified model.

3.1.1 Experiential Philosophy

The experiential philosophy in teaching originates from cognitive linguistics (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999) and emphasizes learning through experience and reflection. It focuses on practical, hands-on activities to enhance understanding and skill development. As Zeng (2013:63) states, human experience of the world relies on the senses, each with specific experiential perceptiveness. In translation teaching, this approach can be implemented by incorporating real-world translation tasks, simulations, and interactive exercises, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts. Experiential learning activities help students improve their translation skills, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and cultural awareness. This approach also promotes active engagement and collaboration, creating a more immersive and effective learning experience in translation education.

3.1.2 Cognition

Cognition involves the mental processes of acquiring, processing, storing, and using information, including perception, attention, memory, language, problem-solving, decision-making, and reasoning. Researchers in cognitive psychology study how individuals perceive, think, and remember, aiming to understand the mechanisms and structures underlying these processes. Wang (2007:583) emphasizes that translation is grounded in multiple interactive cognitive activities. In translation, efforts should be made to outline both the real and cognitive worlds that the author seeks to depict. Cognitive science draws from psychology, neuroscience, linguistics, philosophy, and computer science to explore mental functions and information processing. Tan (2012) suggests that teachers should guide students to use various cognitive tools and resources to reconstruct meaning across diverse textual contexts, highlighting the importance of cognition in translation teaching.

3.1.3 Constructivism

Constructivism likens learning to the process of building or constructing (Fox, 2001:23). Learners develop knowledge about the world and build cognitive structures through environmental interaction. The psychological and cognitive development of learners is influenced by social factors, with the environment playing a critical role in their growth. Huang (2013:70) suggests that a comparable corpus contains texts in two or more languages within the same domain, enabling teachers to select texts that stimulate students' interest according to specific teaching tasks. Constructivist teaching encourages teachers to create authentic contexts that meet each student's learning needs in every new situation, turning them into facilitators of learning and addressing students' diverse needs (Green & Gredler, 2002:59-61). Educators should foster a conducive learning environment, inspire student enthusiasm, guide exploratory learning, and enhance knowledge acquisition. The learning process includes context, negotiation, conversation, and meaning construction.

3.2 Teaching Design

To effectively integrate *The Database* into translation teaching, it is essential to select texts similar to the discourse system. Teachers should enhance their understanding of national leaders' discourse and actively gather relevant language materials.

The author has focused on identifying suitable teaching content, with high-quality language materials being key to utilizing *The Database* effectively and sparking students' interest in translation. The 2022 speech delivered to freshmen by the President of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies serves as an ideal teaching material—its relevance to campus life resonates with students, enhancing engagement. Four paragraphs, totaling 1,059 words, are selected, with each paragraph approximately 250 words. Students work in groups of four, with 4–6 groups based on class size. For classes with more than four groups, paragraphs can be translated multiple times to allow peer comparison.

A flipped classroom model is employed: students first complete the translation task in groups, and in class, the teacher compares, analyzes, and revises their translations with reference to *The Database*. For example, in the four parallel classes taught by the author in 2023, differences appeared in the translations produced by different classes. This paper selects and compares representative student translations, summarizing and explaining these differences during discussions.

3.3 An Integrated Model of Embodiment-Cognition-Construction

This paper proposes an integrated model grounded in the theories and teaching design discussed above. The model can be visualized as follows:
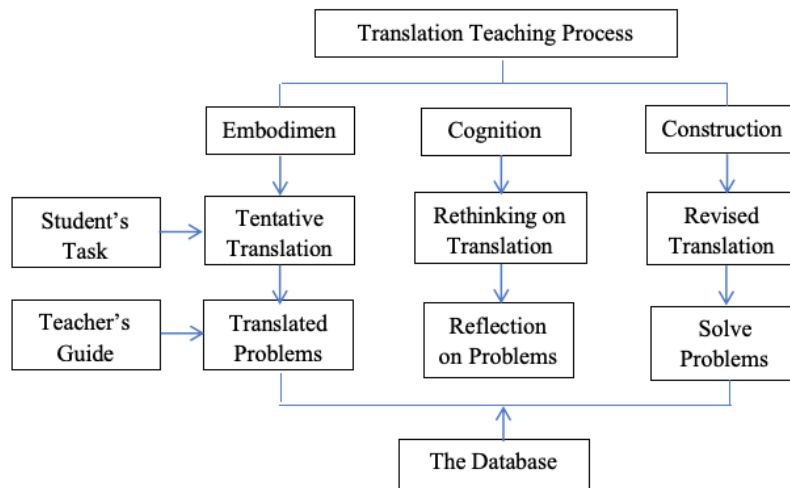

Diagram 1: An Integrated Model of
Embodiment-Cognition-Construction in Translation Teaching

In the first stage, students enter the *Embodiment* phase, where they experience the translation process and challenges by working on a translation exercise of the president's speech. They create a tentative translated version in small groups. When encountering translation difficulties, they may consult dictionaries, search online, or discuss with teammates.

In the second stage, students move into the *Cognition* phase. Here, the teacher introduces *The Database* and demonstrates examples relevant to their translation. These examples help students reassess their translations and reflect on specific translation issues.

In the third stage, students enter the *Construction* phase, where they address translation problems and revise their translations with guidance from the teacher and support from *The Database*.

The three stages are interconnected, with significant interaction between students and the teacher throughout.

