Engaging with Global Contexts: Building Connections through Languages, Education, Culture & Communication

Proceedings of the second International Conference on Globalisation/Deglobalisation in Languages, Education, Culture and Communication (GLECC2026), 28-30 July 2026, Manchester, U.K.

Derek Hird and Karen Wang (Ed.)

AT PUBLISHING

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Preface

It is my honour to contribute the preface to this fascinating and informative collection of papers that form the GLECC2026 conference proceedings. It was my privilege to chair the conference and as such I was involved from an early stage in its development. It is truly gratifying to see what the conference achieved in terms of the quality and range of papers presented and in the breadth of scholarship now published in these proceedings.

Engaging with global contexts and building connections across borders is more important than ever at this time of heightened xenophobia, racism, jingoistic nationalism and weakening of multilateral ties and organisations. The antidote to these trends can be found in the very pages of these conference proceedings. If there is hope and strength to be found in an unstable world, one need look no further than the inspiring discussions and analyses to be found in these papers. Covering topics from across all continents, and written by scholars from all career stages, the papers offer diverse perspectives on a world that can be made better through the patient and collaborative efforts of like-minded people. I'm particularly proud of the contributions by early career researchers, who have shown that they can hold their own in a globally competitive scholarly environment.

The GLECC conferences take globalisation and deglobalisation as their central themes, and the bringing together of different disciplines in productive conversation as their mission. This second GLECC conference has built upon the foundations laid by the first, continuing a successful trajectory of knowledge exchange and collaboration. Distinctive characteristics of GLECC are already emerging: the voices of young scholars from across the Global South are particularly prominent; a warm and friendly atmosphere fosters much good feeling; and there is a growing sense of building a sustainable and committed community of scholars who learn from each other and work together to make a positive difference in the world.

I commend these conference proceedings to you and look forward to the continued growth and success of GLECC for many years to come.

Derek Hird
General Chair of GLECC2026

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About the conference

The second International Conference on Globalisation/Deglobalisation in Languages, Education, Culture and Communication (GLECC2026) was held 28-30 July 2026, Manchester, UK.

The past two decades have witnessed remarkable advancements in the studies into Education, Second and Foreign Languages, Translation and Interpreting, Cultural Studies, and Communication. This growth, evident in both the number of active researchers and the volume of scholarly throughput and outcomes, can be largely attributed to the forces of globalisation. Consequently, adopting the globalisation perspective is timely and provides a natural framework for connecting these diverse yet interlinked disciplines.

GLECC2026 aims to bring together researchers, educators, practitioners, and policymakers from the realms of education, foreign and second languages, cultural studies, translation, interpreting, and communication to disseminate research outcomes, share insights, discuss findings, exchange visions, and identify challenges and trends in an interactive and immersive multidisciplinary environment.

This conference, notwithstanding the dissemination of works within individual and traditional discipline specified scopes, endeavours to break the subject silos. Papers and other contributions in Education, Second and Foreign Languages, Translation and Interpreting, Cultural Studies, or Communication, as well as contributions crossing the borders of traditional disciplines or emerged from frontier research, are welcome.

The conference is organised by AT Publishing in association with its four journals namely, *Research in Education Curriculum and Pedagogy: Global Perspectives* (RECAP) [ISSN: 2977-1633]; *New Perspectives on Languages* (NPL) [ISSN: 3033-490X] and *The International Journal of Chinese and English Translation & Interpreting* (IJCETI) [ISSN: 2753-6149] and *Recent Advances in Humanities Arts and Social Sciences* (HASS) [ISSN: 2978-1345]. Authors of selected contributions at the conference will be invited to further develop their works into full articles for the consideration of the associated journals.

General Chairs:

Derek Hird, School of Global Affairs, Lancaster University

Zheng Wang, Professor & Chair of International Economics, School of Business, University of Dundee

Associate General Chairs:

Hong Diao, EiC *International Journal of Chinese and English Translation & Interpreting*, Sichuan International Studies University, China

Melissa Jogie, EiC *Research in Education Curriculum and Pedagogy*, Roehampton University

Xuan Wang, EiC *New Perspectives on Languages*, Cardiff University

Publication Chair:

Karen Wang, Senior Editor, All Terrain Publishing

Conference Secretariat

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Antonia Yanxi Wu, University of Essex, UK
Yan Ying, University of Leicester, UK
Tatsuo Yoshikawa, Keio University, Japan
Boping Yuan, University of Cambridge, UK
Weixin Zeng, Beijing Normal University, China
Weifeng Zhang – Nanjing Special Education Normal University, China
Ling Zhou, East China University of Science and Technology, China

The Proceedings

All contributions to the conference in written forms accepted and confirmed to present at the conference are included in the proceedings. Abstracts and full papers were reviewed and selected by the working groups formed by the conference technical committee members. Also included in the proceedings is the programme of the conference. This proceedings was published prior to the conference to facilitate discussions amongst presenters and attendees.

The organisation of the proceedings is detailed in the Table of Contents. Abstracts for presentations are organised by sessions in Part 1. Full papers are singled out from sessions and arranged together in Part 2 of the Proceedings.

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International Conference on Globalisation/deglobalisation in Languages, Education, Culture and Communication (GLECC2026)

28-30 July 2026
Wilson Suite, Holiday Inn, Manchester, United Kingdom
Conference Programme

Day 1

Tuesday 28 July

09.00 Registration opens (tea/coffee)

10.15 Welcome by Dr Derek Hird, Chair of the Organising Committee

10.20-11.10 **Keynote: "Who Changes Language?" by Professor Kersti Börjars, Editor of *Journal of Linguistics* and former Head of Schools of Arts, Languages and Linguistics, University of Manchester, UK**

11.10-12.30 ***Session 1 Globalisation & Languages (Chair: Derek Hird)***

The Diasporic New Speaker: A Deterritorialization, Jessica Robinson, University of Glasgow, UK

Language Ideologies Surrounding the Loss and Revitalization of Indigenous Children's Songs in Nawfija, Nigeria, Chinazam Okeke, University of British Columbia, Canada

Two-Dimensional Analysis of Indigenous Language Learning Effectiveness: Proficiency Advancement and Within-Level Mastery, Lung-hsing Kuo, National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan

Naming Public Space: Language Policy, Globalisation, and Linguistic Visibility in Macedonian Cities, Alexander Aleksovski, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, Germany

12.30-13.30 Lunch break

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13.30-15.10 ***Session 2 Languages & Communication (Room 1) (Chair: Kyara Rojas-Bustos)***

From Reception to Localization: Chinese Ecolinguistics and Its Contribution to the Global Discipline, Stephen Davis, Lancaster University, UK (online)

Enhancing Chinese Language Learning through Cultural Engagement: A Case Study of Chinese Teaching and Cultural Activities in London, Sijie Cui, Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications, China (online)

Bridging the Gap: Teacher Preparedness and Perspectives on Implementing the Values Education Curriculum Framework in Hong Kong, Mandy Au, The Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Towards Interculturalising Chinese Language Education in Australian Higher Education: A Conceptual Framework, Shupeng Han, University of Sydney, Australia

The Case for Knowledge Exchanges, Jermane Cooper, MiraCosta Community College, USA

Session 3 Languages & 2nd Language (Room 2) (Chair: Ricky Law)

British or American? Choosing the Appropriate English and Culture in Imperial Japan, Ricky Law, Carnegie Mellon University, USA

The Socio-cultural Contexts of English Language Teaching in Bangladesh: A Study of Secondary Level Education, Tania Hossain, Waseda University, Japan

Meme-Based L2 Pedagogy: Authentic Engagement in a Changing Digital Landscape, Maria Wald, University of Birmingham, UK

Linguistic and Cultural Revival: The Role of FLI in Northern Pakistan, Fakhruddin Akhunzada, Forum for Language Initiatives, Pakistan

Texts, Tweets, Twitch, and TikTok: Teaching Linguistics Through the Study of Computer-Mediated Communication, Jenny Lederer, San Francisco State University, USA

15.10-15.30 tea/coffee break

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15.30-16.30 **Meet the Editors Panel Discussion (Chaired by Dr Derek Hird)**

Professor Kersti Borjars, *Journal of Linguistics*

Professor Yifeng Sun, *Babel: International Journal of Translation*

Dr Xuan Wang, *New Perspectives on Languages*

Dr Kyara Rojas-Bustos, *Research in Education Curriculum and Pedagogy: Global Perspectives*

Dr Saihong Li, *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*

Q&A

17.00 Set off from hotel lobby for a canal walk

18.00 Drinks reception at a local pub

Day 2

Wednesday 29 July

09.00-11.00 ***Session 4 Education (Room 1) (Chair: Kyara Rojas-Bustons)***

Mixed Reality and Collaborative Experimentation Environments: Higher Education Mentoring in Latin America, Rocío Sosa-Fernández, University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain

Nation-Building through Ethnic Minority Education Systems: A Comparative Study of Chinese Education in Malaysia and Malay Education in Singapore, Jieming Zhang, Fudan University, China

The Use of GenAI by University Students: Attitudes and Perceptions, Alice Yin Wa Chan, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Bridging the Gap in Inclusive Education: General Education Teacher Preparedness for Students with Individualized Education Plans, Joy Gibson, Pepperdine University, USA

Leadership Role in Addressing Practical Challenges in Rural Primary Schools in China, Yiyao Zhang, University of Nottingham, UK

Pre-conditions of Universal Transformation in Education from a Sense-related Approach, Elke Knauss, University of Flensburg, Germany (online)

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Session 5 2nd Language (Room 2) (Chair: John Iveson)

Mastering Russian Language Proficiency: Expanding Students' Lexical Repertoire through Exposure to Regional Context, Julia Kobrina, Defense Language Institute, USA

Teaching Chinese through Taiwanese Film: AI-Supported Learning of Film Dialogue, Vocabulary, and Discussions of Love and Mental Health in *I WeirDO*, Zijun Shen, National Taiwan University, Taiwan

Exploring the Perspectives of Undergraduate Students and Teachers on Student Investment in Language Learning, Bertrand Jacquier, Imperial College London & University of Reading, UK

Beyond EAP: Redesigning Undergraduate Language Pathways for the AI Era, John Iveson, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

Motivation and Identity: Analysing the Short Stories of L1 English-Speaking Immigrants in Japan, Steven Lim, Rikkyo University, Japan

Global English, Generative AI, and the Standardisation of Academic Communication: Between Accessibility and Deglobalisation, Mara Georgia Lixandru, University of Bucharest, Romania

11.00-11.20 tea/coffee break

11.10-12.30 ***Sessin 6 Translation Studies (Room 1) (Chair: Saihong Li)***

Accurate Translation, Accurate Outcomes: The Risks of Inadequate PROM Translation in Wales, Hawys Waddington, Centre for Healthcare Evaluation, Device Assessment and Research (CEDAR), UK

Who Makes Translators/Translation Visible? Institutional Gatekeeping and the Popularisation of Translated Literature in Slovakia after 1989, Vanda Koniarová, Matej Bel University, Slovakia

Political Prisoners and the Translation of Violence: A Reflexive Case Study of Alaa Abdel Fattah's You Have Not Yet Been Defeated, Heba Metwally, Kent State University, USA (online)

Excavating the Landscape: An Archaeological Study of Samuel Beal's English Translations of Chinese Buddhist Texts, Chonghua Li, Lanzhou City University, China (online)

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Session 7 AI in Language T&L (Room 2) (Chair: Xuan Wang)

The Impact of Gamification on Kurdish EFL Learners in Terms of Motivation, Engagement, and Listening Comprehension Skills, Hogar Mohammed Tawfeeq, Sulaimani Polytechnic University, Iraq

AI-Supported Speaking Practice in Higher Education: Student Experiences and Perceptions of AI Generated Feedback for Spoken English Development, Tom Grainger, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

Designing a Serious Game for Chinese Idiom Acquisition: An LM-GM-Based Approach, Linhao Ye, The Glasgow School of Art, UK

Workshop

Lexplore as a Globally Applicable Supplementary Language Learning Tool, Tatsuo Yoshikawa, Keio University and Keisuke Fukaya, Chubu University, Japan

12.30-13.30 lunch break

13.30-14.20 **Keynote: "Translation, Chinese Texts, and World Literature" by Professor Yifeng Sun, University of Macau, China.**

14.20-14.40 Disruption, Resilience, and Adaptation in an Age of Crisis, Teba Naqash, University of Leeds, UK

14.40-15.00 tea/coffee break

15.10-16.50 ***Session 8 Translation Studies (Room 1) (Chair: Yifeng Sun)***

Ideology and the Reconfiguration of Science Fiction Translation in 1950s China: A Paratextual Approach, Yiming Liu, University of Stirling, UK

Reconfiguring Translation Expertise in the Age of Algorithmic Mediation: A Global Perspective on Agency, Knowledge, and Digital Resilience, Sanem Peker Dağli, Yildiz Technical University, Turkey

Knowledge Production and Travelling Memory in Retranslation: A Case Study of British Sinologist Samuel Beal's English Translations of Foguo Ji, Wenqing Peng, Soochow University, China

Emotional Engagement and Translator Responses to Indeterminacy in Translating the "*Dao De Jing*", Mingya Jiang, Lancaster University, UK

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Translating Cognitive Metaphor in Fairy Tales: A Corpus-based Study of The Nightingale and the Rose and its Chinese Translations, Lin Luo & Haiyun Huang, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

Session 9 Cultural Studies (Room 2) (Chair: Derek Hird)

Colonial Encounter, Gendered Mediation, and Cultural Adaptation: Translating Local Cuisine in *Taiwan Travelogue*, Yun-Fang Lo, Chung Yuan Christian University, Taiwan

The American and Polish Intellectual Cooperation in Postwar Britain, Marcin Cieszkiel, University of Toronto, Canada

Reimagining Nabokov: The Russian Émigré in Germany and America, Julia Kobrina, Defense Language Institute, USA

From Gong'an Magistrate to Oriental Detective: An AI-Assisted Corpus Study of the Reconstruction of Judge Dee's Image, Wayne Wen-chun Liang, Soochow University, Taiwan

Global English, National Chinese? Values, Identity and Language Roles in Hong Kong's Primary Curriculum Reforms, Catherine Shee-hei Wong, Hong Kong Metropolitan University, Hong Kong

18.30 Conference dinner at The Midland Hotel

Day 3

09.00-09.50 **Keynote: "Confucianism's Global Potential: Fresh Perspectives on Fathering From the Sixth Century to Now" by Dr Derek Hird, Lancaster University, UK.**

09.50-10.30 From Production to Circulation: How Global Digital Discourse Constructs K-ness Beyond Korea (The Case of K-Pop Demon Hunters), Youkyung Ju-Zaveroni, SOAS, University of London, UK

The Potential of Narrative Cinema in Language Ideological Clarification: *Kneecap* (Peppiatt, 2024), Humour, and the Irish Language, Sacha Wood, University of Galway, Ireland

10.30-11.00 tea/coffee break

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11.00-12.20 ***Session 10 Intercultural Communication (Room1) (Chair: Xuan Wang)***

When Culture Becomes Capital: Intercultural Communication in Global IT, Emmanuel Echeverria, Lancaster University, UK

Beyond Words: The Role of Intercultural Nonverbal Communication in Global Organizations, Tarleen Khauv, Pepperdine University, USA

Between Algorithms and Audiences: How Content on Global Platforms is Shaping Local Imaginings of Bangladesh, Mrittika Anan Rahman, North South University, Bangladesh

Who Is Hospice Work For? Rethinking Culture, Communication and Exclusion in Migration-Related End-of-Life Care, Ulrike Koopmann, IU International University, Germany

Session 11 Cultural Studies (Room 2) (Chair: Derek Hird)

Socio-cultural Adaptation of Foreign Students in Austria Academic Culture and Language Policy, Roshanak Nouralian, University of Vienna, Austria (online)

Engaging Young Learners Through Human Images: A Cross-Cultural Comparative Study of English Textbooks in the US and China, Huey Fen Cheong, Universiti Malaya, Malaysia (online)

Embodying Classical Chinese Poetry: Cultural Translation from Kunqu to Contemporary Practice, Xueting Luo, University of Leeds, UK

Transforming Language Access in Multilingual Ireland: Blended Learning as a Sustainable Model for Lesser-taught Languages, Agnieszka Grochola, Post-Primary Languages Ireland, Ireland

12.30-13.30 lunch break

13.30-15.10 ***Session12 Languages & Identity (Room 1) (Chair: Hakima Harris)***

To Write Clearly or/and to Write Inclusively? Clear Writing & Inclusive Language: An Emerging Alliance for Administrative Translation, Vasiliki Chelidoni, Ionian University, Greece

Negotiating Teacher Professional Identity Across Contexts During Doctoral Study Abroad: Narrative Accounts of Saudi EFL Educators, Eman Khan, University of Southampton, UK

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Whose English Counts? Linguistic Power and the Politics of Assessment, Anna Demkowicz-Dobrzanska, University of Greenwich, UK

“No Sabo Kids” A Narrative Inquiry into Spanish as Access, Authenticity Policing, and Identity Formation Among Heritage Speakers, Hakima Harris, Wayne Community College & North Carolina State University, USA

"We Live in a Society That Does Not Know Our Existence": the Language, Culture and Ethnolinguistic Identity of Mathura Labhan, Arjun Naik Guguloth, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, India

Session 13 Languages & Education (Room 2) (Chair: Zarina Abenoja-Patel)

The Future of Language Learning: AI-Powered Feedback in Drama Productions, Zarina Abenoja-Patel, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

Exploring the Aesthetic Appeal of ‘China English’ Narration in Xiaolu Guo’s A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers, Linqing Zhu, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

The Teaching of Creole Languages in the Context of Generative Artificial Intelligence: Practices, Challenges, and Perceptions in the French West Indies, Stella Cambrone, Université Marie et Louis Pasteur, France

Chinese Dialectal Parameterisation in Cantonese Teaching, Keith Tse, Ronin Institute for Independent Scholarship, UK

Emerging Artificial Intelligence Applications in Legal Language and Profession: The Imperative and Caveats of the Technology and the Role of Legal Education, Muruga Perumal Ramaswamy, University of Macau, Macau

15.30 Closing ceremony & prize awards

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Part 1

Abstracts of Presentations

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The Future of Language Learning: AI-Powered Feedback in Drama Productions

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Abstract:

This study explores the integration of Yoodli, an AI-powered speech coaching tool, within a drama-based English learning context at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. While drama education has long been recognized as an effective pedagogical tool for enhancing fluency and confidence, the role of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in drama for second language learning remains an emerging area of research. This pilot study utilized Yoodli to provide students in the English Drama Club feedback on verbal delivery and body language during rehearsals. The club is facilitated by the English Language Centre (ELC) and aims to enhance students' fluency and confidence in English via Drama productions and Role-Plays.

Adopting a qualitative approach, the study analyzed student reflections and semi-structured post-performance interviews to assess the impact of AI feedback combined with teacher feedback. Findings indicate that low-stakes feedback provided by Yoodli complemented by instructor guidance significantly reduced performance anxiety and heightened students' self-awareness of their speaking skills. Students reported that the AI tool provided a "safe space" for iterative practice, which ultimately increased confidence during their live stage performances. These findings suggest that AI-powered coaching can effectively bridge the gap between individual practice and group rehearsal, offering a scalable model for the integration of technology into drama-based pedagogy whilst redefining traditional approaches to second language acquisition.

Keywords: Yoodli, GenAI for second language learning, drama education

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Linguistic and Cultural Revival: The Role of FLI in Northern Pakistan

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Abstract:

The northernmost mountainous region of Pakistan is characterized by its linguistic and cultural diversity. The region hosts over 30 language communities, with populations varying from a few hundred individuals to several million. Most of the languages spoken by the communities belong to the Indo-Iranian branch, while others belong to the Tibeto-Burman and isolate linguistic groups. Until recently, the languages of many of these communities were under threat of extinction, primarily due to a lack of sufficient revitalization efforts and institutional support. The speakers were shifting to widely spoken languages.

Forum for Language Initiatives (FLI) was founded in 2002 to help language communities revitalize, maintain, and promote their mother tongues. FLI worked with language communities to develop orthographies, start MTB-MLE pilot projects, raise awareness about language rights, and advocate for the inclusion of these languages in school curricula. Furthermore, FLI contributed to resolving computational challenges related to languages.

The situation in these language communities is much different now than it was in 2002. Many trainees of FLI are engaged in preserving and developing their native languages, leading to the transformation of many spoken languages into written form and the production of books. The speakers of the languages are now able to use their mother tongue in increasing domains like social media. Some have formed community-based organizations and established mother-tongue-based education programs. Two provincial governments have done legislation to include the languages of their constituency in the school curricula. Further, one province implemented the legislation by developing schools' books up to grade-9 in four languages and started using books in classrooms. The language communities are holding cultural events like music and poetry sessions in their mother tongue.

Data for this paper has been collected through personal experience, focus group discussion, informal interviews, and literature review. This paper concludes that a comprehensive survey must be conducted for the linguistic and cultural revitalization initiative, in order to identify all community members who can contribute to the preservation of their native language. The strategic planning of an organization should consider the needs of community members. This paper serves as a case study for organizations aiming to revitalize endangered languages and cultures.

Keywords: Northern Pakistan, endangered languages, language revitalization, FLI

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Naming Public Space: Language Policy, Globalisation, and Linguistic Visibility in Macedonian Cities

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Abstract:

Name signs are not neutral labels in public space: they can materially organize language hierarchy through script, ordering, placement, and visual prominence. This paper examines how governmental and private-sector name signs in Bitola, Kumanovo, and Tetovo make legal regulation, local demographic power, and globalization visible in the linguistic landscape. Using a linguistic landscape and geosemiotic approach, the study analyses a photographic corpus of public signs, focusing on language choice, script, spatial ordering, and visual prominence. The findings show that Macedonian was the most frequent language overall and was generally placed first on governmental signs, reflecting its legally privileged position. This ordering was locally contested in Albanian-speaking majority areas, where Albanian appeared first on governmental signage. English functioned as the clearest marker of globalization: although it had no official legal status, it appeared on governmental name signs, exceeded co-official Albanian in private-sector frequency, and was more visually prominent than Macedonian on private-sector name signs. The paper contributes to linguistic landscape research by showing that name signs are not peripheral objects of analysis, but central sites where public language hierarchies are materially organized through the interaction of legal status, local demography, commercial naming, and English as a globalizing resource.

Keywords: linguistic landscape, geosemiotics, name signs, language policy, globalisation

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Bridging the Gap: Teacher Preparedness and Perspectives on Implementing the Values Education Curriculum Framework in Hong Kong

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Abstract:

Since the introduction of the Values Education Curriculum Framework (2021) in Hong Kong, schools have faced the complex task of nurturing core student values amidst a shifting educational landscape. This study investigates the implementation of this framework specifically through the lens of frontline educators, examining their attitudes, readiness, and the systemic obstacles they encounter. While the framework aims to foster holistic student development, its success is heavily dependent on the teachers' ability to translate policy into practice.

Adopting a mixed-methods approach, this research utilizes surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with schoolteachers to capture a comprehensive picture of the current educational climate. Quantitative data provides a baseline for teacher confidence and the prevalence of specific training needs, while qualitative insights reveal the lived experiences of educators navigating resource constraints and differing school cultures. Preliminary findings indicate significant variability in implementation success across institutions. Many teachers express a strong commitment to the framework's goals but highlight critical gaps in professional support, citing a lack of specialized training and high workloads as major barriers to effective delivery.

Furthermore, the study explores how teachers integrate values education into both formal curricula and co-curricular activities. It identifies a tension between the standardized requirements of the framework and the practical need for contextual flexibility in the classroom. By centering the "teacher's voice," this research uncovers the professional and emotional labor involved in modern values education.

Ultimately, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the practical dynamics of Hong Kong's educational reforms. The findings serve as a foundation for evidence-based recommendations aimed at refining the curriculum by its scheduled 2026 update. By addressing teacher preparedness and resource allocation, this research seeks to ensure that the educational system is better equipped to meet the evolving societal needs of Hong Kong.

Keywords: values education, teacher preparedness. teacher professional development, pedagogical challenges

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The Teaching of Creole Languages in the Context of Generative Artificial Intelligence: Practices, Challenges, and Perceptions in the French West Indies

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Abstract:

This study explores the implementation of generative artificial intelligence (now GenAI) in education, particularly in teaching French Creole as a foreign language (FCFL) using a mixed-methods approach. In the age of "all-digital" technology, GenAI is on the rise, challenging traditional conceptions of knowledge production for educational purposes. As a reminder, GenAI generates "new data that resembles that created by humans". To what extent does this alter the role and position of French Creole teachers in their professional practices? In order to answer this question, we propose to compile a compendium of practices (GenAI tools used for generating ideas, planning lessons, tailoring content, offering timely feedback…), challenges (language constraints, restricted access to digital resources, reduction of creativity and critical thinking…) and perceptions based on field research (interviews, classroom observation, questionnaires, document analysis, among others) conducted within the educational community in Guadeloupe, French Guiana, and Martinique. Ultimately, this groundbreaking research aims to support and train the teaching staff in a "contextualized, Intelligent, and civic-minded" use of GenAI in a multilingual educational setting.

Keywords: Teaching support, language teacher training, digital pedagogy with GenAI, French Creole, West Indies.

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The Use of GenAI by University Students: Attitudes and Perceptions

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Abstract:

The world is now moving towards increased use of artificial intelligence (AI). To address the learning needs of millennial students, teachers need to understand students' use of GenAI. This paper reports the results of a small-scale survey which investigated students' attitudes towards the use of GenAI, their actual use of GenAI, and their perceptions of the usefulness of these digital tools.

Two mass emails were sent to a total of 174 PhD/Master's degree students at an English-medium university in Hong Kong to solicit participation in an online questionnaire survey. With a satisfactory response rate of 25.3% for an online survey, a total of 44 completed questionnaires were received. The questionnaire consisted of 20 forced-choice questions and two open-ended questions. The forced-choice questions solicited participants' responses on their general use of AI for their studies and work, the frequencies and purposes of their uses, their perceptions of the relative ease of use of GenAI, etc. The open-ended questions probed into the difficulties students encountered and the solutions they adopted to solve their problems. The answers to the open-ended questions served to supplement the information collected from the forced-choice questions and provided more detailed and elaborate feedback from the respondents.

The percentages of respondents who had chosen each option for each forced-choice question was calculated, and a reflexive thematic analysis was conducted to analyse the written answers to the open-ended questions. Themes relevant to some overarching topics (e.g., reliability of AI answers, difficulties in creating prompts) were generated and analysed. No statistical analyses were performed, as comparisons across different questions or across different respondents were not considered necessary for the purpose of the study.

The results of the questionnaire showed that the majority of the respondents used AI quite frequently and that they found AI easily accessible. However, most of them were not satisfied with the answers provided and complained that AI sometimes provided fake or inconsistent information. Some of them also found it difficult to construct adequate and appropriate prompts. To solve the problems encountered, students would revise their prompts, consult academic sources for cross-referencing, compare answers from different AI tools, and avoid providing unnecessary hints to the AI tools. The results of the survey showed that students were aware of the possible pitfalls of using GenAI and they did make an attempt to ensure academic integrity while using GenAI. It is suggested that teachers hold workshops and training sessions to improve their students' literacy in the use of GenAI and that they themselves be taught how to use GenAI properly so that their students can benefit from the new technologies without surrendering academic integrity.

Keywords: GenAI, attitudes, perceptions, difficulties and solutions

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To Write Clearly or/and to Write Inclusively? Clear Writing & Inclusive Language: An Emerging Alliance for Administrative Translation

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Abstract:

The paper entitled **"To write clearly or/and To write inclusively? – Clear Writing & Inclusive Language: An emerging alliance for administrative translation"** examines the techniques of clear writing and inclusive language in the field of administrative writing. Through Corpus Linguistics, multilingual relevant guides of the European Union in English, French, and Greek (e.g., "How to write clearly" and "Claire's Clear Writing Tips" by the European Commission, "Inclusive Communication in the GSC" by the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union and "Gender-Neutral Language in the European Parliament" by the European Parliament) are analyzed, so that common guidelines and their differences are recorded and studied, to find a balance in the coexistence of clear writing and inclusive language. Through the analysis of these official guides using frequency lists, word sketches, and concordances available via the corpus management and text analysis software *Sketch Engine*, the aim is to facilitate communication between administrative bodies, as well as between the administration and the public.

Key questions include:

• What are the main techniques of clear writing and inclusive language?

• What is the common goal of all the individual techniques in the context of administrative translation?

The coexistence, therefore, of these two communicative values is presented as an act of responsibility and sensitivity, which contributes to the formation of a more accessible and equal society.

Keywords: clear writing, inclusive language, administrative translation, Corpus Linguistics

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The American and Polish Intellectual Cooperation in Postwar Britain

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Abstract:

The consequences of the Atlantic Charter of 1941 between the United States of America and the United Kingdom had enormous effects for shaping the postwar intellectual landscape of Allied nations. This is observed in the nascent political currents that immediately necessitated a collaborative approach of the Central-European emigration in the United States of America and the United Kingdom in respect to the postwar order. The result of the Polish emigration's cooperation with the American Government after the war, provided the early contours for a Central-Eastern European intellectual movement, through helping to organise their mutual collaboration and contact. The National Committee for Free Europe (NCFE) played such a role. The impact of American institutions interested in the emerging postwar political and intellectual movements of representatives tied to the wartime Polish Government in Exile, having lost its *de jure* status among the Allies on 5 July 1945, precipitated fundamental strategic shifts in designing future economic, cultural, diplomatic, and security relations of Central-Eastern European émigré groups. The interaction of the Polish political milieu with international postwar institutions like the NCFE contributed to the most important currents of this postwar Polish émigré activity in the United Kingdom in three ways: the shaping of political representation of the émigré population, providing a diplomatic and cultural response for future cooperation of émigré societies, and finally, outlining possibilities for a 'local' cultural approach to Polish and Ukrainian neighbourly relations in the émigré context of the United Kingdom.

Keywords: American-Polish intellectual cooperation, postwar Britain, Central-Eastern European emigration, Polish-Ukrainian relations

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Enhancing Chinese Language Learning through Cultural Engagement: A Case Study of Chinese Teaching and Cultural Activities in London

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Abstract:

As Chinese language education continues to expand internationally, educators are increasingly exploring ways to integrate language instruction with cultural learning. This study examines how Chinese cultural activities can support Chinese language learning among secondary school students in the United Kingdom. The research is based on the author's eight-month experience as a volunteer Chinese language teacher working with HSK 1 learners aged 14–16 in a London secondary school, alongside the organization of Chinese cultural events at Queen Mary University of London.

The study adopts a qualitative case-study approach and draws on classroom observations, teaching reflections, and feedback from participants in various cultural activities, including Chinese calligraphy, paper cutting, rubbing art, Chinese knot making, lacquer fan painting, and Baduanjin (Eight-Section Brocade) exercises. These activities were designed to provide students with opportunities to engage with Chinese culture beyond the language classroom and to develop a deeper understanding of Chinese traditions and values.

The findings suggest that cultural activities can enhance students' motivation to learn Chinese, increase classroom participation, and create meaningful contexts for language use. Students demonstrated greater interest in Chinese characters, vocabulary, and cultural expressions when language learning was connected to hands-on cultural experiences. The study also highlights several challenges, including differences in cultural background, limited instructional time, and varying levels of student engagement.

This paper argues that integrating cultural activities with language instruction contributes to a more holistic approach to international Chinese language education. The findings provide practical insights for teachers and volunteers working in multicultural educational settings and offer recommendations for strengthening the connection between language learning and cultural engagement in overseas Chinese education programs.

Keywords: Chinese language education, cultural activities, intercultural communication, Chinese culture, language learning motivation

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Whose English Counts? Linguistic Power and the Politics of Assessment

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Abstract:

Processes of globalisation have intensified linguistic diversity in higher education. However, assessment practices remain largely anchored in standardised and monolingual norms. This tension raises urgent questions of linguistic justice, social mobility and equity, particularly for students whose communicative repertoires fall outside dominant academic language expectations. This presentation examines how assessment practices in higher education operate as mechanisms of epistemic exclusion and encourages a rethink of decolonial alternatives that better account for the multilingual and superdiverse realities of contemporary student populations.

Drawing on decolonial scholarship and the notion of *superdiversity*, we argue that assessment functions as a key site where linguistic globalisation is unevenly recognised and valued. Although students routinely navigate multiple languages, dialects, accents, registers, scripts, and digital vernaculars across transnational and diasporic context, these practices are often rendered illegitimate within institutional norms that privilege standardised English. As a result, linguistic difference is framed as deficit, limiting access to recognition, progression, and academic credibility.

We propose that decolonising language in assessment involves two interconnected shifts: first: interrogating how student work in English is assessed, including the role of implicit bias and deficit discourses, and second: unpacking the ideological construction of academic language embedded in assessment task design and feedback practices that constrain creativity and student voices. Standardised assessment practices risk reinforcing linguistic injustice and limiting students' social mobility within and beyond the university.

The presentation calls for more socially just and inclusive approaches to assessment and evaluation, including the use of formative assessment, dialogic and developmental feedback, and criteria that recognise linguistic plurality and hybridity as legitimate academic resources. Such approaches challenge residual colonial logics and reposition language diversity as central to educational justice rather than peripheral to academic standards.

By foregrounding assessment as an ethical and political site of language governance, this contribution speaks directly to debates on language and educational justice, social mobility, and the future of equitable evaluation in a globalised higher education landscape.

Keywords: decolonising assessment, linguistic diversity, standard language ideologies, language and social justice

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When Culture Becomes Capital: Intercultural Communication in Global IT

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Abstract:

In an increasingly globalized economy, the Information Technology (IT) sector operates as a critical site of cross-cultural collaboration, where geographically dispersed teams must coordinate in real time across linguistic and cultural boundaries. While technical expertise is often prioritized, this paper argues that Intercultural Communication functions as a strategic driver of organisational performance and value creation rather than a mere "soft skill."

Drawing over 17 years of industry experience, this study examines two contrasting organisational contexts: a Mexican technology firm and a Swiss multinational enterprise operating across multiple regions. Adopting a comparative, practitioner-informed approach, the analysis identifies recurring intercultural challenges, including different approaches to leadership and negotiation, culturally embedded ways to conflict resolution, and misalignments rooted in high- and low-context communication styles. These dynamics are further shape by differences in cultural values, such as power distance and uncertainty avoidance, which influence decision-making, communication flows, and team coordination. When neglected, such differences generate hidden inefficiencies that constrain collaboration, delay execution, and weaken client and supplier relationships.

In response, the paper proposes a novel, practice-based model of Intercultural Communication grounded in three core principles: active listening, empathy and trust. This framework operates through structured communication practices, escalation mechanisms, and culturally adaptive decision-making processes. Preliminary implementation within global IT operations suggests that this approach enables organizations to turn intercultural complexity into a form of strategic capital, enhancing collaboration, fostering innovation, and strengthening service delivery.

Finally, the study explores the economic implications of Intercultural Communication, positioning it within broader debates on globalisation, competition, and communication. It argues that effective Intercultural Communication contributes to measurable business outcomes, including reduced project churn, faster integration into international markets, and increased client retention. By reframing culture as a productive organisational resource, this paper highlights how Intercultural Communication can function as a source of sustainable competitive advantage in the global IT industry.

Keywords: intercultural communication, culture, globalization

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Bridging the Gap in Inclusive Education: General Education Teacher Preparedness for Students with Individualized Education Plans

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Abstract:

Inclusive education has become a central goal of K–12 education in the United States and internationally, resulting in an increasing number of students with learning disabilities being educated in general education classrooms. As a result, general education teachers are expected to differentiate instruction, implement accommodations, and collaborate with special education professionals and related service providers. However, research suggests that many teachers enter the profession without adequate preparation to effectively support students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), thereby creating barriers to meaningful inclusion and student success. Grounded in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Distributed Leadership theory, this study explores how inclusive practices and shared responsibility among educators shape students' classroom experiences. UDL emphasizes designing learning environments that are accessible to all learners, while Distributed Leadership highlights the importance of collaboration among educators and support staff in promoting student success. This proposed qualitative study will examine the lived experiences of 10–15 students with IEPs in grades 3–12 in public schools in California. Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic coding to identify patterns related to students' perceptions of support, inclusion, and engagement in general education classrooms. The purpose of this study is to understand how students with disabilities experience inclusive education and the extent to which they feel supported by both general and special education teachers. Findings from this research aim to inform teacher preparation programs, instructional practices, and school-level collaboration in order to improve educational equity and strengthen inclusive education systems.

Keywords: inclusive education, teacher preparation programs, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), distributed leadership

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AI-Supported Speaking Practice in Higher Education: Student Experiences and Perceptions of AI Generated Feedback for Spoken English Development

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Abstract:

The increased use of artificial intelligence in language learning has opened new possibilities for speaking practice, role play, and feedback. This study examines students' perceptions of an AI assisted speaking tool, in terms of its value as a role play partner and the usefulness of its AI generated feedback. Focusing on AI generated small-talk role-play tasks, this study reports on a small-scale mixed-methods study of university students' experiences of using Yoodli, an AI-supported speaking tool. The participants were 17 Fashion Design students enrolled in a course designed to prepare them for the social English and workplace communication needed for internships in the fashion industry.

The study investigates students' perceptions of using Yoodli and its value for developing spoken English in an English-for-specific-purposes context. In particular, it examines whether students found the AI-generated feedback meaningful, actionable, and relevant to their communication needs. It also explores the students' feelings regarding the role play's authenticity, its potential to provide much needed conversation practice and its ability to develop the students speaking confidence.

Data were collected through post-use questionnaires and focus groups. Questionnaire responses and focus-group data were examined thematically to identify patterns in students' evaluations of their experience of using the tool and the feedback it generated. By examining student responses to AI-generated speaking feedback in higher education, the study aims to contribute to current discussions regarding the use of AI in language education. It also suggests practical implications for integrating AI-supported speaking tools such as Yoodli into classroom practice, or for advising students on the independent use of such tools.

Keywords: English for specific purposes, speaking practice, artificial intelligence, AI generated feedback

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Transforming Language Access in Multilingual Ireland: Blended Learning as a Sustainable Model for Lesser-taught Languages

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Abstract:

Ireland's growing linguistic diversity is creating both opportunities and challenges for language education. While multilingualism is increasingly recognised as an important educational, cultural, and economic resource, access to lesser-taught languages can still be limited, particularly for students who do not have access to local language provision. In response, government strategies such as *Languages Connect* have created opportunities to implement more inclusive and flexible approaches to language learning within post-primary education.

This presentation explores the development of a blended learning model for Leaving Certificate Polish delivered through a collaboration between Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI), Cavan and Monaghan Education and Training Board (CMETB) and H2Learning. The case study offers insights for policymakers, educational leaders, and language educators seeking sustainable ways to support linguistic diversity and equitable access to language learning across geographically dispersed communities.

The model was developed in response to practical challenges often faced by lesser-taught languages, including geographical isolation, limited student numbers within individual schools, and difficulties in accessing qualified teachers. Combining online lessons, independent learning, and local in-school support, the programme aims to create more sustainable and accessible pathways for students studying Polish at Leaving Certificate level.

Using Polish as a case study, the presentation reflects on how blended learning can help ensure that access to lesser-taught language learning is not determined by geographical location or by the number of students interested in a particular language within an individual school.Particular attention is given to the relationship between national language policy and classroom practice, and to the ways technology-supported learning can help bridge some of the gaps between rural and urban language provision.

Drawing on five years of programme delivery, the presentation considers both the opportunities and the ongoing challenges involved in developing new models of access for lesser-taught languages within mainstream education. More broadly, it invites discussion on how education systems can respond to changing linguistic realities and ensure that language learning opportunities are not determined by geography. In this context, blended learning is explored not simply as a technological solution, but as part of a wider move towards more flexible, inclusive, and sustainable approaches to language education.

Keywords: multilingualism, blended learning, lesser-taught languages, language policy, Leaving Certificate Polish, language education, Ireland, equity, rural access

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Towards Interculturalising Chinese Language Education in Australian Higher Education: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract:

In an era of intensified global interconnectedness shaped by mobility, digital technologies, and transnational flows of knowledge, intercultural encounters have become routine rather than exceptional. As a result, intercultural perspectives have increasingly been positioned as a central concern in foreign language (FL) education. Over recent decades, the goals of FL teaching and learning have expanded beyond linguistic proficiency to include learners' capacity to engage appropriately, critically, and reflexively in complex intercultural contexts. In both policy and pedagogical discussions, notions such as intercultural (communicative) competence, critical cultural awareness, global citizenship, and multiculturalism have been widely foregrounded.

Within Chinese as a foreign language (CFL) education, interest in intercultural approaches has also grown alongside the global expansion of Chinese learning and broader social and cultural transformations. In Australia, expectations related to cultural competence and global outlook are explicitly articulated in university graduate attributes and in internationalisation agendas, positioning intercultural learning as an intended outcome of higher education. Consequently, many Chinese Studies programs and CFL units in Australian universities seek to cultivate learners' ability to mediate across cultural perspectives, negotiate meanings among cultural identities, and reflect on their own positioning within diverse cultural discourses. Despite these developments, limited research has systematically examined how such intercultural expectations are understood, articulated, and enacted within CFL education in Australian higher education context.

Addressing the gap, this study draws on theories of interculturality and adopts a social constructivist perspective, conceptualising interculturality as a socially situated, relational, and context-dependent process rather than a fixed set of skills. Intercultural expectations are thus understood as educational orientations constructed through the interaction of institutional priorities, curriculum discourses, pedagogical traditions, and teachers' beliefs and practices. Building on this theoretical positioning, this paper proposes a conceptual framework that maps the construction of interculturality across three interconnected levels: institutional policy narratives (macro), curriculum and syllabus discourses (meso), and teachers' perspectives and pedagogical reasoning (micro).

By articulating this framework, the study aims to offer a theoretically grounded lens for examining intercultural dimensions in Chinese language education and to inform future empirical research. The paper will contribute to ongoing discussions on internationalisation, language education, and intercultural pedagogy by highlighting the multi-layered processes through which interculturality is shaped, negotiated, and potentially contested in Australian higher education, with implications for Chinese language programs in other global contexts.

Keywords: interculturality, Chinese as a foreign language (CFL), Australian higher education, conceptual framework

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"No Sabo Kids" A Narrative Inquiry into Spanish as Access, Authenticity Policing, and Identity Formation Among Heritage Speakers

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Abstract:

Spanish Heritage Speakers in the United States come from diverse national, regional, and familial language backgrounds. Their Spanish reflects different histories, migration patterns, home practices, accents, and cultural meanings. Yet, these differences are often collapsed under broad categories such as Latino, Hispanic, or simply Spanish- speakers. While these categories create a shared identity, it also flattens histories and language varieties that shape heritage speakers' experiences.