4. Case Analysis

4.1 Translating Quotes Using *The Database* Directly

Students often lack familiarity with language resources and national discourse. Research shows that even when students are aware of *The Database*, they seldom actively use it in translation practice. Some sentences in the president's speech are direct quotes from *The Governance*, and *The Database* provides "ready-made" translations for these. By showcasing these translations, students gain a more profound understanding of the usage and context of these quotes. This approach leaves a lasting impression and reinforces their learning.

Table 1. Translation Examples Directly Quoted from *The Database*

No.	Source Text	Student's Version	Database
Example 1	志不立，天下无可成之事。 Zhì bù lì, tiānxià wú kě chéng zhī shì.	Ambition does not stand, nothing can be achieved.	Without resolve, one can accomplish nothing.
Example 2	青年理想远大、信念坚定，是一个国家、一个民族无坚不摧的前进动力。 Qīngnián lǐxiǎng yuǎndà, xìnniàn jiāndìng, shì yīgè guójiā, yīgè mínzú wú jiān bù cuī de qiánjìn dònglì.	Teenagers with giant ambition and strong belief are the invincible motive power of a country and a nation.	Young people with great ideals and firm beliefs are the driving force that builds an invincible nation .
Example 3	奋斗是青春最亮丽的底色...... Fèndòu shì qīngchūn zuì liànglì de dǐsè......	Struggle is the most vibrant backdrop of youth...	Hard work paints a bright backdrop for a young life.
Example 4	大学之道，在明明德，在亲民，在止于至善。 Dàxué zhī dào, zài míngmíng dé, zài qīn mín, zài zhǐ yú zhì sh àn.	The way of university study lies in enlighten the brilliant virtue, making intimate association with people, and striving to attain the highest accomplishment.	The way to great learning is to manifest bright virtue and to treat the people as one 's own family , thereby arriving at supreme goodness .

The above four sentences selected from the speech have been quoted from *The Governance* and can be easily searched from *The Database*. Compared with the version from *The Database*, students' version are problematic in grammar, diction or style. Since students translated these sentences tentatively, they are pleased to learn the well-translated version from *The Database*.

4.2 Translating Words and Phrases by Referring to The Database

Translation example 5.

Source text: 一是希望你们以理想照耀未来，做"眼中有光"的新时代广外人。

Source text Romanized: Yī shì xīwàng nǐmen yǐ lǐxiǎng zhàoyào wèilái, zuò "yǎn zhōng yǒu guāng" de xīn shídài guǎngwài rén.

Target text （Student's Version）：The first is to hope that you will ***illuminate*** the future with ambition and become GDUFSers of the new era with "***light in the eyes***".

Referential Examples from *The Database*

Source text: 我相信......在星星火炬的照耀下，在党的阳光的沐浴下，为实现中华民族伟大复兴的中国梦时刻准备着。

Source text Romanized: Wǒ xiāngxìn...... zài xīngxīng huǒjù de zhàoyào xià, zài dǎng de yángguāng de mùyù xià, w ǒ shíxiàn zhōnghuá mínzú wěidà fùxīng de zhōngguó mèng shíkè zhǔnbèi zhe.

Target text: I believe you have made yourselves ready to realize the Chinese Dream, ***guide*** by your flag of the star and torch.

Source text: 理想之光不灭，信念之光不灭 。

Source text Romanized: Lǐxiǎng zhī guāng bù miè, xìnniàn zhī guāng bù miè.

Target text: The light of our ideal will not go out and the ***light*** of our faith will not go out.

Revised version for example 5.

Source text: 一是希望你们以理想照耀未来，做"眼中有光"的新时代广外人。

Target text: First，I hope your future can be ***guided*** by your ideals and you grow up into a new generation of GDUFSers with "***light in your eyes***".

Translation example 6.

Source text: 理想信念是你们的立身之本。

Source text Romanized:

Target text （Student's Version): ***Ambition and belief*** are the ***cornerstones*** of your standing.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 第一，广大青年一定要坚定<u>理想信念</u>。
Source text Romanized: Guǎngdà qīngnián yīdìng yào jiāndìng lǐxiǎng xìnniàn.
Target text: First，young people must be firm in your ***ideals and convictions*** .

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 实体经济是一国经济的<u>立身之本</u>,......
Source text Romanized: Shítǐ jīngjì shì yīguó jīngjì de lìshēn zhī běn,......
Target text: The real economy is the very ***foundation*** of an economy,...

Revised version for example 6.
Source text: <u>理想信念</u>是你们的<u>立身之本</u>。
Target text: ***Ideals and convictions*** are the ***foundation*** of your life.

The student's version has some problems in translating "理想信念" and "立身之本"。 After the teacher showed them some examples containing the above four-character phrases, she also revised the translated version. In this case, students can learn the approach of applying *The Database.*

Translation example 7.
Source text: 有了<u>理想信念</u>这个"<u>压舱石</u>"和"<u>主心骨</u>"，<u>青春岁月就不会像无舵之舟漂泊不定</u>，求学之路才能从容自信。
Source text Romanized: Yǒule lǐxiǎng xìnniàn zhè ge "yā cáng shí" hé "zhǔ xīn gǔ", qīngchūn suìyuè jiù bù huì xiàng wú duò zhī zhōu piāobó bù dìng, qiúxué zhī lù cái néng cóngróng zìxìn.
Target text （Student's Version): With ambition and belief as the "***ballast stone***" and "***backbone***", youths will not drift aimlessly, and the journey of pursuing knowledge will be self-assured and confident.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 中美两国合作好了，就可以做世界稳定的<u>压舱石</u>、世界和平的助推器。
Source text Romanized:
Target text: Good China - US cooperation will serve as an ***anchor*** for global stability and a booster for world peace.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 在应对国内外各种风险和考验的历史进程中始终成为全国人民的<u>主心骨</u>,.......
Source text Romanized: Zhōng-Měi liǎng guó hézuò hǎo le, jiù kěyǐ zuò shìjiè wěndìng de yā cáng shí, shìjiè hépíng de zhù tuīqì.
Target text: ...always act as the ***backbone*** of the Chinese people in its historic response to domestic and international risks and tests of all kinds.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 青年志存高远，就能激发奋进潜力，<u>青春岁月就不会像无舵之舟漂泊不定。</u>
Source text Romanized: Qīngnián zhì cún gāoyuǎn, jiù néng jīfā fèn jìn qiánlì, qīngchūn suìyuè jiù bù huì xiàng wú duò zhī zhōu piāobó bù dìng.
Target text: High ambitions can stimulate your potential to forge ahead, so that ***you will not drift aimlessly like a boat without a rudder***.