While educational settings often frame Spanish Heritage Speakers through the language of inclusion, culturally responsive pedagogy, and recognition of students' linguistic repertoires, forms of linguicism continue to persist in practice which create a process of linguistic sorting in which heritage speakers learn early in their educational journeys which forms of Spanish are valued, legitimized, and which are rejected. In family and community contexts, however, these same speakers are often valued for their English because they often help relatives navigate institutional systems such as schools or health care systems. Yet, while their English is valued as a resource for institutional access, their Spanish is often judged, mocked, or dismissed for not meeting community expectations of accuracy, fluency, or legitimacy. This creates a contradiction: While English helps them provide access to institutions, Spanish functions as access to family stories, cultural memory, intergenerational relationship, community participation, and, most of all, belonging. As a result, they are placed between two expectations: English as institutional access and Spanish as cultural and community access.

Using *pláticas* within a narrative inquiry design, this study draws on ethnolinguistic Identity and Social Identity Theory frameworks to examine how Spanish operates as both a pathway to belonging and a boundary through which belonging is measured, questioned, or denied. *Pláticas* created relational and conversational spaces where Spanish Heritage Speakers shared how community expectations about proficiency, fluency, and legitimacy affect their identity and confidence. These judgements operate as a form of authenticity policing, where Spanish proficiency becomes a measure of whether heritage speakers are recognized as legitimate members of the Latino community. The preliminary re-storying of these narratives revealed that participants wanted these conversations to happen within their own community. They desired community support, greater understanding of their linguistic experiences, and a reduction of labels such as "no sabo kids," which position them as incomplete or not Latino enough.

Although some Spanish Heritage Language scholarship has explored community-based and service-learning projects, much of this work remains centered on university students already enrolled in Spanish heritage courses. This reveals a limitation: conversations about language ideologies, linguistic shame, often reach only those who make it to college. I propose that these conversations should instead be introduced throughout student's educational journeys, especially through K-12 family engagement and community spaces. These spaces usually bring schools, families, and communities together to share resources, strengthen relationships, and support the well- being of students and their communities, they can be revitalized to include meaningful conversations about language shift, linguistic shame, and Spanish as access. Involving the

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broader community can expand the advocacy needed to support Spanish Heritage Speakers within schools and beyond them.

Keywords: no sabo kids, linguistic shame, Spanish as access, pláticas, ethnolinguistic identity, authenticity policing, language ideologies, family engagement, Latino communities

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The Socio-cultural Contexts of English Language Teaching in Bangladesh: A Study of Secondary Level Education

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Abstract:

Globalization has had a significant impact on educational systems worldwide, and English has become the primary language of instruction and communication. English has long enjoyed a special place in Bangladesh as a result of British colonial control and as a means of international integration. This paper applied critical-cultural and historical-structural theories to analyze the pedagogy of three Bangladeshi high schools. Critical-cultural analysis examines phenomena from three overarching perspectives: multiculturalism, hegemonic ideology, and power relations. A historical-structural framework is brought to bear on our analysis through an interface between language policy and the structured relations in and societal expectations of an educational system. A four-pronged ethnographic method—(a) depth interviews with key policy planners; (b) depth interviews with teachers; (c) nonreactive, unobtrusive classroom observations; and (d) textual analysis—was used to answer three research questions:

1. In the context of power relations, to what degree are school textbooks the dictates of a governing, hegemonic authority or the products of a broad-based participatory decision-making process?
2. In the perspective of hegemonic ideology, to what degree do textbooks, as ideological frames, privilege certain Bangladeshi schools and undermine, marginalize, neglect or ignore others?
3. In the perspective of multiculturalism, is pedagogy, as embedded in textbooks, socially egalitarian or does it privilege urban students over rural students?

To answer those questions, this paper compared English-language teaching in Bengali- and English-medium schools and examined the different socioeducational practices in each. Results indicated that students from resource-poor rural schools, where English teaching is at best perfunctory, are significantly disadvantaged, creating an educational system fraught with pedagogical inequalities, social disparities, and misaligned resources, and calling into question the government's current educational policy. Thus, the present policy continues to confer advantages on groups with access to English education, while contributing to the ongoing educational difficulties faced by the rural and urban poor. A framework for an effective language policy, a desideratum for improved, equal-access education, is proffered.

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Beyond EAP: Redesigning Undergraduate Language Pathways for the AI Era

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Abstract:

This presentation explores a significant transition within a Hong Kong university as it moves from traditional English for Academic Purposes (EAP) requirements toward a new English language curriculum model. Starting in the 2026/27 academic year, all first-year, first-degree students will be required to complete a mandatory subject titled AI as a Tool for Language Learning (AITLL). This course focuses on the practical application of digital and generative resources to support language development and professional communication. The curriculum follows a project-oriented and scenario-based framework that emphasises active student participation. Key learning objectives include the evaluation of AI-generated content, the study of ethical considerations, and the implementation of personalised learning strategies. While the university will also introduce a separate English exit test as a graduation requirement, the primary focus of this session is the pedagogical shift toward AI integration. Initial feedback from teachers and students who participated in a pilot version of the AITLL course will be presented. This feedback, which highlights various opportunities and obstacles encountered during the pilot, is examined through the theoretical lens of "Big Artificial Literacies" (Big-AL). The analysis moves beyond "little-al" models, which define literacy as a set of individual operational competencies such as prompting and bias awareness. By applying this lens to the pilot data, the presentation explores modes of cognitive delegation and considers how student engagement with AI can support epistemic agency. The session considers how these pilot findings relate to empowerment-oriented literacies, such as system-perception awareness and values-anchored practice, and how human-centred agency is sustained within the new language pathway.

Keywords: English language teaching, AI-assisted education, AI literacy, curriculum design

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Emotional Engagement and Translator Responses to Indeterminacy in Translating the "*Dao De Jing*"

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Abstract:

Translating classical Chinese philosophical texts presents particular interpretive challenges due to their linguistic ambiguity, conceptual complexity, and aesthetic openness, often described in Chinese aesthetics as *liubai* ("leaving space"). These features often create points of textual indeterminacy that require translators to actively negotiate meaning. These features create points of textual indeterminacy that require translators to actively negotiate meaning and that also evoke complex emotional responses. Focusing on selected passages from the *Dao De Jing*, a text renowned for its brevity, philosophical depth, and aesthetic indeterminacy, this study explores how such emotional engagement is intertwined with translators' interpretive decision-making during the cross-cultural translation process.

Drawing on an empirical translation experiment involving 38 student and professional translators, this paper combines keystroke logging data from Translog-II with retrospective interviews to capture both behavioural patterns and subjective experiences. The findings suggest that indeterminacy functions as an activating condition that triggers emotional responses such as frustration, hesitation, pride, excitement, and aesthetic appreciation. These emotional reactions may ultimately shape translation outcomes in complex and sometimes unexpected ways.

In responding to indeterminacy, translators tend to adopt two broad strategic orientations. A step-back response involves suspending interpretive closure and preserving textual openness, while a step-forward response reflects a movement toward interpretive resolution through clarification, elaboration, or contextualisation. These responses are not merely technical strategies but are closely linked to translators' situated understanding and affective engagement with the text.

This study contributes to reclaiming the agency of translators by grounding it in observable translation processes, rather than treating it as a purely theoretical construct. At the same time, by incorporating empirical data, it offers a methodological complement to hermeneutic phenomenological approaches, which have traditionally focused on interpretive subjectivity, providing systematic insights into how understanding unfolds in practice.

Keywords: emotion in translation, hermeneutic phenomenology, textual indeterminacy, *Dao De Jing* translation

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From Production to Circulation: How Global Digital Discourse Constructs K-ness Beyond Korea (The Case of *K-Pop Demon Hunters*)

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Abstract:

Globalisation has fundamentally reshaped the circulation of cultural products, allowing media content to move across linguistic, cultural, and geographical boundaries through digital platforms. Korean popular culture—often discussed under the rubric of the Korean Wave (Hallyu)—provides a salient example of this transformation. However, much of the existing scholarship continues to locate cultural identity in the site of production, implicitly treating "Koreanness" as a stable cultural attribute tied to content produced within Korea. Such an approach is increasingly inadequate for explaining how cultural meaning is generated in digitally mediated, globally networked environments.

This paper examines how "K-ness" emerges through global digital discourse surrounding *K-Pop Demon Hunters*, a Netflix animated film produced outside Korea. It argues that K-ness should be distinguished from Koreanness: rather than referring to a culturally or nationally grounded identity, K-ness is conceptualised here as a hybrid, transnational formation of Hallyu that is produced through circulation, interpretation, and interaction. Despite its non-Korean production context, the film has generated extensive engagement framed in terms of Korean cultural identity, making it a productive site for examining how such meanings are constructed.

The analysis draws on the concept of networked publics, which understands digital platforms as environments where meaning is collectively produced through interaction, repetition, and circulation. This framework is combined with theories of participatory culture, discourse, and global cultural flows, enabling an interdisciplinary approach that brings together cultural studies, communication, and sociolinguistics.

Methodologically, the study adopts a mixed-methods design, combining time-series analysis with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of user-generated content from X (formerly Twitter). The dataset consists of English-language posts produced in response to the film's release, focusing on original user contributions. Time-series analysis identifies patterns of engagement, while CDA examines recurring linguistic features, cultural references, and identity markers.

The findings show that users repeatedly mobilise K-pop aesthetics, Korean cultural references, and affective associations in ways that collectively construct K-cultural meanings. These meanings do not simply derive from the media text or its production context but emerge through distributed interpretive practices within networked publics. In this sense, K-ness operates as a discursive effect that is stabilised through repetition and circulation rather than anchored in national origin.

By distinguishing K-ness from Koreanness, the paper argues for a shift in how Hallyu is conceptualised: from a nationally bounded cultural export to a hybrid, transnational formation shaped by global digital communication. This reconceptualisation contributes to broader debates on globalisation, culture, and communication, and highlights the need to rethink cultural identity as an emergent property of networked interaction in the digital age.

Keywords: K-ness, global digital discourse, networked publics, cultural globalization

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Negotiating Teacher Professional Identity Across Contexts During Doctoral Study Abroad: Narrative Accounts of Saudi EFL Educators

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Abstract:

This study explores how Saudi English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators negotiate and reconstruct their teacher professional identities during doctoral study abroad in the United Kingdom. While previous research has often examined teacher identity after completing international study, less attention has been paid to how identity transformation unfolds during the doctoral journey itself, particularly as educators repeatedly move between academic, cultural, and professional contexts. Drawing on narrative inquiry, this study examines the lived experiences of seven Saudi EFL educators pursuing PhDs in the UK while maintaining professional and institutional ties with Saudi Arabia.

The study is theoretically informed by Teacher Agency Theory, Dialogical Self Theory, and Transformative Learning Theory. Together, these frameworks are used to examine how participants negotiate competing expectations, internal dialogues, institutional constraints, and evolving professional aspirations across different stages of their journeys. Data were generated through in-depth narrative interviews conducted before and after participants' research data collection periods in Saudi Arabia. The narratives were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis to identify patterns of identity negotiation, epistemic repositioning, and emerging agency.

Findings indicate that participants experienced significant shifts in their understandings of teaching, knowledge, authority, and professional selfhood. Exposure to dialogic and research-oriented academic environments abroad often disrupted previously inherited assumptions shaped by transmission-oriented educational experiences. However, participants' attempts to enact newly developed pedagogical orientations were frequently constrained by institutional expectations, assessment structures, and cultural norms upon returning to Saudi educational contexts. These tensions generated complex processes of negotiation through which participants re-evaluated their professional identities and developed more agentic and reflective positions toward teaching and research.

The study contributes to current discussions on teacher identity, international doctoral mobility, and professional development by foregrounding the dynamic and ongoing nature of identity transformation during study abroad rather than treating transformation as a completed outcome.

Keywords: teacher professional identity, teacher agency, narrative inquiry, study abroad, Saudi EFL educators

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Beyond Words: The Role of Intercultural Nonverbal Communication in Global Organizations

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Abstract:

As organizations expand overseas and across borders, the demand for interculturally competent leaders and employees grows. In addition, these organizations are facing new challenges, such as finding ways for their leaders and employees to coexist among many cultures. This presentation highlights one such way that leaders and employees in these organizations can overcome challenges in cross-cultural settings, which is using and understanding intercultural nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication often accompanies verbal communication but can stand alone, and includes kinesics, oculesics, haptics, proxemics, paralinguistics, and physical appearance. Approximately 65% to 90% of interpersonal communication includes nonverbal communication. Leaders and employees often lack the specific training required to interpret such communication across varying cultural contexts. This presentation outlines 1) what nonverbal communication is and the various types, 2) the importance of knowing and utilizing nonverbal communication in cross-cultural settings, 3) current organizational training and programs offered to improve intercultural nonverbal communication, and 4) gaps and future research.

Working in cross-cultural settings calls for leaders and employees to be interculturally competent. Intercultural competence is essential in the workplace because of the interconnectedness of the world and the different cultures that exist within an organization. Communication in a cross-cultural setting helps drive the organization's mission and goals. It also invites collaboration and a positive workplace environment since employees are continuously interacting with each other. Furthermore, effective intercultural nonverbal communication bridges gaps among diverse employee groups and enhances followers' perceptions of leader effectiveness, interpersonal connections, and organizational performance. As globalization and diversity grow among organizations, these organizations must prioritize intercultural nonverbal communication training to maintain an advantage and to foster collaborative workplace environments.

Keywords: leadership, intercultural communication, nonverbal communication, global organization

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Pre-conditions of Universal Transformation in Education from a Sense-related Approach

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Abstract:

The contribution introduces a new scientific approach building up a research work on sense. This presentation will outline the prerequisites for shifts in meaning and structure aiming at transformational development in education from a universal perspective. Until now, educational research has focused on social action within existing meanings as socially given meanings. The significant aspect of a) socially non-given meanings and b) its relevance for transformational processes has not received any fundamental consideration yet.

The study examines empirical data on pedagogical interactions in classrooms within the context of the relationship between *socially given* and *socially ungiven meanings*. *Socially ungiven meanings* are non-established meanings emerging from new sense. *Socially given meanings* are established, obviously fixed meanings of everyday language in a cultivated system of social interactions.

The analysis of the empirical data presented takes its starting point from a method(ology) called 'Objective Hermeneutics'. By this means *socially given meanings* are reconstructed through a procedure known as sequential analysis which traces the linear sequence of words from which a social text emerges. The linear line of emergence sets up a condition of substantiating meaning. Its specific emergence reveals a particular given structure of sense arrangement or sense selection within a specific interaction-based language arrangement connecting sense-selected specific meaning to human (inter)action. It operates between conscious (given) meanings and yet unconscious (ungiven) meanings which enter consciousness within the process of reconstruction.

The research issue encompasses the following question: *How can reconstruction processes inherent in a qualitative research design yield a scientific understanding of (un)conscious and new progressive meanings derived from given meaning-structural dispositions? How can a method called ‚Objective Hermeneutics' prepare such sense-related understanding along basic ‚objective' structural meaning conditions in yet (un)given human interaction?*

Connecting to a certain meaning through language arrangements in human (inter)action expresses a selected form of communication which embodies a disconnection to other possible meanings at the same time in order to focus this meaning and not the other. This form of meaning selection or sense selection is analyzed on a deeper and more complex level in terms of transformation to demonstrate how changing (dis)connections to meanings generate fundamentals for conscious transformation in cultural communication processes within educational meaning contexts.

The research work exemplifies how educational transformation may arise from a changing awareness in processes of sense selection cultivating new sense in new forms of communication. Gaining a higher empirically based scientific awareness of sense selection offers an insight into possible evolvement of human interaction through higher complexity in human-determined processes of sense selection as culturally-based concepts in educational interaction.

Meaning is structured within the context of an analytical understanding of how transformation occurs (or does not occur) in meaning-making processes or sense development. These processes are embedded in the pedagogical communication practice of interaction between students and teachers. The analysis takes a higher sense-related complexity into account focusing different

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ways and rhythms of human-made negations that work themselves out in processes of sense selection. This sense-related approach touches the development of meaning that arises from new sense.

Keywords: education, communication, meaning, transformation

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Reimagining Nabokov: The Russian Émigré in Germany and America

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Abstract:

This paper investigates how Vladimir Nabokov's experience as an exiled writer in Germany and in America serves as a model for the protagonists in his last Russian novel "Gift" (1938) and his English novel "Pnin" (1957), in which exile is the primary theme. Nabokov takes an unprecedented approach to exile: rather than lamenting the loss of his homeland, he represents exile as a natural state of being, a state of perpetual transition. His displaced characters grapple with severed roots, linguistic barriers, the fragile, reconstructive power of memory, and the lasting trauma of a lost home country. Even though the protagonists, Fyodor Godunov-Cherdyntsev and Pnin, are both true exiles, they demonstrate remarkably different responses to their dislocations; however, these novels, when read in tandem, illustrate Nabokov's depiction of exile, his transient status, and his transcendence of exile through creativity and art. The paper explores some of the psychological implications of the exile in Nabokov's life and in the two novels, focusing on the roles of memory and imagination. Drawing on specific examples, the paper argues that his relocation to America is the illustration of successful immigration, the foundation of which is a desire to embrace American culture, showing respect to the country where he was initially a stranger.

Keywords: Nabokov, immigration, memory, exile, cultural studies

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Mastering Russian Language Proficiency: Expanding Students' Lexical Repertoire through Exposure to the Regional Context

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Abstract:

Focusing on both-- theoretical foundations and practical classroom strategies, the presenter will explore innovative and effective approaches in the Russian language instruction facilitated through focus on the regional context. Expanding curriculum beyond Russia's borders by utilizing resources that highlight Russian as a global language helps to bridge the gap between textbook theory and real-world application. The presenter will offer insights on teaching Russian gained from the American Councils Summer Russian Language Teacher Program in Almaty, Kazakhstan highlighting the country's unique multilingual landscape and regionally nuanced materials (i.e. localized media and cultural artifacts, glimpses into local life, community-based and "funds of knowledge" approach). The presentation will emphasize the pedagogical value of incorporating regional Russian materials since these resources can promote students' active learning, continued development of intercultural competence, and engagement with the broader Russian-speaking world. Drawing on this approach, the session demonstrates how exposure to real-world language-- both in form and content-- can deepen students' linguistic competence, cultural understanding, and learner motivation. By expanding the boundaries of what is traditionally taught, this presentation offers practical teaching tools and adaptable models to help students navigate complex communicative situations and prepare them for meaningful interactions in academic, professional, and everyday contexts. The presenter aims to engage the audience in a conversation about best practices and evolving trends in vocabulary instruction inviting participants to share their own methodological approaches, vision, and experiences.

Keywords: regional studies, student motivation, vocabulary instruction, real-world language

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Who Makes Translators/Translation Visible? Institutional Gatekeeping and the Popularisation of Translated Literature in Slovakia after 1989

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Abstract:

This paper examines the popularisation of translated literature in Slovakia from 1989 to the present as a historically conditioned and institutionally shaped process. Building on the assumption that translated literature does not automatically enter the target culture, it conceptualises popularisation as a structured form of cultural positioning through which visibility, reception, and symbolic value are produced within the literary field.

The study is based on a comparative analysis of three Slovak literary periodicals that have been published continuously since 1989. It investigates how these periodicals have framed translated literature across three analytical periods (1989–2000, 2000–2010, 2010–present), and how their popularisation strategies have evolved in response to post-socialist transformation, market liberalisation, digitalisation, and the rise of social media. Particular attention is paid to discursive mechanisms used to contextualise translated works and to the ways translators are named, represented, or omitted within reviews, interviews, and editorial discourse.

The analysis seeks to identify recurring strategies of mediation and institutional gatekeeping, and to assess how these strategies influence the visibility and professional positioning of translators within the Slovak literary field. By situating these developments within broader cultural and institutional shifts, the paper argues that popularisation functions not merely as dissemination, but as a structuring mechanism that actively shapes how translation is publicly understood and how translators are positioned within contemporary literary culture.

Keywords: translated literature, popularisation, translator visibility, literary periodicals, institutional gatekeeping

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Who Is Hospice Work For? Rethinking Culture, Communication and Exclusion in Migration-Related End-of-Life Care

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Abstract:

Despite the comprehensive and general orientation of hospice and palliative care services in Germany, people with an international family or migration biography continue to access these services less frequently than the majority population. Existing research often explains this disparity through references to 'cultural differences', communication problems, language deficits or supposedly distinct family structures. Such explanations risk obscuring structural inequalities and reproducing processes of culturalization that locate responsibility for non-use primarily with migrants themselves.

Drawing on critical race theory and intersectionality, this paper conceptualizes hospice care as structured by power relations, dominant norms, and implicit assumptions about 'normal' ways of communicating, caring, and dying. The analysis asks to what extent cultural, linguistic, and familial categories of difference operate as mechanisms of Othering in hospice and palliative care, and how they contribute to social exclusion.

Empirically, the paper builds on ongoing research that synthesises findings from previous studies with qualitative analyses of interviews with professionals in hospice care in Germany. These insights reveal that dominant discourses frequently essentialise 'the culture', 'the language', and 'the family structures' of *the Others*, while leaving unexamined the middle-class, white, and monolinguistic orientation of hospice institutions themselves.

Non-German language is often framed in deficit terms, ignoring multilingual resources and shifting communicative responsibility onto patients and families. Similarly, migrant families are stereotypically perceived as extended and collectivist, which can lead to the non-offering of hospice services, despite empirical evidence of increasing family fragmentation, social isolation, and comparable care burdens across migrant and non-migrant groups.

Against this backdrop, the paper argues for a shift from culturalist explanations toward an understanding of hospice care as a site of power-laden communication shaped by structural discrimination. It outlines key implications for an inclusive hospice practice: questioning institutional power relations, de-ethnicising concepts of culture, and recognising multilingualism as a resource. Adopting a trans-categorical professional stance foregrounds individual life worlds while remaining attentive to intersecting categories of difference and inequality such as race, class and gender. In conclusion, the contribution highlights hospice work as a critical arena of culture and communication in migration societies, where global histories of inequality intersect with local care practices. It offers a theoretical and reflexive framework aiming to foster more inclusive and socially just forms of end-of-life care.

Keywords: hospice and palliative care, migration, Othering, structural inequality

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British or American? Choosing the Appropriate English and Culture in Imperial Japan

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Abstract:

This presentation examines the debate over learning American or British English in pre-1945 Japan. Typically, students, teachers, academics, and policymakers involved in English education do not get to decide which variant to use. Instead, the choice is dictated by factors beyond their control or with little consideration of pedagogy, such as proximity to the United Kingdom or the United States, or the relative strength of American or British influence. For instance, the predominance of American English in Japan today is a legacy of the postwar American occupation and remaking of the country. Before World War II, Japan stood out for preserving its national sovereignty and cultural identity despite its fundamental Westernization since the mid-1800s. Learning from the West and learning Western languages were mutually reinforcing and indispensable. By the twentieth century, English was already established as a world language. Unlike French or German, English was associated with two major powers with different societies, governments, economic systems, and reputations in Japan. Since foreign languages were not taught in Japan as part of compulsory schooling, the Japanese could choose which ones, if any, to acquire. English was more popular than any other foreign language in Japan, but learners still had to choose between British or American English. Some educators advocated British English because they admired the glory of the British Empire and envisioned Japan as "Britain of the East." They saw British English as the means for the Japanese to emulate their idea of British sophistication and decorum. Others favored American English for its potential to make the Japanese more sociable and Japanese society more egalitarian. It could even transform some Japanese into Americans through emigration and naturalization. While the debate, mostly between linguists and academics, did not result in an agreement or policy, it reveals their attitudes toward English, Britain, America, and Japan. Their arguments also provide historical context and inform current discussions on the purpose and motivation of learning foreign languages. This conclusion is a reminder that for individuals or nations, foreign language learning is less about the language but more about perceptions of the self and others, visions and plans for the future, and allocation of resources such as time and money.

Keywords: English, Japan, British, American, education

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Texts, Tweets, Twitch, and TikTok: Teaching Linguistics Through the Study of Computer-Mediated Communication

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Abstract:

Drawing on the broad appeal of computer-mediated communication (CMC), this presentation introduces a replicable curriculum centered on CMC as a vehicle to introduce a variety of elementary linguistic concepts to novice learners. Just as online communication has enriched and accelerated language change, linguists should consider CMC a mechanism to accelerate interest in the field. A focus shift towards CMC in the linguistics classroom facilitates a leveling of the roles of instructor and students in order to expand linguistics recruitment by centering students' empowerment, interest, comfort, and confidence.

Students benefit from learning complex linguistic theory by examining the types of language patterns with which they are most familiar. In fact, the Covid pandemic served to accelerate the movement away from face-to-face, in-person communication. In 2021, the average American teenager (13- to 18-year-olds) spent almost nine hours (8:39) on a screen device daily. Entering the world of language study through what students do on a daily basis makes sense in a time when the tools for linguistic expression are expanding and changing with each new software application and technological invention.

While most introductory linguistics textbooks and courses both exoticize and mathematicize language study, the CMC approach doesn't alienate, but invites, through examples familiar to young people. In this talk, I provide examples of how the instructor of a CMC-focused linguistics course can incorporate lessons on phonetic, morphological, syntactic, semantic, discourse-analytic, and pragmatic touchstones. For example, innovative CMC spelling practices include phonetic spellings that may or may not reflect dialectal variation (*u, nite, fo sho*), adjacent character repetition (*yessss*), abbreviations (*pls =please*), acronyms (*lmao = laughing my ass off*), and keyboard smash to express strong emotion (*sdfghjkl*). In a unit on phonetic spelling, students discover relationships between the phonemic inventory of English and its quite archaic orthographic system, as represented in dictionaries. (Why is *nite* replacing *night*?) In CMC, adjacent character repetition is used pragmatically for emphasis, but follows predictable and non-obvious patterns about which character can repeat. (Why does *yesssss* look familiar but *yyyyyyyes* doesn't?) The patterns of abbreviation in CMC reveal the phonetic and cognitive load differentials between consonants and vowels. (How is it that we recognize *pls* for the word *please*, but *eae* doesn't work as an acronym for the same word?)

Emoji and emoticons (:-/) use can be introduced as an entry into discussion of pragmatics, embodied linguistics cues such as facial expression and co-speech gesture, and syntax (emoji placement is restricted in the linear relationship to text). Asynchronous and synchronous texting yield lessons on conversation analysis and phenomena such as turn-taking, overlaps, and politeness. Data from YouTuber vlogging underlies units on narrative structure and on language and identity. Orthographic creativity such as small caps aesthetic (*i love u*) yield sociolinguistic modules on language and identity. And, just as in face-to-face communication, linguistic patterns of translanguaging, borrowing, and second language acquisition all show up in CMC data. The presentation will include sample instructional units, assignments, accessible articles, and a textbook that can be used to adopt a CMC-centered approach to introductory linguistics.

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Keywords: linguistics pedagogy, computer-mediated communication, digital communication, course design

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Excavating the Landscape: An Archaeological Study of Samuel Beal's English Translations of Chinese Buddhist Texts

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Abstract:

Samuel Beal was the first British scholar in the 19th century to systematically translate Chinese Buddhist texts into English, holding a pioneering position in the history of the overseas dissemination of Chinese Buddhist literature. Adopting the translation archaeology framework of Anthony Pym and Lieven D'hulst, this study integrates library archival materials, work inventories, and socio-historical data to archaeologically examine Beal's translation landscape across four dimensions: intellectual biography, work archives, spatiotemporal distribution, and patronage mechanisms. The research findings are as follows. First, establishing an intellectual biography reveals that Beal's dual identity as a clergyman and a sinologist infused his translation practices with intertwined religious and academic characteristics. He focused on the comparison between Buddhism and Christianity, embodying the exploratory spirit of comparative religion. Furthermore, he was dedicated to bridging the gap in the translation and study of Chinese Buddhist texts in the English-speaking world, thereby establishing his academic status as a pioneer in related European research. Second, in terms of text selection, Beal altered the prevailing convention in Western academia, which heavily favored Sanskrit and Pali source texts. By translating and introducing Chinese classics such as the *Diamond Sutra, Travels of Faxian,* and *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, he greatly enriched the source texts within the translation field of that period, highlighting the independent academic value of Chinese Buddhist texts in Western Buddhist studies. Third, regarding spatiotemporal distribution, his translations were published between 1862 and 1899, forming a network of knowledge dissemination centered in London and radiating globally. Fourth, his translation practices relied on a multi-dimensional patronage network connecting the government, academic institutions, religious organizations, and publishers. Through this network, he acquired original source texts, financial support, language acquisition opportunities, and publication channels. This reveals that translation activities are deeply embedded within specific socio-historical environments, demonstrating the complexity of translation as a social practice. The study concludes that Beal's translation achievements, serving as a medium for the flow of Buddhist knowledge connecting China, India, and Britain, significantly elevated the status of Chinese Buddhist texts in the international Buddhist community and laid a crucial foundation for modern Buddhist studies and Sino-Western cultural exchange.

Keywords: Samuel Beal, Chinese Buddhist Texts, English translation, translation archaeology

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From Gong'an Magistrate to Oriental Detective: An AI-Assisted Corpus Study of the Reconstruction of Judge Dee's Image

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Abstract:

Cross-cultural translation is not merely a process of lexical transfer. Instead, it is a complex act of cultural reproduction shaped by literary norms, publishing practices, and multiple stakeholders. In Robert van Gulik's English translation *Dee Goong An* (狄公案), the original text is introduced to a Western readership, while his subsequent literary recreations, the *Judge Dee Mysteries* series, further develop it into a new body of work through creative rewriting and adaptation. Across these stages, the historical figure of Di Renjie is reconfigured as an "Oriental detective" aligned with Western genre conventions, rather than his original image as a righteous magistrate. Over time, this reimagined figure has circulated globally and has returned to the Chinese-speaking world through translation, raising important questions about how translation and rewriting contribute to the reconstruction of a literary character's images.

Previous scholarship has examined van Gulik's works from perspectives such as cultural hybridity, narrative reconstruction, and translation strategies. Those studies have highlighted the fusion of Chinese gong'an traditions with Anglo-American detective fiction and have characterized van Gulik's approach as a form of "creative treason," involving selective additions, omissions, and transformations. However, such research has tended to prioritize textual or narratological analysis, with less attention to systematic, data-driven approaches that can reveal broader patterns of transformation across texts.

To address this gap, this study employs an AI-assisted, corpus-based methodology. NotebookLM is employed as a preprocessing tool to align sentences between van Gulik's English originals and their Chinese translations, after which the aligned data are imported into Sketch Engine to build a parallel corpus for analysis. This makes it possible to a more systematic examination of translational shifts and discursive transformations across different stages in the reconstruction of Di Renjie's image as it has re-entered the target cultural context.

The analysis is further grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Jacques Lacan's Borromean knot, which links the symbolic, the imaginary, and the real, and André Lefevere's theory of rewriting and manipulation. The study focuses on *Dee Goong An*, the *Judge Dee Mysteries* series, and their Chinese translations by Zhang Ling, examining how the portrayal of Di Renjie is reconfigured across linguistic, cultural, and ideological dimensions.

By examining the image reconstruction of Di Renjie across languages and contexts, this study attempts to show how translation and adaptation participate in the ongoing reshaping of literary figures and their meanings. The findings contribute to a more integrated understanding of cross-cultural rewriting through the incorporation of AI-assisted corpus methodologies and offer further insight into the role of translation in the global circulation of literature.

Keywords: Judge Dee, image reconstruction, AI-assisted corpus study, Borromean knot

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Motivation and Identity: Analysing the Short Stories of L1 English-Speaking Immigrants in Japan

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Abstract:

Narrative inquiry has become increasingly prevalent in the social sciences because it elucidates how people use stories to make sense of their lived experiences. The analysis of narratives can reveal not only the narrator's perception of their own identity but also their relationship with the social environments in which they exist. This study utilized Q methodology and short story analysis to examine how motivation towards learning Japanese influences immigrants' perceptions of their own integration into society. The concourse for the 50-statement Q set was created using the responses of 80 L1 English-speaking long-term residents to a survey of seven open-ended questions about their motivation to learn Japanese. Q sorts and post-sort interviews were conducted with 45 participants and, following a principal components analysis using varimax rotation, a three-factor solution was chosen. The three factors were labelled Japanese Users, Japanese Learners, and Japanese Bypassers. Japanese Users utilized Japanese in their professional and private lives, seeing their usage of the language as an intrinsic part of their identity. Japanese Learners did not need to speak Japanese at work or home but strived to improve, believing that becoming more proficient would lead to a more fulfilling life in the country. Japanese Bypassers were comfortable not learning Japanese, reasoning that the significant time and effort required to learn the language was not a worthwhile investment. In the post-sort interviews the participants were asked to tell a story about a personally important experience that they had only been able to have because they could speak Japanese. The narratives of the three highest-loading participants in each factor were analysed to explore whether the motivation of the participants towards learning Japanese was reflected in the stories they told. Japanese Users told stories of atypical scenarios that could not be experienced without a high proficiency in the language. Japanese Learners shared experiences of commonplace encounters in which they were able to use the language effectively, allowing them to recognise their linguistic development. However, the stories of Japanese Bypassers related to the experience of living in Japan, rather than being about using Japanese. The stories were systematically examined through the three scales of context (i.e., the individual interactions, the communities they took place in, and the broader society) and the dimensions of the story content (i.e., who the narrator was speaking to, where the interaction took place, and when it took place). Through the stories that they tell, we can better understand how motivation shapes the lived experiences and identities of immigrants in Japan.

Keywords: Japanese as a second language, narrative inquiry, Q methodology, immigrant language learners

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Global English, Generative AI, and the Standardisation of Academic Communication: Between Accessibility and Deglobalisation

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Abstract:

The rapid integration of generative artificial intelligence into academic and professional communication is accelerating the standardisation of English-language discourse across educational and cultural contexts. While digital communication has historically supported linguistic accessibility and international collaboration, AI-assisted writing introduces new tensions between globalisation and deglobalisation in communication practices. This paper explores how AI-generated academic English contributes simultaneously to the expansion of global communicative norms and to the gradual erosion of linguistic, stylistic, and cultural diversity.

Drawing on perspectives from communication studies, digital discourse analysis, and language globalisation, the paper employs a qualitative critical discourse analysis combined with an exploratory pedagogical research approach. The study is based on a corpus consisting of AI-assisted student assignments, academic writing exercises, professional communication tasks, and reflective responses collected from undergraduate students enrolled in English-language communication and writing courses. In addition, the research incorporates data from a small-scale exploratory questionnaire investigating students' perceptions of generative AI in academic writing, with particular attention to perceived usefulness, linguistic confidence, authenticity, creativity, and dependence on AI-generated structures.

The analysis focuses on recurrent rhetorical and linguistic patterns identified in AI-assisted student writing, including lexical predictability, formulaic argument structures, standardised academic tone, and the gradual reduction of culturally specific forms of expression. Particular attention is given to the emergence of "safe" communication strategies characterised by clarity, coherence, and grammatical correctness, but often lacking rhetorical individuality or stylistic nuance.

The paper argues that although AI tools democratise access to academic English and reduce linguistic anxiety for non-native speakers, they may also reinforce dominant Anglo-American rhetorical conventions and reshape the criteria through which academic writing is evaluated. Consequently, educators increasingly shift their attention from grammatical accuracy toward questions of authenticity, originality, critical positioning, and communicative intention.

The paper ultimately proposes a critical communication framework for understanding AI-assisted writing as a negotiation between efficiency, visibility, authenticity, and cultural specificity in contemporary higher education.

Keywords: Generative AI, academic discourse, global English, discourse standardisation

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Colonial Encounter, Gendered Mediation, and Cultural Adaptation: Translating Local Cuisine in *Taiwan Travelogue*

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Abstract:

This paper explores translation as a form of cultural adaptation and gendered mediation in Lin King's English rendition of *Taiwan Travelogue*, with particular attention to the representation of local Taiwanese cuisine. Set in 1938 during the Japanese colonial period, the novel adopts a pseudo-documentary structure in which Yáng Shuāng-zǐ constructs a fictional colonial travelogue through layered paratexts and fabricated archival elements, creating the illusion of historical authenticity. Within this framework, Aoyama Chizuko is presented as a Japanese woman traveler whose culinary journey through colonial Taiwan is mediated by her Taiwanese interpreter, Ō Chizuru. Chizuru's role extends beyond linguistic transfer to cultural negotiation, as she guides Aoyama's understanding of local food, customs, and everyday life. Through their interactions, the text reveals how colonial encounter, female mobility, and local identity intersect within acts of translation.

Local dishes such as lóo-bah-pn̄g (Braised Pork Rice) function not only as culinary references but also as carriers of cultural memory, preserving traces of Taiwanese everyday life under colonial rule. The English translation further develops this layered narrative by re-mediating a text that is already shaped through multiple layers of fictional narration, pseudo-documentary construction, and translational framing.This study focuses on how translation negotiates the transmission of taste, sound, and historical atmosphere through the rendering of multilingual culinary expressions in colonial Taiwan. To preserve the colonial setting, the translator retains Japanese pronunciations for colonial-era terms and Japanese-influenced expressions, while tonal markings and phonetic specificity in Taiwanese Hokkien allow local voices to remain audible and culturally distinct within the English text.

These strategies demonstrate that translation functions not merely as linguistic transfer but as an active form of cultural adaptation that preserves marginalized histories and foregrounds the gendered dynamics of colonial contact. By mediating between colonial memory and global readership, the English version creates a critical space in which Taiwanese cultural identity, female experience, and historical memory are reinterpreted and made accessible to contemporary international readers.

Keywords: cultural adaptation, gendered mediation, colonial translation, culinary translation

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Embodying Classical Chinese Poetry: Cultural Translation from Kunqu to Contemporary Practice

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Abstract:

This presentation explores how classical Chinese poetry may be approached not only as literary language, but also as an embodied cultural form shaped through voice, rhythm, gesture and perceptual attention. In Chinese aesthetic tradition, poetic expression has long operated beyond semantic meaning alone: tonal pattern, breath, temporal pacing and imagistic resonance all contribute to the way a poem is experienced and communicated. This interrelation between language and bodily articulation is particularly evident in Kunqu, where poetic text, vocal delivery and stylised movement remain closely integrated within a continuous performative tradition.

Building on doctoral research and previous published work on poetic embodiment in Kunqu, this paper examines how such relationships between language and bodily form may continue within contemporary practice. Here, cultural translation refers not only to the transmission of poetic meaning across historical contexts, but also to the re-articulation of poetic language through voice, movement and embodied perception. Rather than treating poetry as content to be illustrated, the presentation considers spoken poetic language and bodily action as parallel expressive processes through which imagery, rhythm and atmosphere are explored in performance.

Selected examples from recent creative work show how classical poetic imagery — such as seasonal transition, spatial distance and subtle environmental change — is developed through the simultaneous use of spoken poetic language, breath-based movement and shifting temporal pacing. Brief performative demonstration will accompany selected examples in order to illustrate how poetic language and movement interact in practice. Drawing on principles derived from Kunqu while moving beyond fixed theatrical conventions, this practice seeks to retain the relational qualities of poetic expression while opening them to contemporary contexts.

The paper argues that contemporary embodied practice can offer a complementary mode of cultural translation in which inherited poetic sensibilities are not simply preserved, but actively re-experienced and reformulated. By tracing a path from Kunqu to contemporary performance, the presentation proposes that classical Chinese poetry continues to generate meaning through the dynamic interaction of language, body and cultural memory, offering new possibilities for artistic, educational and intercultural engagement.

Keywords: classical Chinese poetry, Kunqu, cultural translation, cultural transmission, intercultural communication

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Disruption, Resilience, and Adaptation in an Age of Crisis

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Abstract:

My study investigates how legal and peacebuilding language is translated from Arabic into English in post-2003 Iraq, a context marked by political transition, post-conflict reconstruction, and evolving legal institutions. In such contexts, language functions not only as a legal tool but also as an instrument of power, negotiation, and reconciliation. The paper examines how key legal and peace-related terms such as السلام(peace), المصالحة(reconciliation), and العدالة(justice) are translated and framed in bilingual legislative texts and NGO peacebuilding documents, and how these translation choices influence meaning, legal clarity, and perceptions of social justice.

A self-compiled Parallel Corpus of Iraqi Legislative and Peacebuilding Texts (PCILPT) was developed containing 40 Iraqi laws and bilingual NGO reports. The dataset comprises approximately 98,109 Arabic tokens and 132,834 English tokens, segmented, aligned manually, and analysed using Sketch Engine. Employing a mixed-method corpus linguistic and translation studies approach, the study identifies translation strategies, examines lexical, semantic and syntactic shifts, and evaluates how institutional and socio-legal concepts are mediated across languages. Preliminary findings reveal systematic additions, paraphrasing, and lexical expansion in English translations, often used to clarify culturally embedded or legally dense concepts (Bostanji, 2010:189). However, some translation choices introduce ideological shifts or conceptual ambiguity, potentially affecting the interpretation of legal rights, peace narratives, and public trust. (El-Farahaty, 2023:103). The paper highlights challenges related to legal equivalence, multilingual legal reform, and the representation of peace discourse in translation. By combining linguistics, translation studies, and peace research, this study contributes both to academic knowledge and to the practical improvement of legal translation practices in post-conflict contexts.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, legal language, peacebuilding, translation

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Socio-cultural Adaptation of Foreign Students in Austria Academic Culture and Language Policy

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Abstract:

My study focuses on the challenges faced by Iranian students in Vienna, employing a constructivist grounded theory strategy (Charmaz, 2006), with particular emphasis on Iranian students. The study examines essential questions about the types of challenges encountered the factors that influenced them, and the consequences for both students' lives and Austrian society. Furthermore, it explores the students' employed strategies and provides some suggestions for overcoming these challenges.

A data triangulation method is employed during both the data collection and analysis phases. I gathered data through focus groups, individual interviews, and expert interviews for analysis. I used both grounded theory and critical discourse analysis. Due to the centrality of the academic environment in this study, the influence of academic culture at both macro and micro levels has been demonstrated. At the macro level, substantial differences between the academic systems of Iran and Austria provide fundamental challenges for students. At the micro level, differences in the academic culture of universities - different majors and levels of study with language policy - an environment that is receptive to cultural diversity has been shown to influence students' different experiences and the formation of students' sociocultural identity and linguistic perspectives.

Keywords: academic culture, constructivist grounded theory, Iranian students in Vienna, language policy.

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Language Ideologies Surrounding the Loss and Revitalization of Indigenous Children's Songs in Nawfija, Nigeria

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Abstract:

This paper examines how competing language ideologies shape the decline and potential revitalization of Indigenous children's songs in Nawfija, an Igbo-speaking community in southeastern Nigeria. Situated within sociolinguistic debates on language, identity, and globalization, the study explores how beliefs about English and Indigenous languages influence language socialization practices and intergenerational cultural transmission.

The theoretical framework draws on a multilevel conceptualization of language ideologies, with particular attention to how individual experiences, social interests, and community structures interact to produce and sustain beliefs about language value and use. The concept of ideological clarification, which refers to an open and honest assessment of how community members really feel about using and preserving their language, is also employed to interrogate the gap between participants' stated support for revitalization of their Indigenous songs and their willingness to engage in it in practice.

The data were derived from qualitative interviews with 20 participants across different age groups, educational levels, and parental statuses. The analysis identifies three dominant and competing ideologies. The first, "English equates to intelligence and success", is predominantly reported by older participants (aged 30–40), who describe social stigma attached to speaking Igbo or its Nawfija variety in public and institutional spaces. Consequently, in a bid to be perceived as intelligent and economically successful, community members attempt to reconstruct their Igbo identity as *Engligbo* or 'white Igbo'. The second ideology, "English as the language of geographical mobility", is articulated chiefly by younger participants (aged 18–29), many of whom are university students aspiring to migrate to English-speaking countries in the Global North. For these participants, English language competence is pragmatically essential, and Indigenous song practices are consequently deprioritized. The third ideology, "Igbo/Nawfija variety is a language of identity", is voiced predominantly by older participants and mothers, who argue that Indigenous children's songs are inseparable from their cultural heritage, ancestral place, and collective identity as *Ndị Igbo*. This perspective frames Indigenous songs as critical tools for transmitting cultural knowledge, moral values, and a sense of place, such that their erosion represents not merely linguistic loss but a loss of identity and heritage.

While all twenty participants expressed verbal support for revitalizing the Indigenous songs, several, particularly younger participants, simultaneously admitted to a personal lack of interest in learning them. This contradiction, between what community members say they want and what they do and are willing to do, is a recurring pattern in endangered language communities. This underscores the importance of ideological clarification in revitalization efforts, as community verbal support does not necessarily translate into sustained practice.

The findings highlight how globalizing forces and migration aspirations intersect with local language ecologies, producing complex and sometimes contradictory orientations toward language use. Community-driven strategies, such as integrating Indigenous songs into school curricula, leveraging digital media, and fostering intergenerational transmission, are proposed as revitalization pathways. By foregrounding the interplay between language ideologies, identity,

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and globalization, this study contributes to broader sociolinguistic discussions about the challenges of maintaining minority languages in an increasingly globalized world.

Keywords: language ideology, language revitalization, Indigenous children's songs, globalization

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Reconfiguring Translation Expertise in the Age of Algorithmic Mediation: A Global Perspective on Agency, Knowledge, and Digital Resilience

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Abstract:

The accelerating integration of generative artificial intelligence into translation practices is reshaping the epistemological and professional foundations of the field. While large language models (LLMs) are often framed as tools that enhance efficiency and accessibility, their growing presence also signals a deeper transformation in how translational knowledge is produced, circulated, and legitimised across global contexts. Within this evolving landscape, translation expertise is increasingly mediated by algorithmic systems that both enable and constrain human agency.

This paper situates these developments within the broader dynamics of globalisation, where technological infrastructures operate transnationally and reconfigure disciplinary boundaries between education, research, and professional practice. Drawing on the notion of algorithmic culture and recent discussions on digital patronage, the study examines how translation experts are repositioned within socio-technical systems that subtly regulate visibility, authority, and decision-making processes. The paper approaches LLMs as structuring forces that reshape the conditions under which expertise is exercised and recognised.

The analysis focuses on three interconnected domains. In educational contexts, the increasing emphasis on technology-driven competencies reflects a global shift in curriculum design, yet it also raises concerns about the marginalisation of theoretical knowledge and the attenuation of cognitive engagement. In academic research, the reliance on externally developed tools risks limiting scholarly agency, positioning researchers as evaluators of systems rather than contributors to their conceptual design. In the professional sphere, translators' roles are fragmented and their participation in decision-making processes becomes increasingly restricted as a result of platform-based workflows and market-driven dynamics.

In response to these developments, the paper proposes a theory-driven approach to digital resilience in Translation Studies. It argues that translation scholars and professionals can reposition themselves as active agents by engaging with AI technologies not merely as users but as co-designers of analytical tools. Drawing on an AI-based model configured by the researcher, the study demonstrates how HCAI (Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence) and EITL (Expert-in-the-loop) approaches can enable scholars to build their own systems grounded in theoretical frameworks. Furthermore, the paper highlights the continued importance of theoretical training by showing that individuals with a strong theoretical background are better equipped to critically interpret outputs generated by the model. Finally, from a professional perspective, the practical value of the theory-informed model is discussed through editorial feedback, illustrating its potential to support decision-making processes rather than replace them.

By foregrounding the interplay between theory, technology, and practice, the paper ultimately proposes a reconfiguration of the translation expert as a reflexive agent capable of navigating and shaping the evolving conditions of algorithmic culture.

Keywords: large language models, translation expertise, digital resilience, HCAI

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Knowledge Production and Travelling Memory in Retranslation: A Case Study of British Sinologist Samuel Beal's English Translations of *Foguo Ji*

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Abstract:

Against the backdrop of cross-cultural communication and overseas dissemination of Chinese Buddhist classics, the 19th-century British Sinologist Samuel Beal (1825–1889) completed two successive English translations of *Foguo Ji*. His retranslation practice goes beyond routine textual revision; it embodies continuous knowledge accumulation, historical interpretation and memory reconstruction shaped by over a decade of engagement with Sinology and Buddhist studies. Centering on Faxian's pilgrimage to the Western Regions, Beal's retranslation reconstructs the historical and geographical context of medieval Buddhist civilization, and reinterprets the philosophical connotations of diverse Buddhist schools for Western academic circles. Compared with the earlier one, his retranslated version makes remarkable progress in textual form, stylistic presentation and cultural interpretation. Adopting an introductory monograph style, the retranslated version paves the way for Western reception of Chinese Western Regions travel narratives. It replaces indiscriminate transliteration with standardized Sanskrit and Pali expressions to enhance cross-cultural academic legitimacy. By sorting out Buddhist terminological systems and constructing a holistic cognitive framework of Eastern Buddhist culture, Beal's retranslation realizes the cross-border circulation of cultural knowledge and the reshaping of collective cultural memory, offering a valuable paradigm for the global dissemination and cross-cultural reconstruction of traditional Chinese classics.

Keywords: retranslation, *Foguo Ji*, knowledge production, travelling memory, cross-cultural communication

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Between Algorithms and Audiences: *How Content on Global Platforms is Shaping Local Imaginings of Bangladesh*

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Abstract:

Social media content creators are increasingly operating in digital media environments where platform algorithms and the viral circulation of content spread their work across borders. While many videos produced by Bangladeshi influencers highlight local markets, cuisine, clothing, or music, these representations are often shaped for the gaze of the digital-native viewer. Such viewers are growingly accustomed to globalised aesthetics of online content where narrative formats and styles of speech from around the world converge into recognisable and repeatable patterns. In the context of Bangladesh, content creators play a key role in presenting locals with a fixed idea of what contemporary Bangladesh is or what an aspirational lifestyle living in it should look like. Many creators have come to signal narrow and highly capitalised portrayals of success, social class, and desirable lifestyles through various visual and narrative cues. We can also examine the role of content creators as cultural mediators who promote local cultural expression online while simultaneously navigating - and competing against millions of other creators on - global platforms governed by algorithmic visibility. This paper examines how social media content shapes contemporary understandings of cultural practices, class dynamics and personal aspirations in Bangladesh. While existing scholarship has explored the commodification of identity and lifestyle in Western and global contexts, relatively little research has examined how creators in emerging digital media environments such as Bangladesh do the same. To bridge this gap, this paper draws on several theoretical frameworks including Actor-Network Theory (Latour) to help illuminate the relationships between creators, platforms and audiences. This paper is a scoping study that examines a purposive sample of content by top-performing Bangladeshi urban lifestyle creators on Instagram and YouTube. Through conducting analysis of visual, linguistic, and narrative choices embodied in digital content alongside exploring broader social and platform contexts, this paper examines how Bangladeshi culture is increasingly being represented in networked digital spaces and how platform logics inform the popular imagination of modern Bangladesh.

Keywords: social media, Bangladesh, cultural homogenisation, globalisation, hegemony

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Emerging Artificial Intelligence Applications in Legal Language and Profession: The Imperative and Caveats of the Technology and the Role of Legal Education

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Abstract:

Legal education is conventionally aligned to the veracities of the legal profession but limited in providing allied skills in interdisciplinary fields involving language and technology. The proposed paper aims to identify the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology in fulfilling the needs of legal language and practice and assess whether law school curriculum and pedagogies are sufficiently responsive to the emerging opportunities. After reviewing prominent AI applications in law, the paper traces its identified pitfalls to determine the pathways to balance between the perceived risks and benefits. The paper examines the contemporary pedagogic underpinnings of AI in legal education curricula to critique the conventional dogma among law schools and calls for the need to cultivate interdisciplinary traits involving law, language and AI. The paper makes a comparative review of the response of the legal education programs in selective jurisdictions and assesses the co-relation and resulting implications of the policies of the local law societies and bar associations. The paper finally argues the nexus between the emerging directives from the judicial and arbitral institutions regarding AI usage in their respective forums and the responsiveness (or the lack of it) among legal educators. The paper calls for a more cohesive affirmative action encompassing diverse stakeholders in individual jurisdictions to adapt and harness AI technology, language and legal education.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, legal profession, language, legal education, pedagogy and curriculum reforms

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The Diasporic New Speaker: A Deterritorialization

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Abstract:

This paper explores how speakers of Irish within the Irish diaspora complicate and expand notions of identity and belonging within global diasporas, and how they may fit within a deterritorialized conception of the 'new speaker'. New speaker theory reshaped sociolinguistic understandings of language revitalization in the last decade by decentering nativeness and foregrounding questions of legitimacy, authority and authenticity. However, the framework was largely developed within territorially bounded minority language contexts in Europe, implicitly linking speakerhood to place. This territorial bias obscures the experiences of second and later-generation diaspora Irish speakers, who also experience struggles over legitimacy and authenticity, though these struggles are structured through different spatial, institutional, and ideological systems. This paper proposes a rescaling of the new speaker category by introducing the sub-category of the diasporic new speaker. These are individuals who acquire and use minority or heritage languages outside the historical homeland and for whom language becomes a key site through which belonging to an imagined homeland is claimed, negotiated and contested across borders. Through a critical review of existing scholarship on new speakers, heritage language learning, and diaspora studies, this paper demonstrates how the territorial assumptions embedded in existing literature on new speakers limit our understanding of how linguistic identities and senses of belonging are constructed. It is further argued that the experiences of those outside of traditional territorial boundaries deserves greater academic attention, thus the proposal of this revised analytical lens. By foregrounding diaspora contexts, this paper proposes a shift from a model that is implicitly territorially grounded to a transnational, identity- and mobility-oriented framework. In doing so, it contributes to interdisciplinary debates on how migration shapes cultural and linguistic identities as well as the role of the diaspora in issues such as language revival.

Keywords: new speakers, irish diaspora, irish language, authenticity; legitimacy

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Teaching Chinese through Taiwanese Film: AI-Supported Learning of Film Dialogue, Vocabulary, and Discussions of Love and Mental Health in *I WeirDO*

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Abstract:

Audiovisual materials could serve as a valuable resource in foreign language classes because they provide authentic input in a real context, allowing learners to develop linguistic authenticity while enjoying the content. This helps fill the gap beyond the reach of traditional textbooks. However, due to the large volume of dialogue, limited class time, and the preparation load, it is challenging for teachers to both teach the vocabulary used in the dialogue and the main themes presented in the film.

This study uses the Taiwanese film *I WeirDO* as teaching material, exploring how generative AI can be used to optimize instructional design. Previous research has shown that advance organizers can facilitate comprehension and reduce cognitive load, while AI tools have the potential to summarize large volumes of dialogue. This study integrates these approaches by using AI-generated introductory texts as advance organizers to support learners' understanding. In addition, AI can generate word lists including important vocabulary for students to review after viewing, thereby enhancing learners' language authenticity.

Regarding the thematic discussion, *I WeirDO* explores complex relationship dilemmas through two protagonists with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), resonating with contemporary society's focus on mental health. This teaching design encourages students to think about core questions in a relationship: When two people grow at different paces, should you wait for your partner, try hard to catch up, or just let go? Also, when you have a mental health problem, is it better to find someone who shares the same struggle, or a 'so-called normal' one? By leveraging AI tools, students can overcome language barriers and engage in meaningful discussions of these complex issues. This study demonstrates how AI can support teachers in transforming popular culture into meaningful language learning experiences.

Keywords: TCFL, generative AI, film pedagogy, advance organizers

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Mixed Reality and Collaborative Experimentation Environments: Higher Education Mentoring in Latin America

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Abstract:

In recent years, the integration of immersive technologies in education has increased exponentially, leading to a proliferation of use cases, particularly within higher education. Nevertheless, recent bibliometric analyses and systematic reviews indicate that adoption remains largely concentrated in a limited set of countries, notably the United States, China, Canada, and across Europe. However, its implementation in Latin America continues to be constrained by several factors. These include limitations in infrastructure, technical expertise, and the availability of suitable software. In this broader context, and as part of the 'Scientific Mentoring in Latin America' project, the present study seeks to facilitate knowledge transfer through immersive technology, using the Edison eDesk mixed reality software. A series of 16 lectures on empirical research and scientific writing was delivered across six countries, involving eight universities from Ecuador, Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Mexico, and Brazil. The mentoring programme was implemented in the following manner: two live lectures were conceptualised and subsequently delivered via the Teams platform. The initial session focused on the design and conceptualisation of social science research, encompassing the formulation of research problems, the development of the conceptual framework, and the overall structure of a research project. The second session concentrated on methodological design, the analysis of collected data, empirical strategies, the use of technological tools, and guidelines for preparing scientific articles and achieving their publication in high-impact journals. The project was systematically organised into six sequential phases: the coordination and selection of participating universities; the design of training materials and their adaptation to the Edison environment; the

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implementation of mentoring activities in virtual settings; the collection, cleaning, and processing of data; the conduct of empirical analysis; and the dissemination of scientific outputs.

Keywords: scientific mentoring, mixed reality, TAM, higher education, collaborative experimentation

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Chinese Dialectal Parameterisation in Cantonese Teaching

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Abstract:

Using formal parameters and universal cartography, it is possible to account for linguistic variation in Chinese dialects, which display systematic microvariation within a common core grammar. This is particularly useful for the teaching of Chinese as a second language, as there is a growing interest in Chinese, not only in standard Mandarin but also in Cantonese which is immensely popular in the West and mainland China. As cartography seeks a universal word order from which language-specific parameter-settings are derived, the following schemata can account for Chinese dialects:

1. C(omp) Subj(ect) T(ense) Adv(erb) V(erb)-Aff(ix) Obj(ect) S(entence) F(inal)P(article)
2. Possessor Poss Dem(onstrative) Num(ber) Q(uantifier) Cl(assifier) Adj(ective) N(oun)

In the clausal (1) and nominal (2) domains, the head-initiality of Chinese correlates with commonly spoken languages like English and Romance, which facilitates the acquisition of Chinese by many foreigners. Furthermore, these schemata permit a systematic account of the microvariation between Chinese dialects, since while Mandarin and Cantonese share forms for the same categories (e.g. C: 因爲 because… 所以 and so…, 雖然 although… 但是/係 but…, 如果 if… 就 then…; T: 會 will/shall, 應該 should, 要 must, 想 want; V-aff: completive aspectual 了/咗, anterior aspectual 過, stative aspectual 著/住; Poss: 的/嘅, Dem: 這/呢 (proximal), 那/嗰 (distal)), dialectal variation can be classified in three types: 1) dialectal forms exist in Cantonese but not in Mandarin e.g. progressive V-aff 緊 (3) 2) different word order, namely Cantonese postverbal adverbs and Mandarin preverbal ones (先'before' (4), 多'more' (5), 少'less' (6)) 3) new constructions, like Cantonese classifiers heading noun phrases denoting articles, which indicates Cl-to-Poss movement (7):

3.外邊 响度 落-緊 雨 / 外面 正在 下 雨
outside AUX fall-PROG rain outside AUX fall rain
'It is raining outside.' (Cantonese/Mandarin)

4. 我哋 行 先 / 我們 先 走
we go first we first go
'Let's go first.' (Cantonese/Mandarin)

5a) 我哋 諗-住 再 住 多 三 日
we think-ASP again live more three day

5b) 我們 想-著 再 多 住 三 天
we think-ASP again more live three day
'We are thinking of staying for three more days.' (Cantonese(5a)/Mandarin(5b))

6a) 我 俾 少 十 分 嗰 個 學生
I give less ten mark that CL student

6b) 我 少 給 那 個 學生 十 分
I less give that CL student ten mark
'I gave ten marks less to that student.' (Cantonese(6a)/Mandarin(6b))

7a) 架 車 阻-住 個 出口
CL car block-ASP CL exit

7b) 這 輛 車 阻-著 出口

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this CL car block-ASP exit
'The car is blocking the exit.' (Cantonese(7a)/Mandarin(7b))

Based on these examples, the dialectal parametric setting for Cantonese can be represented thus:

8) C Subj T Adv V-Aff(緊) Obj Adv (多/少/先) SFP

9) Possessor Poss (CL-D) Dem Num Q Cl Adj N

Keywords: education, second and foreign languages, translation and interpreting

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Meme-Based L2 Pedagogy: Authentic Engagement in a Changing Digital Landscape

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Abstract:

This paper explores how internet memes – multimodal, user-generated, and socially grounded digital artefacts – can contribute to foreign language (L2) instruction, with a focus on Russian, by fostering authentic engagement and meaningful participation in an evolving digital landscape. The purpose of this paper is two-fold: to demonstrate key pedagogical functions of memes in higher education and to examine how meme-based L2 pedagogy responds to emerging challenges and affordances of digital technologies, including generative AI. Rooted in the everyday digital communicative practices of today's learners, memes are perceived by them as relevant, engaging, and personally meaningful. Their familiarity encourages emotional investment and active meaning-making, supporting authentic engagement grounded in learners' sense of relevance and participation (Pinner, 2014) within a context of shifting learner identities and evolving expectations in higher education.

Drawing on a qualitative classroom-based approach, combining classroom interventions in universities in France and the UK, classroom observation, analysis of learner-produced and AI-generated memes, pre- and post-intervention surveys, and learner feedback, the paper demonstrates how memes serve three key pedagogical functions: (a) motivational tools that capture attention and spark dialogue through humour and relatability; (b) linguistic resources that expose learners to authentic, contemporary, and colloquial Russian, reflecting the emphasis on colloquial language in current L2 Russian instruction (Kaltseis & Stadler, 2023), and supporting learners' development of sociolinguistic competence; and (c) socially grounded texts that reflect shared experiences and cultural references, fostering intercultural understanding (Shifman, 2014; Milner, 2016; Denisova, 2019) and collaborative meaning-making.

In the age of AI, memes also highlight what remains uniquely human in digital creativity. Unlike algorithmically generated content, memes rely on shared social knowledge, humour, and collective authorship. Their meaning emerges from interaction rather than prediction, making them less amenable to automation and therefore particularly relevant for AI-aware assessment practices. By engaging learners in the creation and interpretation of memes, educators can support the development of digital literacy, creativity, and critical awareness, including critical AI literacy (Pribble, 2024).

Keywords: Internet memes, meme-based pedagogy, L2 Russian, multimodal digital discourse, AI and language learning

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Global English, National Chinese? Values, Identity and Language Roles in Hong Kong's Primary Curriculum Reforms

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Abstract:

This paper examines how globalisation and securitisation intersect in Hong Kong's recent primary language curriculum reforms by comparing the 2025 English Language Education and 2023 Chinese Language Education Curriculum Guides (Primary 1-6). Building on work that links language policy to inequality, ideology and identity (Fairclough, 1992; Tollefson, 1991; van Dijk, 1998), it situates the analysis within Hong Kong's biliterate (Chinese-English), trilingual (Cantonese-English-Putonghua) regime and its evolving "biliterate and trilingual" policy (Poon, 2018). The study asks how English and Chinese are differentially positioned as resources for global participation, national identity and values education in a context marked by new Values Education and National Security Education frameworks (Curriculum Development Council, 2021, 2023, 2025; Education Bureau, 2022, 2025).

Using comparable corpora of both guides, the analysis adopts a corpus-assisted critical discourse approach (Baker, 2006; Baker et al., 2008; Taylor, 2017). Keyword, collocation and cluster analyses identify salient lexical fields and discourse prosodies, which are then interpreted through close reading of vision, aims, values and assessment sections, informed by appraisal theory and critical discourse analysis (Martin & White, 2005; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

Findings indicate an emergent functional division of labour. English is framed as an international language associated with global competitiveness, 21st-century skills and cross-cultural communication, while simultaneously being integrated into a National Security Education framework that emphasises safeguarding national security and cultivating "proper values and attitudes". Chinese, by contrast, is constructed as the primary carrier of Chinese culture, moral cultivation and national identity, with dense lexical fields around "中華文化 (Chinese culture)", "德育 (moral education)" and "國民身份認同 (sense of national identity)". References to social inequality, race/ethnicity and linguistic rights are rare or absent in both guides, suggesting that globalisation and security are foregrounded over equity and linguistic justice (Shohamy, 2006).

The paper argues that these discursive patterns reconfigure the symbolic hierarchy between English and Chinese, offering students asymmetrical identity trajectories as global competitors and national subjects. It concludes by reflecting on implications for language education policy and for understanding how globalisation and securitisation reshape language hierarchies and learner identities in other postcolonial and increasingly securitised education systems.

Keywords: corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis, language education policy, globalisation and securitization, bilingual and multilingual education

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Lexplore as a Globally Applicable Supplementary Language Learning Tool

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Abstract:

Lexplore (formerly "Jishobiki" or the "JB model") is a vocabulary learning approach originating in Japan that uses paper dictionaries as its primary tool. Learners examine definitions of familiar words and annotate them with sticky notes. This process reinforces vocabulary and builds learner confidence. It encourages learners to develop dictionary reading habits and gradually expand from familiar to unfamiliar vocabulary. Although online dictionaries are now widespread, paper dictionaries provide comprehensive page overviews that support the development of metacognitive awareness in language learning.

In Japan, over 2,000 primary schools use this method to teach Japanese. Secondary schools employ it for English education, while upper secondary schools teach Chinese through Lexplore. The method has expanded to other countries at various educational levels: in the UK, English instruction in primary schools and Chinese in grammar schools and universities; in Singapore, Arabic and English in primary schools; and in India, English in primary schools. These developments demonstrate Lexplore's potential across different educational contexts, levels, and target languages.

This presentation outlines Lexplore's core procedures and dissemination within Japan. It presents empirical data from Chinese language education at a UK university and English education in Indian primary schools to examine effectiveness and adaptability. The study also examines how Scaffolding and Multimodal Learning theories inform implementations using online tools and AI integration.

While Lexplore is not a universal solution, empirical evidence supports its value as a globally applicable supplementary tool. Given tight curriculum constraints globally, Lexplore offers an effective way to develop language competence without adding curriculum burden.

Keywords: Lexplore, paper dictionaries, metacognitive awareness, online tools

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Nation-Building through Ethnic Minority Education Systems: A Comparative Study of Chinese Education in Malaysia and Malay Education in Singapore

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Abstract:

National ethnic policies and nation-building objectives profoundly shape the legitimacy and evolution of minority education systems. This research employs century-scale comparative case study (1920-2025), assessing the effectiveness of minority education in achieving respective nation-building objectives. Chinese language education in Malaysia has thrived through sustained resistance despite the government's mono-ethnic assimilationist education policy and nation-building objective, demonstrating the resilience of minority education systems. Conversely, Singapore's integrationist approach—characterized by its pluralistic yet unified framework—has effectively strengthened nation-state cohesion while unintentionally side-lining Malay-language-culture preservation. The nation-building strategies, corresponding education policies, and their outcomes in both contexts are dynamically shaped by the complex interplay of distinct historical paths, political-economic imperatives, and developmental needs. Acknowledging the uniqueness of ethnic education contributes to the implementation of national education and strengthens the identification with the nation-state.

Keywords: ethnic minorities, nation-building, educational evolution, policy evaluation

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Part 2

Full Papers

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Engaging Young Learners Through Human Images: A Cross-Cultural Comparative Study of English Textbooks in the US and China

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Abstract:

ELT materials produced by Western native speakers are often highly valued in EFL/ESL contexts. However, such materials may embody particular practices and beliefs about social interaction and education that may not adequately account for cultural differences across EFL/ESL contexts. This study examines how locally produced American and Chinese primary school English textbooks interact with learners via human images. Drawing on Kress and van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar and Hofstede et al.'s cultural dimensions, this study analysed the interactional metafunction, focusing on gaze, social distance, and power relations in 144 human images from two sixth-grade textbooks. Findings show that the American textbook more frequently employs direct gazes and close-up shots, inviting personalised engagement and reflecting student-centred pedagogical orientations associated with individualism. In contrast, the Chinese textbook predominantly uses indirect gazes and medium-to-long shots, positioning human figures as objects of observation within broader social contexts and reflecting more collectivist and teacher-centred educational orientations. Power relations are generally balanced in both textbooks. These findings show that ELT materials do not just teach the English language, but also embed cultural differences, particularly in social interaction (where language is used) and education. The interaction between textbooks and learners also signals teacher-student interaction. All these highlight the ongoing tension between the push for globalisation and the call for deglobalisation, with the latter often advocating greater cultural inclusivity and sensitivity in ELT practices and materials.

Keywords: ELT textbooks, visual grammar, cultural comparison, learner engagement

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1. Introduction

ELT materials produced by Western native speakers are often highly valued in EFL/ESL contexts, despite potential cultural misalignment in non-Western contexts (Lai, 2014; Weninger & Kiss, 2013). Si's (2019) study revealed the continued dominance of English-as-a-native-language (ENL)-informed ELT materials in the Chinese EFL context, highlighting insufficient attention and effort to include linguistic and cultural diversity for broader global varieties, particularly the learners' own cultures. Similarly, Yeoh and Cheong (2025) criticised that Western-authored literature taught in ESL classrooms embedded cultural assumptions that may not fully align with the local ESL contexts. Amid ongoing discussions surrounding cultural differences in education between Western and Eastern contexts, as well as recent diplomatic tensions between the US and China, this preliminary study compares an American and a Chinese English textbook produced and used in their respective countries. This study aims to provide insights into cultural differences in teaching practices and the creation of teaching materials, contribute to broader global educational understanding, and support more informed cross-cultural awareness in the Western and Eastern educational contexts.

Past studies on language textbooks predominantly prioritised verbal features and non-human images (e.g., Keles & Yazan, 2023; Uzum et al., 2021). From a social semiotic perspective, human images constitute an important mode of meaning-making. This echoes the term "visual grammar" in a widely used framework in social semiotics – Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) Visual Grammar. Although previous studies have examined images in English language textbooks, less attention has been given to cross-cultural comparisons and how visual interactional patterns may reflect different educational and cultural contexts.

To address the limited attention given to cross-cultural visual analyses of human images in primary school English language textbooks, where imagery is highly relied upon for engaging young learners, this study examines how human images in American and Chinese English textbooks engage learners differently. This echoes McConachy's (2018) view that textbooks mediate social interaction through verbal cultural representations, which can vary across different cultures.

This study, therefore, examines how human images in locally produced primary school English textbooks construct interaction with learners in different cultures using three key features: gaze, social distance, and power relations. It addresses two research questions:

1. How do the interactional features (gaze, social distance, and power relations) of human images differ between American and Chinese English textbooks?
2. How do these differences reflect the cultural values of their educational contexts?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Visual images in English textbooks

Past studies have analysed various features in textbooks, e.g., instructions, verbal texts, and images (Lucy et al., 2020). According to Elmiana (2019), images in EFL textbooks are attractive features that can help foster students' motivation in language learning: "to engage effectively with the exercises and provide emphasis for the assertions made in the linguistic parts of the text" (p. 1). Beyond language acquisition, past studies show that these visuals teach social interaction. Elmiana (2019) reports that images in Indonesian EFL textbooks are highly idealised and interactive, constructing meanings designed to personalise learner engagement with the tasks. Purwaningtyas' (2020) study demonstrates that visual images in Indonesian EFL textbooks project cultural tolerance and gender equity by balancing professional roles between male and female characters. Mantei and Kervin (2014) found that

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picture book illustrations allow young learners to make personal, text-to-self connections reflecting their home and community experiences. In China, Chen (2010) demonstrated how multimodal resources like dialogue balloons allow the textbook's editor voice to interact with character and reader voices, fostering dialogic engagement.

However, cross-cultural research focusing on how human images construct learner engagement remains limited. While Elmiana (2019) provides insights into Indonesian EFL textbooks, the lack of cross-cultural comparison makes it difficult to interpret if those visual features reflect unique national values. Cross-cultural comparisons make these culturally specific interactional choices visible and interpretable.

2.2 Social interaction in the US and China

This study employs Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) Visual Grammar, focusing on the interactional metafunction: eye contact, social distance, and power relations. Regarding eye contact, Uono and Hietanen (2015) report cross-cultural differences in direct gaze perception, with Western participants showing greater sensitivity to direct cues than Eastern participants in experimental settings. Stanley et al. (2013) found cultural differences in gaze allocation during emotion recognition tasks, with American and Chinese participants attending differently to facial and contextual information. Similarly, social distance has also been associated with cultural variation in interpersonal spacing and relational preferences (Beaulieu, 2004).

Regarding power relations, lower power distance is generally associated with Western individualist cultures such as the United States, while higher power distance is more commonly associated with Eastern collectivist cultures such as China (see Zhang, 2013). The Hofstede model shows systematic differences across cultures in individualism/collectivism and power distance. According to the more recent update from Hofstede et al. (2010), the United States is reported to score 91 on individualism, while China scores 20. For power distance, the United States scores 40, while China scores 80. Societies with lower power distance tend to be more egalitarian in social relations, whereas higher power distance societies tend to be more hierarchical, reflected in relations such as between authority figures and subordinates (Hofstede et al., 2010).

2.3 Social interaction in educational contexts in the US and China

Grant et al. (2013) observed that American teachers prioritise individualised instruction and lesson differentiation, whereas Chinese teachers lean heavily toward cohesive, whole-group instruction. Numerous studies suggest that the Western individualist education (e.g., the US) is often described as more student-centred, where students are encouraged to participate actively, ask questions, and contribute to classroom discussion (Nelson, 2000). In contrast, the Eastern collectivist education (e.g., in China) is often described as more teacher-centred, where teachers often dominate the interaction in the class with the goal of passing knowledge to the collective students. Zhang (2013) notes that Chinese students tend to perceive classroom relations as hierarchical, with teachers occupying a higher position, and students may prefer seeking help from peers rather than directly interacting with their teachers.

To date, past studies have primarily analysed the interaction among real individuals in physical educational settings. This study extends the literature by examining interactional meaning embedded in textbook human images.

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3. Methodology

This preliminary study focuses on one English textbook each from the US and China, used in primary schools of prominent states/provinces, California and Beijing, respectively. This study employs Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions, focusing on individualism versus collectivism, and Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) Visual Grammar, emphasising the interactional metafunction: how images engage viewers through gaze (direct/indirect), social distance (close-up, medium, long shots), and power relation (high, equal, low angles). Human images (53 American, 91 Chinese) were collected from two nationally approved sixth-grade English textbooks used in the US (Wonders: Reading/Writing Workshop; McGraw Hill, 2016) and China (English Subject; People's Education Press, 2013). These images were coded and quantified based on the interactional features and interpreted through Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural lens.

For analytical clarity, the paper tends to explain cultures in broad generalisations with simplified binaries of East–West and US–China, particularly from the cultural aspect of individualism and collectivism. We recognise that regional samples are not fully representative and that treating cultural orientations as a strict binary can overlook individual or subcultural diversity along the cultural continuum (Hofstede et al., 2010; McSweeney, 2002). However, while recognising cultural diversity is crucial to understanding the cultural landscape, enabling discussion of cultural differences is equally important. See Cheong (2020, 2021) on intangible cultural diversity, tangible cultural differences, the demand for tangible knowledge, and how academic favouritism towards diversity and anti-generalisation stems from the hegemonic Western individualism that has been ruling academia.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Eye contact: More direct gazes in the American English textbook and indirect gazes in the Chinese English textbook

Table 1. Gazes of Human Images in the American and Chinese English Textbooks

Textbook	Frequency (Percentage)		
	Direct gaze	Indirect gaze	Total
The American English textbook	31 (58%)	22 (42%)	53 (100%)
The Chinese English textbook	16 (18%)	75 (82%)	91 (100%)

Table 1 shows the number of human images with direct and indirect gazes in the American and Chinese English textbooks, respectively. Human images in the American English textbook often use direct gazes (58%), creating eye contact and potentially increasing viewer engagement, while the Chinese English textbook favours indirect gazes (82%), where characters look away, offering information rather than demanding interaction (see Figure 1).

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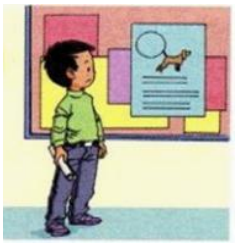
Individual figure
(American textbook)

Group figures
(American textbook)



Individual figure
(Chinese textbook)

Group figures
(Chinese textbook)

Figure 1. Examples of Direct Gaze in the American English Textbook and Indirect Gaze in the Chinese English Textbook

American textbook images, both individual and groups, often show direct gazes with positive or neutral expressions. This aligns with individualist design conventions linking direct viewer address to active learner engagement. Even groups maintain direct eye contact, suggesting a stronger orientation towards viewer address in visual design. In contrast, Chinese English textbook images avoid eye contact with viewers. This visual choice may reflect broader cultural differences in gaze behaviour reported in previous cross-cultural studies (Uono & Hietanen, 2015).

Exceptions include 42% indirect gazes in the American textbook, typically used for internal reflection or storytelling, and 18% direct gazes in the Chinese English textbook, often appearing in instructional or question-based contexts where learner response is invited.

4.2 Social distance: More close-up shots in the American English textbook and medium-to-long shots in the Chinese English textbook

Table 2. Camera Shots of Human Images in the American and Chinese English Textbooks

Textbook	Frequency (Percentage)			
	Close shot	Medium shot	Long shot	Total
The American English textbook	22 (42%)	16 (30%)	15 (28%)	53 (100%)
The Chinese English textbook	10 (11%)	44 (48%)	37 (41%)	91 (100%)

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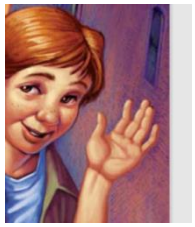
Table 2 shows the distribution of camera shots, corresponding to the social distance between the human images and students/readers. The American textbook features more close-up shots (42%), often featuring children of a similar age to the readers, which may encourage emotional identification and simulate peer interaction (see Figure 2).



Close-up shot

(American textbook)

Medium and long shot

(American textbook)

Long shot

(Chinese textbook)

Close-up shot

(Chinese textbook)

Figure 2. Examples of Camera Shots in the American and Chinese English Textbooks

An example shows a girl's head and hand greeting students, fostering familiarity, especially when combined with direct gaze. In contrast, the Chinese English textbook uses medium (48%) and long shots (41%) to portray group activities and context, which positions the characters as objects of observation, consistent with collectivist values favouring social harmony and teacher-guided learning.

Some variation exists: the American textbook uses long shots (28%) and medium-to-long shots (30%) to show teamwork or child-adult dynamics. Close-up shots (11%) in the Chinese English textbook mostly appear in vocabulary lessons, showing emotions like "joy" and "thought", but often serve informational rather than engaging purposes, indicating that distance does not always equate detachment.

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4.3 Power relation: Equal angles/power in both American and Chinese English textbooks, with low angles only in the American textbook

Table 3. Camera Angles of Human Images in the American and Chinese English Textbooks

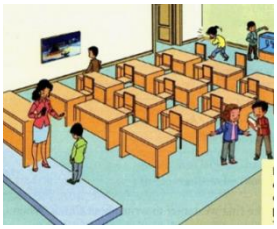
Textbook	Frequency (Percentage)			
	High angle	Low angle	Equal angle	Total
The American English textbook	2 (4%)	8 (15%)	43 (81%)	53 (100%)
The Chinese English textbook	4 (4%)	0 (0%)	87 (96%)	91 (100%)

Table 3 presents the distribution of camera angles. Most images in both textbooks are presented from equal angles, 81% in the American and 96% in the Chinese English textbook. This likely reflects standard textbook design conventions for reader comfort rather than intentional power dynamics (see Figure 3).

Equal angle
(American textbook)

Low angle
(American textbook)

Equal angle
(Chinese textbook)



High angle
(Chinese textbook)

Figure 3. Examples of Camera Angles in the American and Chinese English Textbooks

The American textbook uses low angles (15%) to depict characters as brave and admirable, inviting students to look up to them. The Chinese English textbook's few high-angle shots (4%) offer wider group views, reinforcing collective activity and framing subjects as visual information rather than interaction partners.

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5. Conclusion

This study reveals distinct visual interaction styles shaped by cultural values. The American textbook personalises interaction through direct gazes and close-ups, reflecting Western individualism and active, student-centred learning. The Chinese English textbook favours indirect gazes and medium-to-long shots, reinforcing collectivist, social learning, and passive observation. Both use mostly equal angles, likely reflecting design conventions rather than power dynamics.

These findings echo broader cultural differences between Western individualism and Eastern collectivism, aligning with educational practices, the roles of teachers, and materials. While offering insights into cultural patterns in textbooks, this preliminary study acknowledges the complexity of cultures and cautions against overgeneralising US–China/East–West binaries. Broader research across diverse contexts is needed to understand how visual design shapes and reflects cultural approaches to education. Culture must be compared to be observable and distinguishable from other cultures, and thus, claimable and justifiable as a culture.

All in all, these findings show that ELT materials do not just teach the English language, but also embed cultural differences, particularly in social interaction (where language is used) and education. The interaction between textbooks and learners also signals teacher-student interaction. All these highlight the ongoing tension between the push for globalisation and the call for deglobalisation, with the latter often advocating greater cultural inclusivity and sensitivity in ELT practices and materials.

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The Case for Knowledge Exchanges

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Abstract:

Academic conferences connect students with ideas and individuals they might not otherwise encounter. However, they are not without limitations. Students cannot attend every concurrent session; furthermore, little time is spared for students to crystalize takeaways. To address this, and provide a more well-rounded learning opportunity for students, MiraCosta Community College's Learning Centers(TLC) piloted a conference for students, conducted by Learning Center employees, to share information and improve takeaways: a Knowledge Exchange. The event consisted of 14 sessions in three concurrent blocks(4, 5, 5). Additionally, TLC facilitators used a three stage 'directed networking' strategy based on the studio model to promote student access to and retention of sessions. In part 1, students from the same session were grouped together and asked to share their name and intended major, and then to share around and discuss insight gained and knowledge reinforced. For part 2, attendees from each of the separate sessions were grouped together and given time to share what they learned. Finally, in phase 3, students were encouraged to discuss next sessions of interest. Feedback for this process and the Knowledge Exchange as a whole was largely positive, suggesting a place for similar conferences in the future.

Keywords: Directed Networking, studio model, intentionally inviting culture

1. Introduction

Conferences are valuable because they connect participants with ideas and individuals they might not otherwise encounter in their coursework. However, they are not without their limitations. Concurrent sessions mean that students cannot attend every offering(e.g. activity, presentation, workshop, panel) that interests them; they must pick and choose. Furthermore, time is rarely set aside during the conference for students to crystalize takeaways. To address these issues, and to provide a more well-rounded learning opportunity for students, MiraCosta Community College's Learning Centers(TLC) piloted a conference for students, conducted by Learning Center employees in their fields of expertise, designed to share more information and improve takeaways; in short, a Knowledge Exchange. The event presented 14 sessions across three concurrent blocks(4, 5, 5). Following the first block, TLC facilitators implemented a three stage 'Directed Networking' strategy based on the studio model to promote student access to and retention of sessions; the second block preceded a more informal networking period. The Knowledge Exchange received largely positive feedback overall, and

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for the directed networking in particular, along with urgings for more workshops, more chances to see workshops, and more networking opportunities, suggesting a place for similar conferences in the future.

2. The Learning Centers Knowledge Exchange

The Knowledge Exchange was created by MiraCosta College's The Learning Centers(TLC); essentially, the tutoring center. TLC employees(student employees, tutor coordinators, faculty coordinators, supervisors) facilitated the conference for MiraCosta students. Initially, the Knowledge Exchange was inspired by thoughts that students should be:

1) Exposed to different fields of knowledge typically stratified by majors/degree programs.
2) Given ample time to discuss takeaways from conference offerings.

These thoughts are not without academic precedence. In the case of the first, Burchell(1971) echoes Fraenkel's(1970) observation that a single discipline method fractures student perspective of self and world, and further notes "exploration and investigation of knowledge that transcends disciplinary domains can enlarge the individuals capacity to build [one's] own synthesis of knowledge and simultaneously can enable [one] to grapple with the unknown, thereby enhancing [their] power." More recently, Reed et. al.(2026) reasserts this, reminding us that the world is inherently interdisciplinary; today's challenges are overcome by the cooperation of individuals across many different fields—and current interdisciplinary efforts may be hampered by(often perceived) obstacles of structure or administrative design.

Regarding the second thought, Qian(2026) highlights the fleeting, yet powerful incubation capabilities of conferences, wherein students may advance their academic understanding and self-discovery —and the tragically narrow research attention that conferences have received as drivers of such growth. Qian also acknowledges how the rigors of academia can discourage students, and how conferences can help revive them. Ghatak, et al.(2026) reaffirms as much, identifying engagement in networking, and more specifically, group discussions as critical to participants. In essence, conference access is a driver of student identity, agency, and success.

Addressing the first idea involved presenting students a variety of offerings across academic, personal and professional domains. For the second, a conference agenda which included intentional Directed Networking time for students to discuss takeaways.

3. Knowledge Exchange Proceedings

Table 1. Knowledge Exchange Schedule

8am-9am	Event Opening: Introduction, Light Bites, Keynote
9am-10am	Concurrent Workshops I
10am-11am	Directed Networking I
11am-12pm	Concurrent Workshops II
12pm-1pm	Directed Networking II and Lunch
1pm-2pm	Concurrent Workshops III
2pm-2:30pm	Closing Remarks

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The Knowledge Exchange took place in the Learning Commons, a two-story building housing the Library, the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement(MESA) Center, and the Learning Centers themselves, which are further broken into the Writing Center, STEM, and Academic Support and Innovations(ASIC). MESA and the Library graciously granted use of their spaces for sessions hosted by TLC personnel.