Revised version for example 7.
Target text: With *ideals and convictions* as your ***anchor*** and ***backbone***, you will be confirmed with confidence on your way of study ***without drifting aimlessly like a boat without a rudder***.

Translation example 8.
Source text: 不懈奋斗是你们的<u>动力</u>之源。
Source text Romanized:Bù xiè fèndòu shì nǐmen de dònglì zhī yuán.

Target text （Student's Version): Persistent endeavor is the source of your ***motivator***.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 让勤奋学习成为青春远航的**动力**......
Source text Romanized: Ràng qíndiligōngxué chéngwéi qīngchūn yuǎnháng de dònglì......
Target text: You should make assiduous learning a ***driving force***...

Revised version for example 8.
Target text: The unremitting endeavors would be the source of your ***driving force***.

Many examples can be identified in this category. From students' version, we can find that they may misunderstand the phrases in source text and translate them improperly. In Example 6, student's version for "压舱石"is "ballast stone", which is a literal translation. Yet the referential example from *The Database* translate it into "anchor". The replacement of the metaphor, on one hand can keep the vividness of the speech and the other hand, is a more idiomatic expression in English world. Considering the following up clause "青春岁月就不会像无舵之舟漂泊不定", the word "anchor" make the whole sentence more coherent. In the process of teaching, the teacher shows the students the referential examples, tells them how to use the examples and helps them revise their translated version.

4.3 Translating Sentences by Referring to The Database
When we cannot find direct quotations or phrases from *The Database*, we can also refer to it with some sentence structures or patterns.

Translation example 9.
Source text: ......**不负**韶华，**不负**时代，**不负**人民，在青春的赛道上奋力奔跑，**书写**新时代广外人心系家国、担当奉献的青春**华章**。
Source text Romanized: ...... bù fù sháohuá bùfù shídài, bù fù rénmín, zài qīngchūn de sàidào shàng fènlì bēnpǎo, shūxiě xīn shídài guǎngwài rén xīn xì jiāguó, dāndāng fèngxiàn de qīngchūn huá zhāng.
Target text （Student's Version): ...***live up to*** the youth, ***live up to*** the times, and ***live up to*** the people, run hard on the track of youth, ***write the youth chapter*** of 'GDUFSers' caring for our country, and taking on the responsibility of dedication.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 我们要**不负**人民重托、无愧历史选择......
Source text Romanized: Wǒmen yào bù fù rénmín zhòng tuō, wú kuì lìshǐ xuǎnzé......
Target text: We must ***live up to*** the trust the people have placed in us and prove ourselves worthy of history's choice.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: 在为人民利益的不懈奋斗中**书写**人生**华章**！
Source text Romanized: Zài wèi rénmín lìyì de bù fù fèndòu zhōng shūxiě rénshēng huá zhāng！
Target text: ....and ***write a vivid chapter*** in your tireless endeavors to serve the interests of the people.

Revised version for example 9.
Target text: I hope you can ***live up to*** the youth, ***live up to*** the times, and ***live up to*** the people. Run vigorously on the track of the youth and ***write a vivid chapter*** of patriotism and dedication presented by new GDUFSers.

Translation example 10.
Source text: ......做**有德行、知敬畏、明底线、守规则**之人。
Source text Romanized: ...... zuò yǒu déxíng, zhī jìngwèi, míng dǐxiàn, shǒu guīzé zhī rén.
Target text （Student's Version): You should ***advocate moral character, yearn for kindness, respect your own personality, to be a person who have virtue, know reverence, clear bottom line, observe discipline***.

Referential Examples from *The Database*
Source text: ......培育**知荣辱、讲正气、作奉献、促和谐**的良好风尚。
Source text Romanized: ..... péiyù zhī róng rǔ, jiǎng zhèngqì, zuò fèngxiàn, cù héxié de liánghǎo fēngshàng.
Target text: ...and cultivate the social trends of ***recognizing honor and disgrace, practicing integrity , encouraging dedication and promoting harmony***.

Revised version for example 10.

Target text: Being a person of having virtues and merits, knowing what to respect, clarifying the bottom line, and obeying rules and regulations.

In these two examples, the teacher presents students with similar sentence structures or patterns. This method can also effectively enhance students' awareness of parallel texts.

5. Conclusion

With the assistance of *The Database*, both teaching and learning have improved. The integrated model of *Embodiment-Cognition-Construction* proves effective for both teachers and students. For teachers, it enables them to enhance their own knowledge while teaching. For students, it provides a means to find suitable reference examples and revise their translations. The teaching model and methods discussed in this paper are applicable in similar translation classes. As mentioned above, *The Database* is a comprehensive and resourceful platform that requires further exploration for more applications in both teaching and research.