A total of 63 attendees were received in the Learning Commons lobby, where they checked in and acquired their conference materials. From there, they were directed further into the TLC space, which consists largely of an open floor plan with various grouped tables identified by letter-number or number-number configuration, e.g. A-1, 2-3, depending on which side of the space they fall. In this open area, attendees had access to breakfast refreshments; likewise, the conference introduction and keynote were held.

After the keynote, attendees participated in the first round of concurrent workshops, which took place in the various study rooms in TLC space, the MESA center, or upstairs in the Library. Following the first set of concurrent workshops, attendees returned to the common space, where the first Directed Networking sessions were held: a more organized version on the 'number' side of the floor, and an informal discussion on the 'letter' side.

From here, the attendees were directed toward the second set of concurrent sessions, which likewise took place in the previously designated spaces; after these sessions, the conference reconvened for further informal networking, along with the provided lunch. Following this was the final set of concurrent workshops, an anonymous survey, closing remarks given by the host, and the dismissal of attendees.

4. What is Directed Networking?

Directed Networking is a form of collaboration that utilizes the guidance of a facilitator to help participants process and integrate their learning. Namely, its purpose is to amplify students' access to, and retention of, conference offerings by giving students intentional time to discuss what they have learned. In fact, it is noted by Ghatak et al.(2026) that networking opportunities are one of the core drivers for conference attendance. Allowing students to compare notes with those who attended other sessions further extends their knowledge and creates room to find various overlaps in understanding.

Directed Networking is based on more than conference observation. It is a strategy that borrows from the studio model, which emphasizes collaboration and coworking among students(or students with peer tutors, facilitators, or teachers) to improve their work. A mainstay of writing centered courses, studio model style practice has expanded to encompass other disciplines, as asserted by Baker(2002), who spoke of its versatility in architecture programs as a source of collaboration and mentorship; Miley et al.(2018), who praised its ability to center student work and facilitate problem solving and skill modeling; and Mertz et al.(2019), who utilized a 'studio course' model to help veterans understand the connections between their computer courses, as well as develop an educational cohort for success, strategies that would benefit other student groups as well.

The studio model puts students in conversation with facilitators and their peers; Directed Networking adapts this process for conference spaces, encouraging students to pause, reflect, and discuss with one another what they glean from their sessions.

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5. Directed Networking: Method

5.1 Phase 1. Within session discussions

Attendees from the same session were grouped together and asked to share their name and intended major. Next, in their groups, attendees were asked to share around and discuss (A) New insights gained, and (B) Knowledge reinforced. The goal: allow attendees time to review and expand on the information they received during their session.

5.2 Phase 2. Between session discussions

Attendees from each of the separate sessions were grouped together and given time to share out on what they learned. The goal: allow attendees to act as representatives of their session, sharing key points discussed during Phase 1, to inform those did not attend that particular session.

5.3 Phase 3. Upcoming session discussion

Explore and discuss next sessions of interest. The goal: encourage attendees to discuss the options and their interest for the remaining sessions.

5.4 Second round Directed Networking:

The second round consisted of two informal options given the overlap with lunch:

Option 1: Students were encouraged to discuss the sessions they attended, and which they would be attending next.

Option 2: Lunch-related conversation topics were printed and placed on lunch tables, intended to generate non-conference related discussions.

6. Knowledge Exchange: Reception

The TLCKE had 22 facilitators who provided 14 unique sessions. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive and demonstrated success in achieving various objectives.

Regarding the overall experience of the Knowledge Exchange(Figure 1), the leading response was excellent(60.9%) while the remainder returned results(39.1%) of 'good'. Similar responses indicated how engaged participants felt with the workshops and panels(Figure 2), with 69.6% declaring 'Very Engaging' and 30.4% declaring 'Somewhat Engaging' respectively.

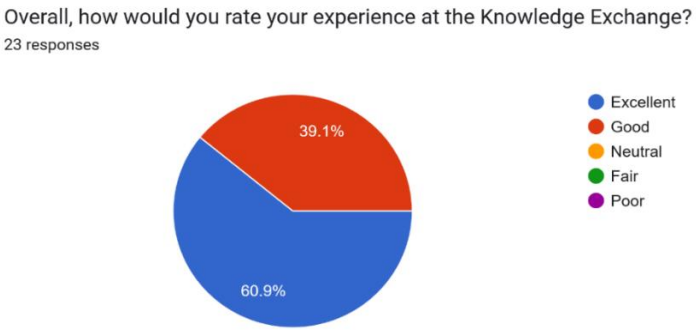

Figure 1. Overall Experience of Knowledge Exchange

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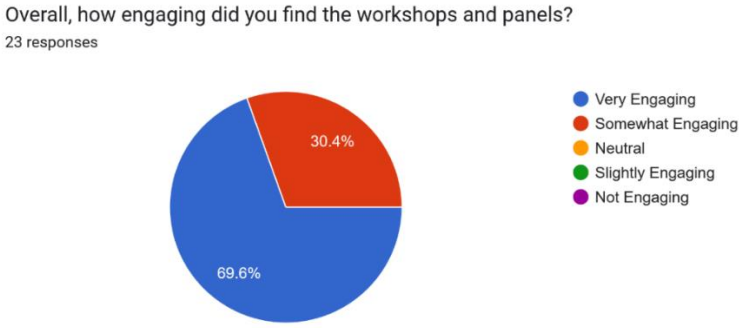


Figure 2. Workshop and Panel Engagement

Furthermore, all respondents agreed that the Knowledge Exchange was an inclusive and welcoming learning environment(Figure 3), with 82.6% in strong agreement.

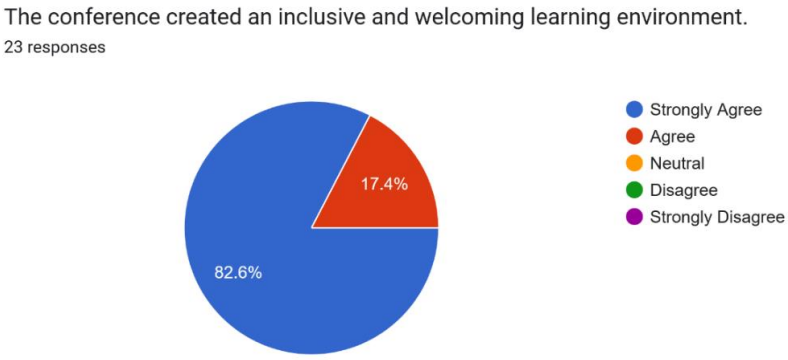
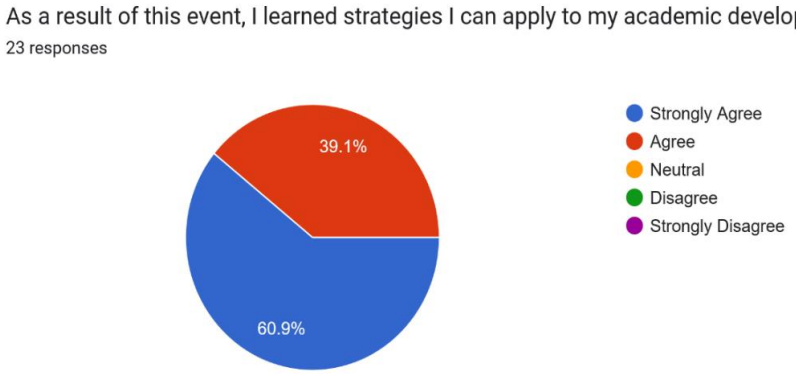


Figure 3. Inclusivity; Intentionally Inviting Culture

Overall, participants also were in strong agreement that the conference offerings provided were applicable to their academic, personal, and professional development(Figures4-6).



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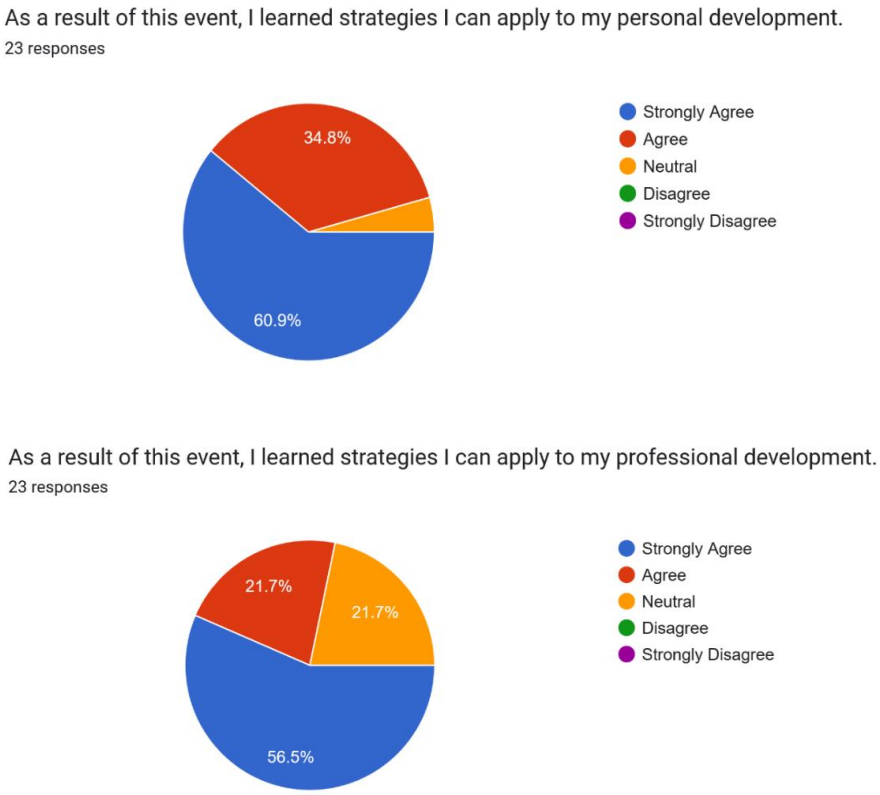

Figure 4-6. Academic, Personal, Professional Development

Ultimately, respondents felt more comfortable and connected with the TLC and its staff (Figure 7).

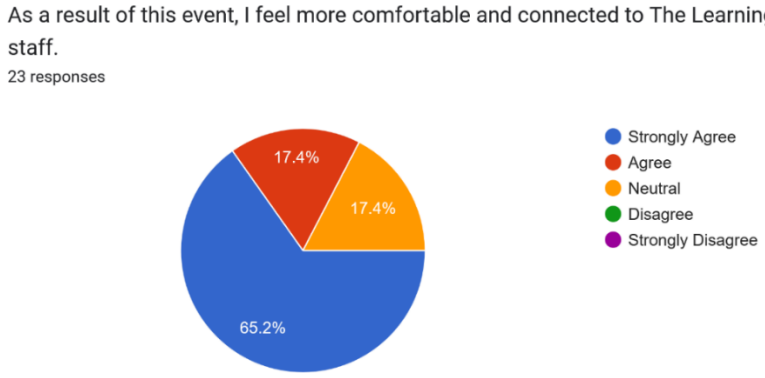

Figure 7. Rapport with TLC Space and Personnel

The survey's short answer questions gathered qualitative data. Specifically, the questions asked for the most valuable aspect of the knowledge exchange, improvements for future versions, and the types of content participants would like to see. Nearly half of the feedback included requests for more

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content(additional offerings, or more access to existing offerings), indicated by responses such as "provide more workshops" in the former case and "[having] a longer time so everyone can hit all the workshops," in the latter. When asked about the offerings desired, feedback called for a range of subject matter, broadly categorized into academic, professional, personal, and social offerings. Lastly, participants expressed a desire for more networking, with specific phrases like "Only Directed Networking" or "I really liked the discussion, so I could learn about the other [sessions]," identifying the need for Directed Networking or similar strategies at future conferences.

6.1 Directed Networking: reception

78.2% of survey respondents indicated that the Directed Networking sessions were beneficial for connecting with others.

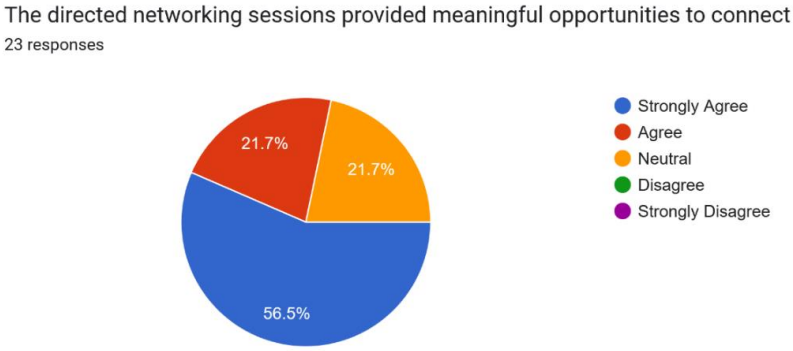

Figure 8. Directed Networking Efficacy for Connection

For some participants, Directed Networking was the most valuable part of the conference. One respondent stated: "Engaging with peers and hearing their interpretations of the sessions" was a great opportunity. Another indicated that "Learning what the people around you know and what you were able to share" was a meaningful part of the experience. These and similar responses indicate an appeal of the Knowledge Exchange in students' learning from and sharing with one another, as well as with facilitators.

7. The Case, then, for Knowledge Exchanges

A Knowledge Exchange goes beyond typical conferences in the way that it seeks to provide additional context for sessions(attended or missed) through Directed Networking. In addition to providing space for collaboration and refinement of understanding, Directed Networking facilitates socialization in a low-stakes setting. Finally, a well-curated Knowledge Exchange can offer a 'sampler platter' of sorts for students finding their way in academia and life.

These aims are well reflected in the student response, given that students wanted more content, more access to content, more variety of content, and more opportunities for discussion. Revisiting the thoughts that inspired the Knowledge Exchange:

1) Students should be exposed to different fields of knowledge typically stratified by majors and degree programs.

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This broadening of perspectives and exploration ultimately extends beyond traditional academia, and unfortunately was beyond the scope of the pilot of the Knowledge Exchange. It is clear, however, given student feedback, that a broader range of content is desired- for subjects academic and non. This follows the precedents established by Miley, Mertz, and Qian regarding the multifaceted and interdisciplinary nature of student experience.

Put simply, students want to learn, academically and otherwise.

2) Students should be given ample time to discuss takeaways from conference offerings.

Directed Networking sought to alleviate this issue; as with all first iterations, there remains room for improvement. Refined Directed Networking sessions may better facilitate closing the content gap and furthering connection of students to content and peers.

8. Directed Networking: Potential Reforms

Because directed networking relies on participants' ability to take notes and communicate, more facilitation could help foster those skills, improving the experience for participants. Two models for future Directed Networking are the 'Panel' style and the 'Speed Dating' style.

The Panel style Directed Networking would create a panel by gathering the leads of each concurrent session in a given block. The host would ask them questions related to their sessions, covering basic information, perhaps executed in a What, Why, How, framework; from there, questions could dive into insights about the sessions and their processes, and subsequently, opened to the audience.

This structure offers a few advantages. Namely, it taps experts while they are fresh from their sessions, so their knowledge is readily available. Additionally, everyone receives a recap of all the panels, including those they did not attend. Allowing participants to ask questions can inform the entire audience, whether it's someone who was in a session following up, or someone who did not attend a given session inquiring more.

One concern to consider is that certain offerings may not be conveyed effectively in panel style. For example, if a session already was a panel, as was the case for some offerings at the Knowledge Exchange, it may prove difficult to distill into part of a larger panel as a recap. This could perhaps be alleviated by asking hosts of panel sessions to take copious notes from their panel speakers so they can accurately convey that information during subsequent Directed Networking panels.

Another option for Directed Networking is the Speed Dating style, where the facilitators of each session are assigned a station, and groups of participants rotate to each station for a recap. Perhaps the roaming groups could be arranged according to session, e.g. everyone who attended session 1 would be grouped together to cycle through stations 2, 3, and 4, and so on.

This structure of Direct Networking allows for short, focused information concentrated on one session at a time for participants moving from station to station. At the same time, the experts are likewise still warm, fresh from their sessions, and they may be able to develop an 'elevator pitch' which will help in situations beyond the Knowledge Exchange.

There is the concern that facilitators will encounter difficulty giving a summary of their presentation multiple times; Balancing breadth and depth information may also prove difficult. Perhaps discussing the speed dating strategy ahead of time will help them prepare.

Regardless of Directed Networking strategy, a follow-up 'Afterparty' loosely designed on the original Directed Networking method may help with insight integration. This involves grouping the attendees of different sessions and allowing them to discuss independently. A lax structure after a

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period of guidance may help students sink into ease and integrate their ideas rather than simply absorbing them.

Above all else, a structured Directed Networking plan will take pressure off participants to see the 'right' session, as well as facilitate connection and networking among participants.

9. Final Thought

Knowledge Exchanges confer(at least) one other benefit- Engendering a greater connection between the students and their institutions. As noted in the survey, many who participated in the TLCKE felt more connected to Learning Centers staff as a result. As Qian asserts, students, often worn down by the rigors of academia and challenging programs, need this sort of connection to reaffirm their commitments, strengthen their sense of self as academic constituents, and restore their well-being. The hope, then, is that Knowledge Exchanges can build a stronger community of practice for students, faculty, and staff alike.

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From Reception to Localization: Chinese Ecolinguistics and Its Contribution to the Global Discipline

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Abstract:

Ecolinguistics examines language use from an ecological perspective, exploring interactions with social, cultural, and natural environments. This article reviews the development of Chinese ecolinguistics and situates it in relation to Western scholarship. This article argues that its development is best understood as a process of localization. Chinese ecolinguistics has moved through three broad stages: early reception of Western ecolinguistic models, interdisciplinary adaptation and exploration, and recent localization through professionalization, Sino-Western dialogue, and theoretical extension. The Chinese case demonstrates that localization is not merely the application of an existing theory to a new context, but a methodological and theoretical process through which ecolinguistics is reshaped by local languages, cultural traditions, ecological realities, and social needs. Chinese ecolinguistics contributes to the global discipline to construct ecological stories that promote harmony between humans, society, and nature.

Keywords: Chinese ecolinguistics; localization; Harmonious Discourse Analysis; language ecology; ecological discourse analysis; linguistic diversity; global ecological community

1. Introduction: Ecolinguistics and the Problem of Localization

Ecolinguistics examines the relationship between language, human society, and the natural environment, examining interactions between language, society, and the environment. Two major traditions have shaped the field: Haugen's language ecology, focusing on multilingualism, language vitality, and policy (Haugen, 1971/1972), and Halliday's discourse-oriented approach, which examines how language contributes to ecological crises (Halliday, 1992). Together, these traditions reflect a dual focus on the ecology of languages and the ecological consequences of discourse (Fill, 2001). Recent scholarship has emphasized this dual orientation through increased attention to discourse, method, and global diversity (Stibbe, 2021). These developments highlight how ecolinguistics can become global

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not through theoretical uniformity, but through situated forms of ecological, linguistic, and cultural interpretation.

The development of ecolinguistics in China provides a particularly revealing case. Initially shaped by the reception of Western theories, Chinese ecolinguistics has undergone processes of adaptation and transformation in response to local linguistic realities, cultural traditions, and ecological concerns. In recent years, it has become increasingly professionalized and has begun to generate theoretical contributions of its own, especially through research on linguistic diversity and the development of Harmonious Discourse Analysis (Huang, 2016).

This article argues that Chinese ecolinguistics stands as a case of disciplinary globalization through localization, unfolding across three interrelated dimensions: historical development, theoretical articulation, and disciplinary contribution. The following sections trace this development empirically and examine its theoretical implications.

2. From Reception to Localization

The development of Chinese ecolinguistics can be divided into three broad stages:

1. Reception: Germination of Chinese ecolinguistics, 1985–2003
2. Adaptation: Learning, exploration, and early localization, 2004–2015
3. Contribution: Professionalization, localization, and Sino-Western dialogue, 2016–present

The reception stage involves the introduction and framing of Western ecolinguistic concepts in a Chinese context. The adaptation stage reflects the reinterpretation and expansion of these concepts in relation to local linguistic and cultural conditions. The contribution stage, in turn, marks a shift toward the production of locally grounded theoretical frameworks, demonstrating localization as a process of theory-building rather than application.

2.1 Reception: germination of Chinese ecolinguistics, 1985–2003

The first stage of Chinese ecolinguistics was sporadic and exploratory. During this period, Chinese scholars were influenced primarily by Haugen's language ecology model, though some were also shaped by sociolinguistic theories from the former Soviet Union, Europe, and American structuralist linguistics (Haugen, 1971).

Early studies introduced ecolinguistic ideas into Chinese scholarship through applications to language ecology, minority languages, and linguistic culture (e.g., Li, 1991). These were significant because they introduced ecological thinking into Chinese linguistics. However, the work of this stage remained largely receptive and applicative. Chinese scholars used Western ecolinguistic concepts to study Chinese language and society, but they had not yet developed a distinct Chinese theoretical framework. The first stage therefore established the possibility of Chinese ecolinguistics but did not yet produce a localized disciplinary system.

2.2 Adaptation: learning, exploration, and early localization, 2004–2015

The second stage began in 2004, when Fan Junjun and Gong Qi translated Alwin Fill's overview of ecolinguistics into Chinese (Fan & Gong, 2004). Fill's explanation of the two major paths of ecolinguistics, following Haugen and Halliday, had a major impact on Chinese scholars. It helped Chinese researchers understand ecolinguistics as a field that included both language ecology and ecological discourse analysis (Fill, et al., 2004).

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During this period, Chinese ecolinguistics diversified. Scholars began to introduce more international ecolinguistic theories, apply ecolinguistic perspectives to new research areas, and raise questions about localization. This stage illustrates localization as a process of reinterpretation and expansion, in which Chinese scholars begin to reshape ecolinguistic frameworks in response to local research concerns, cultural traditions, and interdisciplinary connections.

2.2.1 Promotion of the Halliday model

One of the most important features of this stage was the growing influence of Halliday's model. Chinese scholars increasingly examined the role of language in ecological and environmental issues. This shifted attention from language ecology alone toward discourse, environmental awareness, and ecological responsibility (Halliday, 1992). During this period, Chinese ecolinguistics expanded into related fields, including translation, cognitive linguistics, and language education, reflecting increasing interdisciplinary engagement.

2.2.2 Introduction of additional approaches

Beyond Haugen and Halliday, Chinese scholars began introducing the work of other important international ecolinguists, including Fill, Alexander, Goatly, Mufwene, and Stibbe. The introduction of Fill's ecolinguistics website and the online journal Language and Ecology was especially important. These resources exposed Chinese scholars to critical discourse analysis of environmental destruction and to efforts to identify discourses that support ecological sustainability. Such concerns resonated with long-standing Chinese cultural themes concerning harmony, balance, and the relationship between humans and nature.

2.2.3 Extensions and contributions to related fields

During the learning and exploration stage, Chinese ecolinguistics expanded into several related fields. Scholars connected ecolinguistics with translation studies, cognitive linguistics, foreign language education, lexical analysis, and studies of cultural and linguistic biodiversity. Research on English and Chinese lexical systems also revealed anthropocentric assumptions in word structure, morphology, and meaning. As of this writing, the most recent work in this domain explores the application of personal pronouns to non-human animals (Zhu, et al., 2026).

Most important to this discussion, however, scholars began to discuss localization explicitly. Zhou Wenjuan (2018) argued that ecolinguistics could be localized in three ways: localization of research consciousness, localization of research content, and localization of research paradigms. This was an important transitional moment. It showed that Chinese scholars were no longer asking only how to apply ecolinguistics in China; they were beginning to ask how ecolinguistics itself might be reshaped by Chinese contexts.

Despite this growth, Chinese ecolinguistics during this stage still lacked a strong native disciplinary system. Chinese scholars mostly followed Western thought and applied it to Eastern or Chinese cultural contexts. The groundwork for localization had been laid, but the field had not yet fully entered a stage of independent theoretical contribution despite healthy dialog between the two contexts.

Huang's work helped bring more systemic functional linguists into ecolinguistics and contributed to a period of rapid development. Since 2016, Chinese ecolinguistics has increasingly moved beyond the application of Western theories. It has entered a stage of professionalization, localization, and dialogue with international ecolinguistics. This development is especially visible in the explicit articulation of Harmonious Discourse Analysis as a localized Chinese approach to ecolinguistic inquiry (Huang &

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Zhao, 2021), the continued international discussion of ecolinguistics as a maturing field (Penz & Fill, 2022), and the more recent consolidation of HDA in book-length form (Zhao & Huang, 2025).

Taken together, these stages show that Chinese ecolinguistics develops not through linear adoption of external theory, but through successive processes of localization that culminate in the emergence of locally grounded frameworks. The following section examines localization more directly as a methodological and theoretical principle.

3. Localization as the Core of Chinese Ecolinguistics

Localization in ecolinguistics is not simply the contextual application of pre-existing theoretical frameworks, but a methodological and epistemological process through which those frameworks are reinterpreted, extended, and transformed in response to locally situated linguistic practices, cultural traditions, and ecological conditions. In this sense, localization operates as a form of theory-building from context. The development of Chinese ecolinguistics exemplifies this process most notably in the emergence of Harmonious Discourse Analysis. Localization provides a productive methodological orientation for ecolinguistics as a global discipline, engaged through locally grounded linguistic and cultural resources.

Ecolinguistics requires localization wherever it is practiced because the relationship between language and environment is always shaped by specific histories, cultures, policies, and ecological conditions. In China, localization means studying the interaction between Chinese languages and China's natural, social, cultural, and policy environments.

Methodological expansion has also become increasingly important. Recent ecolinguistics has placed more emphasis on corpus-assisted approaches, multimodal data, public media discourse, and educational applications. These developments matter for Chinese ecolinguistics because they provide practical tools for moving from broad ecological philosophy to replicable discourse analysis and classroom practice.

If the second stage of Chinese ecolinguistics can be characterized as a period of "following the West," the post-2016 stage may be understood as a movement toward theorizing "in our own words." This does not mean rejecting Western ecolinguistics. Rather, it means developing ecolinguistic descriptions, categories, and research priorities grounded in Chinese linguistic realities and cultural traditions.

Two major areas of localization are especially important: linguistic diversity and ethnic minority languages, and Harmonious Discourse Analysis.

3.1 Linguistic diversity, minority languages, and dialect ecology

Harmonious Discourse Analysis builds on Hallidayan ecolinguistic thought and international ecological discourse analysis, but it is also grounded in Chinese social realities, cultural traditions, and contemporary ecological concerns. Its contribution is not limited to adding Chinese examples to an existing Western paradigm. Rather, it proposes a culturally situated ecosophy in which harmony, diversity, interaction, and co-existence become evaluative principles for discourse analysis (Zhao & Huang, 2025).

One key dimension of localization in Chinese ecolinguistics can be observed in its sustained focus on linguistic diversity, minority languages, and dialect ecology. As a multiethnic and multilingual society, China presents complex patterns of language contact, vitality, and policy, making it a particularly productive site for extending Haugen's concept of language ecology into new empirical and sociopolitical contexts (Huang & Zhao, 2021). Research in this area has not simply applied existing

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models but has reinterpreted language ecology through locally specific concerns, including regional dialect preservation, minority language maintenance, and the interaction between language policy and national development strategies.

This work demonstrates that localization operates through the reframing of established theoretical concerns in relation to local linguistic realities. Studies of minority language vitality and dialect ecology also extend the scope of ecolinguistics beyond abstract models of language–environment interaction by grounding analysis in specific historical, cultural, and policy conditions. In doing so, Chinese ecolinguistics contributes to the integration of language ecology and broader ecological concerns, showing how the study of linguistic diversity can be connected to questions of sustainability, cultural continuity, and social development. This strand of research therefore provides empirical evidence for localization as a process of theory-building from context rather than the mere application of global frameworks.

3.2 Harmonious Discourse Analysis in the Chinese context

HDA's development reflects localization at the level of epistemology and method. HDA does not only analyze how discourse contributes to ecological harm; it also provides criteria for identifying and promoting forms of discourse that support sustainable and harmonious relations among humans, society, and the natural world. In this respect, it shifts ecolinguistics toward a more explicitly constructive and culturally situated mode of analysis. Traditional Chinese philosophical resources—including Confucian and Taoist perspectives on human–nature relations—play a crucial role in this transformation, providing locally resonant foundations for evaluating ecological discourse (Pang, 2017; Zhou, 2018; Pang & Marlow, 2021). These Chinese traditions can be placed in dialogue with Western ecosophical thought, including the work of Arne Næss and Félix Guattari (Levesque, 2016). The point is not that Chinese philosophy replaces Western ecolinguistics. Rather, Chinese philosophical traditions provide locally resonant resources for extending ecological discourse analysis. The result is not merely the localization of an existing theory, but the generation of a new analytical framework that contributes to global ecolinguistics.

4. Contributions of Chinese Ecolinguistics to the Global Discipline

Chinese ecolinguistics remains relatively young, but it has already begun to contribute to the global development of ecolinguistics.

4.1 Localization as theory and method

Recent methodological developments make this integration more important. Corpus-assisted ecolinguistics offers ways to examine large-scale patterns in environmental discourse, including repeated metaphors, evaluations, collocations, and narrative framings. For Chinese ecolinguistics, such methods can complement close qualitative analysis by allowing researchers to trace how ecological values, development narratives, minority-language issues, and human-nature relations circulate across media, policy, education, and public communication.

Harmonious Discourse Analysis provides a distinctive Chinese contribution to ecolinguistic theory. Its focus on harmony does not mean avoiding critique. Rather, harmony refers to the active construction of sustainable, balanced, and mutually supportive relations among humans, society, and the natural world (Huang, 2016; Zhao & Huang, 2025). In this respect, HDA complements critical ecolinguistic approaches by adding a constructive orientation: destructive discourse should be identified and challenged, but beneficial discourse should also be described, promoted, and adapted for public use.

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4.2 Key contributions of Chinese ecolinguistics to the global discipline

Chinese ecolinguistics contributes to the global development of ecolinguistics in three interrelated ways. First, it advances Harmonious Discourse Analysis (HDA) as a culturally grounded evaluative ecosophy, offering a framework for identifying not only destructive but also beneficial discourses that promote balanced and sustainable relationships among humans, society, and nature (Haugen, 1971/1972; Halliday, 1992; Fill, 2001). Second, it strengthens the integration of language ecology and ecological discourse analysis, demonstrating how research on linguistic diversity, minority languages, and dialect vitality can be productively linked with the analysis of ecological meanings, narratives, and values in discourse (Huang & Zhao, 2021). Third, it positions localization as a methodological model, suggesting that ecolinguistics develops most effectively when global theoretical frameworks are reinterpreted through local linguistic practices, cultural traditions, and ecological conditions rather than being applied unchanged across contexts (Zhou, 2018; Pang, 2017). This emphasis also connects Chinese philosophical resources with Stibbe's more recent account of ecolinguistics as the search for alternative stories capable of supporting more sustainable ways of living (Stibbe, 2021).

Although ecolinguistics has developed rapidly, much ecolinguistic research remains limited to academic discussion and theoretical analysis. Yet ecological crises require practical responses. Recent work on corpus-assisted ecolinguistics, ecological discourse analysis, and sustainability-oriented language education suggests that the field is increasingly moving toward applied, teachable, and publicly engaged forms of practice (Stibbe, 2021). Ecolinguists can partner with public and institutional domains through contributing to language education, environmental communication, minority language preservation, public health discourse, ecological policy, climate communication, and sustainable development in the Chinese context and beyond.

5. Conclusion: From Theory to Applied Practice

Chinese ecolinguistics demonstrates that disciplinary globalization in ecolinguistics occurs through processes of localization rather than theoretical uniformity. Through the reinterpretation of global frameworks in relation to local linguistic, cultural, and ecological contexts—and through the development of approaches such as Harmonious Discourse Analysis—the Chinese case shows how locally grounded innovations can contribute to the global field. As ecolinguistics continues to evolve, its most productive development will depend on the integration of universal ecological concerns with context-specific linguistic and cultural resources.

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"We live in a society that does not know our existence": the language, culture and ethnolinguistic identity of Mathura Labha

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Abstract:

Globalisation creates a paradox for ethnic minority communities: larger groups gain recognition, smaller subgroups within them become invisible. The Mathura Labhan, a minority subgroup of India's Banjara tribe, is a clear example. Once nomadic cattle herders, they now live in the northern districts of Telangana. Their language, culture, and identity remain undocumented. Older literature treated the Banjara as a homogeneous group, neglecting subgroups like the Mathura Labhan. Geographical isolation, lack of education, political representation, and historical backwardness deepen their situation, while their unwritten oral language faces serious endangerment, surrounded by Telugu, Hindi, Kannada, and Marathi languages. This study investigates Mathura Labhan's language, culture, and ethnolinguistic identity through fieldwork, participant observation, informal interviews, and a language attitude survey. Social Identity Theory and Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory structure the analysis. Mathura Labhans maintain a distinct identity, see the Lambada as an out-group, and claim a higher social position within the tribe. Despite challenges, they hold positive distinctiveness. Younger generations are shifting toward dominant languages for better opportunities. The study introduces layered invisibility as globalisation makes larger tribal categories visible while smaller groups inside them disappear and calls for documentation and policy action.

Keywords: Banjara, ethnolinguistic identity, Mathura Labhan, language endangerment, Social Identity Theory.

1. Introduction

In the era of globalisation, international bodies and governments have increasingly recognized indigenous peoples using instruments such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). However, Peters (2011) notes that such recognition places diverse smaller subgroups together under umbrella labels for legal or statistical purposes. These labels make a broader population visible, simultaneously keeping its internal diversity invisible. Many communities, therefore, face a paradox of double invisibility, formally counted as part of a larger indigenous group, but their distinct identity remains undocumented and outside the purview of policies meant to protect them. Globalisation deepens this problem by reshaping languages those groups speak. When minority groups enter into larger economic and educational streams, their members increasingly adopt dominant regional languages for education and employment purposes, gradually reducing the use of their mother tongue in their daily life (Abbi, 1995; Ishtiaq, 1998). This pattern favors languages associated with

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prestige and opportunity while placing smaller languages at a disadvantage (Fishman, 2001). Yet globalisation faces resistance. Many communities resist through what Social Identity Theory calls positive distinctiveness, the deliberate effort to remain positively distinct from others (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The Mathura Labhan is one such community that remained underdocumented, understudied and socially invisible, yet actively resisting assimilation within the larger Banjara tribal framework. This study investigates their language, culture, and ethnolinguistic identity. To understand their invisibility, we must first examine who the Banjaras are and how their internal diversity has been erased.

2. Background: The Banjara Tribe and the Problem of Representation

The Banjara are one of the most historically significant nomadic trading communities of the Indian subcontinent. This mobile way of life, as Satya (1997, p. 1) argues, generated "tremendous diversity within the Banjara society in terms of language, customs, beliefs and practices."

Despite their outward image as a single community, the Banjara are internally divided into four principal subgroups such as Mathura, Labhan, Charan and Dhadia with a fifth class, the Dhalias, attached as musicians (Russell & Hira Lal, 1916; Channa, 2004). These subgroups do not intermarry or eat together (Ul Hassan, 1920). The existing literature has predominantly focused on the Charan (widely called as Lambadas) subgroup, treating the Banjara as Lambadas neglecting its internal diversity or heterogeneity (Bhukya, 2010; Naik, 2016; Lal, 2016). As a result, the distinct sociocultural and linguistic identity of other subgroups has been almost entirely erased and Mathura Labhan is one among them.

Ramalinga Reddy (2018) briefly notes the Mathura Labhan's presence in Telangana, but no study has systematically documented their language or identity. This study addresses that gap by investigating: (1) the linguistic features of Mathura Labhan and how they differ from Lambadi; (2) how Mathura Labhans construct their ethnolinguistic identity; (3) what sociocultural practices define them; and (4) what threats globalisation poses to their survival.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study draws on three frameworks: Social Identity Theory (SIT), Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory (ELIT), and UNESCO's Language Vitality and Endangerment Framework. Pandharipande's (2002) concept of functional load is applied separately in the analysis, in Sections 6 and 7, to explain how domain loss drives attrition. Tajfel and Turner (1979) developed SIT to explain how people build their sense of self through group membership. By categorizing themselves as part of one group and comparing that group against others, people work to see their own group as better, what the theory calls positive distinctiveness. Brown (2000) shows this works even for small, politically weak communities as long as members believe their group boundaries are clear and stable, they resist assimilation. Mathura Labhans do this against the Lambada. They are lesser in number and hold less political power, yet they keep their boundaries intact.

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Giles and Johnson (1987) built ELIT on SIT's foundation, using language as the main tool communities use to mark who they are and who they are not. The concept of ethnolinguistic vitality covers three dimensions. They are, population size of that group and how concentrated they are, the institutional support the language gets, and what social status the language and its speakers hold (Yağmur, 2011). A group can score low on all three objective factors and still hold a strong internal belief that their language carries more strength, what Clément et al. (2020) call subjective vitality. That internal belief often keeps boundaries strong when the conditions are working against a community from outside. UNESCO (2003) defines a language as endangered when speakers use it in fewer domains and stop passing it to their next generations. Pandharipande (2002) builds on this with the concept of functional load, i.e. the more domains a language covers, the better its survival chances. When dominant languages take over domain after domain like education, workplace, media the minority language shrinks to whatever space is left. For Mathura Labhan, confined almost entirely to the informal domains while Telugu and Hindi dominate formal domains, this framework predicts serious and ongoing language loss without urgent intervention.

4. Methodology

The study is qualitative and ethnographic, drawing on language documentation methodology (Himmelmann, 1998; Austin & Sallabank, 2011) and community-based participatory research. Community members were not treated as passive subjects as they actively took part in documenting their language and culture, on the understanding that a language cannot be separated from the lives of the people who speak it.

4.1 Field sites

Fieldwork was carried out across three northern districts of Telangana state, such as Adilabad, Nizamabad, and Kamareddy, that have Mathura Labhan villages. It helped observe language variation and community experiences across different locations.

4.2 Participants

Participants were chosen through the snowball method to access people across different ages, genders, and social backgrounds (Patton, 2002). The participants were classified into two groups: elders aged 35 and above, who hold greater knowledge of language, songs, and stories; and youth aged 18 to 35, whose everyday language choices show whether the language is being maintained or lost. The participants were free to withdraw at any point.

4.3 Data collection

As part of fieldwork, participant observation was conducted in festivals, marriages, domestic life, and other informal settings. Unstructured informal interviews were carried out, and a language attitude survey designed using the UNESCO Language Vitality and Endangerment scale was conducted. Oral

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literature such as songs, stories, proverbs, and ritual speeches was also collected and recorded as part of the fieldwork.

4.4 Data analysis

Interview transcripts and field notes were analyzed thematically. The analysis noted patterns related to group boundaries, language pride, and language loss. Survey responses were examined with descriptive statistics and compared across age groups.

5. The Mathura Labhan Community

The Labhan is a principal subgroup of the Banjara tribe (Grierson, 1907), migrated from Mathura in northern India, that is why they are regarded as Mathura Labhan (Hassan, 1920; Chandra Sekhar, 1961). Present day, the community has settled in the northern districts of Telangana state. The exact population figure is unavailable, but community leaders estimate 80,000 to 1,00,000 people. Their hamlets, called tanda, are located near forest areas, their village head is called naik, which is a hereditary post (Rahmatulla, 2001).

Among all the subgroups in the Banjara tribe, Mathura Labhan is believed to be the highest rank and purest blood, with men wearing a sacred thread, strictly following endogamy, and prohibiting widow remarriages (Ul Hassan, 1920). Historically the community was involved in salt trading and cattle herding (Crooke, 1881), but present-day community members are involved in agriculture, and education is a recent occupational choice. Mathura Labhans exclusively follow Hinduism, and Lord Krishna is their principal god of worship, and Gokulastami is the most significant festival. The community also observes festivals such as *kitʃɖamos, ɖəkra, piʈramos, tʃomasagu, aʈʰe, poɭo, ʈiz, paɖmo,* etc.

Though outsiders label them as Lambadies, Mathura Labhans reject this and hold a clear sense of where they come from and who they are. Though Lambadies are dominant in social, political, economic, and population terms, Mathura Labhans resist assimilating and consider them outgroups and maintain the group boundaries as legitimate and stable with distinct identities. Interestingly, a Mathura Labhan community elder put it:

"azero ɖən səb ek vego pəɳ beʈi roʈi gaurijan su nəi calәʈ" - Though the hierarchical differences are compromised, we still don't eat with and marry Lambadies.

6. The Mathura Labhan Language

Mathura Labhans speak a language of the Indo-Aryan family that has no script. Language is a mixture of Hindi and Gujarati (Ul Hassan, 1920) and is considered a dialect of Lambadi with a distinct syntactic structure (Trail, 1960), but Mathura Labhan and Lambadi are mutually unintelligible.

Grierson (1907) argued that Lambadi is mixed with surrounding Dravidian languages, but Mathura Labhan is partly based on Marwari and Gujarati, said to be the standard because it preserves the older

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form of speech. Surrounded by major Kannada, Marathi, Telugu, Hindi, and Lambadi languages, Mathura Labhans are multilingual out of necessity rather than choice.

The preliminary Mathura Labhan language data show the following features distinguish Mathura Labhan from Lambadi:

1. Mathura Labhan exhibits nasal aspiration.

   Example: /mʰ/ = mʰa - there

   /nʰ/ = nʰa - here

2. Mathura Labhan has an ergative case marker.

   Example: ruʈ ne bʌs mẽ əmmo kʰa:jo

   Ruth ERG bus LOC mango ate

   Ruth ate mango in the bus

3. In Mathura Labhan, the negative marker follows the verb.

   Example: mĩ iskul ku nəı d͡ʒa:ʈ

   I school ACC NEG go

   I don't go to school.

For speakers, these features are proof that Mathura Labhan and Lambadi are not the same language, a point raised consistently when community members assert their separate identity.

6.1 Ethnolinguistic vitality

Assessed through ELIT's three dimensions, the picture is serious. Demographically, the community numbers 80,000 to 1,00,000, scattered across three districts with no separate census recognition. Institutionally, the language has no presence in schools, government, media, or digital platforms and has never been formally documented. In terms of status, Mathura Labhans are economically dependent on agriculture and politically underrepresented, yet perceive themselves as hierarchically superior to other Banjara subgroups. This gap between low objective vitality and high subjective vitality puts the language at risk.

Pandharipande's (2002) concept of functional load makes the danger concrete. Mathura Labhan retains functional transparency in home and religious rituals domains. It has been entirely displaced from education, employment, government, and entertainment by Telugu and Hindi. Each lost domain reduces the functional load further. Attrition follows.

6.2 Language attitudes

The language attitude survey (n = 107) reveals Mathura Labhan remains the primary home language across generations. However, Telugu and Hindi are slowly entering home due to urban migrated

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younger speakers (Figure 1). The home domain is the last stronghold of most endangered languages (Fishman, 1991), and the results show the warning sign for Mathura Labhan.

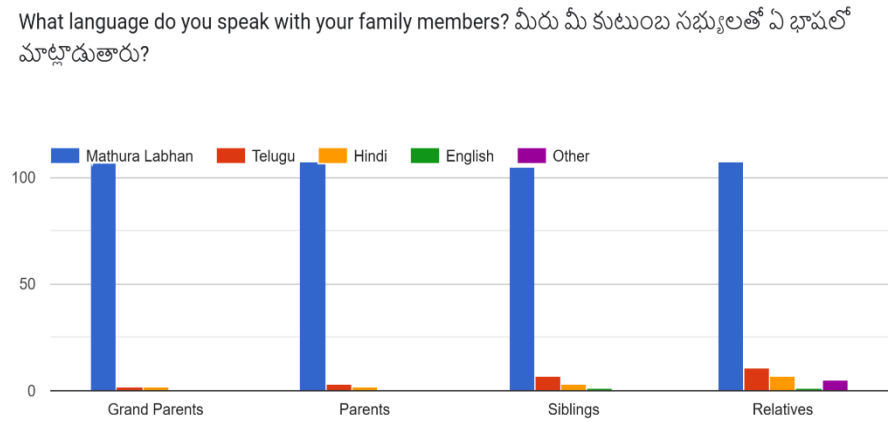

Figure 1. Language Choice in Home Domain

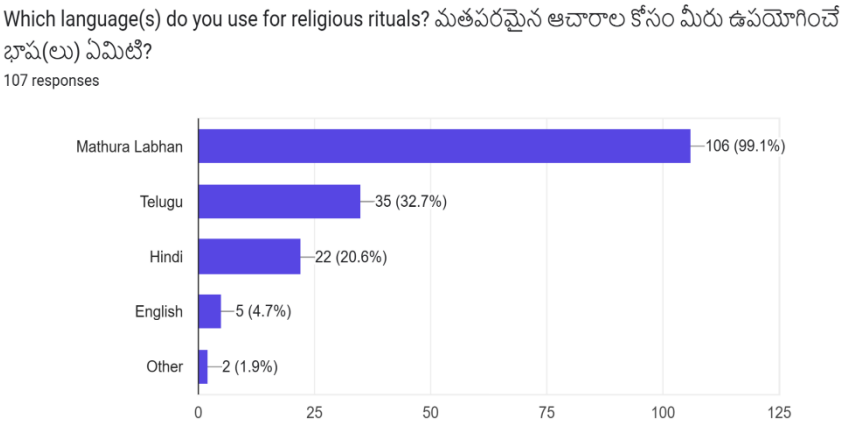

Figure 2. Language Choice for Religious Rituals

Rituals are conducted almost exclusively in Mathura Labhan (Figure 2). Religion remains one of the two domains where the language still holds functional transparency.

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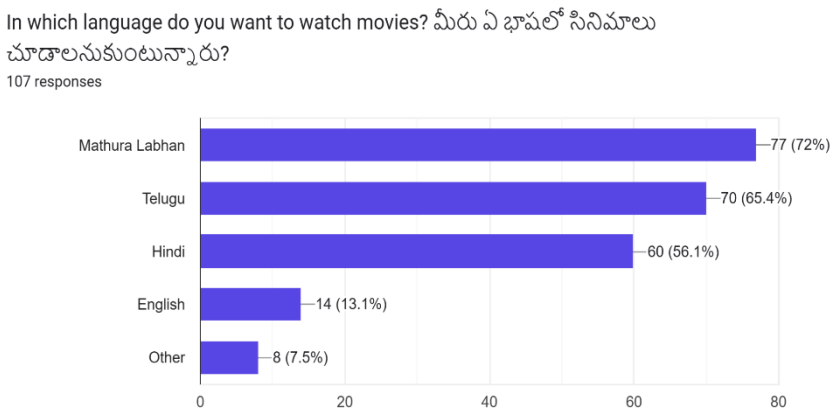

Figure 3. Language Choice for Movies

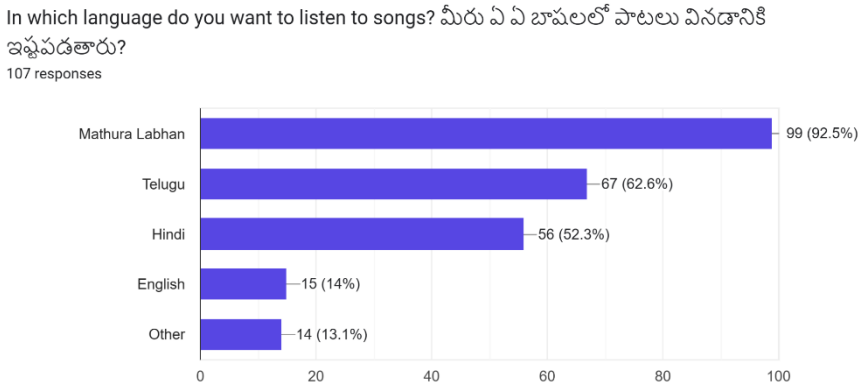

Figure 4. Language Choice for Songs

Though speakers express a positive attitude towards digital entertainment in their language (Figure 3 & 4), the absence is pushing speakers toward Telugu and Hindi for entertainment, shrinking the language's functional load further.

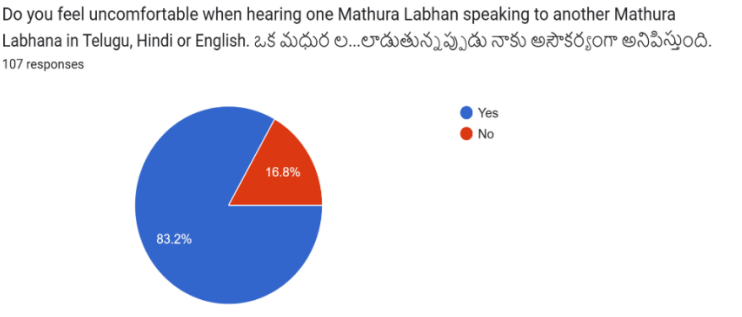

Figure 5. Language Loyalty

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Most speakers feel uncomfortable when two Mathura Labhans speak to each other in Telugu or Hindi. However, 16.8% of urban- migrated educated younger speakers show slight negative attitudes, driven by the language's lack of employment value consistent with Mallikarjun's (2008) account of politico-economic subordination driving language shift.

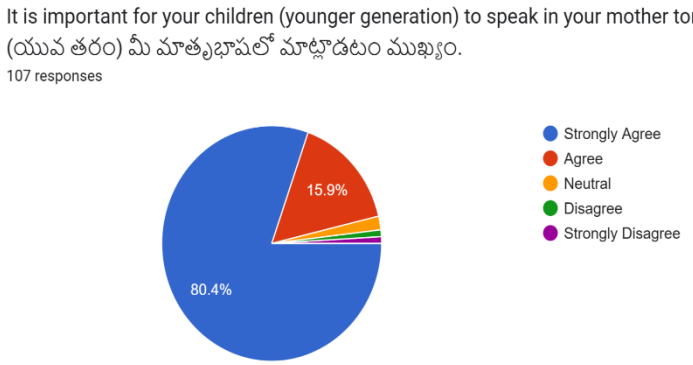

Figure 6. Attitude towards Intergenerational Transmission of Mathura Labhan

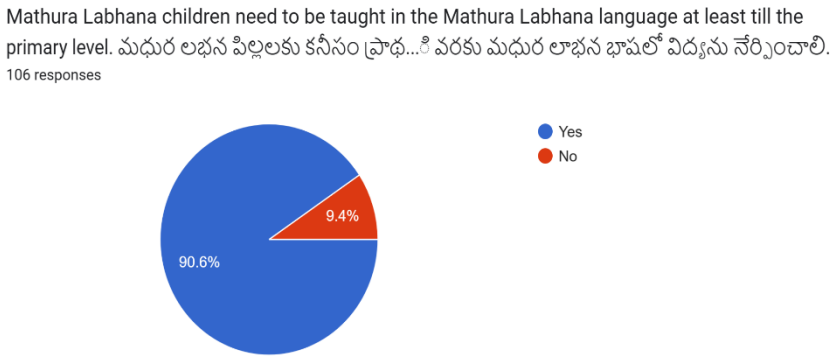

Figure 7. Attitude towards inclusion of Mathura Labhan in Education

UNESCO (2003) and Fishman (1991) identify intergenerational transmission failure as the most critical indicator of language endangerment. The survey shows elders speak fluently, adults are partially shifting, and youth increasingly use Telugu and Hindi even at home placing Mathura Labhan firmly in the endangered category. Yet speakers strongly support both transmission and primary education in their language.

7. Globalisation, Deglobalisation and the Mathura Labhan Experience

The language attitude findings do not exist in isolation, they are the direct result of larger structural forces. Pandharipande (2002) argues that minority languages die gradually as dominant languages take over domain after domain until the minority language has nowhere left to go. This is what globalisation is doing to Mathura Labhan.

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The process is systematic. Telugu and Hindi dominate education, so Mathura Labhan children enter schools where their language has no place. Employment requires Telugu and Hindi, so adults shift for economic survival. Digital media carries no Mathura Labhan content, so younger speakers turn elsewhere. India's National Education Policy 2020 calls for tribal and minority language inclusion in primary education but for a community with no written form, no official recognition, and no trained teachers, this policy has not reached the ground. Each domain lost reduces the functional load further (Pandharipande, 2002).

In public discourse, all Banjara subgroups are merged into a single identity "Lambada", leaving Mathura Labhan more invisible than before. This is what the present study calls layered invisibility. That is, globalisation makes the larger group visible while the dominant subgroup absorbs that visibility, pushing smaller communities further into the shadows. Despite small numbers, having no recognition, no institutional support, they maintain positive distinctiveness (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This resistance is quiet and everyday, and it has kept them distinct for generations.

8. Conclusion

This study has put the Mathura Labhan on the academic record for the first time as a distinct ethnolinguistic community. Settled in northern Telangana after a historical displacement, they speak a language separate from Lambadi, maintain sociocultural practices that mark them apart from other Banjara subgroups, and hold group boundaries that have lasted for generations, yet none of this appears in previous research.

Mathura Labhans hold strong subjective vitality and a firm sense of who they are. Their language function is restricted to fewer domains. Elders find pride speaking it. Pandharipande's (2002) functional load concept makes this plain: each domain lost pushes the language closer to extinction. The concept of layered invisibility carries a lesson beyond this community alone. When a larger tribal group gains formal recognition, the smaller communities inside it often become harder to see, not easier. Language policy has to reckon with this.

The study highlights the need for systematic linguistic documentation of Mathura Labhan, separate recognition in the census, and real inclusion in mother-tongue-based primary education under the National Education Policy 2020. Their language is endangered. Their community is not giving up.

Declarations and Acknowledgement:

I declare no conflict of interest. Ethical approval was obtained from the ethics committee of Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur.

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Exploring the Perspectives of Undergraduate Students and Teachers on Student Investment in Language Learning

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Abstract:

Learning languages alongside their studies offers undergraduate STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine) students the opportunity to broaden their cultural awareness, improve their communication skills, and expand their career prospects. It also supports building social connections and enhancing cognitive abilities. This qualitative research explores students' and language teachers' perspectives at a UK university focused on STEMM, using interviews and questionnaire analysis to understand why learners choose to invest time and effort in learning an additional language. This research links learner motivation and identity to the concepts of the 'ideal-self', 'ought-to-self' and consider learner 'investment' and gaining of cultural capital in Anderson's imagined communities. Despite focusing on their disciplines and operating in a context of high competitiveness and limited time, students still dedicate time to languages and view language learning as a pathway to broader cultural understanding, intercultural competence and a potential future identity.

This study discusses the role of social factors in second-language acquisition and offers recommendations for engaging and sustaining investment in the target language. This study suggests that language centres and Institution-Wide Language Programmes can help learners develop a meaningful, long-term plan that outlines the educational steps needed to achieve their language goals.

Keywords: motivation, investment, imagined communities, ideal-self

1. Introduction

This study aims to explore how STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine) students negotiate their identities and capital across various social spaces, the impact of this negotiation on their language learning, and the most effective ways to support them.

The starting point of this study is a reflection on students' engagement. During my experience as a language teacher, I have noticed that, despite my efforts, some students still seem quieter or do not always complete their assignments, while others actively participate, speak in class, and engage in activities. After discussing this with my colleagues, I found that they often face similar issues. These quieter students are often described as unmotivated, shy, uninterested, anxious, or overwhelmed by their workload in their primary degree.

This study aims to explore how STEMM students who engage in additional language learning navigate their identities and cultural capital across various social spaces, analysing how these negotiations influence their language learning experiences and identifying strategies to support them more effectively.

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2. Literature Review

Dörnyei (2005, 2009) introduced the L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), which serves as a theoretical framework for research in second language acquisition (SLA), particularly concerning the global status of English (Howard and Oakes, 2024). This model explains motivation to learn a second language through two self-guides: the ideal L2 self and the ought-to self. The ideal L2 self represents the learner's visualisation of their future self as a proficient L2 speaker, symbolising an aspirational identity they aim to attain. This concept highlights the learner's desire to close the gap between their current self-perception as a language learner and their future self, driven by the goal of achieving fluency. Dörnyei (2009) argues that the ideal L2 greatly influences learners' motivation for L2 acquisition, supported by empirical evidence from studies such as that of Csizér and Kormos (2009), who found that Hungarian learners' motivation was closely linked to their ability to envisage themselves as competent users of the target language.

Conversely, the ought-to self pertains to external influences that shape the learner's perceived duties and responsibilities, such as pressures from parents or societal expectations (Dörnyei, 2009). This idea emphasises the motivating factors that arise from the desire to meet or avoid negative outcomes linked to external expectations.

Additionally, Lanvers (2012) concurred with these findings in her research among UK university students, emphasising a growing awareness of the disadvantages linked to monolingual English speakers. She argues that despite a decline in language study within the UK, the language learners she studied transformed the negative stereotype of British monolingualism into a source of pride. This perspective reflects a broader trend where embracing linguistic diversity is seen as both a challenge and a valuable asset in an increasingly globalised world.

Investment, unlike motivation, reveals the complex relationship between language learners and the target language, reflecting their sometimes conflicting desires to use it. Unlike motivation, which can be seen as a fixed trait, investment involves the time, effort, and resources learners dedicate to their language learning, expecting to gain tangible or intangible rewards. When learners invest in a second language, they aim to acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, thereby boosting the value of their cultural capital (Norton, 2000, p.10). They expect these investments to bring rewarding returns, giving them access to opportunities and resources that were previously out of reach.

Investment should be understood as a social construct shaped by the surrounding social environment. Additionally, Norton (1995, 2001) developed the concept of imagined communities. This term was initially introduced by Anderson (1991) to describe nations as imagined communities because members of these communities are unlikely to meet most of the other members. He argued that a nation should not be defined solely by territorial boundaries but as an imagined political community connected by shared beliefs, values, and narratives. Our imagination creates our sense of nationalism and belonging, enabling us to build a bond with other members we do not know and may never meet.

Norton (2001) drew on the ideas of imagined communities and applied them to SLA. She argued that learning extends beyond the physical communities where learners participate, such as schools, churches, and language clubs. Instead, learners are connected to distant imagined communities that greatly influence their learning experience. These imagined communities provide a space for learners to see themselves as members of groups they aspire to join, thereby increasing their engagement and sense of identity.

A critique of motivation research is that language learners are often viewed as having fixed traits and personalities, with participants frequently assigned characteristics such as introverted or extroverted, inhibited or uninhibited, motivated or demotivated (Darvin, 2019). For instance, Norton

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and Kramsch (2013) conducted a study with three immigrant women in Canada, showing that they became more tense and forgot simple grammar rules when their interlocutor commented on their accents. This indicates that anxiety is not a fixed trait of language learners but a social construct that varies depending on their lived experiences.

Most research literature on motivation and investment focuses on English learners, with some studies examining languages other than English. There is also limited literature on non-specialist language learners, especially university students enrolled in STEMM.

How do students' identities, interactions, and responses to their learning environment influence their investment in their optional language studies? How can teachers better support them in maximising this investment?

3. Methodology

Constructivism underpins this research. Constructivists believe that reality is built by individuals, who develop meaning through their experiences. For Savin-Baden and Major (2013), constructivists argue that reality is a mental construct created by individuals, and the role of the researcher is to understand and interpret individuals' experiences to make sense of their subjectivity.

During my research, I focus on how students negotiate their identities within their social context, so my philosophical stance also leans towards social constructivism. For Wenger (1998), identity is a fluid concept and is negotiated through an individual's lived experience. Learning is socially constructed, and I examine how students' views are shaped through their interactions within the social contexts in which they evolve.

It aligns with the concept of investment that underpins this study. Norton (1995, 2000, 2001) drew on Bourdieu's work and concepts of habitus and language as cultural capital. According to Block (2007), identity is viewed through the lens of post-structuralism, and is socially constructed, constantly changing and negotiated over time and space.

Furthermore, the concept of imagined communities underpins the concept of investment, suggesting that nations are socially constructed entities created through shared identities and experiences (Anderson, 1991).

I used two types of sources for generating data. The first set of data was obtained through interviews with undergraduate students enrolled in an optional language module. The second set of data was obtained via an online structured questionnaire with language teachers to gain their perspectives on students' investment in their context.

4. Presentation of Findings

I have identified three themes across the data set, including interviews and questionnaires. The first section, titled "Future self," explores the importance of clear goals and imagined communities to which learners participate or aspire to join. The second section, "Language skills," examines how students and teachers interpret their learning in relation to the development of language skills. The third section discusses resource acquisition, which I view as the aspects of language that students invest in to increase their cultural capital, as claimed by Norton (2000).

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4.1 Future self

Jack is a Life Sciences student with a year abroad and is enrolled in German: "*I'm considering staying in research and again, there is a lot of interesting research in Germany and I wouldn't be surprised if there are gonna be an opportunity for me in the future. Um to interact with the scientific community there. So, and even if I don't, if I'm going to industry, again, there still gonna be quite a bit of connection and I wouldn't be surprised*".

Teachers also emphasise the importance of a goal by a clear idea of what they want to achieve.

Teacher One: "*In my view, learner investment is mostly determined by learners having a clear idea of what they want to achieve in the language and why they want to learn it*".

Another teacher emphasises the importance of knowing students' goals: "Find out why they are learning the language, what interests them most about it, and integrate it in your teaching".

These examples show that having a clear goal and vision of the future self is important for both students and teachers.

4.2 Languages skills

Chloe recognises the benefits of practising speaking, an activity she mainly does in the classroom. She mentioned that it is fun, but she also gets nervous and shows an ambivalent desire to speak.

Chloe: "*I know that we can make mistakes, but when you know that your turn is coming and you have to think, you don't want to sound stupid or say something totally wrong, like if I say something I'd rather it be something correct*".

Speaking aloud can be intimidating for some, even though they recognise the supportive environment and the general acceptance of making mistakes in class. They also mention that they usually do not speak the language they are learning outside of class, despite recognising its importance.

Researcher: "*Do you speak Spanish outside of the classroom*?"

Chloe: *To be honest, no. Yeah, I probably should, but I just like anyone who I know is a Spanish speaker because we speak in English. It's weird to kind of change the language, you know*?"

Lucy understands that oral skills are crucial for learning a language, and engaging with other learners is an important part of the language learning process.

Lucy: "*I think speaking is the is more useful or, understanding the language stuff because you need to go through your brain to express the thing to actually understand how you use it."*

4.3 Resource acquisition

Olivia, "*There isn't really much communication in science and so I think doing communication in languages, it literally does force you, I think, to talk to people, to give your opinion on things. So, I think that's probably the biggest thing that I've got from learning a language is just being able to talk to people*".

Chloe clearly reflected on the additional symbolic resources of languages. She perceives languages and engineering as something that should go "hand in hand". As she says:

Chloe:"*If you are an engineer, you should be willing to engage in other aspects, because it's what foster creativity and it's what fosters human imagination, human thought*".

Sophie explains how learning Japanese will help her gain symbolic resources to set herself apart.

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Sophie: "*I don't want to just kind of like pigeonhole myself into just a STEMM student. And learning a language, I think that's a really good way of combining my interest in STEMM with my interest in like, more cultural and more literature stuff*".

In this example, Sophie explains her desire to expand her cultural capital (more cultural and more literature stuff), both for her personal knowledge and for social recognition (I don't want to just kind of like pigeonhole myself into just a STEMM student). Sophie's investment is focused on gaining social advantage. This example also highlights the relationships between investment and identity transformation. Sophie, by learning Japanese, could develop her identity as not just a STEMM student.

5. Discussion of Findings

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This study confirms the importance of having a clear goal to learn a language, and it appears to be shared by both students and teachers. Participants in this study refer to the other language they speak or have been exposed to, and it seems to have a strong influence on how they value languages.

It is also worth noting the relationship participants establish with their imagined identities as part of larger imagined communities (Norton, 2001). This ability to make connections encourages them to invest in different aspects of languages (Wu, 2017).

It is interesting to note that most students express a conflicted desire to speak the language, recognising its importance but not always taking opportunities to converse. This reflects what Norton and Toohey (2011) describe as the socially situated nature of identity in relation to language learning. While participants highlight the supportive classroom environment, they often mention experiencing anxiety when they have to speak in class.

By learning a foreign language, learners develop their language skills and enhance the value of their cultural capital (Norton, 2000). Investment takes form in both the opportunity to access more legitimate positions and the development of existing ones (Zarate, 2000). Participants see languages as a pathway to broader cultural context and potential future identity.

6. Conclusion

Students and teachers emphasised the importance of having a clear goal, effective communication, and developing oral skills. Students also clearly connected the professional prospects and the symbolic that learning a second language can offer.

There are some limitations to this research. This study employed a qualitative approach with a small, non-representative sample. Additionally, my role as a member of staff and as a teacher could influence participants' responses. The research was conducted in a highly selective university in the UK specialising in STEMM subjects. The participants interviewed are students undertaking an optional language module alongside their main subject, which limits the generalisability of the findings to other contexts. With this in mind, I would like to conclude with some recommendations for future practice.

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Firstly, tutors should give students opportunities to articulate their own objectives and explain why they are learning an L2. This would help tutors create personalised goals for students and foster their ideal L2 selves and imagined identities. It could take the form of a portfolio assignment to encourage learners to set their own learning goals, document their progress, and develop their autonomy. It could include a Language Biography with goal setting and self-assessment related to the target language. A template could be provided depending on the level taught and the language.

Secondly, encourage students to keep a weekly journal of their interactions in the language they are learning. It would help students to practise their oral skills outside of the class in a real-world environment, a key element mentioned by both teachers and students in this study.

Finally, I recommend including a reflective task based on students' own communicative experiences. This would help learners explore different options to enhance their communicative skills and make informed choices about which competencies to focus on and develop (Sung, 2018). It would also foster greater independence and ownership of their learning journey. This task can be completed in English or the target language, depending on the student's level.

Learning a language can sometimes feel demoralising when learners realise how much time and effort it takes to become proficient. Teachers can engage learners' investment by helping them develop a long-term plan, which includes short-term language learning goals to bridge the gap between their current reality and their aspirations.

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Two-Dimensional Analysis of Indigenous Language Learning Effectiveness: Proficiency Advancement and Within-Level Mastery

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Abstract:

Taiwan is an inclusive maritime nation characterized by rich linguistic and cultural diversity. Its Indigenous languages constitute the Austronesian language family. This study evaluates the learning effectiveness of an AI-based learning platform for Indigenous learners in Taiwan. Longitudinal learning data were extracted from Indigenous users from the Indigenous Language Audio Challenge platform. Utilizing quantitative methods, this research analyzed Indigenous learners' assessment records stored within the system database. Logistic regression and Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression were employed to examine learning effectiveness through two lenses: proficiency advancement and within-level mastery. The findings suggest potential avenues for language education, cultural preservation, and technological innovation. The primary results indicate: (1) prior ability exhibits a stable effect on sustained Indigenous language learning; (2) advancement thresholds and performance disparities manifest across ethnic groups; and (3) school environments exert structural interference on learners' mastery of Indigenous languages.

Keywords: Indigenous language, Indigenous peoples, learning effectiveness

1. Introduction

Taiwan is a maritime nation characterized by extensive linguistic and cultural diversity. Its Indigenous languages of Taiwan belong to the Austronesian language family. Blust (2013) posits Taiwan as the homeland of the Austronesian languages. These languages represent critical cultural assets but face intergenerational disruption and the risk of extinction due to modernization, many Indigenous languages in Taiwan are facing intergenerational disruption and the risk of disappearance. The preservation and revitalization of Indigenous languages and cultures have therefore become urgent tasks.

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Recent advances in digital technology have accelerated the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Natural Language Processing (NLP) and machine learning techniques facilitate the processing of large unstructured datasets, allowing computers to interpret human language. Accordingly, research in text analysis, Machine Translation (MT) (Tan et al., 2020), and Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) (Malik et al., 2021) has made substantial progress.

Centering on Taiwan's Indigenous peoples, this study adopts AI-based Natural Language Processing (AI-NLP) as its technological core. It aims to develop an AI adaptive testing and self-learning service system for Indigenous language literacy. This platform supports individualized learning and serves as an integration of technology and cultural education. By promoting effective and sustainable models, the platform has the potential to further opportunities for language education, foster and technological innovation.

2. Literature Review

The AI-based technology platform for Indigenous language education consists of two main websites: the Indigenous Language Literacy Self-Learning Service System and the Indigenous Language Audio Challenge (Shih et al., 2024).

The former provides learners with individualized online learning tailored to learners' motivation. Modules include Interactive Listening and Speaking Literacy, Indigenous Language–Mandarin Translation, Human–Machine Dialogue, AI Indigenous Writing, Indigenous Board Games, Indigenous Singing Instruction, Indigenous Self-Learning Path Planning, and Digital Animation. The pedagogical foundation rests on the ARCS Model of Motivation (Keller, 2010), focusing on Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction.

The Indigenous Language Audio Challenge is a personalized online self-challenge platform, covering eight thermotic domains, which are life experience, interpersonal interaction, language and humanities, leisure and entertainment, social institutions, technology and health, nature and the universe, and values and beliefs, and 13 levels of difficulty. Its construction utilizes Item Response Theory (IRT), precisely measure ability and item characteristics through the Item Characteristic Curve (ICC). Unlike traditional methods, IRT improves assessment reliability and validity within computer-based environments (Chen, 2006).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Participants

The research data were drawn from the Indigenous Language Audio Challenge using a longitudinal matched-sample design. Users with multiple records were selected, comparing the initial challenge with the chronologically most distant final challenge. Participants included Indigenous learners from the Tsou, Truku, and Pinuyumayan groups. Descriptive statistics are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Background Variables (N = 142)

Independent Variable	Category	Count	Percentage	Number Advanced	Proportion
Gender	Female	42	29.58	31	73.81
	Male	100	70.42	74	74.00
School Type	Elementary school	112	78.87	93	83.04
	Junior high school	30	21.13	12	40.00
Ethnicity	Tsou	100	70.42	87	87.00
	Truku	28	19.72	10	35.71
	Pinuyumayan	14	9.86	8	57.14
Home Language Environment	No	29	20.42	17	58.62
	Yes	113	79.58	88	77.88
Advancement Status	Yes	105	73.94	-	-
	No	37	26.06	-	-

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Continuous Variables

Variable	Minimum	Q1	Median	Q3	Maximum	Mean	SD
Initial score	0	50	67	83	100	64.54	26.18
Final-stage score	0	38	63	75	100	55.25	27.59
Number of level advancements	0	0	1	1	4	1.03	0.86

3.2 Research models

All categorical variables were converted into dummy variables, and the first category of each variable was selected as the reference group, including Tsou, female, and no Indigenous language use at home. Two analytical models were employed to address the two research questions.

3.2.1 Proficiency advancement model: binary logistic regression

The first model examined whether a learner advanced to a higher level as the binary dependent variable (1 = advanced; 0 = did not advance). Ethnicity, initial score, gender, and home language environment were included as predictors to examine the extent to which these factors affected learners' ability to progress beyond their current level of difficulty. In the sample, 105 learners (73.94%) advanced, whereas 37 learners (26.06%) did not.

Logistic regression expresses the effect of each variable in terms of odds ratios (ORs) and is appropriate for the analysis of binary outcome variables. Model fit was assessed using McFadden's Pseudo-R^2 and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC).

$$\ln \frac{pi}{1-pi} = 0 + 1(\text{Truku})i + 2(\text{Pinuyumayan})i + 3(\text{Score_Early})i + 4(\text{Male})i + 5(\text{Home language environment})i$$

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3.2.2 Within-level mastery model: ordinary least squares regression

The second model utilized the final test score (i.e., the final-stage test score) as the dependent variable, controlling for the final level reached as a control variable to ensure that learners' performance was compared under equivalent levels of difficulty.

$$\text{Score_Late}i = 0+1(\text{Stage_Late})i+2(\text{Score_Early})i+3(\text{Truku})i+4(\text{Pinuyumayan})i+5(\text{Male})i+6(\text{Home language environment})i+7(\text{school})i$$

4. Results

The statistical results of the two models are presented in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3. Results of Model 1

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	Test Statistic	p-value	Significance
Intercept	-1.38	1.11	-1.24	.216	
Truku	-2.73	0.75	-3.64	< .001	***
Pinuyumayan	-0.75	0.81	-0.93	.351	
Initial score	0.07	0.01	4.82	< .001	***
Male	0.16	0.63	0.26	.796	
Home language environment (Yes)	-0.98	0.82	-1.20	.230	

Note. The reference group was Tsou, female, and no Indigenous language use at home.
* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

The results show that the initial score had a significant positive effect. Specifically, each 1-point increase in the initial score was associated with an approximately 7% increase in the odds of advancement. Put differently, a 10-point increase in the initial score nearly doubled the odds of advancement. Prior ability was the most stable and influential predictor in this model. Even after controlling for ethnicity, gender, and home language environment, its effect remained highly significant, consistent with previous findings on the cumulative effect of prior knowledge in heritage language learning (Montrul, 2010).

With regard to ethnicity, the Truku group showed a significant negative effect. Its odds of advancement were only about 7% of those of the Tsou group, indicating a gap of more than fourteenfold. This was the largest ethnicity-related effect observed in the model. In other words, when learners had the same initial score, Truku learners were significantly less likely than Tsou learners to advance to a higher level. This difference was both statistically and substantively meaningful.

Neither gender nor home language environment reached statistical significance. These findings may have been affected by sample variation or unobserved confounding variables and should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Regarding overall model performance, McFadden's Pseudo-R^2 was .42, substantially exceeding the commonly accepted benchmark of approximately .20 for a well-performing model in social science research. This suggests that the model had strong discriminatory power in predicting advancement outcomes. The AIC was 106.99, which may serve as a useful benchmark for subsequent model comparisons.

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Table 4. Results of Model 2

Variable	Estimate	Standard Error	Test Statistic	p-value	Significance
Intercept	38.64	9.97	3.88	< .001	***
Truku	-6.63	7.20	-0.92	.357	
Pinuyumayan	0.67	8.38	0.08	.936	
Initial score	0.27	0.11	2.47	.014	*
Male	-2.12	5.28	-0.40	.688	
Home language environment (Yes)	7.58	7.19	1.05	.292	
Final level	-3.90	2.71	-1.44	.149	

Note. The school-type variable was removed because of severe collinearity with Truku ethnicity (VIF > 10). * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

The final level reached showed a negative effect, indicating that for each additional increase in difficulty level, the average score decreased by approximately 3.9 points, which is consistent with expectations.

The initial score again showed a significant positive effect. Specifically, for each 1-point increase in the initial score, the final score increased by an average of 0.27 points, after controlling for the other variables. This finding is consistent with the results of Model 1 and further supports the conclusion that prior ability has a robust positive influence on learning performance.

The home language environment showed a positive coefficient, but the effect was not statistically significant. Gender was likewise non-significant.

With respect to ethnicity, neither Truku nor Pinuyumayan showed a statistically significant effect. This finding has important diagnostic implications. In the original model, Truku ethnicity had shown a significant negative effect; however, that coefficient was influenced by severe multicollinearity. After the removal of the highly collinear school-type variable, the effect disappeared, suggesting that the earlier result may have reflected statistical distortion. Accordingly, the present data do not support an independent effect of ethnicity on within-level score performance.

In terms of overall explanatory power, the model yielded an adjusted R^2 of .061, indicating that it explained only about 6.1% of the variance in final scores. It should be noted that the R^2 used in Model 2 and the McFadden Pseudo-R^2 used in Model 1 are different types of fit indices and therefore should not be directly compared numerically. The former reflects the proportion of explained variance in a continuous dependent variable, whereas the latter captures the improvement in model likelihood relative to a null model.

5. Conclusion

This study yields three main conclusions:

First, prior ability is a robust predictor of sustained Indigenous language learning, which is consistent with the cumulative effect of prior knowledge identified in heritage language learning research.

Second, advancement thresholds vary by ethnic groups potentially due to structural factors. Whether Indigenous learners can progress from their current level of difficulty to a higher one is not determined solely by their initial level of ability; it may also be influenced by structural factors associated with ethnic background.

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Third, school environments exert structural interference on learners' mastery of Indigenous languages than ethnic background itself. In the analysis of final-stage scores, ethnic differences disappeared after controlling for school type. This statistical pattern suggests that, under the same level of difficulty, learners' mastery may be shaped more strongly by the school environment than by ethnic language background itself. Therefore, evaluations of Indigenous language learning effectiveness should take institutional learning environments into account, rather than attributing systematic environmental differences solely to ethnic-group ability.

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Ideology and the Reconfiguration of Science Fiction Translation in 1950s China: A Paratextual Approach

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Abstract:

Science fiction (sci-fi) translation in 1950s China received significant state support as part of broader efforts to promote scientific development. This resurgence was not merely driven by the diversity of literary forms but also by alignment with a state-led scientific agenda, which increasingly infused sci-fi with a distinct political dimension shaped by Cold War conditions. To examine how ideological and institutional forces shaped the process of sci-fi translation, this study adopts a paratextual approach, drawing on Gérard Genette's concept of paratexts to analyse genre labels, prefaces, and editorially produced content summaries. The findings show that paratexts functioned as key sites where sci-fi was redefined, positioning the genre in relation to scientific development, social values, and ideological priorities. Through this analysis, the study shows how ideological priorities, enacted through the regulation of translated sci-fi in 1950s China, actively reconfigured the genre's function.

Keywords: paratexts; genre labels; content summaries; scientific development

1. Introduction

The translation of science fiction (sci-fi) is often understood as a process of introducing literary products across linguistic and cultural boundaries. However, in specific historical contexts, sci-fi translation can also function as a site where the genre is reshaped under broader ideological and political conditions. This is particularly evident in 1950s China, where the development of sci-fi translation was closely intertwined with state-led scientific and cultural agendas.

Sci-fi translation in China experienced a short resurgence in the mid-1950s. Literary motivations did not drive this resurgence, but were closely aligned with state policy. At the Conference on Intellectuals held by the Chinese Communist Party in January 1956, Zhou Enlai emphasised the urgent need for scientific development, declaring that China was "on the eve of a new scientific and technological and industrial revolution" and calling for a nationwide programme of "marching towards science" (Xu, 2016, para. 6).

This orientation did not emerge in isolation. When sci-fi was first introduced into China through translation at the turn of the twentieth century, it was already associated with promoting scientific knowledge and cultivating public interest in science (Jiang, 2013, p. 119). This early pedagogical orientation, rooted in reformist and enlightenment discourses, was not only retained but was rearticulated and institutionalised to serve a collective, state-led vision of scientific development.

This study examines the reconfiguration of sci-fi translation through several interconnected dimensions. It begins by tracing the relocation of publishing centres, which reshaped the institutional foundations of translation. It then turns to paratextual elements, highlighting their role as key sites in defining and interpreting the genre. Building on this, the study argues that these paratextual spaces were increasingly shaped by institutional forces, contributing to the redefinition of sci-fi through the

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introduction of new genre labels, as discussed in Section 3. Building on the discussion of genre label transformation in Section 3, Section 4 further examines, through paratextual analysis, how sci-fi in 1950s China was increasingly infused with broader socio-political contexts.

2. Reconfiguration of Publishing Institutions

The reconfiguration of sci-fi translation in the 1950s was institutional, particularly in the restructuring of publishing authority and geographical organisation. Publishing practices were progressively centralised, as the state increasingly assumed a coordinating and guiding role over national publishing activities (Zhongguo Chuban Kexue Yanjiusuo and Zhongyang Dang'anguan [China Publishing Science Research Institute and Central Archives], 1996, pp. 90-92). This shift significantly reduced the editorial autonomy of local presses in terms of topic selection and textual content. At the same time, journals and books were expected to align closely with broader social and economic priorities, which functioned as a key evaluative criterion. From 1950 onwards, the coordinated introduction of Soviet publications further contributed to a more curated reading environment (Zhongguo Chuban Kexue Yanjiusuo and Zhongyang Dang'anguan, 1996, p. 68).

A geographical relocation of publishing activity accompanied this institutional shift. Before 1949, Shanghai served as the primary centre for sci-fi translation. Prior to 1912 (the establishment of the Republic of China), approximately 80–90% of translated sci-fi (single-volume editions) published in Shanghai, and the city continued to account for over half of such publications before 1949 (the establishment of the People's Republic of China), based on a corpus compiled for this study from the Chinese Science Fiction Database (Chinese Science Fiction Database, n.d.), supplemented by bibliographical sources including Takeda and Lin (2017) and Chen (2013-2014).

After 1949, however, the centre of publishing gradually moved from Shanghai to Beijing, marking a transition towards a more centralised system. Major presses that had previously played key roles in SCI-FI translation and dissemination, including the Commercial Press, Zhonghua Book Company, World Book Company, and Qiming Book Company, underwent relocation, mergers, nationalisation, or functional redefinition. The Commercial Press and Zhonghua Book Company, for instance, relocated their headquarters to Beijing around 1954 and were reoriented toward specialised publishing, including reference works and classical texts (Zhongguo Chuban Kexue Yanjiusuo and Zhongyang Dang'anguan, 1996, pp. 61-63). Meanwhile, Shanghai retained only selected specialised branches, while other presses were absorbed into new state publishing structures or gradually ceased operation due to financial constraints (Zhongguo Chuban Kexue Yanjiusuo and Zhongyang Dang'anguan, 1996, pp. 39-40).

These changes show that the transformation of sci-fi translation in the 1950s was embedded in a broader reorganisation of publishing institutions and geographical centres. The shift from Shanghai to Beijing, alongside the consolidation of publishing practices, reshaped the conditions under which sci-fi translation was produced and circulated.

3. Reinterpreting Science Fiction through Genre Relabels

Following the geographical relocation of publishing houses, one of the most significant changes observed in paratexts is the transformation of genre labels. This change was not merely terminological but reflected a redefinition and re-interpretation of the genre's function. During this period, the Soviet term *nauchnaia fantastika* was increasingly translated as *kexue huanxiang xiaoshuo* (scientific fantasy fiction), gradually replacing the earlier label *kexue xiaoshuo* (scientific fiction). In Gérard Genette's terms, such genre labels function as paratextual indicators that shape readers' expectations and position

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a work within broader literary and cultural frameworks (Genette, 1997). In the Chinese context, these functions were frequently adapted to legitimise sci-fi and articulate its educational and social value.

This shift in genre labelling was closely connected to broader changes in paratextual practices, particularly in the use of prefaces and postscripts. Before 1949, translators frequently contributed prefaces in which they explained their motivations, interpreted the text, and articulated expectations for readers. For example, in the preface of his 1903 translation of *From the Earth to the Moon*, Lu Xun (1903/1973, pp. 9-11) highlighted the pedagogical potential of sci-fi. Lu (1903/1973, pp. 10-11) argued that fictional narratives could facilitate the communication of scientific knowledge, challenge superstition, and make complex ideas more accessible to a general readership. Such interpretations were not confined to this case, but were echoed in the prefaces of other translators, indicating that sci-fi translation before 1949 was widely associated with an educational function, as also noted in the Introduction of this study.

By contrast, in the 1950s, translator-centred commentary became less prominent. Prefaces and postscripts were fewer in number and more standardised in form, leaving limited room for extended personal interpretation. Paratexts, in contrast, tended to convey more unified and institutionally aligned interpretations of the genre, reflecting their role as framing devices that shape readers' expectations. Nevertheless, the limited number of traceable prefaces and postscripts still provides valuable insight into how genre labels were being reinterpreted. A representative example is the afterword to Okhotnikov's *Exploring the New World* (1955), the first volume in a Soviet sci-fi series published by Chao Feng Publishing House. As one of the few sustained book series of translated sci-fi from the 1950s to the 1970s, this collection offers a particularly important case for observing shifts in genre labelling. In this afterword, the translator of the book, Wang Shian, explicitly contrasted earlier works labelled *kexue xiaoshuo* with the newly introduced Soviet sci-fi under *kexue huanxiang xiaoshuo* (Wang, 1955, pp. 337–338). He argued that pre-1949 sci-fi, whether translated or locally produced, was shaped by bourgeois perspectives, often driven by individual interests rather than collective concerns. On this basis, he called for replacing these earlier forms with Soviet sci-fi, which was considered more consistent with the developmental priorities of the new state.

At the same time, this comparison indicates how sci-fi began to participate in a broader political narrative, in which texts were evaluated in relation to competing ideological positions under Cold War conditions. Through such paratextual framing, the genre was reinterpreted as one grounded in scientific principles, with its educational orientation increasingly aligned with collective and ideological goals. The shift from *kexue xiaoshuo* (the earlier genre label) to *kexue huanxiang xiaoshuo* (new genre label) thus signals not only a change in terminology, but a rearticulation of the genre's role within a new cultural and publishing context. This growing entanglement with political dimensions will be explored further in the following section.

4. Science Fiction Translation Embedded in Cold War Political Narratives

The influence of Cold War dynamics becomes particularly visible in paratexts, especially in content summaries, which began to incorporate evaluative elements aligned with bloc affiliations. The sci-fi translation in the 1950s was shaped not only by domestic institutional restructuring but also by a broader Cold War context that influenced how the genre was introduced and interpreted. In this setting, translated sci-fi became embedded in competing global narratives, mediated through paratextual framing. This dynamic can first be observed in how genre labels were applied differently across geopolitical blocs. Sci-fi translations during this period can be broadly grouped according to the geopolitical origin of their source texts, distinguishing between works from the socialist bloc and those from the capitalist bloc. While the overall amount of translations from these two groups is relatively

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comparable, a notable difference emerges in their paratextual presentation. Works translated from the Soviet Union were more consistently and explicitly labelled as *kexue huanxiang xiaoshuo*, whereas texts from the capitalist bloc were less systematically categorised, with some lacking explicit genre labels.