References

Green, S.K.& Gredler M. E. (2002). A Review and Analysis of Constructivism for School-based Practice. *School Psychology Review*, (1): 53-70．

Huang, Y. P. (2013). Translation Teaching under the Perspective of Constructivism. *Foreign Language World.* (06):65-71. [In Chinese:黄远鹏.(2013).建构主义视阈下的翻译教学.外语界.]

Fox R. (2001). Constructivism Examined. *Oxford Review of Education*，(1): 23-35.

Lakoff G ＆ Johnson M．(1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press．

Lakoff G ＆ Johnson M. (1999). *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and Its Challenge to Western Thought*. New York: Basic Books．

Li, X.Q．＆ K. B. Hu (2021). Construction and Application of Multilingual Parallel Corpus of "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China". *Foreign Language Electronic Teaching*, (03):83-88+13.[In Chinese: 李晓倩,胡开宝. (2021). 《习近平谈治国理政》多语平行语料库的建设与应用.外语电化教学.]

Ministry of Education Higher Education Teaching Guidance Committee (Ed.), 2018, *National Standards for the Quality of Undergraduate Programs in Regular Higher Education Institutions (Part I)* . Beijing: Higher Education Press. [In Chinese: 教育部高等学校教学指导委员会（编）(2018).《普通高等学校本科专业类教学质量国家标准（上）》.北京：高等教育出版社.]

Tan, Y. S. (2012). A Cognitive Linguistic Perspective in Translation Teaching. *Foreign Languages World.*(03): 66-73+88. [In Chinese: 谭业升 2012). 翻译教学的认知语言学观. 外语界.]

Wang, H. T. ＆ Q. Liu. (2023). Exploration of the Teaching Mode of Chinese Discourse Translation Based on Two Parallel Corpora - Taking the Translation Teaching of "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China" as an Example. *Foreign Languages Research*, 9(03):66-75. [In Chinese: 王洪涛,刘倩. (2023). 基于两个平行语料库的中国特色话语翻译教学模式探索——以《习近平谈治国理政》汉英翻译教学为例.外国语文研究.]

Wang, K.F. (2004). The Application of Bilingual Parallel Corpus in Translation Teaching. *Foreign Language Electronic Teaching*, (06):27-32. [In Chinese: 王克非. (2004). 双语平行语料库在翻译教学上的用途.外语电化教学]

Wang Yin. (2007). *Cognitive Linguistics*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. [In Chinese: 王寅. (2007). 认知语言学．上海外语教育出版社.]

Wang, Y. (2021). Theoretical Construction and Practical Application of Embodied Translation Studies. *Chinese Translators Journal*.42(03):43-49+191. [In Chinese:王寅. (2021). 体认翻译学的理论建构与实践应用.中国翻译]

Xiong, B. (2015). Research on Translation Teaching Mode Based on English-Chinese Bilingual Parallel Corpus. *Foreign Languages World,* (04):2-10.[In Chinese: 熊兵. (2015). 基于英汉双语平行语料库的翻译教学模式研究.外语界]

Zeng, L. S. (2013). Exploration of the Experience-Construction Integrated Teaching Model - Innovation Report on Undergraduate Translation Teaching. *Foreign Languages World*, (01):62-71. [In Chinese: 曾利沙. (2013). 体验—建构融通式教学模式探索——本科笔译教学创新实验报告.外语界]

Zeng, L. S. (2011). Concept and Methodology of Experience-Construction Integrated Translation Teaching - On the Interaction between Context Parameters and Experience-Construction. *Journal of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies*, 22(04):75-80. [In Chinese: 曾利沙. (2011). 体验-建构融通式笔译教学法理念与方法论——兼论语境参数与体验-建构的互动性.广东外语外贸大学学报]

Zhang, J. (2023). Construction of an Integrated Translation Curriculum Ideological and Political Teaching Model. *Contemporary Foreign Language Studies*, (02):106-112+123. [In Chinese: 张静. (2023). 融合式翻译课程思政教学模式的建构.当代外语研究]

Zhou X. L. & S. H. He. (2023). Visualized Analysis of Translation Research on "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China (2015-2022) . *Foreign Languages and Translation*, 30(02):9-16+98. [In Chinese: 周小玲,何思慧. (2023).《习近平谈治国理政》翻译研究的可视化分析（2015—2022）.外语与翻译]

Zanettin, F. Bilingual comparable corpora and the training of translators. *Meta*, 43(4): 616–630.

An Analysis of the Current Situation of Hong Kong City Image Communication on YouTube and Research on Strategies

Zhe ZHANG

Guangzhou College of Commerce, Guangdong, China email: 20122022@gcc.edu.cn

Abstract

This research takes the Hong Kong city promotional videos released by China International Television (CGTN) on the YouTube platform as the research object, aiming at exploring the unique performance, influencing factors, and improvement strategies of this promotional videos in international communication. In this paper, Python software was used to obtain the comment data of Hong Kong city's international promotional videos on YouTube platform, and combined with the methods of word frequency measurement and text analysis, semantic network was analyzed. Then a response strategy is proposed from the 5W communication theory (communication subject, communication content, communication channel, communication audience and communication effect). This research focuses on the Hong Kong city promotional videos released by China Global Television Network (CGTN) on the YouTube platform. The study aims to explore the unique characteristics, influencing factors, and potential improvement strategies for these promotional videos in the context of international communication. Using Python, the comment data from these videos on YouTube was collected and analyzed through methods such as word frequency measurement and text analysis. A semantic network analysis was also conducted. Based on the findings, a response strategy is proposed using the 5W communication theory, addressing the communication subject, content, channel, audience, and effect.

Keywords: Hong Kong; city image; international communication; semantic network; affective tendency; 5W communication theory

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Research

A good national image influences the construction of cities and the establishment of their image, and the image of cities feeds the national image in the same way.

The 2016/2017 State of China's Cities Report proposes to plan the future of China's cities with a global vision, not only the development of global cities will affect the country's world influence and popularity, but also every city that wants to find a place in the forest of the world reconstructs people's imaginations and perceptions of the country and the city(Guo, Chen &Du, 2018). Especially since China hosted the Olympic Games in 2008, people's attention to the image of the city has become higher and higher, and the world's attention to Chinese cities can not be ignored, the construction and development of China's national image and the need for image shaping of each city has become more and more urgent.

As the number of global Internet users continues to grow, the flourishing of international online social media provides more space for city image communication. As the Internet enters the Web 2.0 era, the global social media platforms represented by YouTube, Twitter and Facebook have become the main positions for international social activities to 'happen' and 'speak out'. YouTube is undoubtedly the world's largest video sharing platform with more than 1 billion visits per month, and it is one of the six social media platforms with the largest number of visits from overseas, which means that presenting the national image and the city's image on the YouTube platform creates a complete communication chain of the city's image in an all-rounded, multi-level and deep pattern, and has a forward-looking effect on the presentation of the city's hardware facilities, living environment, humanistic style and spiritual delicacies. It has a forward-looking role and irreplaceable value for showing the city's hardware facilities, living environment, humanistic style and spiritual delicacy.

1.2 Significance of the Research

Hong Kong, as an international metropolis, the communication of its city image is not only about economic benefits, but also about the display of cultural soft power. However, the current status of city image positioning and communication is still vague and needs to be further explored. Hong Kong ranks first in *the Report on Building Overseas Communication Power of Chinese Cities in 2021*, which has certain research value in terms of its influence as well as the strength and scope of its

communication (Beijing, 2022). However, the current status of Hong Kong's city image communication on YouTube is all vague, thus requiring a deeper investigation. The study finds that by investigating and exploring the communication status of Hong Kong's international city image on YouTube, and summarizing the international communication ideas of Hong Kong's city image accordingly, it is also inspiring and useful for the external communication of such cities. Therefore, this study is of great practical significance and application value. Through the in-depth analysis of the current situation of Hong Kong's city image communication on YouTube, this paper expects to provide relevant policy makers and practitioners with scientific theoretical basis and practical guidance, with a view to better shaping and communicating Hong Kong's city image in the new media era.

1.3 Research Theory

In *The Structure and Function of Social Communication*, Lasswell constructively put forward the '5W' model of communication, namely 'who', 'says what', 'in which channel', 'to whom', 'with what effect', 'with what effect', 'in which channel', 'to whom', 'with what effect', and 'with what effect'. ', 'in which channel', 'to whom', 'with what effect'，with what effect'. These five elements explain the complete process of communication and play a fundamental role in the subsequent research of communication (Gao, 2008). This paper explores the main body of urban image communication on YouTube, clarifies who is communicating Hong Kong's urban image, and with the prosperity of social media, the range of communicators is also expanding, and then analyses in detail the content of the urban image, which also contains invisible emotional factors and is the presentation of the communicator's attitudinal tendencies. YouTube, as a channel for the communication of Hong Kong's urban image, provides a platform for the publicity of domestic and foreign cities. YouTube, as a channel for Hong Kong's city image to be disseminated, provides a platform for the city to promote itself to the outside world, and the city can make use of the diversified forms of communication in social media to increase the readability of the message, and the forms of communication are also a part of the 'media analysis' extended by the 5W model. YouTube is used by users from all over the world, thus expanding the range of recipients of the city's image in general, and the communicators are also the recipients, and the two are increasingly connected, with the effect of the communication mainly reflected in the degree of attention to the message, the degree of recognition, and the effect of diffusion. Compared with the unidirectional linear communication of the 5W model, the powerful commenting and retweeting functions provided by social media platforms, such as YouTube, increase the feedback link, which is conducive to the 'reproduction' of information content by communicators.

1.4 Innovations

Literature research reveals that there is a considerable amount of literature on city image research, but the research perspective mainly focuses on domestic social media, especially the literature that examines the construction of city image by short videos, while the literature that examines the city's international image is relatively small; most of the literature within the scope of the current research only focuses on the international dissemination of the city's image in a general sense, so this paper conducts a quantitative and qualitative investigation of Hong Kong's city image on YouTube. This paper is a quantitative and qualitative study of Hong Kong's city image on YouTube, which not only enriches the academic exploration of the international communication of Hong Kong's city image, but also expands the research ideas and contributes thoughts or ideas to other studies on city image.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Sample Extraction

This paper uses python technology for data collection, and investigates and researches the current situation of Hong Kong's city image communication on YouTube through content analysis and case study.

This paper is based on the current situation of Hong Kong's city image communication on YouTube. Taking into account the fact that Hong Kong's ranking in the top one of the domestic cities regarding the influence of international communication and that there being a sufficient amount of data, the overall data selection is from the year of 2019 to the year of 2022. In this study, the Python tool was used to explore the data on YouTube about Hong Kong's city image from 11 October 2019 to 19 December 2022, with 'HongKong' as the keyword, to exclude the Chinese comment samples and focus on the overseas comment samples. Chinese comment samples and focusing on overseas comments, non-English samples (due to small data size and language recognition difficulties), and pure emoji, punctuation and other meaningless symbol samples. In the end, we obtained 100,852 valid audience comment data. The study mainly employs data text analysis and semantic network analysis methods, aiming to investigate the effectiveness of Hong Kong's city promotional videos in international communication as well as improvement strategies.