Paratexts played a central role in shaping how these works were positioned for readers. Translator-authored prefaces became less prominent, often replaced by concise content summaries produced by publishers. These summaries not only introduced the narrative but also provided interpretive guidance. In many cases, they adopted an evaluative tone that highlighted the social and educational value of the text, while situating it within broader moral or ideological frameworks. This paratextual pattern did not operate uniformly but varied according to the geopolitical origins of the texts. Translations from the socialist bloc, such as the Soviet science fiction series published by Chao Feng Publishing House mentioned above, were framed in terms of their ideological and geopolitical positioning. The publisher explicitly presented this genre as a means of cultivating youth in line with socialist values, presenting the Soviet Union's scientific ideals and contributions to peaceful national development (Chaofeng Chubanshe, 1955). This ideological framing became even more explicit in works such as Gurevich's *Frost on Palms* (1955), where Cold War tensions were directly incorporated into the content summaries. These summaries contrasted Soviet and American scientists, portraying the former as working for the benefit of the people, while the latter were depicted as exploited by capitalist interests. The work was further characterised as a satirical critique of imperialism, exposing the moral failings of the American bourgeoisie and depicting the hardships of ordinary people under capitalist conditions.

By comparison, works from the capitalist bloc were often framed through a more critical or cautionary lens. For example, translations of Jules Verne such as *In Search of the Castaways* (1956a) and *The Begum's Fortune* (1956b) were accompanied by summaries that emphasised themes of social inequality, colonialism, and moral critique. This critical framing was further reinforced by paratexts that drew attention to perceived limitations within the original texts, including problematic representations of race, such as discriminatory portrayals of Black characters, and depictions of indigenous peoples in New Zealand as cannibalistic in *In Search of the Castaways* (1956a). *The Begum's Fortune* (1956b) was further characterised as a work of social fiction that exposed the contradictions of capitalist society. Its paratextual framing interpreted Verne's narrative as presenting two opposing paths: one oriented towards serving the people and contributing to the construction of an ideal society, and the other towards the production of destructive technologies, ultimately leading to self-destruction.

5. Conclusion

Through these paratextual strategies, particularly the shift in genre label, sci-fi was not simply introduced as a literary genre, but reinterpreted in ways that aligned with discursive priorities of the 1950s. Genre labels, prefaces (or postscripts), content summaries, and editorial framing collectively contributed to embedding sci-fi within a broader narrative that emphasised scientific progress and social values. In this sense, paratexts functioned as key mediating devices through which sci-fi was positioned and understood within the cultural and geopolitical context of the 1950s.

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that sci-fi in the 1950s was increasingly framed through its association with scientific knowledge and broader social functions. However, this alignment also entailed a gradual shift in the genre's positioning, as sci-fi became infused with a more explicit political dimension. Rather than functioning primarily as entertainment, it was reconfigured as a medium serving educational and ideological purposes. This transformation, shaped through paratextual

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mediation, not only reflects the interaction between Cold War dynamics and domestic policy but also foreshadows the more complex and uneven development of sci-fi translation in the following decades.

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Translating Cognitive Metaphor in Fairy Tales: A Corpus-based Study of The Nightingale and the Rose and its Chinese Translations

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Abstract:

This study approaches the metaphorical language in Oscar Wilde's *The Nightingale and the Rose* and its two Chinese translations from the perspective of cognitive metaphor, by means of a corpus-based approach. Statistical analysis assisted by the corpus tool Sketch Engine reveals that the writer uses nine types of metaphor-related words (MRWs), with indirect metaphors mainly manifest in the form of personification, as well as diverse metaphor flags that create various similes serving as direct metaphors. In the two target texts, the two translators primarily employ strategies of direct metaphor to direct metaphor and indirect metaphor to indirect metaphor, thereby largely maintaining and reproducing the types and expressions of metaphors in the source text, which reflects their understanding of and respect for Oscar Wilde's cognition. This research offers a brand new standpoint to the analysis of this literary work and its translation and provides some new theoretical and methodological insights for the field of translation studies on fairy tales.

Keywords: cognitive metaphor studies; metaphor in translation; corpus-based translation studies

1. Introduction

With the development of cognitive metaphor studies (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), metaphor in literature studies have been embarked on from a cognitive linguistic perspective (Lakoff & Turner, 1989; Semino, 2008). Some scholars have devoted themselves to applying contemporary cognitive metaphor theory to the interpretation of metaphor translation, fostering an interdisciplinary study of metaphor translation. Translation studies can absorb the theoretical and methodological insights from contemporary metaphor studies, and then feed back to that discipline (Shuttleworth, 2014).

This study will examine the cognitive metaphor and its Chinese translation in Oscar Wilde's *The Nightingale and the Rose* by means of a corpus-based approach and will shed light on the writer's

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metaphorical language use in his fairy tale and the way in which the translators deal with this cognitive linguistic phenomenon. We will choose the two Chinese translations of this fairy tale – one by Ba Jin and the other by Zhu Chunshen – as the research materials, focusing on the metaphors within the two translated texts.

2. Research Questions and Methodology

2.1 Research questions

Research on translating *The Nightingale and the Rose* lacks analysis from the perspective of cognitive metaphor. In addition, most of the existing studies of the translation of this fairy tale remain qualitative analysis, with little application of quantitative approaches.

Based on the above research gaps, we propose two questions for investigation:

1) What metaphorical language does the writer employ in the literary text?
2) In what ways do the two translators render the metaphors in their target texts?

2.2 Metaphor identification

For the purpose of metaphor identification, close reading and Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU) (Steen et al., 2010) will be adopted in this study. In particular, the procedure will begin with a close reading of the source text to identify potential metaphor-related words (MRWs), which will then be checked against the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online to assess whether their contextual use is metaphorical. Subsequently, such MRWs in the narrative will be categorised, following MIPVU's identification guidelines, into four types: direct metaphor, indirect metaphor, implicit metaphor and metaphor flag. We will then implement the aforementioned steps of this procedure again in the target texts. Slightly differently, we will check the digital version of *Xiandai Hanyu Cidian* (现代汉语词典) to verify whether this Chinese word is metaphorical in the context.

Direct metaphors are metaphorical expressions that appear in context in a relatively straightforward form without any additional modification, characterised by a higher degree of conventionalisation and a relatively lower degree of metaphoricity (e.g. *life is a journey*). Indirect metaphors, by contrast, are expressions that are less easily perceived or require modifiers in order to be manifested in co-text, marked by a higher level of metaphoricity and a comparatively lower level of conventionalisation (e.g. time *flies* so quick). Implicit metaphors are metaphorical utterances in which certain lexis or grammatical structures are omitted or substituted, or which have to be interpreted through cross-domain mapping in context (e.g. *they* said that let there be light). Metaphor flags are a kind of metaphor signal words, which serve to indicate the presence of metaphorical language in a given context (e.g. *as*, *like*). The occurrence of a metaphor flag usually indicates that there is a metaphor here. In other words, metaphor flags are usually found in conjunction with direct metaphors. But because of the modifying effect of these metaphor flags, such direct metaphors (e.g. *her smile is like a flower*) become more salient and explicitly found and identified than ordinary direct metaphors (Steen et al., 2010).

2.3 The compilation of the corpus

A parallel corpus called "The Nightingale and the Rose and its Chinese Translations" will be self-established by an online corpus analysis tool Sketch Engine, incorporating the scanning versions of the original and the two Chinese translated texts of this fairy tale. The hard copies of the original and its two translations will be scanned into electronic versions by the mobile app I Love PDF and then extracted by the OCR website 诚华 OCR. The proofreading will be manually undertaken. After this

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step, the two documents will be imported into the software ABBYY Aligner for aligning the English and Chinese texts at the sentence level. After that, all the metaphors and their Chinese translations will be manually annotated. A manual proofreading for the alignment and annotation will be conducted in order to further ensure accuracy. The aligned and annotated files will then be imported into the parallel corpus for statistical analysis.

3. Results

3.1 Findings from the source text

By quantifying the identified metaphors and the statistics of the word frequency of the MRWs in the self-built corpus, the number of the four different annotated metaphor types in the original is clearly demonstrated in the following table:

Table 1. The Statistics of Each MRW Type in *The Nightingale and the Rose*

Type	Frequency	Example	Total Number
Human and Human Body	16	feet, lips	**94**
Animal body	2	wings	
Plants	6	hyacinth-blossom	
Tool and Machine	7	chariot, jar	
Money	2	price, pay	
Force	3	bubbling, shot	
Natural Landscape	7	river, sky	
Personification	29	leaned down, hang over	
Colour	3	flame-coloured, rose	
Food	1	honey	
Metaphor Flag	18	as, like	

From the table outlined above, we observe that the original text contains a total of 94 metaphorical utterances, classified into nine types. The last type is relatively special but not a kind of MRW, consisting of 18 metaphor signal words. Metaphorical utterances accompanied by such metaphor flags are relatively explicit in the text, appearing in the form of 18 similes. In the light of identifying personification, we notice that these metaphors are predominantly indirect in form.

3.2 Findings from the target texts

Moving on to the target text, the number of each MRW type in Ba Jin and Zhu Chunshen's Chinese versions, along with the number of translation strategies use by him, are quantified and clearly calculated by Sketch Engine, as shown in the following four tables:

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Table 2. The Statistics of Each MRW Type in the Chinese Version by Ba Jin

Type	Frequency	Example	Total Number
Human and Human Body	12	脚 (feet)，嘴唇 (lips)	**93**
Animal body	2	翅膀 (wings)	
Plants	6	风信子(hyacinth)，蔷薇 (rose)	
Tool and Machine	5	银罐子 (silver jar)，银镜 (silver mirror)	
Money	2	换 (trade)	
Force	3	沸腾 (boil)，散布 (spread)	
Natural Landscape	5	雾 (fog)，晨光 (dawn light)	
Personification	32	躲藏 (hide)，俯下头 (lower head)	
Colour	5	火焰 (flame)，红 (red)	
Food	1	蜜 (honey)	
Metaphor Flag	20	像 (like)，跟……一样 (as…as)	

Table 3. The Statistics of Each Metaphor Translation Strategy used by Ba Jin

Type of Translation Strategy	Number
Direct Metaphor ---> Direct Metaphor	34
Indirect Metaphor ---> Indirect Metaphor	52
Direct Metaphor ---> Indirect Metaphor	3
Indirect Metaphor ---> Direct Metaphor	0
Metaphor ---> Non-metaphor	2
Non-metaphor ---> Metaphor	1
Adding Metaphor	2

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Table 4. The Statistics of Each MRW Type in the Chinese Translation by Zhu Chunshen

Type	Frequency	Example	Total Number
Human and Human Body	12	双脚 (feet)，嘴唇 (lips)	**91**
Animal body	2	双翼 (wings)	
Plants	4	风信子 (hyacinth)，玫瑰 (rose)	
Tool and Machine	6	银壶 (silver teapot)，银镜 (silver mirror)	
Money	2	换 (trade)	
Force	4	涌上 (well up)，穿透 (pass through)	
Natural Landscape	9	雾霭 (foggy mist)，朝霞 (rosy dawn)	
Personification	26	俯下身 (bend down)，流连 (linger)	
Colour	3	红 (red)	
Food	1	蜜 (honey)	
Movement and Direction	1	东方 (the East)	
Heat	1	炽烈 (blazing)	
Metaphor Flag	20	像 (like)，宛如 (as if)	

Table 5. The Statistics of Each Metaphor Translation Strategy used by Zhu Chunshen

Type of Translation Strategy	Number
Direct Metaphor ---> Direct Metaphor	29
Indirect Metaphor ---> Indirect Metaphor	52
Direct Metaphor ---> Indirect Metaphor	2
Indirect Metaphor ---> Direct Metaphor	0
Metaphor ---> Non-metaphor	7
Non-metaphor ---> Metaphor	5
Adding Metaphor	3
Omitting Metaphor	1

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In Ba Jin's translation, there are 93 MRWs, because one metaphor was removed via the metaphor to non-metaphor procedure. It should be emphasised that the total number of MRWs listed in the above two tables also includes metaphorical expressions generated in two ways: non-metaphor to metaphor and adding metaphor. Although we also count the use of the strategy of metaphor to non-metaphor, such instances are not included in the total number of MRWs or in the overall number of metaphor translation strategies used, as they are no longer metaphorical in context. Therefore, the number of translation strategies employed by Ba, after statistical calculation, is consistent with the number of MRWs, amounting to 93. The explanation described above applies to the second translator too. Discrepancies arise as Table 4 lists examples of omission and metaphor to non-metaphor.

In accordance with Tables 2 and 4, the type and number of MRWs in Ba Jin's and Zhu Chunshen's translations are generally consistent with those in the source text. Interestingly, in contrast to the source text and Ba's version, Table 4 shows that Zhu's translation contains two additional types: heat and movement and direction metaphors. The other types within his version remain the same as those in the source text and Ba's translation. Similarly to the source text, the largest number of MRW type identified in both Ba's and Zhu's translations is indirect metaphor, followed by metaphor flag, and then direct metaphor. The most frequently used metaphor found in both versions is personification, followed by metaphor flag. The number of metaphor flag is identical in both translations, but Ba's version contains slightly more instances of personification. Moreover, personification in both translated texts is predominantly identified as indirect metaphor. Further, in each translation, 20 metaphors are accompanied by various metaphor flags, which shape them into 20 similes and help them more directly and saliently to be identified in the translated context. We do not identify any implicit metaphors in Zhu's translation either.

In terms of analysing the use of translation strategies, we find that the most frequent strategy used in both target texts is indirect metaphor to indirect metaphor, with the second most common being direct metaphor to direct metaphor, as demonstrated in Tables 3 and 5. Neither translated text contains the strategy of indirect metaphor to direct metaphor. Notably, in his translation, Ba Jin renders two original metaphorical expressions into non-metaphorical utterances. Interestingly, Ba adds three metaphors in the translated text. That is, he converts such non-metaphorical expressions in the source text into metaphorical ones and also adds two new metaphors in the translated text, one of which is a personified expression and the other of which is a colour metaphor. By contrast, in employing the strategies of metaphor to non-metaphor and non-metaphor to metaphor, Zhu Chunshen makes more frequent use than Ba, with 7 and 5 instances respectively. Differently from Ba, Zhu adds three metaphors – two colour metaphors and one personified utterance – in his translated text. Furthermore, there is an omission of a natural landscape metaphor in Zhu's translation.

4. Conclusion

This corpus-based study conducts a relatively systematic and comprehensive quantitative examination of metaphorical language in *The Nightingale and the Rose* and its two Chinese translations from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. In the light of analysing MRWs' occurrence frequency within the source and target texts, it indicates that nine types of MRWs are identified in the source text. Oscar Wilde primarily employs direct and indirect metaphors in his work. Indirect metaphors are mainly presented through personification. In addition, various metaphor flags are used to shape versatile similes as more prominent and explicit direct metaphors in the text. In the two Chinese translations of this fairy tale, both translators mainly adopt strategies of direct metaphor to direct metaphor and indirect metaphor to indirect metaphor, extensively preserving and reproducing the types and expressions of MRWs found in the source text and thereby apprehending and respecting the writer's cognition.

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Through this case study, we also attempt to provide a fresh research angle and methodology for the fields of literary studies and translation studies of this fairy tale and offer a more well-grounded literary analysis alongside translation research, supported by a robust theoretical framework and solid empirical data across the text.

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Political Prisoners and the Translation of Violence: A Reflexive Case Study of Alaa Abdel Fattah's *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated*

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Abstract:

This paper examines the English translation of *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* (2022) by Alaa Abdel Fattah as a site where political violence, censorship, and collective resistance converge. Compiled and translated by a network of family members, activists, and editors working under conditions of surveillance and risk, the English edition mediates texts written in prison, during probation, or reconstructed from memory after interrogations. The translation does not emerge from a single authorial or professional voice but from a collective process shaped by coercion, fragmentation, and political constraint.

By reading the English edition alongside the Arabic collection *Shabāḥ al-Rabīʿ* (The Ghost of the Spring), the paper explores how editorial and translational decisions both preserve and reshape the political force of Abdel Fattah's testimony. Rather than smoothing rupture, silence, or textual instability, the English translation retains these features, allowing the conditions of repression to remain visible within the translated text itself. Drawing on key concepts from translation studies and cultural theory, including opacity, translator visibility, and narrative control, the paper argues that translation here operates within a sustained tension between reproducing the constraints imposed by state violence and resisting them through fragmentation, collective authorship, and refusal of transparency.

This tension has gained renewed urgency following Abdel Fattah's release in 2025 under international pressure. After his release, he was initially prohibited from leaving Egypt through the imposition of travel restrictions, before later being permitted to travel to the United Kingdom. This sequence highlights how mechanisms of control over movement can persist beyond formal release and how political regulation extends across temporal and spatial boundaries. While Abdel Fattah's physical mobility has been constrained, his translated writings have continued to circulate transnationally.

Through this case study, the paper demonstrates that translating political prisoner testimony is not merely linguistic labor but a critical site where repression, narrative control, and resistance are negotiated across languages and borders.

Keywords: Alaa Abdel Fattah, translation and violence, political prisoners, activist writing, narrative control, transnational circulation

1. Introduction

Translation becomes a site of political struggle when the text being translated is produced under conditions of imprisonment, censorship, and state surveillance. Few contemporary works illustrate this relationship more clearly than *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* (2022), a collection of essays, statements, and social media writings by the Egyptian activist Alaa Abdel Fattah. Written across years of imprisonment, probation, and political repression, the volume documents not only the experience of

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incarceration but also the broader struggle over memory, citizenship, and political participation in post-revolutionary Egypt.

Unlike conventional literary translations, the English edition emerged through a collective process involving family members, editors, activists, and unnamed intermediaries who helped preserve and transmit Abdel Fattah's writings under conditions of risk. Many of the texts were smuggled from prison, reconstructed from memory, or circulated through informal networks before publication. As a result, the English volume bears visible traces of the political circumstances that shaped its production.

This paper examines the English translation of *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* alongside the Arabic collection *Shabāḥ al-Rabīʿ* (*The Ghost of the Spring*). While the two volumes share substantial overlap, they also differ in selection, framing, and paratextual presentation. Following Genette's understanding of paratexts as threshold elements that shape interpretation, these differences raise important questions about how political testimony travels across languages and how translation mediates experiences of censorship, repression, and resistance.

Rather than treating translation as a neutral transfer of meaning, this study approaches it as a process shaped by power relations, editorial decisions, and material constraints. Drawing on scholarship by Baker (2009), Venuti (1995), Spivak (1993), Glissant (1997), Barokka (2022), and Baer (2021), the paper explores how translation preserves, reshapes, and circulates political narratives produced under authoritarian conditions.

The analysis focuses on three interconnected dimensions: the role of translation in challenging state-controlled narratives, the preservation of opacity and fragmentation as traces of political violence, and the significance of collective translation as a form of resistance. Through this case study, the paper argues that translation functions not merely as linguistic mediation but as an extension of political testimony, enabling voices constrained by state power to circulate across linguistic and national boundaries.

2. Paratexts and the Politics of Framing

The paratexts surrounding both the Arabic and English editions play a significant role in shaping how readers encounter Abdel Fattah's writings. Following Genette (1997), paratexts can be understood as threshold elements that guide interpretation before readers engage with the main text. In the case of Abdel Fattah's work, the chronology, forewords, editors' introductions, title pages, and publication histories do more than provide contextual information; they frame the writings as political testimony emerging from conditions of surveillance, imprisonment, and resistance.

The English edition, *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* (2022), opens with a chronology of modern Egyptian political history, a foreword by Naomi Klein, and an editors' introduction detailing the circumstances under which the writings were produced, preserved, and transmitted. These materials position Abdel Fattah not simply as an author but as a political prisoner whose writings survived censorship and confinement. Klein emphasizes that many texts were written under conditions of imprisonment and reconstructed, transmitted, or preserved despite severe restrictions, while the editors highlight the collective effort required to bring the volume into existence (Klein, 2022; Abdel Fattah, 2022).

The Arabic edition, *Shabāḥ al-Rabīʿ* (*The Ghost of the Spring*), presents a different form of framing. Published in Lebanon in 2022, it addresses an Arabic-speaking readership already familiar with many of the political events referenced in the essays. Public commentary surrounding the publication of the volume, including Sanaa Seif's announcement of its release, emphasized that the book contains introductory materials written by three Arab writers who situate Abdel Fattah's work within wider

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regional histories of revolution, repression, and intellectual resistance (Seif, 2022). Rather than introducing Egypt to international readers, these materials participate in an ongoing Arab conversation about memory, defeat, and political responsibility.

The publication of *Shabāḥ al-Rabīʿ* also attracted attention across Arabic-language media and cultural platforms, reflecting the wider regional significance of Abdel Fattah's writings and their circulation beyond Egypt (Abdel Alah Alsalehi, 2022; al-'Araby al-Jadeed, 2022; UltraSawt, 2022).

The contrast between the two editions demonstrates how paratexts mediate political meaning across linguistic and cultural contexts. The English edition seeks to make the texts accessible to readers who may be unfamiliar with Egyptian political history, while the Arabic edition assumes a greater degree of shared political and cultural knowledge. Despite these differences, both editions frame the writings as documents of resistance and preserve the connection between personal testimony and collective political struggle. The existence of two differently framed editions also suggests that translation does not simply reproduce a text in another language; it repositions that text within a new interpretive environment.

Particularly significant is the visibility of collective translation in the English volume. The translation is credited to "A Collective," foregrounding the collaborative labor involved in transmitting Abdel Fattah's writings beyond the confines of prison and censorship. This choice challenges the conventional invisibility of translators identified by Venuti (1995) and highlights translation as a political and ethical practice rather than a neutral linguistic transfer. Through these paratextual choices, both editions guide readers toward understanding the text not merely as literature but as an intervention in ongoing struggles over memory, justice, and political representation.

3. Translation, Narrative, and Resistance

The English translation of *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* does not simply reproduce Abdel Fattah's writings in another language. It reshapes the ways in which those writings circulate, are interpreted, and engage new audiences. The following sections examine three interconnected dimensions of this process: the challenge translation poses to dominant state narratives, the preservation of opacity and fragmentation as traces of political violence, and the role of translation in sustaining political testimony and resistance beyond the conditions that sought to suppress it.

3.1 Narrative control and the state's language of stability

Abdel Fattah's writing emerges from a linguistic landscape structured by the Egyptian state's emphasis on *amn wa istiqrār* ("security and stability") as central civic values. This discourse extends beyond official speeches and legal institutions into media narratives that frame obedience as patriotism and dissent as a threat to national security. Baker's (2009) work on narrative theory helps explain how such narratives operate: political power is sustained not only through coercion but also through the stories that shape public understanding of legitimacy, citizenship, and belonging.

State-aligned media figures play an important role in reinforcing this framework. Television hosts such as Ahmed Moussa and Mostafa Bakry have repeatedly described political opponents and activists as *khawāna* ("traitors"), contributing to a discourse that divides society into loyal citizens and perceived enemies of the state. Such language does not merely describe political conflict; it actively constructs moral boundaries that delegitimize dissent.

Against this narrative, Abdel Fattah advances a vocabulary centered on *karāma* (dignity), *ḥurriyya* (freedom), and *ʿadāla* (justice). These concepts recur throughout both the Arabic and English editions and offer an alternative understanding of political participation and collective responsibility. The

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English translation preserves many of these terms rather than replacing them with simplified equivalents, allowing readers to encounter the ethical language of the Egyptian revolutionary movement on its own terms.

Translation therefore functions as more than linguistic transfer. By carrying Abdel Fattah's writings beyond the reach of the institutions that seek to marginalize them, the English edition challenges dominant narratives and enables alternative political memories to circulate transnationally. In Baker's terms, translation becomes a form of narrative intervention, linking localized experiences of repression to wider conversations about justice, citizenship, and resistance.

3.2 Opacity, silence, and the ethics of translation

Many of Abdel Fattah's essays bear visible traces of the conditions under which they were written. Some were composed in prison, others were reconstructed from memory, and many emerged under circumstances shaped by surveillance, uncertainty, and restricted communication. These conditions are reflected not only in what the texts say but also in how they are written. Abrupt shifts in tone, fragmented reflections, and moments of silence appear throughout the collection and remain visible in the English translation.

Glissant's (1997) concept of opacity offers a useful way of understanding these textual features. Rather than treating difficulty or incompleteness as problems to be corrected, Glissant argues for the right of individuals and communities not to be fully transparent to dominant systems of interpretation. From this perspective, the gaps and discontinuities that appear in Abdel Fattah's writing can be read not as failures of expression but as reminders of the conditions under which testimony is produced.

The English translation generally avoids smoothing these irregularities. Instead of presenting a fully coherent narrative of imprisonment and resistance, it preserves many of the tensions and uncertainties that characterize the original writings. This decision is significant because political repression often seeks to control not only speech but also the terms through which experience becomes intelligible. Preserving fragmentation allows the translation to retain traces of that struggle.

This approach also resonates with Barokka's (2022) discussion of refusal and the limits of accessibility. Barokka argues that demands for complete legibility can reproduce forms of control by requiring marginalized subjects to make themselves fully available to outside interpretation. In Abdel Fattah's case, not everything can be explained, translated, or contextualized without loss. The translation therefore respects certain silences and ambiguities rather than attempting to resolve them.

Spivak's (1993) call for ethical attentiveness to the text further clarifies this choice. Ethical translation involves listening to the particularities of a voice rather than reshaping it to meet the expectations of a new audience. In preserving uncertainty, fragmentation, and opacity, the English edition carries across not only Abdel Fattah's words but also the conditions that made those words necessary.

3.3 Translation as political testimony and resistance

The English translation of *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* does more than carry Abdel Fattah's writings into another language; it transforms the conditions under which they can be read. Many of the essays were written in prison, reconstructed from memory, or transmitted through informal networks operating under conditions of surveillance and risk. As a result, the translation inherits the marks of coercion embedded in the original texts. Rather than erasing these traces, the English edition preserves them, allowing readers to encounter testimony shaped by imprisonment, censorship, and political struggle.

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The collective nature of the translation is central to this process. Credited to "A Collective," the English edition foregrounds the collaborative labor involved in preserving and circulating Abdel Fattah's writings. As Venuti (1995) argues, translation is often expected to conceal its own mediation. Here, however, mediation remains visible. The translators, editors, family members, and unnamed intermediaries who contributed to the volume become part of the story of transmission itself. Translation emerges not as a neutral act of linguistic transfer but as a practice of solidarity through which testimony survives.

The political significance of this process becomes particularly visible in Abdel Fattah's reflections on the persistence of repression after the Egyptian revolution. Essays such as "Impossible Solutions," "The Hostage State," and "History Repeating Itself" describe how structures of authority continue to operate through legal, judicial, and military institutions even when political circumstances appear to change (Abdel Fattah, 2022). Translation carries these reflections beyond their original context, enabling readers outside Egypt to engage with debates about memory, accountability, and political continuity.

Across both the Arabic and English editions, Abdel Fattah's writings insist that political struggle does not end when a revolution is declared defeated. Instead, memory itself becomes a site of resistance. By preserving references to repression, loss, disappointment, and unfinished political aspirations, the translation resists narrative closure. In Baker's (2009) terms, it creates connections between localized experiences of violence and broader transnational conversations about justice and resistance.

Following Abdel Fattah's release in 2025, restrictions on his ability to leave Egypt underscored the persistence of political control beyond imprisonment. Yet while his movement remained constrained, his writings continued to circulate through translation, reaching audiences beyond the limits imposed on him (Lewis, 2025).

Translation therefore functions as more than representation. It extends the circulation of testimony beyond the spatial and political constraints imposed on the writer. While states may restrict movement, censor publications, or suppress dissent, translated texts can continue to travel. In this sense, the English edition *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* becomes part of the struggle it documents, preserving memory, challenging erasure, and sustaining political dialogue across linguistic and national borders.

4. Conclusion

This study has examined the English translation of *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* as a site where political violence, narrative control, and resistance intersect. Through its paratexts, collective translation practices, and preservation of textual fragmentation, the volume demonstrates that translation is not merely a linguistic transfer but a process shaped by the material conditions under which testimony is produced and circulated.

The comparison between the English edition and the Arabic collection *Shabāḥ al-Rabīʿ* highlights how translation repositions political writing within new linguistic and cultural contexts while preserving its connection to ongoing struggles over memory, justice, and representation. Rather than smoothing rupture or resolving ambiguity, the English translation retains many of the traces of censorship, imprisonment, and political constraint that shaped Abdel Fattah's writings.

The analysis has shown that translation functions simultaneously as mediation and resistance. It challenges dominant narratives, preserves experiences that might otherwise be erased, and enables political testimony to travel beyond the boundaries imposed by the state. In the case of Abdel Fattah's writings, translation becomes part of the struggle it documents, extending the circulation of memory and dissent across languages and borders.

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In sum, *You Have Not Yet Been Defeated* demonstrates that the work of testimony does not end with the original text. Translation allows that testimony to acquire new audiences, new political meanings, and new forms of solidarity, ensuring that voices constrained by repression continue to be heard beyond the conditions that sought to silence them.

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The author is solely responsible for the conception, analysis, and writing of this paper.

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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The Impact of Gamification on Kurdish EFL Learners in Terms of Motivation, Engagement, and Listening Comprehension Skills

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Abstract:

Listening is one of the most difficult and frequently overlooked skills in EFL classes, especially in the Kurdistan region of Iraq (KRI). The innovative assessment practice in such regions remained underutilised. This study examined the impact of gamified formative assessment on Kurdish EFL students' listening comprehension, motivation, and classroom engagement. Furthermore, it aimed to evaluate students' and teachers' perceptions of the educational value of gamified assessment and its application in language learning. This study adopted a mixed-methods approach, using a quasi-experimental test with interviews. Moreover, Kahoot was used as a gamification assessment tool in the experimental group, while the control group utilised traditional method protocols.

The quantitative findings demonstrated that although the post-test comparison between the two groups was not statistically significant, the experimental group achieved higher listening comprehension scores than the control group. These qualitative results indicated that students perceived gamified assessments with confidence, a great sense of autonomy, peer collaboration, and enjoyment. Teachers' responses also corresponded to these advantages, emphasising observable improvements in students' engagement, reductions in anxiety, and the pedagogical benefits of real-time feedback. This research provides insights for teachers and policymakers about the potential and limitations of gamified assessment and its application in language learning settings.

Keywords: gamification, GFA, Kurdish EFL students, motivation, engagement, listening comprehension

1. Introduction

The integration of gamification as a pedagogical approach in the educational setting to boost learners' engagement, motivation, and persistence has garnered considerable interest in recent years (Hamari et al., 2014). The effectiveness of digital gamification tools (e.g. Quizizz, Kahoot) in providing a dynamic, student-centred learning experience is often less considered in EFL settings (Zainuddin et al., 2020). While existing research has largely examined the role of gamification in overall language competence, grammar mastery, and vocabulary development, fewer studies have explored its potential to improve listening comprehension (Li et al., 2024; Zhang & Huang, 2024). However, many EFL contexts still

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prioritise reading and writing over listening skills (Field, 2008). This is particularly evident in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) educational contexts (Sofi-Karim, 2015).

Gamified formative assessment (GFA) is a recent, promising strategy that combines game elements such as points and continuous feedback to improve learners' listening performance and enhance motivation during assessments (Deterding et al., 2011). A notable gap in the literature exists about how such approaches have an impact on listening skills, particularly in EFL settings across KRI. This study addresses the following research questions:

1) What is the effect of GFA on Kurdish EFL students' listening comprehension skills compared to traditional assessment approaches?

2) How do Kurdish EFL school students perceive GFA in terms of motivation and engagement?

3) What are the perspectives of Kurdish EFL teachers on the integration of GFA into EFL classrooms in terms of motivation, engagement, and listening comprehension skills?

From a theoretical standpoint, this study contributed to the Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis and Vygotsky's (1978) role of social interaction in the educational process. From an empirical perspective, this study provides further evidence of the impact of gamification on listening comprehension in EFL settings.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Gamification and GFA

"Gamification" is described as the latest academic strategy (Okolo et al., 2024) and "the use of game design elements in non-game contexts", which includes different features (e.g. levels, marks) in the game itself to enhance user interaction within the existing system (Deterding et al., 2011, p. 10). It works on a solid foundation of gaming features such as points, levels, and achievements incorporated into ongoing learning activities (Deterding et al., 2011). Several theories underlie the significance of GFA, such as Behaviourism (Skinner, 1968, as cited in Ebo, 2018), Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural hypothesis, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and Krashen's (1982, p. 131) "affective filter".

The effectiveness of gamification varies according to the user interface and experience when played in a different non-player environment (Hamari et al., 2014). GFA has emerged as a promising transformational pedagogical approach from game applications that increase student participation, motivation, and instant feedback during the process of learning (Zainuddin et al., 2020; Che Abdul Rani et al., 2023). By incorporating various features such as badges, leaderboards, instant feedback, and interactive challenges, this strategy reconsiders traditional evaluation models, encouraging active contribution and in-depth learning (Zainuddin et al., 2020). When incorporated into formative assessments, gamification can change regular testing into more interactive and encouraging experiences (Hussain et al., 2025).

2.2 Previous studies

Several studies (Zainuddin et al., 2020; Arce and Valdivia, 2020; Zhang and Huang, 2024) indicated the positive role of GFA, showing that the experimental group that utilised the gamified platform performed better than the control group in improving overall language competency. Other studies (Bularafa et al., 2023; Syihabuddin, Abidin, and Khafifah, 2025) argued for the effectiveness of

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gamified assessment for listening comprehension. Some empirical studies (Hussein et al., 2022, Zebari and Alzeebaree, 2022) investigated gamification in the KRI educational context. In general, these studies show that gamified activities help increase student motivation and interest in language learning as well as reduce anxiety levels in education. However, there is a significant variation between the studies in research design. More importantly, few studies focused specifically on listening skills. Thus, this study seeks to fill the existing gaps by specifically focusing on the listening comprehension skill in secondary EFL classrooms in KRI.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

This study used a mixed-methods approach with a quasi-experimental design that compared the listening scores of the control and experimental (GFA) groups. In this study, a non-probability purposive sampling approach was employed to choose both participants and schools. Two intact classes were selected as natural settings to gather information in class. The qualitative sampling process proceeded until data saturation was achieved.

3.2 Research participants

Overall, this study involved 90 students at Balla Private English School in Erbil city in KRI. All of the participants were mostly Kurds, followed by Arabs. The quasi-experimental test included 30 students who were divided into two groups: an experimental group (GFA) and a control group (traditional assessment). The participants aged between 15 and 16 years were enrolled in Grades 10 and 11. Additionally, 17 EFL teachers from various private schools in Erbil city participated in semi-structured interviews to provide their professional perspectives about GFA tools, focusing on both instructional value and practical application.

3.3 Instrumentation

For the Quasi-experimental exam, listening-test samples from Cambridge IELTS 19 and 16 were used (Cambridge IELTS, n.d., a-b). Both tests were administered to all the participants under supervised conditions. Additionally, Kahoot, as a gamified assessment tool, was utilised as it allows audio-visual aids to create a better studying experience. Students and teachers were also interviewed to examine their views on the role of GFA in listening comprehension, engagement, and motivation. The interview questions were checked for validity and reliability.

4. Findings and Discussions

SPSS was used to analyse quantitative data. Both groups had equivalent English language proficiency levels, establishing a valid starting point for the post-intervention differences.

As shown in Table 1 and Table 1, the findings of the experimental group indicated a statistically notable increase from 14.00 to 16.07 ($p = .004$), highlighting a substantial impact of the GFA on improving listening scores, as supported by the paired-samples t-test result ($t(14) = -3.460$, $p = .004$).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pre- and Post-Listening Scores – Experimental Group

Test Time	N	Mean	SD
Pre-Listening	15	14.00	4.60
Post-Listening	15	16.07	5.87

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Table 2. Paired Samples T-Test – Experimental Group

t	df	Sig.	Mean Diff.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
-3.460	14	.004	-2.07	-3.35	-0.79

Table 3 shows a slight increase from 13.20 to 14.53; according to Table 4, at a p=.146, this difference was not statistically significant. This collective finding suggests that the traditional assessment did not lead to a notable improvement in listening scores.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Pre- and Post-Listening Scores – Control Group

Test Time	N	Mean	SD
Pre-Listening	15	13.20	6.07
Post-Listening	15	14.53	7.75

Table 4. Paired Samples T-Test – Control Group

t	df	Sig.	Mean Diff.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
-1.540	14	.146	-1.33	-3.19	0.52

Table 5 shows the results of the post-test listening comparison between the two groups, indicating that the experimental group achieved higher listening scores than the control group (16.07 vs. 14.53). Conversely, the comparison shown in Table 6 revealed no statistically significant differences (p = .546).

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Post-Listening Scores by Group

Group	N	Mean	SD
Experimental	15	16.07	5.87
Control	15	14.53	7.75

Levene's p	t	df	Sig.	Mean Diff.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
.281	0.611	28	.546	1.53	-3.61	6.68

Table 6. Independent Samples T-Test for Post-Listening Scores

The findings of the pre- and post-tests corroborate the results of recent studies (e.g. Zhang and Huang, 2024; Bularafa et al., 2023). However, these results are not congruent with Zainuddin et al.'s (2020) study, demonstrating no statistically significant differences between the two groups in their performance. This study provides empirical evidence on listening improvement by GFA. These findings support Self-Determination Theory, Krashen's affective filter hypothesis and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which stresses the role of social interaction in cognitive development.

Crucial dimensions were emerged from the students' views, including competence, autonomy, motivation, engagement, relatedness, as three basic psychological needs, and motivation, engagement, emotional response, curiosity, and game elements as instructional factors. Furthermore, their responses illustrate the transformative impact of GFA on their educational environment, concentration, and motivation, and independent learning. More than half of them thought that such activities noticeably

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improved their listening comprehension. The students' emphasis on feelings of autonomy, social connections, and competence aligns with Self-Determination Theory, and their perceived collaborative and interactive components of Kahoot platform resonate with Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on learning as a social practice.

All EFL teachers emphasised the beneficial impact of GFA on students' motivation and their listening comprehension. However, around 7 out of 17 of them pinpointed some notable obstacles like technical issues and student speech rate differences. Teachers' insights included teacher attitude, core dimensions of student engagement, improvements in listening skills, assessment methods, equity concerns, and implementation challenges. Together, these viewpoints underscore the multifaceted classroom realities of integrating GFA into EFL teaching in classroom. These findings are supported by Zhang and Huang (2024), who acknowledged that implementing GFA promotes students' autonomy and improves their competence.

5. Conclusions

This study concludes that implementing GFA, like Kahoot, can enhance listening comprehension, motivation, and engagement among Kurdish EFL students. The findings from this study could provide valuable insights into how gamified-based activities can possibly turn language learning into a more dynamic and effective classroom experience. Future studies are needed in public schools and different regions to provide a deeper and longer-term impact of GFA on Kurdish EFL learners.

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Accurate Translation, Accurate Outcomes: The Risks of Inadequate PROM Translation in Wales

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Abstract:

In Wales, Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are used across the health service (NHS Wales) as part of Value-Based Healthcare initiatives. PROMs must be translated into Welsh for use across Wales to meet legal requirements. However, traditional translation methods, such as producing single forward-translations, risk producing suboptimal PROM translations. Drawing on work to translate over 50 PROMs into Welsh for national use across Wales, this manuscript discusses the consequences of inadequate PROM translations on understanding patient outcomes. Informed by feedback from over 350 qualitative interviews, we discuss observed behaviours amongst Welsh-speaking patients when met with inaccurate or overly complex translations such as responding despite a lack of understanding, skipping questions and requesting to complete a different language version, and the implications on PROMs data accuracy. These data discrepancies pose the risk of misdiagnosis and ineffective treatment for individual patients and can more broadly lead to misinformed healthcare policies in Wales. Recommendations are made to follow multi-step frameworks to produce robust Welsh PROM translations that enable accurate and equivalent data to be collected.

Keywords: Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs), Welsh translation, cognitive debriefing, data accuracy

1. Introduction

Traditional measures of success in healthcare have focused on clinical outcomes such as mortality and morbidity. Performance has also commonly been assessed using activity- and process-based metrics, such as the volume of appointments, tests or treatments delivered, and operational indicators like waiting times. However, there is a growing trend for policy makers to consider patient outcomes as reported by the patients themselves. In Wales, assessing these Patient-Reported Outcomes (PROs) helps to drive Value-Based Healthcare, where its principle of providing care that is proportionate to

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patient need has emerged as a means of maximising efficiency while maintaining the highest standards of care (Palmer et al., 2020).

To achieve this, PROs can be analysed and used at micro- (patient), macro- (treatment/department), and meso- (national) levels. At the micro-level, PROs can be used in consultation with patients as a prompt to ensure that healthcare professionals ask the most appropriate questions. In addition, by collecting PROs before and after treatment, it is possible to track a patient's condition or symptoms over time, which helps healthcare professionals to decide next steps and facilitates patient involvement in clinical decision-making. At the macro-level, PROs collected from one cohort (e.g. undergoing one treatment) can be compared with another (undergoing different treatment) to assess the impact of those treatments. At the meso-level, researchers and policy makers can use PROs to determine the cost-effectiveness of treatment and procedures to influence policy changes.

Patient-Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are questionnaires completed by patients to collect PROs. As PRO data can heavily influence treatments, services and policies, PROMs must collect accurate data. As a result, PROMs are developed using lengthy scientific processes to ensure their validity and reliability (Streiner et al., 2015). This depends greatly on their wording, and so PROMs are usually protected by copyright to prevent subtle modifications to wording that could compromise their scientific validity (Roberts et al., 2012). As PROMs are developed in one language (e.g. English), they need to be translated before they can be used in other languages. However, by doing this, it is possible to lose the scientific properties that the developers vigorously tested and achieved in the original PROM (Streiner et al., 2015). Therefore, a comprehensive translation method must be followed to ensure that the translated versions are able to collect equivalent data to their original versions (Chang et al., 2019). Without a robust methodology, the translated version risks containing inaccurate or inequivalent wording which can impact a patient's understanding of the questions and lead to inaccurate responses. This can have long-term implications on the pathway or treatment that the patient receives in the future.

2. Data Collection

The International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR) published guidelines to PROM translation in 2005, which have since been widely recognised by PROMs developers (Wild et al., 2005). This method involves multiple stages, including forward-translation (from source to target language), reconciliation, back-translation (from target to source language), and back-translation review. Finally, translations are validated by 5-10 native-speaking patients in a process often referred to as cognitive debriefing (CD).