Table 1. CGTN Hong Kong's international dissemination data on YouTube platforms

Name of the data	First Release Date	Number of views	Number of likes	Number of comments
1. Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area (GBA): Internationalization and Integration-part 1	24th Nov. 2020	247,447	78	15074
2. Hong Kong youth in Shenzhen: Try the Greater Bay Area	22nd Jun. 2022	3,197	147	525
3. Hong Kong's New Era: Stories From After 1997 | CGTN Documentary	19th Dec. 2022	13,959	418	29434
4. Hong Kong youth, here is a Hong Kong history class	11th Oct. 2019	50,008	1287	21818
5. Hong Kong is Building a 2.5M Person City From Scratch	7th Dec. 2021	360,993	9892	18395
6. Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area (GBA): Internationalization and Integration-part 1	24th Nov. 2020	247,447	78	15606

2.2 Category construction

Based on the basic attributes of the YouTube platform and the two categories of concepts, namely the concepts given to communication texts by mass communication and the concepts such as emotions contained in communication texts (Deng, 2021:498), this study follows the rule that a complete YouTube text is a unit, and is based on four aspects, namely, user identity information, tweet content information, tweet interaction information, and tweet emotion information, according to YouTube's available information sources are encoded. The user identity information includes the user's positioning, identity and influence; the tweet content information contains the tweet content and multimedia information; the tweet interaction information is mainly about the dissemination effect, audience comments, including likes, comments, retweets, and audience comments on the Top5 texts; the tweet sentiment information is mainly related to the sentiment tendency, including positive, neutral and negative categories. The latest version 0.16.0 of TextBlob, an open source library based on the Python programming language, produces two values of 'Polarity' and 'Subjectivity'. The two values are 'Polarity (or positive and negative emotions)' and 'Subjectivity (subjectivity)', where a Polarity of 0 is neutral (neither positive nor negative), a positive value (maximum of 1 and greater than 0) is positive (i.e., love, liking, recommending, approving, admiring, worshipping, etc.), and a negative value (minimum of -1 and less than 0) is negative (i.e., resisting, antipathy, sarcasm, complaining, hatred, etc.), (i.e., resistance, antipathy, sarcasm, complaint, hatred, etc.). The above categories are basically in line with the 5W model and its extended theoretical content.

3. Analysis of the Current Status of Hong Kong City Image Communication on YouTube

3.1 Semantic Network Analysis of Overseas Audience Comments on Hong Kong Cities

After word frequency cleaning and statistical processing of overseas audience's comments on Hong Kong city promotional videos, we installed 'Java11 for Windows' and imported the data into the data visualization software 'Gephi 0.10.1' to draw semantic network maps based on co-occurring words and to summarize the main issues arising from overseas audience's comments on the sample documentaries. The data was imported into the data visualization software 'Gephi 0.10.1', and a semantic network diagram based on co-occurring words was drawn.
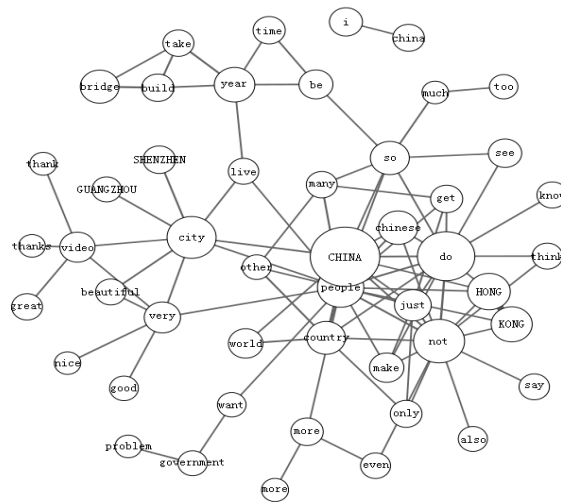
Figure 1. Semantic network diagram of the 'Hong Kong People, Events and Situations Discussion' framework.

In the network graph, there are several nouns that have the highest node degree values, they are 'people' 'China' 'city' 'do' 'not' 'Chinese' 'country' 'bridge' 'beautiful', and 'great'. The magnitude of the degree values of these nodes can be seen that the degree values of the nodes are not only related to the word frequency, but also consistent with the emotional tendency of the audience. This suggests that the comments are generally positive and more focused on the Hong Kong crowd. Moreover, the comments are not only limited to evaluating people and events in Hong Kong-related news events, but also cover broader topics such as government administration. The most important node word in the center is 'China', and the most closely related node word is 'people', with the word 'people' in the densest network relationship. The word 'people' is in the densest network relationship. This shows that Hong Kong's participation in the construction of the Greater Bay Area is beneficial to the local people, with the 'motherland' as the background for the construction.

3.2 Analysis of the Emotional Tendencies of Hong Kong City's Overseas Audience

In this paper, the sentiment annotation of the corpus based on the latest version 0.16.0 of TextBlob, an open-source library in Python programming language, produces two values of 'Polarity' and 'Subjectivity', where Polarity (sentiment value) of 0 means the sentiment is neutral (neither positive nor negative), and the sentiment value is positive (neither positive nor negative). The two values are 'Polarity (sentiment value)', where a Polarity of 0 is neutral (neither positive nor negative), a positive value (maximum 1 and greater than 0) is positive (i.e., love, like, recommend, approve, admire, worship, etc.), and a negative value (minimum -1 and less than 0) is negative (i.e., resistance, resentment, sarcasm, complaint, hatred, etc.), sarcasm, complaint, hatred, etc.). At the level of comment entries, the overall percentile values of the database for the proportion of positive entries, the proportion of negative entries, the proportion of neutral entries, and the proportion of subjective entries. The following results were obtained after importing nearly 2188 audience comments on Guangzhou city promotional films into the sentiment analysis runtime code: 56.7% of the entries with positive comments (Sentiment polarity>0); 30.94% of the entries with neutral attribute comments (Sentiment polarity=0); 30.94% of the entries with negative attribute comments (Sentiment polarity<0) accounted for 12.31%, and Subjective polarity<0) accounted for 73.11% (see Figure 2). It can be seen that overseas audiences' emotional responses to this Guangzhou city film are mainly positive and neutral, while there are also 12.31% of negatively inclined comments.
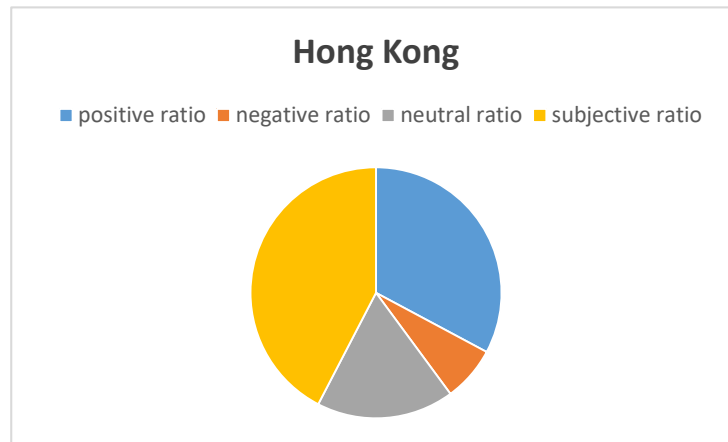
Figure 2: The emotional attitude towards the Guangzhou city promotional video

4. Strategies for Improving the International Image of Hong Kong Cities

Hong Kong city's international communication has not only gained favorable comments from overseas audiences, but also a certain proportion of negative comments, which indicates that there is still room for improvement in the relevant Hong Kong city's international communication work. Based on the above problems, the following improvement strategies are designed in a targeted manner.

4.1 Constructing a diversified outreach organization

YouTube is the world's leading video-sharing platform, and the dominant domestic voice in this field comes mainly from official media and a limited number of organizations and individual accounts. Nonetheless, there is a scarcity of Chinese media entities that are truly capable of exerting a wide-ranging communication effect and far-reaching influence on the international scene. Currently, the official-dominated communication model leads to a clear distinction between content and style, and this monolithic communication often leaves a question mark over the audience's acceptance of propaganda films. In order to break this pattern, we need to identify and motivate more civil society groups and individuals to enter into the creation and dissemination of promotional videos, and support those organizations that have the potential and strength to share more quality content (Green & Gredler, 2002:59-61). Particularly in the case of international communication of Hong Kong's city image, it is crucial to build a diverse group of communicators and to enhance the creative drive and capacity of all parties. Such a shift will not only drive more creative talents and organizations to join the cause of international communication of Hong Kong's and even China's culture, but also leverage on their unique perspectives and modes of expression to showcase Hong Kong's story to the world. On this basis, we should make unremitting efforts to broaden the horizons of the communicators, so that they are no longer confined to building up an image of Hong Kong or China, but extend to the whole grand blueprint of international communication. Cultivating such a body of communicators will ensure that we can build a more proactive image of China in the international arena, and create a group of international communicators who can convey China's voice and show China's style. This is a cultural self-renewal and a new chapter in conveying China's story to the world.

4.2 Constructing the Concept of a "Community with a Shared Future for Mankind": Content and Audience Model for Dissemination"

Against the backdrop of deepening global integration, the concept of building a 'community of human destiny' has become more and more crucial. This concept seeks to gradually dissolve cultural barriers between nations through the bonds of empathy and information exchange, and to expand mutual understanding and respect. Instead of pursuing total cultural assimilation, we should embrace diversity and the wisdom of 'harmony and difference'. Through the bridge of empathy, we can not only dispel irrational stereotypes, but also stimulate intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding（Franco& Ortiz, 2020). The 'community of human destiny' not only inherits the profound heritage of traditional Chinese culture, but also integrates the essence of the Western Enlightenment era's concepts of the supremacy of reason and sociability. The concept is not only a modern elaboration of ancient Chinese wisdom, but also a deep insight into the current structure of the 'nation-state'. It rejects the Western hegemonic approach whereby national power determines the map of influence, and advocates a new paradigm of international relations based on morality and justice - the 'Way of the King'. It encourages dialogue among nations on an equal footing, eschews confrontation and moves away from alliances to create a more coherent international community. China's adherence to the concept of 'community of human destiny' on the global stage not only demonstrates its

confidence in its national cultural heritage, but also reveals to all mankind a new way of resolving international disputes and cultural collisions. This innovative strategy of cultural diplomacy aims to promote the harmonious coexistence of global cultures, effectively resolve misunderstandings and stereotypes brought about by differences in history, culture and ideology, and contribute valuable strength to world peace and co-prosperity.