In NHS Wales, PROMs must be translated into Welsh due to legal obligations (Welsh Language Measure 2011), and we have adapted ISPOR's guidelines for the bespoke use of translating PROMs into Welsh in Wales (Palmer et al., 2025). Over 50 PROMs have since been translated into Welsh from English, conducting over 350 interviews with patients across Wales.

CD was a key stage of the translation process and is where problematic aspects of language, such as inappropriate register, unaccustomed dialect, and unfamiliar terminology, are identified and corrected (Palmer et al., 2025; Wild et al., 2005). The table below illustrates examples of feedback received during CD.

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Table 1. Examples of Cognitive Debriefing Feedback

PROM	Source text	Translation before CD	Final translation (after CD)	Reason for change
Integrated Palliative care Outcome Scale (IPOS)	"Poor mobility"	"**Symudedd gwael**" - *Poor mobility*	"**Trafferth symud**" - *Trouble moving*	Register: Change to less formal language.
Integrated Palliative care Outcome Scale (IPOS)	"Weakness or lack of energy"	"**Gwendid** neu ddiffyg egni"- *Weakness or lack of energy*	"**Teimlo'n wan** neu ddiffyg egni" - *Feeling weak or lack of energy*	Semantic: "Gwendid" usually refers to a weakness in character rather than physical weakness in Welsh.
Integrated Palliative care Outcome Scale (IPOS)	"Constipation"	"Rhwymedd"	"Rhwymedd **(constipation)**"	Unfamiliar vocabulary: "Rhwymedd" is accurate but not a commonly used word in Welsh.
Integrated Palliative care Outcome Scale (IPOS)	"Drowsiness"	"**Teimlo'n swrth**" - *Drowsiness*	"Teimlo'n **gysglyd**" - *Feeling sleepy*	Dialect: "Teimlo'n swrth" meant "to be angry" in some Welsh dialects.
IPOS Views on Care (VOC)	"There has been no change"	"**Ni fu unrhyw newid**" - *There has been no change*	"**Does dim newid wedi bod**" - *There has been no change*	Register: Change to less formal language.
IPOS Views on Care (VOC)	"Yes, it's giving a lot of benefit"	"**Ydy, mae'n rhoi llawer o fudd**" - *Yes, it's giving a lot of benefit*	"**Ydy, mae'n gwneud llawer o newid er gwell**" - *Yes, it makes a lot of change for the better*	Unfamiliar vocabulary: Some participants mistook "fudd" (benefit) as "ffydd" (faith).

3. Resulting Behaviour

As a result of such barriers to fully understanding the translated version of the PROM, several behaviours were observed. Participants typically reacted by:

- Attempting to respond despite misunderstanding the question
- Skipping the question altogether

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- Requesting the English version instead

These behaviours only became apparent during CD and were useful indicators of problematic areas within the translation that challenged the participants' understanding of the text. The most common response was to attempt to answer the question despite being unsure of its meaning. This behaviour would typically be in reaction to an unfamiliar word or phrase in the translation, where participants partially understood the question and made assumptions of its meaning based on context. The result was a PROM that appeared complete, but some of its answers were based on an inaccurate interpretation of one or more question(s).

In cases where the translation had a combination of features (e.g. complex syntactical structures, overly technical vocabulary, or elevated register), participants often disengaged with the translation altogether, finding it too difficult to process. This resulted in skipping questions, as participants could not be certain which response best described their situation (Alpers and Hanssen, 2025). In other instances, some participants asked to complete the English version instead, believing that it would offer more clarity. While both behaviours indicate comprehension issues with the translation, we suggest that participants who switched to the English version may be less confident in understanding or responding to the translated PROM than those who skipped individual questions, as it is a more extreme reaction to the translation.

4. Consequences

Behaviours observed during CD pose risks to patient outcomes. When a patient answers a translated question that they have misunderstood, their response may not accurately reflect their current health status. This can produce inaccurate PROs that misrepresent the severity of their symptom(s) or condition. As a result, treatment decisions are based on inaccurate data, potentially leading to inadequate treatment or even misdiagnosis (Alpers and Hanssen, 2022). Additionally, at a population level, if a large cohort of Welsh-speaking patients misunderstands a translated question but still provides an answer, the data from this patient group will be inaccurate. This can lead to a collective under- or overestimation of symptom severity within the patient group (Streiner et al., 2015). As this data influences clinical decisions and policymaking, incorrect responses may ultimately lead to inequalities and/or inequities between Welsh-speaking patients and other patient populations in Wales.

Furthermore, as PROMs have been scientifically developed to measure a medical construct (e.g. hip function) with the fewest questions possible, skipping one question may mean that the construct is not measured at all. Missing responses may prevent analyses from being undertaken at all or undertaken on potentially inaccurate imputed data. This affects the robustness of clinical decisions and policymaking.

Finally, patients requesting to complete the English PROM instead may not seem problematic at first glance, as most Welsh speakers are also proficient in English (Welsh Government, 2022). However, this raises important questions about equality and accessibility for this patient group. Previous publications (Ball, 1988; Madoc-Jones, 2004) have detailed that the Welsh language exists in a complex sociolinguistic landscape shaped by diglossia, dialect and register variation. These sociolinguistic factors play a role in a patient's language use and attitudes (Li et al., 2025). In this circumstance, patients may switch to the English version because it feels like the easier option within formal healthcare settings, rather than it reflecting their natural language preference (Drolet et al., 2017). This was observed by Roberts et al. (2007), where staff and patients used Welsh informally, but reverted to English for complex medical discussions due to limited proficiency or confidence to engage in higher-level Welsh interactions. This reinforces the belief amongst some Welsh speakers that English is the primary language within healthcare, reflecting historical linguistic hierarchies in Wales

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(Madoc-Jones, 2004). The Welsh Government's Active Offer aims to address this by promoting the routine provision of Welsh-language services without patients needing to request them (Welsh Government, 2015). However, if native speakers cannot confidently understand the translated PROM, the purpose of providing this service is questionable, as it cannot be considered meaningful language provision. On the contrary, it undermines the importance of linguistic equality and reduces patient confidence in the healthcare system, creating communication barriers between providers and patients that lead to poorer healthcare and lower patient satisfaction (Drolet et al., 2017; Li et al., 2025; Shamsi et al., 2020).

The consequences of reverting to English are particularly significant in vulnerable groups such as children, senior citizens and mental health patients, for whom first-language care is crucial for effective healthcare provision (Drolet et al., 2017; Roberts et al., 2007). Speakers often prefer to express emotions in their dominant language, and second language attrition in elderly or neurologically impaired patients often deteriorates, which limits their ability to understand or fully express themselves in English (Madoc-Jones, 2004; Dewaele, 2006). Therefore, in the context of PROM translation, when a vulnerable Welsh-speaking patient cannot understand the Welsh PROM and resorts to the English version (secondary language), switching between two texts may add to their cognitive burden. This is because their proficiency level does not match the language level used in the source or the translation. Therefore, navigating between two demanding texts may heighten emotional stress, leading to inaccurate responses and potentially misdiagnosis or ineffective treatment (Li et al., 2025; Madoc-Jones, 2004; Shamsi et al., 2020).

To avoid such consequences, it is crucial that the PROM translation is accurate with accessible language that preserves conceptual equivalence to the original version. Feedback collected during CD demonstrates that subtle inaccuracies or convoluted linguistic features remain undetected if only a single forward-translation is undertaken. This ultimately hinders the patient's understanding and engagement with the translated PROM. For this reason, multi-step translation methods are required for PROM translation to ensure that the translated version collects equivalent data from the target population. Future practice in Wales should follow multi-step frameworks to ensure that PROMs are robustly and consistently translated for use across the health service (Palmer et al., 2025; Wild et al., 2005) . This approach will facilitate sustainable and inclusive Welsh-language healthcare services, by collecting more accurate data and improving clinician and patient confidence in the translated PROMs.

5. Conclusion

This paper examines the consequences of inadequate PROM translation on patient outcomes in Wales. PROMs are psychometric tools that result in real-life treatment consequences and feedback from qualitative interviews demonstrates that subtle linguistic choices can affect these. Considering the influence that PROMs data can have on clinical decisions and policymaking, inadequate translations risk creating disparities in data accuracy and patient engagement. Possible implications include misdiagnosis, ineffective treatment, and misinformed policy planning.

A robust multi-step translation method significantly reduces these risks when translating PROMs into Welsh. Key to this is CD, which allows the translation to be tested across a range of speakers, uncovering linguistic issues that can be corrected to enable patients to provide meaningful and accurate responses to the PROM. As a result, rather than producing tokenistic translations, this method includes patient preferences to produce translations that contribute to meaningful language provision and to collect accurate data.

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The Potential of Narrative Cinema in Language Ideological Clarification: *Kneecap* (Peppiatt, 2024), Humour and the Irish Language

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Abstract:

The importance of popular culture in language revitalisation is becoming ever clearer, with the Irish language providing a particularly notable example following the recording-breaking public, critical and financial success of feature film *An Cailín Ciúin* (*The Quiet Girl,* Bairéad 2022). The semi-fictionalised music biopic *Kneecap* (Peppiatt, 2024), however, stands out within this growing canon of Irish-language cinema for its explicit engagement with the issue of language rights and revitalisation. Uniting sociolinguistics, humour theory and film studies, this paper will explore how *Kneecap* represents a new possibility for narrative cinema as a site of language ideological clarification (Kroskrity 2009), focusing on the linguistic encounters and resulting dialogues of the character of JJ (JJ Ó Dochartaigh). Exploring vernacular, institutionalised and politicised language use, this paper ultimately argues that the emotional responses and cognitive understandings facilitated by the humorous cinematic narrative allow for a more nuanced and successful staging of language ideological contestation and clarification.

Keywords: Language Ideological Clarification, Irish Language, Film Studies, Humour

The importance of popular culture in language revitalisation is becoming ever clearer, with the Irish language providing a particularly notable example as numbers of speakers rise in response to "social influencers" (Osborne 2025) and "cultural visibility" (Curtin 2026). Writing in 2011, Moriarty and Pietikäinen described popular media as a "public legitimising sphere" (366) for minoritised languages, specifically citing the success of television channel TG4 in creating an "increased positive attitude" (369) towards the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland. In their terms, the "new values and functions" provided through this pop-culture "linguistic environment" confer added "indexical value" onto the language, which in turn influences real-world language practices through its positive alteration of language ideologies (Moriarty and Pietikäinen 2011: 363-68). Upscaling this process to the high-prestige and international medium of cinema, the creation of feature-film funding scheme Cine4 in 2017 marked a watershed moment for the Irish language, with the recording-breaking public, critical and financial success of *An Cailín Ciúin* (*The Quiet Girl*, Bairéad 2022) positioning it as the herald of a new popular language revival (Fox 2022).

Rich Peppiatt's Belfast-based semi-fictionalised music biopic, *Kneecap* (2024), however, stands out within the canon of Irish-language cinema for its explicit engagement with the issue of language rights and revitalisation. Specifically, *Kneecap* reflects a time of increased awareness of language ideologies due to the much-publicised debate around the establishment of an Irish Language Act, which would grant the language official status in the north of Ireland (Dunlevy 2023). Highlighting this crisis point of contemporary regional politics, the film positions the Irish language as an index of the anachronistic tensions of a supposedly 'post-conflict' north and therefore of the ongoing negotiations (and potential solutions) of an unfinished peace process. With this in mind, *Kneecap*'s structure as a polyphony of

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characters set against the context of this political struggle can be seen to enact the encounters and dialogues necessary for that which Paul V. Kroskrity has termed "language ideological clarification" (2009). Identifying language renewal activities as "sites" (Silverstein 1998, cited in Kroskrity 2009: 71) of struggle between conflicting language ideologies, Kroskrity delineates the need for language ideological clarification to ensure success within the renewal community. Reading the Irish-language film as such a site, it is through the explicit engagement with this ideological situatedness and debate that *Kneecap* can thus be seen to pave new ground for the relationship between narrative cinema and language revitalisation, employing the popular culture medium as a space for language ideological clarification.

Moreover, *Kneecap*'s equal uniqueness within the canons of Irish-language and northern Irish cinema as a comedic film merits a consideration of Joseph O'Neill (2016)'s argument for the potential of humour in easing hostile language ideologies. In contrast to the indigenous "assembly of pain" (Naxhielly 2022: 46) which Irish-language cinema has arguably heretofore represented, *Kneecap* echoes O'Neill's espousal of humour to provide an alternative path to linguistic revitalisation. As such, John C. Meyer's four communicative functions of humour (2000) will form much of the theoretical basis of this paper, in which the "varying degrees" of audience "position" and "familiarity" (317) informing Meyer's "continuum of humour use" (323) can be roughly aligned with Kroskrity's emphasis on multiplicity, positionality, and awareness, providing thus a useful analytical framework for reading the humorous Irish-language film as a site of fruitful linguistic revitalisation through language ideological clarification.

A key turning point in the narrative of the biopic is the first encounter between Mo Chara (Liam Óg Ó hAnnaidh) and JJ (JJ Ó Dochartaigh), in which JJ is brought in as an interpreter when Mo Chara refuses to speak English to the police. Providing a fictional catalyst for the real ideological clarification embodied in the band's formation and creative work, a significant intra-community language ideological encounter occurs when JJ is ordered to translate from Mo Chara's notebook, where he discovers the lyrics for Kneecap's early song, 'Amach Anocht'. Emphasised cinematically by the close-up on his surprised and somewhat impressed facial expression, JJ's emotional response to the lyrics signals a notable change from the character's previously depicted ambivalence, contrasting the distant self-positioning of his introductory scenes in which he keeps to the back of an activist meeting, leaves the group of Gaelscoil staff gathered around a news report, and substitute-teaches Irish somewhat uncomfortably to an uninterested class of young students. Marked through contrast in this way, this moment of emotional response can thus be read as a clarification of JJ's own language ideology, in which his self-differentiation from the ideologies of political activism and the education system is brought to consciousness through his uniquely affective encounter with Mo Chara's novel use of the Irish language.

Based on Ó Dochartaigh's real teaching experience, JJ's introductory scene in which he covers an Irish class at the Gaelscoil where he teaches music stages a key linguistic encounter between individual and institution, in which his temporary interpellation into the role of language teacher allows for a bringing-to-awareness both diegetic and metadiegetic of the significant site of ideological contestation that is the education system. In a considerable tonal shift from Mo Chara and Móglaí Bap's (Naoise Ó Caireallán) drug-fuelled, hiphouse-soundtracked introductory sequence, the action resumes from the intercut title logo with a quiet, slow track down from a classroom painting of Cú Chulainn to an unimpressed-looking JJ, who proceeds to lead a class of bored teenage students in a recitation from a textbook: "The man walked to market with his sow [...] The girl cut turf in the rain [...]". One student then raises her hand and asks, "How do you cut turf?", to which JJ responds with a deadpan expression: "With misery and despair, I'd say." Leaving the classroom, JJ then bumps into another teacher and expresses the need for new Irish textbooks, to which the other sighs and emphasises: "They are the new textbooks." Serving as a point of identification for the film's audience in his newly acquired access to

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the institutionalised process of language transmission, JJ's lackluster pedagogical encounter thus at once brings to awareness and problematises the particular language ideology at the heart of Irish-medium education.

Indeed, this scene is particularly important in that the significance of its language ideological negotiation extends beyond northern Ireland to the Republic, in which the same "reliance" (MacKenzie, Engman and McGurk 2023: 493) and "overemphasis" (Moriarty and Pietikäinen 2011: 371) on the education system has been credited across the island with the restriction and re-stigmatisation of the Irish language to 'classroom use'. Reflecting a well-intentioned history of institutionalised language use, whether through the official policy of a post-independence government (Crowley 2005: 166) or a grassroots campaign for minority-language recognition (Ó Baoill 2007), this downscaling of Irish from the public domain is presented in this scene as equally enfolded into the process of language instruction itself, exposing the counterproductive effects of such preservational language ideology through the employment of incongruity humour (Meyer 2000: 313). Clearly verbalised in the student's question, the disconnect between contemporary life and the traditional heritage embodied in the vocabulary being taught is exaggerated visually through the close-up tracking shot of the students' uninspired faces and the dramatic aesthetic shift away from the movement and colour of the film's undeniably urban establishing sequence. Epitomised in the bitterly punchline-like revelation that these "are the new textbooks", so the institutionalised ideology of Gaelic cultural nationalism (Crowley 2005: 166) is exposed as laughably absurd in its anachronicity, ultimately bringing to both diegetic and metadiegetic awareness its positionality within an essentialist and symbolifying concept of Irishness: "Preservation is a kind of embalming; even as it purports to be an extension of life, it cannot elide its funerary function" (McMahon 2012: 32).

Kneecap is certainly not the first popular media to use humour to criticise the methods and informing ideologies of Irish language teaching, with Irish-American comedian Des Bishop's short documentary series *In the name of the Fada* providing a key example of a popular cultural product effecting notable changes in both public language ideology and official language planning (see Moriarty and Pietikäinen 2011: 370-73). Though writing in different terms, Moriarty and Pietikäinen note how the series makes particular use of incongruity humour to facilitate language ideological awareness and clarification: "The juxtaposition of his experience of learning the language as a tool for everyday conversation evidenced through the [series] against the experience of the majority of Irish language learners brings these [educational] issues to the fore" (2011: 371). By incorporating similar critical humour into their biopic, Kneecap arguably take this one step further, succeeding not only in upscaling the Irish language into the medium of cinema, but in upscaling language ideological clarification itself, using the playfully hybrid form of the semi-fictionalised biopic to incorporate typically documentarian structures of educational dialogue into popular narrative cinema.

With this radical concept of narrative language ideological clarification in mind, JJ's dryly humorous response to the student ("With misery and despair, I'd say") represents a significant step within Kroskrity's process, in which JJ's position as an outsider to the pedagogical linguistic encounter (much like Des Bishop's own diasporic identity) grants him a heightened level of objectivity from which he can voice both humour and criticism more freely. Feeling less of a need to reassert his authority than a permanent teacher would, JJ instead chooses to step outside of the pedagogical hierarchy by responding with a subversive play on grammar which works along the lines of both relief and identification humour to express his empathy for the students' boredom and alienation. Bringing the students thus "to a more equal relationship" with himself (Meyer 2000: 318), JJ momentarily disrupts the didactic structure and process and gestures instead towards a more dialogic approach to language instruction, in which the political and generational positionalities informing the embodied ideology of the curriculum can be brought to awareness through a more equal and open classroom environment. Expressing his own new ideological awareness, JJ's humorous response can thus be positioned as a preliminary example of

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Kroskrity's "intervention in the name of language ideological clarification", which "would attempt to create intergenerational dialog[ue]s that would promote a greater awareness of the ideologies involved and the unintended consequences associated with the [preservational] practices of elder purism [...]" (2009: 75).

In this light, JJ's ambivalence to the political activism encountered in the following scenes compounds the affective disconnection between the Irish-speaking (or -learning) individual and established structures of language renewal, and as such the strongly felt need for a new language ideology. Following JJ as he proceeds with his day, a sequence of tracking shots cinematically effects this searching impulse, in which the character's turning away from the news broadcast appearance of then-Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams and unnoticing walk past the Falls Road mural of Bobby Sands ('Poet, Gaeilgeoir, Revolutionary, IRA Volunteer') serve to establish an alienating ideological linguascape inextricably rooted in the region's recent violent past. Arriving, then, at an activist meeting held by his partner, Caitlin (Fionnuala Flaherty), JJ's distant and awkward self-positioning at the back of the room re-emphasises his discomfort with the ideological discourses around him, exemplified in the moment of Caitlin's emphatic paraphrasing of historic revolutionary leader and language revival pioneer Pádraig Pearse - "A country without a language is only half a country" - where JJ's hesitant applause clearly distinguishes him from the noisily enthusiastic crowd. While bringing to audience awareness the political struggle for language rights constituting the context of Kneecap's formation, the various revival efforts and informing nationalist language ideologies brought into encounter through the character of JJ are thus equally positioned as not wholly effective, as his initial unimpressed reaction to the Irish textbooks, reflected and amplified through that of the students, remains unchanged throughout this sequence of ideological encounters. Clarified, then, in JJ's later encounter with Mo Chara and his playful, colloquial language use is that which he has been searching for - an everyday use of Irish that is personal, modern, urban and fun.

Emphasised in its affective and narrative significance through the notebook's almost symbolic centrality in JJ's next scene, prompting the character's first depicted moment of joy, this encounter's pivotal nature is ultimately solidified in JJ's proposal to Mo Chara and Móglaí Bap, wherein his attempt to persuade them to make music with him exemplifies the process and significance of language ideological clarification. Telling the boys, "Your lyrics, they're great. I've never read anything like them in Irish", JJ attempts to communicate his own affective response to their creative language use, implicitly recognising his own positionality within more institutionalised and intellectualised sites of language use and thus opening a dialogue across implied boundaries of class and age. As Móglaí Bap goes on to argue, "People barely listen to Irish hip-hop, let alone Irish hip-hop in Irish", JJ's response of "How do you know when there is no hip-hop in Irish?" places emphasis on the self-procluding, tautological logic of Móglaí's dismissal in order to 'recognise the problem' (Kroskrity 2009: 80) of a lack of popular language use and move it into the boys' discursive consciousness. As such, he brings to their awareness an understanding of their creative linguistic practice as a meaningful act of language renewal, emphatically responding to Móglaí's interestingly self-excluding claim that "No cunt who speaks Irish listens to hip-hop" with the plea to "Give them a reason to!" Ultimately asked, "Why?", JJ exemplifies his own ideological clarification: "Why? Because Irish, it's like the last dodo. Stuck behind glass in some zoo. 'Look, but don't touch'. Someone needs to smash that glass and set the dodo free so it can live." In this passionate moment, JJ brings together his awareness- raising and positionality-shifting encounters into a creative analogy of preservational language ideology, through which he at once clarifies the problem of linguistic disconnect and disinterest, its ideological basis in traditional, institutionalised language use, and the solution of an ideological and practical shift towards Irish as a living language.

It is in Móglaí Bap's response, however, where this clarification is truly enacted: "What the fuck's a dodo?" In line with Meyer's notion of clarification humour, in which "[h]umorous lines often serve

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to express one's views creatively and memorably because they are presented incongruously or unexpectedly" (2000: 319), this diegetically serious moment prompts a laughter response from the audience due to its dialogic incongruity. However, in occupying an unclear, hybrid space between sarcasm and sincerity, the humour is ambivalent in its target, granting viewers a sense of superiority over either the over-intellectualising JJ or the unknowing Móglaí - or, indeed, both. The power of this hierarchy-challenging extradiegetic humour is that it ultimately works to clarify for the audience the same ideological position either way: the very need for de-intellectualising, de-symbolifying, and forward-looking language use which JJ had been trying to express. As such, this pivotal scene of intra-community dialogue is a prime example of language ideological clarification, made all the more effective by its incorporation into a forward-driving and affectively engaging cinematic narrative through which the viewers become emotionally invested in the meaningful nature of the band and their biopic as a revitalising force for the Irish language.

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Designing a Serious Game for Chinese Idiom Acquisition: An LM-GM-Based Approach

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Abstract:

This research investigates the potential of a serious tabletop game to enhance the acquisition of Chinese idioms (chengyu) among adult learners of Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL). Chengyu present particular challenges for second-language learners. To address this, a serious game was designed based on Learning Mechanic Game Mechanic framework. A small-scale evaluation was conducted with pre-, post-, and delayed-tests of idiom comprehension, Likert-scale surveys based on Keller's ARCS model of Motivational Design, and semi-structured interviews. Findings suggest that the game improved learners' comprehension of most idioms, with participants demonstrating stronger retention and deeper engagement compared to pre-test. Participants reported high levels of attention, confidence, and satisfaction, underscoring the motivational advantages of the game-based approach. Gameplay fostered memorable, embodied experiences likely to support long-term retention. This study highlights the promise of serious games in idiom pedagogy. It provides both empirical evidence and design recommendations for integrating serious tabletop games into CFL instruction, contributing to the broader field of game-based language learning.

Keywords: Game-based Language Learning (GBLL), Chengyu (Chinese idiom), Chinese as a Foreign Language (CFL), serious games, language pedagogy, game design

1. Introduction

Serious Games(SGs) is defined as "games have an explicit and carefully thought-out educational purpose and are not intended to be played primarily for amusement"(Abt, 1970). Game-Based Language Learning (GBLL) is regarded as an innovative approach to language acquisition (Zou et al., 2021). Idioms are the 'life and soul' of a language (Zevgoli, 1998). However, learning Chinese idioms (chengyu) present unique challenges for second-language (L2) learners(Li & Hin Tat, 2014). Serious games have shown great potential for vocabulary acquisition (Chen & Hsu, 2020) but few prior research has been identified on the topic of serious game to enhance chengyu acquisition. This small-scale study addresses this gap by integrating serious game mechanics with the pedagogical goals of GBLL and by exploring the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent can GBLL facilitate figurative meaning acquisition for adult chengyu learners?

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RQ2: How do learners perceive and experience the use of a GBLL approach in supporting Chinese idiom acquisition?

2. Research Context

Chengyu, also known as Chinese idioms, mostly consist of four characters. They are commonly derived from classic Chinese literary sources and play a crucial role in achieving a profound understanding of Chinese culture. However, their acquisition poses significant challenges(Li & Hin Tat, 2014). Semantic opacity may have played a crucial role in hindering the chengyu acquisition, as, when encountering unfamiliar idioms, L2 learners tend to interpret them literally whereas native speakers are more likely to access their figurative meanings directly (Gibbs, 1980). Furthermore, idiom comprehension is fundamental to idiom acquisition, as learners must first understand an idiom before they can internalize and use it effectively, so helping students understand idioms should be the main focus of idiom instruction (Liu, 2017).

The benefits of combining games with language learning is particularly effective. (Hwang et al., 2023). “The characteristics of learning and gameplay are closely interconnected: curiosity, persistence, risk-taking, reward-seeking, attention to detail, problem-solving, and interpretation” (Abbott, 2019), therefore, the novel interactivity inherent in games, along with their capacity for leveraging emotional affect can enhance language learning.

GBLL for idioms has been proved effective in different languages (Almusawi et al., 2024; Mokhtar et al., 2021). However, only a very limited number of studies have examined in depth the patterns of interaction and relationships between game mechanics and learning mechanics. Therefore, this paper contributes detailed insights into the pedagogical and gameplay design of educational games for chengyu learning.

3. Methodology

The Learning Mechanic Game Mechanic (LM-GM) framework facilitates the design and analysis of serious games for education and training. It incorporates categorized lists of LMs and GMs with guidance to assist educators and game developers in mapping them to create Serious Game Mechanics (SGMs) (Figure2). This increases the likelihood of strong and robust alignment of in-game activities with specific learning goals, and therefore pedagogical effectiveness (Arnab et al., 2015).

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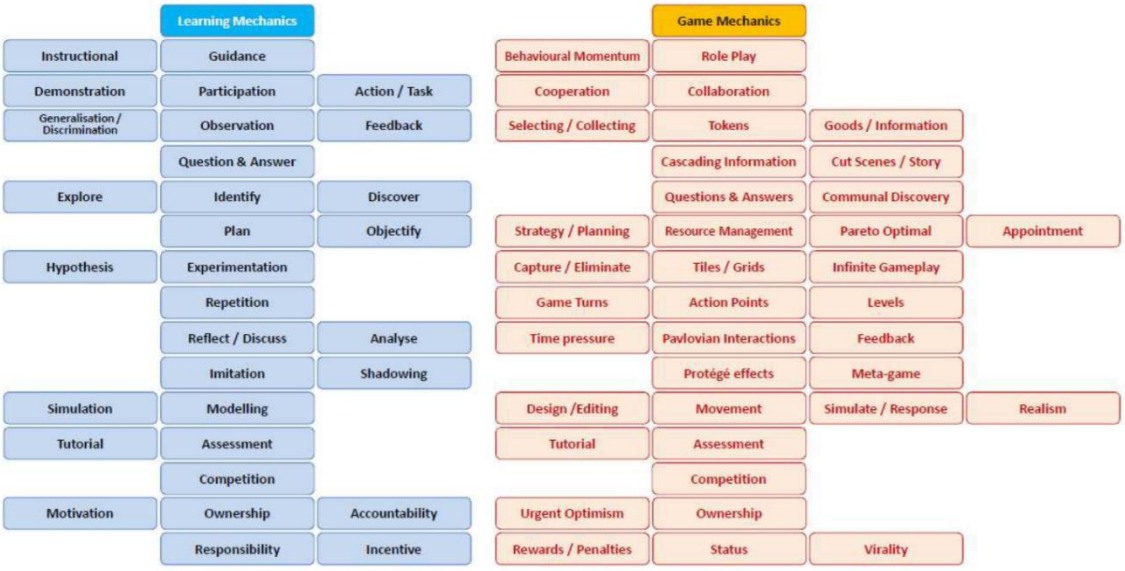

Figure 1. Original Learning Mechanic and Game Mechanics Mapping Framework (Arnab et al., 2015)

Recent research (Ferguson et al., 2023) note that there is a research gap for domain-specific Learning Mechanics in certain fields. The existing LM-GM framework is not intended to be exhaustive, as it is designed to accommodate a broad spectrum of serious game designs. Notably, research applying this framework to language learning is still extremely rare, especially in the context of Chinese as a foreign language.

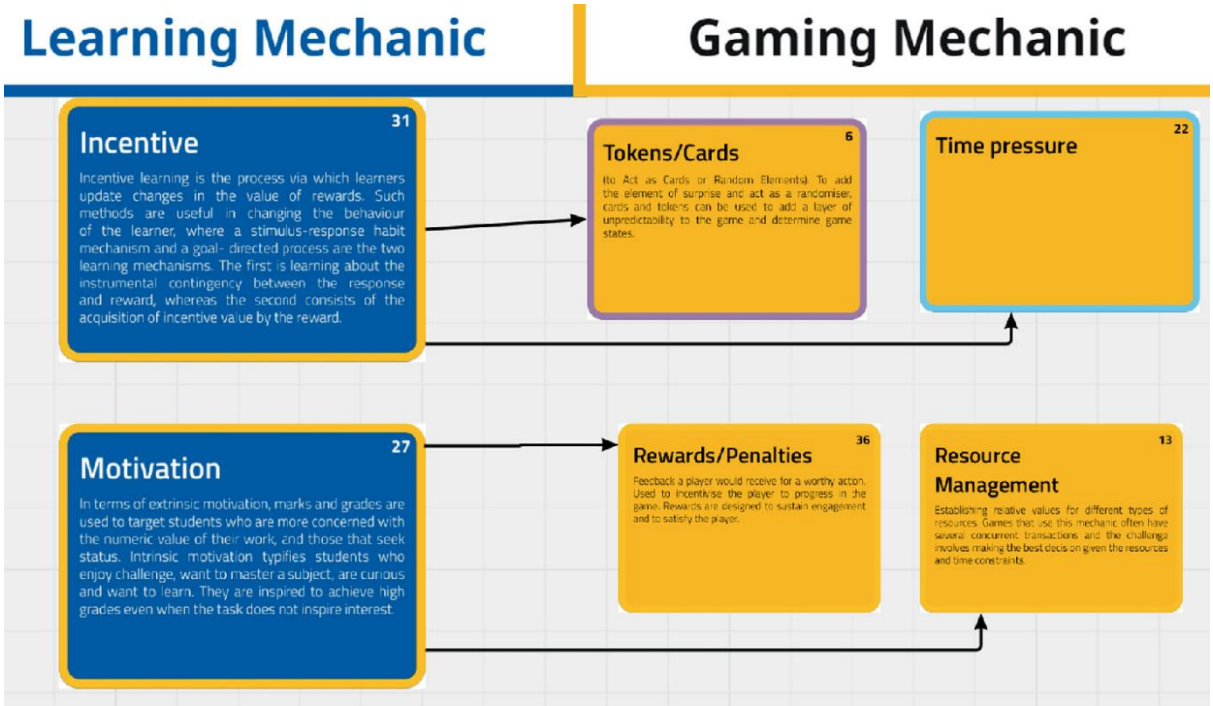

Figure 2. An Example of a SGM (SECRIOUS Slow Game Jam Toolkit, 2023)

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4. Game Design

This paper focusses on a game called *The Thirty-Six Stratagems* which was designed by the authors specifically for teaching chengyu. It is a turn-based, two-player strategy game that combines tactical board play with card mechanics. The game places players in a virtual battlefield scenario. Each player takes on the role of a commanding general in a face-off between two armies, manoeuvring soldiers while making optimal use of stratagem cards to influence the course of battle.

Note that the audience for chengyu learning is adult CFL learners with intermediate existing skills (e.g., HSK3 or above). Complex linguistic forms (and therefore the learning outcomes of this game) are not suitable for beginners. Learning context is likely to be in a classroom and this allowed for an analysis of how tutor support could be built into gameplay and specific SGMs. Through an iterative design process, we analysed how the existing GMs could support the LMs required and adapted them through a prototyping process to reinforce and add further learning behaviours. Gameplay loops analysis (Guardiola, 2016) identifying LMs and GMs and their interactions are shown in Figure 5, Figure 6, and Figure 7.

At the start of the game, both players receive the same set of stratagem cards, soldiers, and cities. Each stratagem card contains a chengyu and has a game effect that is closely tied with the figurative meaning of the chengyu. For example, the game effect of “顺手牵羊” (lit:"to casually lead a sheep") is "Swap this card with a card from your opponent’s deck", while the figurative of the original chengyu is " Taking something that belongs to someone else ".

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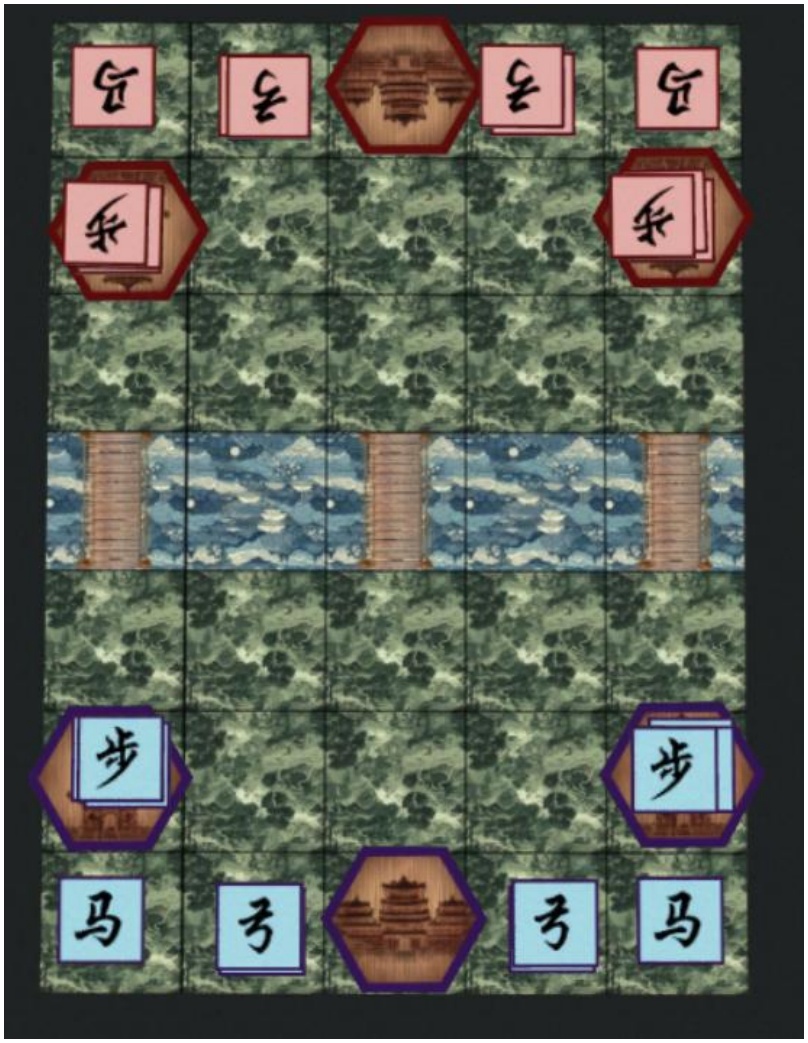

Figure 3. Game Map, Soldiers and Cities

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Figure 4. A Stratagem Card Example, is Closely Tied with the Figurative Meaning of the Chengyu

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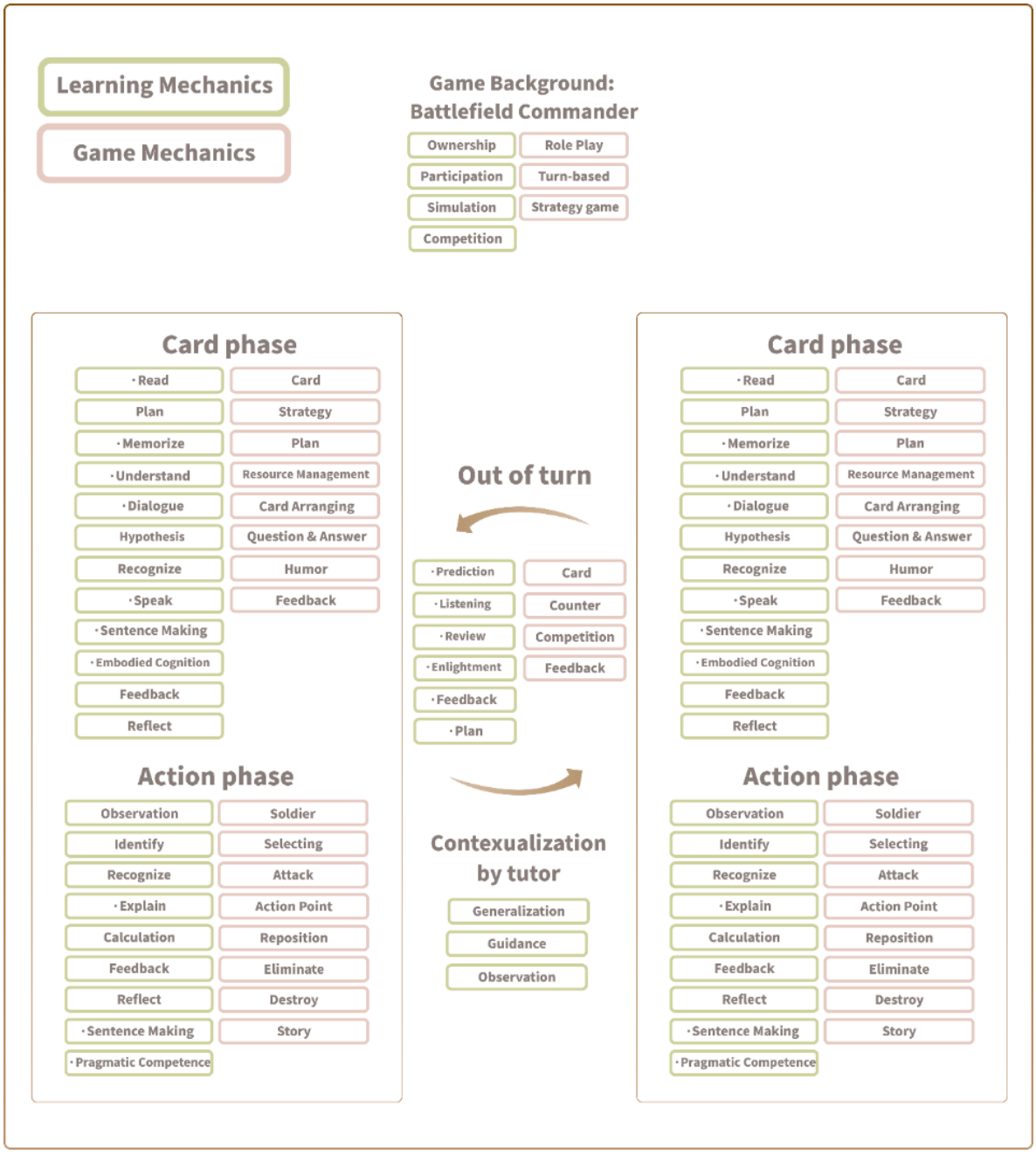

Figure 5. LM-GM Interactions for the Game. Note the Newly Emphasized LMs Specific to Language Learning including 'Speak'. 'Sentence Making', and 'Pragmatic Competence'

Then players take turns, with each turn consisting of two phases: the Card Phase and the Action Phase. During the Card Phase (Figure 6), players must decide (based on their current situation) whether to play a card and, if so, which one. This process encourages players to understand the meaning of each card. When a player plays a card, they must clearly announce its name aloud, an active learning strategy which reinforces understanding of pronunciation through embodied cognition (cf. Schilhab & Groth, 2024) and adds a humorous element to the game. After a card is played, its effects are resolved. Linking the figurative meaning of a stratagem directly with a game action that is likely to have high emotional

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affect (whether success or failure) is proposed to increase the memorability of the chengyu by association. Rather than playing a stratagem, players may choose to instead exchange one card with a card from the deck. If so, they must explain (in Chinese) to their opponent why the stratagem was not worth playing. Note that multiple players can be assigned to the same side and are encouraged to talk with each other, allowing discussion of meaning and planning strategy whilst simultaneously providing a low-stakes context for conversational practice (cf. Wong & Yunus, 2021).

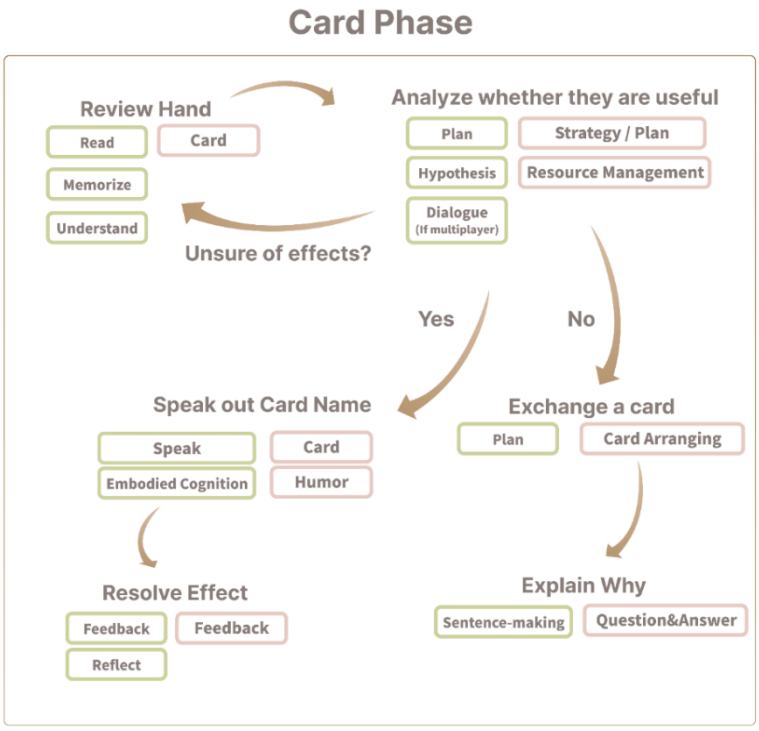

Figure 6. LM-GM Interactions within the Card Phase

During the Action Phase (Figure 7), the player chooses one of their armies to carry out actions such as moving or attacking. Players may consider not only the effects of their own cards and the opponent's likely actions in the next turn, but also the potential effects of cards the opponent might play. This adds an extra layer of strategic depth and gives players a strong incentive to remember card effects. If a card was used during the turn, then at the end of the Action Phase the player must explain (in Chinese) what happened in that turn. For instance, they may make a sentence or tell a short story to help articulate figurative meanings in other forms and reinforce memory.