4.3 Building multi-dimensional communication channels

Although 'joint narratives' with a multitude of voices can compensate for the limitations of a single narrator, enrich the dimensions of communication, and enhance the effectiveness of international communication, they are still based on the perspective of 'I'（Bremer, Mayr, Schmidtner & Rutzinge，2016). However, a single 'self-report' is not enough to reach a global audience, and the techniques of 'endorsement' and 'voice-over' can compensate for this, enhancing the authenticity, trust and effectiveness of the message. The techniques of 'endorsement' and 'voice-over' can compensate for this and increase the authenticity, trust and impact of the message. For example, the overwhelming response to a documentary about the Greater Bay Area on YouTube, with 2.39 million views and thousands of comments, suggests that international audiences are open to and even appreciative of China's stories delivered through third parties, and are likely to place a higher degree of trust in such non-China-centric content. This phenomenon undoubtedly provides valuable insights into our international communication strategies.

5. Conclusion

International social media breaks through time and space limitations, giving cities more and more opportunities to display their characteristics and attract admirers on the globalized stage, and bringing brand new opportunities for city construction and development. YouTube, as one of the most visited international social media, provides a broad platform for cities to promote themselves to the outside world. This survey explores the communication status of Hong Kong's city image on YouTube through data mining and content analysis, and draws the following conclusions: Combined with the specific survey results: YouTube presents Hong Kong's economic image of booming industries, advancing with the times in science and technology and education, and creating a brilliant future; its cultural image of deep cultural heritage and outstanding sports characteristics; its ecological image of complete infrastructure, well-developed transport, and excellent environment; and its ecological image of a city of high quality and high quality, and its ecological image of a city of high quality and high quality. It also presents the ecological image of Hong Kong with well-developed infrastructure, excellent transport and environment, as well as the image of warm and tolerant residents and the social image of poor law and order. In terms of communication subjects, the users' regional orientation is dispersed, mainly in Eurasian countries, and the communicators are mainly individuals, lacking opinion leaders; in terms of communication content, the main focus is on cultural and ecological areas. The image of culture and economy is prominent, and information related to the city's sports events, gastronomy culture and economic industry is centrally disseminated. In terms of communication form, it is mainly in the form of graphics, most of which are just simple text communication, and the overall utilization rate of short videos is not high, which needs to be supported by richer, more vivid and interesting forms of communication. In terms of communication emotion, positive emotion is the main focus. In terms of communication effect, the influence is still insufficient, the audience comments are polarized, and the overall communication effect needs to be further improved.

On the basis of sorting out Hong Kong's image on YouTube, this study proposes a communication idea based on the 5W theory of marketing, that is, to enhance the city's image in three aspects, namely, to build a diversified foreign propaganda body, to build a communication content and audience mode of the concept of 'community of human destiny', and to build a multidimensional and three-dimensional communication channel. Due to the limitations of ideological theory and academic level, there are still deficiencies in this research, for example, the sample capacity of the survey is not comprehensive enough compared to the amount of urban image content in YouTube. When summarizing the characteristics of the city and its image positioning, there may not be completely reasonable, and there is still room for improvement. In the future, we will improve the exploration of the relevant topics and contents, and gain more from the investigation and research related to the communication of the city's image.

References

Bremer, M., Mayr, A., Wichmann, V., Schmidtner, K., & Rutzinger, M. (2016). A new multi-scale 3D-GIS-approach for the assessment and dissemination of solar income of digital city models. *Computers, Environment and Urban Systems*, *57*, 144-154.

Franco, I. D., & Ortiz, C. (2020). Medellín in the headlines: The role of the media in the dissemination of urban models. *Cities*, *96*, 102431.

Munjal, R., Liu, W., Li, X. J., & Gutierrez, J. (2020). A neural network-based sustainable data dissemination through public transportation for smart cities. *Sustainability*, *12*(24), 10327.

BNUNMCR. (2022). 2021 Report on Chinese Cities' Overseas Communication Power building. https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1720395252644876912. [In Chinese: 北京师范大学新媒体传播研究中心. (2022). 2021 年中国城市海外传播力建设报告].

Deng, S. M. (2021) .Communication Research Methods and Essay Writing. *Beijing: Renmin University of China Press*, 498. [In Chinese: 邓树明.(2021). 传播研究方法与论文写作.*北京: 中国人民大学出版社*, 498.]

Gao, H.B. (2008) .Exploring the source of Lasswell's 5W model. *International Journalism*, 2008(10):37-40.[In Chinese:高海波. (2008). 拉斯韦尔 5w 模式探源. *国际新闻界*(10)，4.]

Guo K, Chen Y and Du Y. (2018).Generation Mechanism and Theoretical Interpretation of Global City Image Communication--Taking Shanghai City Image as an Example. *Journalism University*,(06):1-8+146.[In Chinese:郭可, 陈悦, & 杜妍. (2018). 全球城市形象传播的生成机制及理论阐释--以上海城市形象为例. *新闻大学*(6), 9.]

The Editorial Team of CABTI

Zhengguo HE, PhD in Translation Studies (Newcastle University).

Jie LYU, PhD in Translation Studies, Lecturer (Guangdong University of Foreign Studies), expert in audiovisual translation and Business translation.

Hu CHENG, Binzhou University, PhD in Education (Jeonbuk National University), Master's in Translation (Guangxi University).

Mark JAMES, Associate Professor (Columbus State University), expert in International Business Communication and Cross Cultural Management and Investments.

Joe BANKS, Juris Doctor in law (Ohio Northern University), expert in cross-cultural education.

Suihong GUO, professor, master's dissertation supervisor, dean of the School of Foreign Languages of Guangdong Ocean University (2021), executive director of Guangdong Translation Association