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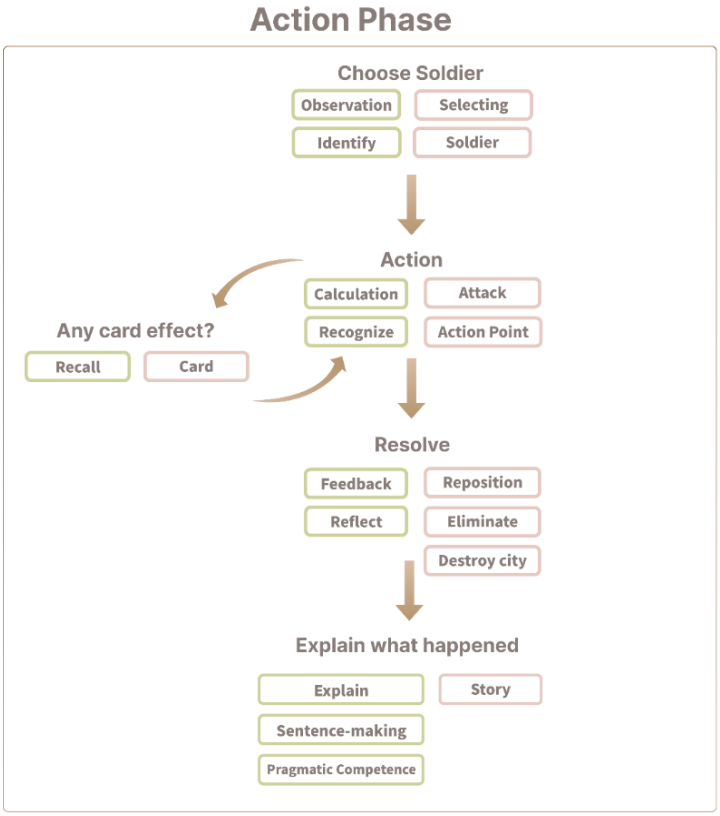

Figure 7. LM-GM Interactions within Action Phase

Vicarious learning was also designed into the game. Some cards give players the ability to counter their opponent's moves allowing the opportunity for language learning and practice even outside their own game turn. Players are also encouraged to pay close attention to the opponent's use of language in explanations and stories, acting as peer support for learning. At the end of each round, the instructor or tutor reflects on what happened and can offer feedback, explaining the origins and meanings of the idioms used. Any mispronunciations or errors in sentence construction are also corrected.

5. Evaluation

The following section presents a preliminary evaluation of two research questions.

Quantitative data in chengyu acquisition was collected by a series of questions that test understanding of the figurative meaning of idioms. Each question included 4 choices, the correct answer taken from the definition in the Dictionary of Chinese Idioms (2025). Distractors (wrong answers) were created following advice from experienced Chinese teachers.

Quantitative data on learning experience was collected using a Likert 5-point scale based on Keller's Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction ARCS framework, a tool used to gain insight in motivational instructional design (Keller, 2010)

Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain rich qualitative insights that were not covered by other methods to provide further insight. Ethical approval was granted for this research study.

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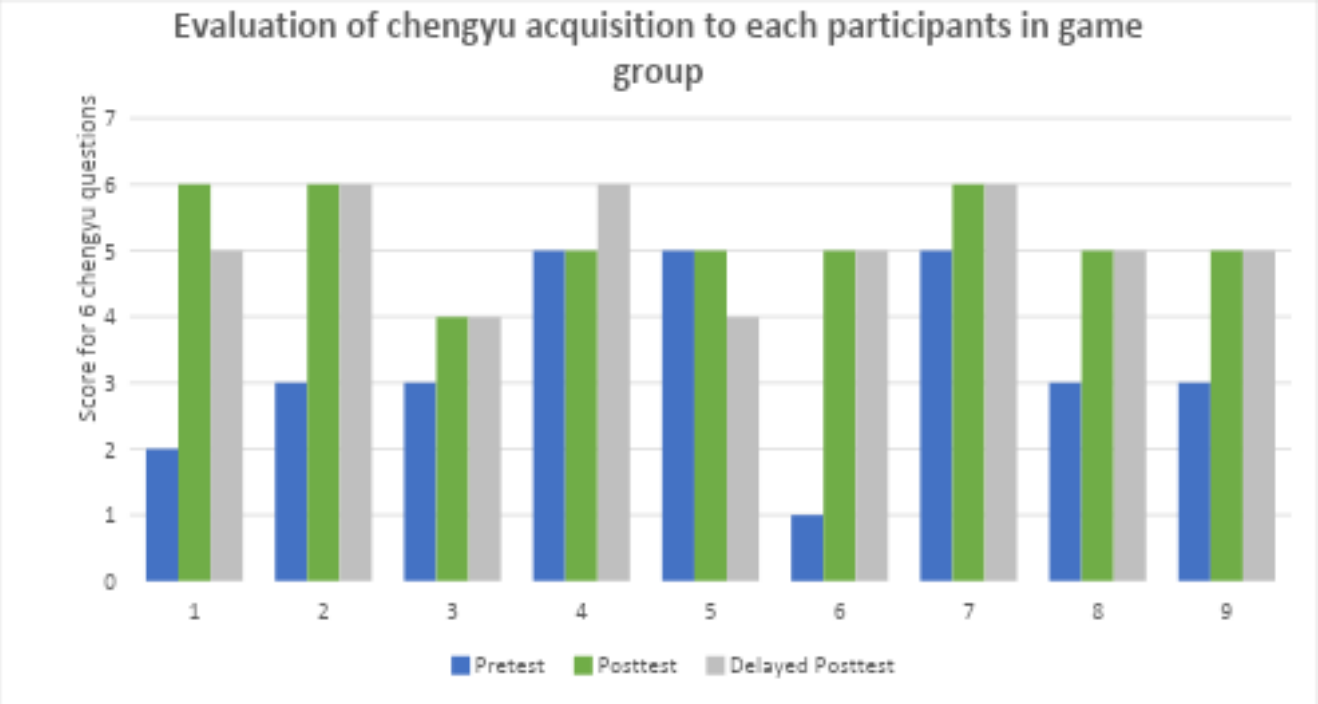

Figure 8. Total Numbers of Correct Answers for Each Participant in the Game Group

Effect of Game-assisted idiom learning is shown by the results of the pre-test, post-test and delayed test of each participant in the clustered bar chart at Figure 8. In general, the game has a positive impact on participants' acquisition of the figurative meanings of idioms. 77% of players improved their score after the game and there was a 1.89 increase in mean test scores from the pre-test (M = 3.33, SD = 1.41) to the post-test (M = 5.22, SD = 0.67) across the cohort. On average, the participants' scores improved by 1.89 (or 56%) on the 6 questions.

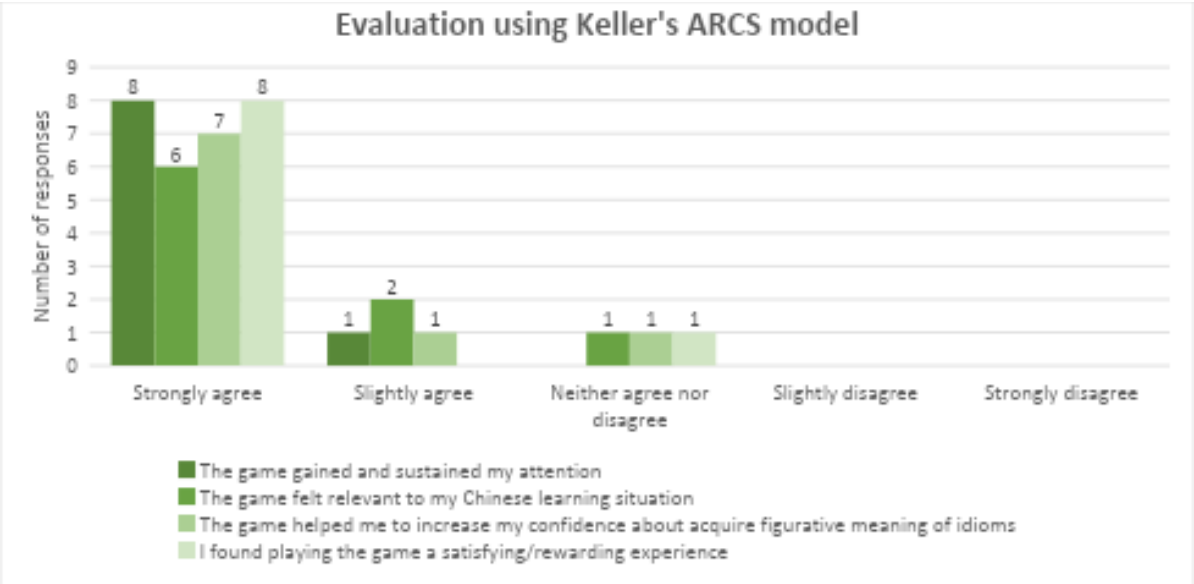

Figure 9. Results of Game Experience Survey

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All the participants agreed that the game sustained their attention. Among them, 89% of participants strongly agreed. This indicates that the game can naturally immerse players in its process and keep them actively engaged. Qualitative responses about attention included: *"I was so into the game."(PID2)/ " I keep thinking about my cards and my opponent's."(PID4)/ "My brain just didn't stop for a second." (PID9)*

67% of the participants strongly agreed that the intended learning outcome of game was relevant to their learning situation. This might be because chengyu themselves are advanced knowledge. Qualitative data included: *"I learn some authentic expressions!" (PID7) / " Some of them might be a bit beyond to me, but I'm really happy I got to learn new words." (PID4)*

89% of the participants agreed that the game increased their confidence in acquiring chengyu, 78% strongly. Qualitative data includes: *" When you act out the idiom in the game, its meaning becomes really easy to understand."(PID8) / "Even though I lost, I still felt good because I managed to use some idioms." (PID2)*

89% of the participants strongly agreed that playing this game was a satisfying experience. " It felt amazing to play the card and shout it out loud!"(PID7) / "Would like to play it again, with more idiom cards!"(PID6).

6. Discussion

Whilst results are small-scale, they indicate that Thirty-Six Stratagems was successful in facilitating the acquisition of Chinese idioms. For the idioms that were successfully learned, several participants reported that acting out the chengyu during gameplay played a crucial role. The pedagogical value of performing in language teaching has been mentioned (Yannacanedo, 2024). This may be because the acting of chengyu within the game provided learners with mental imagery that supported their comprehension, a strategy commonly recognized as a method of dealing with unfamiliar idiomatic expressions (Gibbs & O'Brien, 1990). Moreover, game mechanics which amplified the emotional impact (e.g., competition, identification) may have contributed to the formation of memory. For future iterations, it may be beneficial to incorporate explanations of idiom etymology into the reflective stage, as this has also been recommended as an effective practice for idiom instruction (Boers et al., 2008).

Given that learners of Chinese face different challenges depending on their different first languages and cultural backgrounds, future research could more carefully consider the specific characteristics and usage patterns of learners' first languages when constructing common distractors for such games.

For novice learners, understanding how to use the cards strategically to gain an advantage can be challenging: *"At first I didn't really understand "金蝉脱壳," but when I saw how my opponent used it, it clicked for me." (*PID9*) / "I thought it was a useless card, so I never used it."(*PID3*).* This adds an additional layer of cognitive load and may even discourage players from attempting to use certain cards. A potential improvement would be to provide illustrative examples of card usage at the beginning of the game. As York (2021) notes, offering guidance prior to gameplay has been shown to enhance learning outcomes.

7. Conclusion

Overall, this paper demonstrates that serious tabletop games can serve as a powerful pedagogical tool for Chinese idiom learning. By connecting game mechanics with cognitive and cultural aspects of language acquisition, this research contributes to both the design of educational games and the advancement of innovative approaches in teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language.

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Leadership Role in Addressing Practical Challenges in Rural Primary Schools in China

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Abstract:

In the context of globalisation, this article critically examines the role and limitations of rural primary school principals in responding to practical challenges and promoting educational equity. As educational digitalisation and equitable access to quality education become global concerns, urban-rural educational inequality in China provides an important context for examining rural school leadership. Based on a systematic review of recent Chinese- and English-language research on urban-rural educational inequality, teacher retention, educational digitalisation, infrastructure, and resource allocation, the article analyses the main challenges faced by rural primary schools and their implications for school leadership practices. It argues that rural principals can support school improvement through distributed leadership, community participation, and local resource mobilisation, thereby partly addressing limited teacher support, digital resource inequality, and policy implementation pressures. However, leadership effectiveness remains constrained by institutional conditions, local governance capacity, and unequal resource allocation. Rural principals act primarily as coordinators and mediators between policy requirements and school realities rather than "heroic" changemakers. The article concludes that achieving equity in rural education in China requires not only principals' efforts but also more stable institutional support, fairer resource allocation, and long-term policy commitment to rural schools.

Keywords: rural education; educational equity; rural school leadership; educational digitalisation; resource allocation

1. Introduction

The issue of rural education and its link to issues of educational equity, social mobility and educational reform has long been an important concern in the development of global education. In the context of globalization, the issue of educational inequality has become more prominent, as access to quality education, digital resources and social mobility opportunities are increasingly linked to broader technological, economic and policy changes (UNESCO, 2023). Although China has improved the quality of basic education through continuous reform, the long-standing inequality between urban and rural areas still affects rural children's access to high-quality primary education. Rural primary schools still face obvious restrictions in terms of teacher resources, professional development opportunities, infrastructure and technology access, which not only affects students' learning opportunities, but also restricts the further promotion of educational modernisation and educational equity in China.

Against this background, school leadership has been widely regarded as an important factor in improving school efficiency and quality of education. Rural primary school principals, in particular, need to balance the requirements of policy reform, local educational realities, and institutional restrictions in their daily leadership work (Li et al., 2025). At the same time, the digitalisation of education can also be understood as an important educational policy trend in the process of

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globalisation, that is, the education systems of all countries are responding to the increasing role of technology in teaching, learning, and school governance. China's education digitalisation reform also reflects the response of national education policies to the global education digitalisation wave. However, compared with urban schools, rural schools often face greater restrictions in terms of resource access, professional support, and community capacity, which makes leadership practices highly dependent on specific local conditions.

This article argues that although rural primary school principals play an important role in meeting educational challenges, their leadership effectiveness is still subject to the structural constraints of broader inequality in educational governance and resource allocation. Therefore, this article aims to identify the main practical challenges facing rural primary schools in China and critically analyse the role and limitations of rural primary school principals in responding to these challenges and promoting educational equity. Through a systematic examination of recent Chinese- and English-language research, this article critically discusses the role positioning of rural primary school principals in the context of globalisation and educational inequality.

2. Background and Questions

2.1 Teacher shortages and rural school development

Existing research on rural education in China has consistently emphasised the problem of uneven distribution of educational resources between urban and rural areas. Rural primary schools generally face challenges such as teacher shortages, limited professional development opportunities, inadequate infrastructure, and unequal access to educational technology. These problems not only affect students' learning opportunities but also the long-term development of rural schools.

Among these problems, teacher retention and educational digitalisation have received special attention in recent research. Rural teachers often face limited professional support and weak technology integration in classroom teaching, which may further widen the educational gap between urban and rural schools (Wang et al., 2025). In addition, teachers' sense of professional identity, self-efficacy and the perceptions of school environment have a significant impact on whether they are willing to stay in rural schools (Chen et al., 2025). These findings suggest that rural school challenges result not only from resource shortages, but also from organisational and institutional conditions.

2.2 Digitalisation policy and the rural resource gap

Educational digitalisation is regarded as an important policy direction to narrow the gap between urban and rural education and promote educational equity. The Chinese government is trying to improve the differences in educational resources between schools in different regions through educational digitalisation policies, platform construction and digital resource sharing (Cao et al., 2024). However, in many rural schools, insufficient infrastructure, limited technical support and wide variation in teachers' technical abilities still seriously restrict the actual results of digital reform.

This indicates a considerable gap between national policy goals and local school realities. Although educational digitalisation policies emphasise technology use and resource sharing, digital reform is difficult to improve teaching and school development if rural schools lack stable infrastructure, technical support, and teacher professional development opportunities. Therefore, digitalisation is not only a technical issue but also reflects inequality in urban–rural educational resource allocation.

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2.3 Policy implementation and leadership conditions

In addition to teacher shortages and digital resource gaps, rural schools are also affected by the institutional environment and policy implementation conditions. Although principal rotation, educational digitalisation and school governance policies aim to improve school management and reduce educational inequality, their effectiveness often depends on local implementation conditions. Zheng et al. (2024) point out that the effectiveness of the principal's rotation policy is closely related to the local implementation environment; if the implementation conditions are insufficient, it may affect the continuity and stability of rural school leaders.

Research on educational leadership increasingly emphasises the situated nature of leadership argues that school leaders are deeply influenced by institutional conditions, resource availability and local governance structures. In a rural environment, principals often need to balance policy implementation, school management and community expectations with limited resources (Li et al., 2025). Studies have shown that distributed leadership, community participation and local resource mobilisation may help rural schools improve teacher support and school development (Andreoli et al., 2020; Schutt et al., 2026). However, rural principals may also face greater work pressure in the process of policy implementation and school improvement, and their leadership effectiveness can be affected by administrative burden, insufficient organisational support and institutional environment (Su-Keene & DeMatthews, 2025).

Based on the above background, this article critically reviews existing Chinese- and English-language research in this field. Rather than collect primary empirical data, it examines the main challenges faced by rural primary schools and the role and limitations of principals through literature on rural education, school leadership, education digitalisation and educational equity in China.

Based on the above background, this paper focuses on three issues:

RQ1: What practical challenges do rural primary schools in China face?

RQ2: What leadership strategies are adopted by rural primary school principals to address these challenges?

RQ3: To what extent can principals promote a more equitable distribution of educational resources in rural schools?

Through these questions, this article further clarifies the possible role of rural primary school principals in promoting educational equity and the structural limitations they face.

3. Critical Analysis

3.1 Teacher retention and professional development

Teacher shortages and teacher mobility are generally regarded as major obstacles to the development of rural schools. With ongoing curriculum reform and educational digitalisation, rural schools face teacher shortages and the need to improve teachers' technical skills and pedagogical knowledge. Wang et al. (2025) show that the effective integration of educational technology by rural teachers depends on a large extent on their technological pedagogical knowledge and requires targeted professional development support. Therefore, rural teacher retention depends not only on teacher shortages but also on professional development opportunities, school support systems and working conditions.

To address these challenges, rural primary school principals usually adopt leadership strategies aimed at improving school operations and expanding resource capacity. Spillane (2006) argues that

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distributed leadership should not be understood simply as the personal behaviour of the formal principal but emphasises that leadership practice is distributed across different members, organisational situations and daily practices in the school. Existing research shows that in rural environments, involving more members in school improvement, developing distributed leadership, and establishing a sense of common responsibility will help strengthen schools' capacity for improvement (Andreoli et al., 2020). Therefore, distributed leadership can partly enhance teacher support, organizational cohesion and the school's capacity for development. Another important strategy is to strengthen cooperation between schools, families and local communities. Through community participation and local collaboration, principals may be able to expand the social and organisational resources available to rural schools. Such practises also help to improve teacher retention and school culture by strengthening the relationship between schools and local communities (Schutt et al., 2026).

This article argues that although distributed leadership and community cooperation can support rural teachers, they cannot automatically solve teacher retention problems. Their effectiveness depends on local economic conditions, institutional support, and community involvement. Principals can reduce teachers' isolation and create a more supportive environment through these strategies. However, without stable external resources and continuous professional development, principals alone cannot fundamentally address teacher shortages or limited professional growth. Therefore, rural principals should be seen less as independent reformers and more as leaders coordinating limited resources within structural constraints.

3.2 Digitalisation and resource inequality

Inequitable access to digital resources and poor infrastructures continue to widen the urban-rural education gap. Educational digitalisation policy aims to reduce educational inequality through technology application and resource sharing; however, policy goals may not be directly translated into practical improvements in rural schools. Cao et al. (2024) show that provincial-level educational digitalisation policies in China are characterised by an imbalance in the current use of policy instruments. Supply-side and environment-side instruments are used more frequently, while demand-side policy instruments and feedback mechanisms remain insufficient. This study suggests that although educational digital reform emphasises technical support, platform construction and infrastructure improvement, it pays limited attention to the actual needs of rural schools, teachers' experiences, and local implementation conditions. As a result, digital teaching methods remain difficult to integrate into daily teaching in areas with weak infrastructure and technical support.

In response to this problem, rural primary school principals usually need to respond to the digital reform of education by promoting technological integration and coordinating limited digital resources. Wang et al. (2025) show that the effective integration of educational technology by rural teachers in China depends largely on their technological pedagogical knowledge. Based on this finding, digital reform depends not only on equipment and platform development, but also on teachers'ability to apply technology in classroom teaching. Therefore, this article argues that principals mainly coordinate existing resources, support teachers' use of digital tools, and balance requirements with school realities.

However, uneven teacher capability, inadequate infrastructure and limited technical support continue to limit the effectiveness of these reforms. The gap between policy expectations for school digitalisation and rural school also conditions principals' work pressure. In many cases, principals act more as coordinators balancing policy requirements, teacher capacity and school resources than as leaders able to drive fundamental change alone. Therefore, this article argues that principals' leadership capacity depends not only on personal ability, but also on structural and institutional environments.

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3.3 Institutional constraints and policy implementation

The institutional environment affects rural schools, including through the principal rotation policy, which aims to improve governance capacity and share leadership experience; however, the success of this policy depends largely on local implementation conditions (Zheng et al., 2024). In some instances, rural schools lack stable leadership; making it difficult to maintain continuity and creating organisational instability. Administrator must also consider school management, policy implementation , and resources the availability within institutionally restricted environment. This finding suggests that institutional policies are not automatically translated into school improvement, their effectiveness depends on local implementation conditions and school resource environment.

In response to these institutional challenges, principals need to coordinate between policy requirements and the actual conditions of their schools. Su-Keene and DeMatthews (2025) show that principals' work-related stress can accumulate during the process of implementing policies and promoting school improvement, especially when workloads increase and systemic challenges persist. For rural principals, this pressure may be more obvious because they must not only implement higher-level policies but also manage administrative affairs, insufficient resources, and teacher support. Based on this finding, this article argues that principals' leadership strategies reflect not only personal ability but are also organisational support, administrative burden, and policy stability.

Moreover, the principal rotation policy, intended to provide some relief by increasing the number of placements available to principals, could unintentionally reduce continuity of leadership for rural schools and increase the uncertainty of organisations located in rural areas (Zheng et al., 2024).This article further argues that although rural principals can respond to external demands through school management, policy implementation and resource use, their leadership effectiveness remain limited by the institutional environment. In other words, principals do not promote school reform independently environment but must balance policy pressure, administrative tasks and resource constraints.

3.4 Structural limits of principal leadership

The challenges faced by rural primary schools should not be understood only at the individual school. Problems such as teacher retention, digital resource inequality and institutional restrictions reflect broader structural inequalities in educational governance, resource allocation and regional development. Recognizing this is important for understanding the role and limitations of rural school leaders.

Therefore, educational equity is not only influenced by school leadership but also constrained by broader structural conditions. Hallinger (2011) suggests that school leadership should be understood in relation to specific contexts, and that leadership practice is closely connected to school goals, values, organisational conditions, and shared leadership. Although principals can improve school operations to a certain extent through internal coordination and flexible resource redistribution, they do not have the capability to address educational inequities at a broader structural level. This article argues that an excessive focus on principals' individual responsibility may obscure deeper institutional problems.

The idea of "heroic leadership" implies that principals can solve rural educational inequality through personal ability , but this may oversimplify fundamentally. In fact, rural principals work within constrained institutional environments, and their leadership effectiveness remains shaped by surrounding policies, resources and governance frameworks.

Rural principals have an important influence in coordinating school improvement and supporting educational development. Leithwood et al. (2020) suggest that school leadership influences student learning and school improvement indirectly by shaping school conditions, teacher capacity, and

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organisational processes. Therefore, this article argues that rural principals' strategic leadership remains constrained by broader rural conditions and institutional environment. In summary, identifying the needs and limitations of rural principals is crucial for rural education reform and achieve educational equity in rural schools in China.

4. Conclusion

This article discusses the main challenges faced by rural primary schools in China, as well as the role and limitations of principals in responding to them. It argues that teacher retention, digital resource inequality and institutional constraints are not isolated school-level problems, but reflect broader issues of resource allocation, policy implementation and local governance.

Rural primary school principals can support school improvement through distributed leadership, community participation, resource coordination and school management. However, the effectiveness of these strategies remains constrained by organisational conditions, policy environments and governance structures. Therefore, rural principals should not be understood as "heroic" leaders who can independently solve educational inequality, but as leaders coordinating within constrained institutional environment.

Achieving equity in rural education in China requires not only principals' efforts but also stable institutional support, fairer resource allocation, and long-term policy commitment. In the context of globalisation, this article also contributes to understanding how educational digitalisation, resource inequality, and policy flows shape leadership practices in basic education. For rural primary schools in particular, principal leadership should be understood in relation to both global educational reform trends and local institutional conditions.

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Exploring the Aesthetic Appeal of 'China English' Narration in Xiaolu Guo's A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers

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Abstract:

This paper explores the aesthetic appeal of "China English" narration in Xiaolu Guo's A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers, focusing on how interlanguage functions as both a narrative device and a means of cultural expression. Guo employs a hybrid form of English, reflecting the protagonist Zhuang's evolving language proficiency, to authentically capture her experience as a Chinese woman navigating life and love in the UK. By analyzing the linguistic creativity and intentional use of "broken English," the study demonstrates how Guo's stylistic choices foster empathy, authenticity, and a unique literary voice. The paper further examines rhetorical techniques, such as metaphor and personification, and the integration of Chinese cultural elements, which together enhance the novel's emotional and aesthetic impact. Drawing from interlanguage theory, this study reveals how the linguistic hybridity in Guo's novel challenges conventional language norms and boundaries, deepens intercultural resonance, and highlights the beauty that emerges from the fusion of languages. Although this study focuses on a single fictional example, developing an appreciation for the aesthetics in this China English classic may serve as a key to unlocking more promising possibilities in an increasingly intercultural and multilingual literary landscape.

Keywords: interlanguage, China English, linguistic creativity, cultural identity

1. Introduction

The uniquely and courageously written diary-style novel, "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers" by Xiaolu Guo, has garnered immense praise for its linguistic novelty and captivating narrative. Published in 2007, the book fictionalizes China English as the language spoken by the main female character, Zhuang. The story follows Zhuang, a Chinese girl who initially travels to the UK to learn English but unexpectedly develops a romantic relationship with a British man. As the love story unfolds, the language of the book, which is also Zhuang's narrative language, progresses alongside her personal growth and development.

The exceptional success achieved by the author in this book cannot be fully attributed to a single factor. However, the unique linguistic choice adopted by Guo undoubtedly plays a pivotal role and has sparked controversy. Guo deliberately employs "broken English" to vividly portray Zhuang's initial limited command of the language. This linguistic style serves as a narrative device, illustrating Zhuang's journey as her English gradually becomes more fluent and "standardized."

As the only known book written in China English at the time, "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers" has been the subject of endless debates surrounding its linguistic choice. Some argue about the trustworthiness and reader-friendliness of this "broken English"(Cadwalladr, 2007), particularly considering that the book's main target audience is native English speakers in the UK. On

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the other hand, others view it as the key to the book's success, believing that the true essence of the story shines through when concerns about the language divide are set aside. Guo herself, in an interview with the Weatherhead East Asian Institute (2020), expressed her intention to create a hybrid voice that transcends linguistic backgrounds.

This hybrid voice, can be alternatively annotated as the “Interlanguage” proposed by Selinker (1972), which depicts an intermediary system formed by individuals when acquiring a second language that exists somewhere between their native language and the language they are learning. Interlanguage is characterized by several linguistic features, encompassing simplified grammar, a restrained vocabulary, and creative language use. This unique creativity in the Chinese-English interlanguage, which is evident in "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers," will be further explored in this paper.

The distinctive linguistic approach in "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers" has gained significant attention and love from readers of diverse backgrounds. Beyond its well-received love story theme, the book offers an additional layer of authenticity through its unique linguistic style. Reading the book allows readers to embark on a journey with the protagonist Zhuang, experiencing her moments of sadness, happiness, and the challenges of navigating a foreign country. This narrative approach fosters a profound sense of empathy and understanding, enabling readers to intimately connect with Zhuang's thoughts and conversations.

Several papers have delved into the analysis of the linguistic choice of the book and the sociocultural phenomena that underlie it (Hwang, 2012; Sinoimeri, 2021; Oboe, 2013). However, this paper aims to explore the aesthetic side of China English narration in "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers" and explore its significance through the lens of interlanguage theory. By meticulously examining the linguistic features and cultural subtleties lurking within the narrative, this study seeks to shed light on the controversies surrounding the book's linguistic selection and deconstruct the profound layers of authenticity and connection that emerge from this distinctive approach. Ultimately, this exploration will not only contribute to a wider comprehension of the intricate relationship between language, culture, and literature but also accentuate the unique beauty that arises from the fusion of languages.

2. The Aesthetic Creativity of China English Narration

According to Carter (2004, 13), linguistic creativity is not limited to exceptional individuals but is an inherent characteristic present in all people. Language serves as a powerful device for practicing creativity in various contexts, including second language (L2) learning and usage (Verde, 2022).

Firstly, L2 learners, who have not fully mastered the target language, often rely on their existing knowledge and resources to express themselves, leading to unconventional language patterns and creative expressions.

Secondly, creativity is an innate aspect of language itself. Despite the finite number of linguistic elements, language users, including L2 learners, can generate an infinite number of novel combinations, surpassing their pre-learned or inputted linguistic knowledge (Chomsky, 1965). Additionally, both pre-existing and newly-created linguistic creations are subject to recreation and reinterpretation as language norms are constantly evolving (Zawada, 2006).

Moreover, when confined to more structured thinking patterns, certain creative uses of language can give rise to poetic expressions that possess aesthetic appeal and evoke vivid imagery.

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In the context of "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers," the term "China English Narration" refers to the distinct linguistic style employed by the author. This style plays a crucial role in shaping the main character, Zhuang, and narrating her bittersweet life as a Chinese suburban girl in the UK. The interlanguage narration, resulting from the fusion of Chinese and English, reflects the inseparable blend of cultural backgrounds. It is characterized by a unique mix of Chinese idioms, sentence structures, and cultural references within an English framework. This linguistic hybridity contributes to the creation of a narrative voice that resonates with readers on multiple levels.

2.1 Language use and linguistic style

According to Ellis (2016), creativity in interlanguage can be either spontaneous or intentional. Spontaneous creativity occurs naturally when there is a need for communication and the language user is not consciously trying to be creative. In such cases, limited access to linguistic resources, including vocabulary, syntactical structures, and relevant cultural background knowledge, leads to deviations from the rules of the target language. This results in simplifications in various dimensions, such as the omission of articles, auxiliary verbs, and tense morphemes, as well as the omission of content words, which are evident consequences of this kind of creativity.

In this book, it can be observed that there is a mixture of both spontaneous and intentional creativity in the intentionally adopted linguistic style. The choice of China English as part of shaping the character and reflecting the peasant Chinese girl's image demonstrates a spontaneous use of creative language. Moreover, the lines of the book convey the author's ambition to present the character of the Chinese girl as not simply straightforward and simple, but rather as sophisticated in her perception and thoughts about the "New World" and her constant reflections on the values and cultural elements of her home country. The girl is depicted as a struggling yet curious individual, one who is sensitive and constantly engaged in deep introspection. This portrayal of the character, in my opinion, is why the author maintains Zhuang's language creativity throughout the book, even with her "broken English" at the beginning, allowing it to shine through. This forms the basis of this paper, as it aims to explore those moments created by the "Sparking wit" (CBC Books, 2018), analyzing and interpreting the sophistication within it, which I believe plays a pivotal role in the unique charisma of the book.

2.1.1 Rhetorical expressions

Indeed, the observation highlights that Zhuang's language in the book is abundant in rhetorical expressions, including metaphor, juxtaposition, and personification. The main character, Zhuang, demonstrates exceptional skill in using accurate and inventive rhetorical devices that create vivid mental imagery. This proficiency adds depth and vividness to the narrative, enhancing the reader's experience.

Example 1 – About Drinking Tea

> I put scones into mouth, and **drink tea like horse**.
>
> — Confusion Pg9
>
> She drink it in very thirsty way, **like angry camel in the desert**.
>
> — Homesick Pg10

The act of drinking tea in English culture is often associated with refinement and elegance. However, it is rarely compared to something as crude and lacking in refinement as a horse (drinking water) or “angry camel in the desert”. These metaphors evoke vivid mental imagery and offer a unique and imaginative perspective on the tea-drinking experience. Additionally, they inject the description with a delightful sense of playfulness and humor.

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Example 2 — About Cinema

> **Cinema is my paradise.** When a person not having any idea about real life, just walk into cinema choosing a film to see.
>
> What crazy films! I not understanding very much the English speakings, but I understand I must never walk in highway at night alone. **The world scary and strange like deep dark dream**.
>
> — Homesick Pg10

In Example 2, the author employs rhetorical expressions and a linguistic aesthetic view to describe their experience with Cinema. By comparing cinema to paradise, a word familiar to the Chinese girl narrator, the author vividly depicts the importance of cinema in her world. This comparison conveys that cinema is not just an escape but also a source of comfort for the lonely girl in a foreign country. The sentence "When walking out of the world the movies create for her, the real world is like a deep dark dream" employs metaphor and simile to contrast the immersive cinematic experience with the harshness and unreality of the outside world. This juxtaposition gives insight into the girl's state of mind, as she struggles to discern between the movie world and the reality around her.

Example 3

> Room **smelling old, rotten**. Suddenly **my body feeling old** too.
>
> — Hostel Pg3

Juxtaposition is employed in this example by comparing the smell of the room to a feeling within the body. The room is described as "smelling old, rotten," which creates a vivid sensory image of a space that is dilapidated and decayed. By using the phrase "suddenly my body feeling old too," the narrator connects the physical experience of being in the room with a psychological response, suggesting that the atmosphere of the room affects her on a deeper level. This rhetorical technique of associating the physical condition of the room with the narrator's own bodily sensation adds depth and emotion to the description. It enhances the reader's understanding of the impact that the room has on the narrator's perception and contributes to the overall atmosphere of the scene. The description is brief yet evocative, effectively capturing the essence of the room and its effect on the narrator. The use of sensory language, such as "smelling old, rotten," creates a multisensory experience for the reader, allowing them to imagine the distinct odors associated with an aged and deteriorated room. This imagery adds a layer of realism and sensory immersion to the passage. Additionally, the use of parallelism in the sentence structure enhances the aesthetic appeal of the description. The repetition of the word "old" creates a sense of rhythm and balance, contributing to the overall cohesion and aesthetic flow of the sentence.

Example 4 — About Men

> Maybe I want find man can love me. A man in this country **save me, take me, adopt me, be my family, be my home**.
>
> — Homesick Pg10
>
> I feel a concentrate of love for you, **farmer, sculptor, lover of men, stranger**. Noble man.
>
> — Charm Pg20

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Example 5

> Every cup different with other, big or small, half new or broken...So everything single, **no company, no partner, no pair**.
>
> — Homosexsual Pg13

In both Example 4 and 5, the protagonist demonstrates a narrative tendency towards repetitive parallelism. This technique is utilized to strengthen the overall tone and emotion of the passages, providing a distinct narrative style. What sets this particular form of parallelism apart is its resemblance to a paraphrase structure, rather than the conventional parallelism structures that focus on the progression of meaning within each unit. This deviation can be attributed to the limited vocabulary employed by the protagonist, but it also carries a certain sense of childish purity and innocence.

Example 6 — About Love

> My heart **hold a** secret to **make me warm** at night.
>
> — Homosexsual Pg13
>
> **The meadow asking us to lie**. We rest beside each other. I never do that with a man. **Juice from grass** wetting my white shirt. My heart melting.
>
> — Guest Pg14

Example 6 beautifully utilizes personification to portray the development of romantic feelings in a young girl. The first sentence, akin to the Chinese expression "少女懷春 Shao Nv Huai Chun," delicately captures the secretive musings of a young girl as she daydreams about her beloved man. The second sentence builds upon this theme with even more charm, personifying the meadow as it seemingly invites the couple to lie (down). The description of dew on the grass as "juice" adds vibrancy and vividness to the imagery. The juxtaposition of "wetting" and "melting" not only creates an enchanting interaction between humans and nature but also possesses a sense of intentional or unintentional rhyming, enriching the poetic essence of the language used. It is unclear whether this sense of enchantment, purity, and innocence in the character is inherent to Zhuang's original depiction or if it is a result of the author's skillful linguistic manipulation, enhancing the overall aesthetic and emotional impact of the passage.

2.1.2 Skillfully incorporating Chinese elements

Another aspect that deserves attention in the composition of the book is the recurrent presence of direct or indirect references to Chinese cultural and social elements. This literary technique not only contributes to the development of the main character, Zhuang, as a young girl who instinctively contemplates her homeland amidst her adventures in a foreign country, but also adds a distinct Chinese cultural essence to the narrative. The incorporation of Chinese idioms, proverbs, and cultural symbols creates a poetic and visually captivating experience for the readers. The choice to include such elements reflects a deliberate effort to infuse the narrative with an enriching linguistic aesthetic. Through the juxtaposition of the protagonist's experiences in the foreign country with her reflections on her homeland, the narrative effectively captures the complexities of cultural identity and the sense of displacement. This amalgamation of cultural and linguistic elements creates a multi-layered and nuanced narrative that resonates on both emotional and intellectual levels. Consequently, these references become an indispensable component in shaping the hybrid voice that permeates the story. By adopting a hybrid voice that merges different cultural perspectives, the story becomes a powerful exploration of identity, belonging, and the interplay between different cultural landscapes.

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Example 7

> The lush next doors trees trying come through rusty iron fence, but nothing getting in this concrete family. This house **like factory place in China, just for cheap labours earning money, no life, no green, and no love**.
>
> — Homesick Pg11

In Example 7 of Zhuang's "Homesick," the author explores the cultural elements by drawing a parallel between a concrete family home and a Chinese factory. Through this juxtaposition, Zhuang vividly captures the absence of life, greenery, and love within the sterile confines of the house, producing an overwhelming sense of alienation and a yearning for meaningful connections. By presenting the house as a microcosm of a dehumanized environment, Zhuang effectively conveys the emptiness that pervades the protagonist's experience.

Example 8

> **In China we say hundreds of reincarnations bring two peoples to same boat.** Maybe you are that people for me to be same boat. I never met mans like you before. I think we perfect: You quite Yin, and I very Yang. You earthy, and I metal. You bit damp, and I a little dry. You cool, and I hot. You windy, and I firey. We join. There is mutualism. And we can benefit each other. And all these makes us efficient lover.
>
> — Charm Pg20

The incorporation of Chinese cultural elements, in Example 8, as well as the use of repetitive sentence structure, create a rich and intriguing narrative. It begins with the introduction of a Chinese idiom that reflects the idea of fate and the serendipitous nature of finding a true partner in life. Additionally, the parallel sentence structure used throughout the paragraph enhances its impact. The repetition of phrases such as You quite Yin, and I very Yang, You earthy, and I metal, You bit damp, and I a little dry, emphasizes the complementary nature of the individuals involved and underscores their compatibility. The use of concise and condensed units further adds to the strength and intensity with which the girl's eagerness to prove their compatibility and her yearng for love is conveyed. inShe seeks connection and affection to alleviate her feelings of loneliness and emptiness, particularly in the context of adapting to a foreign culture. This exploration of personal emotions within the broader cultural framework adds complexity and depth to the narrative, allowing readers to empathize with the character's experiences and desires.

3. Conclusion

In "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers," Xiaolu Guo masterfully employs the aesthetic appeal of China English narration to create a captivating and thought-provoking literary experience. By exploring the linguistic creativity of interlanguage within the narrative, the book transcends conventional language boundaries and offers a unique blend of cultural backgrounds. The incorporation of rhetorical expressions, poetic language, and skillful integration of Chinese elements enhances the aesthetic allure of the book, allowing readers to connect with the protagonist, Zhuang, on a deep and intimate level.

The linguistic style adopted by Guo, characterized by "broken English" and a fusion of Chinese and English language patterns, has sparked debates and controversies. However, through a careful analysis of the aesthetic creativity present in the narrative, it becomes evident that this linguistic choice is not only deliberate but also integral to the book's overall impact. The intentional and spontaneous use of creative language reflects Zhuang's journey and her evolving command of the English language. It also

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provides a rich repertoire of metaphors, juxtapositions, and personification that impart the narrative with vivid imagery and emotional depth.

Furthermore, the incorporation of Chinese cultural and social elements adds an additional layer of authenticity and complexity to the narrative. By seamlessly embedding idioms, proverbs, and symbolic references into the story, Guo creates a poetic and visually captivating experience that explores themes of cultural identity, displacement, and the search for meaningful connections.

This paper has examined the aesthetic appeal of China English narration in A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers and discussed its significance in relation to interlanguage theory. By analyzing the linguistic features and cultural nuances woven throughout the narrative, we have gained a clearer understanding of the author's linguistic choices, as well as the layers of authenticity and connection that develop from this distinctive approach. This study, while drawing attention to the unique beauty that emerges from the blending of languages, challenges the traditional black-and-white linguistic boundaries and brings innovative perspectives to second language learning and application.

In conclusion, "A Concise Chinese English Dictionary for Lovers" stands as a remarkable example of linguistic innovation and intercultural exploration. Through the aesthetic appeal of China English narration, the book challenges conventional language norms and invites readers to embrace the beauty and complexity of linguistic hybridity. It reminds us that, beyond the surface level of language, there lies a deeper connection that transcends cultural boundaries and resonates with readers on a universal level.

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