

Abstracts of Presentations

Part A: Literature

AN Ruoxi

On Spatial Writing and Chinese-Americans' Pursuit of Cultural Identity in *The Woman Warrior* and *The Joy Luck Club*

According to spatial literary studies, the image of China in Maxine Hong Kingston and Amy Tan's novels, a personal version of Chinese immigrants' original country based on some indirect spatial memory and experience, is an important manifestation of the literary space and Chinese-Americans' pursuit of cultural identity. In *The Woman Warrior* and *The Joy Luck Club*, the selective descriptions of both geographic and human landscapes in Chinese cities, countries and traditional families, which has constituted the China in the authors' eyes, and the different reappearances of those spatial scenes, are closely related to their reflection on Chinese historical culture and collective memory. The spatial images of China in these two novels reveal the complexity and fluidity of Chinese-American's cultural identity.

AO Rumeng

Mimicry and Collapse in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* and Alejo Carpentier's *The Kingdom of This World*

Things Fall Apart and *The Kingdom of This World* are both seminal works of post-colonial literature, the former about Africa and the latter about Latin America. This paper aims to compare the representations of mimicry and collapse and investigate the connection between them in the two works. This research primarily draws on Homi Bhabha's mimicry and previous research on the two novels. The study finds that the representations of mimicry and collapse are gradual in *Things Fall Apart*, while they are radical in *The Kingdom of This World*. Moreover, mimicry exacerbates collapse. The comparative study of the two works helps us understand the connection between African post-colonial literature and Latin American post-colonial literature in presenting the same themes.

BAI Shiyu

Fluid Figurations in Transatlantic Women's Narratives: The Symbol of Water in Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John* and Mati Diop's *Atlantique*

Water, as a natural element, plays a critical role in artistic works either as a figurative or a symbolic language. This essay examines the multifaceted symbolism of water in the context of postcolonial and black feminist literature and film through an analysis of Mati Diop's *Atlantique* and Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John*. Both works engage with the discovery of women's identity suggested by the element of water, one with cinematic techniques, the other with textual description. The paper examines how water serves as a complex metaphor for the confinement and exit for the liberation of black women, featuring fluidity to represent the protagonists' transformation and lack of agency and mirror their evolving natures while they confront their personal and social challenges. The paper also explores the different ways for black women to transcend the limitation of postcolonialism and patriarchy demonstrated by different forms of water. By studying the dynamics between water and the characters' psychological states and identities, the paper underscores the transition of black female subjectivities.

BIAN Yijing

Resistant Bodies in Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Han's *The Vegetarian*

Both *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and *The Vegetarian* scrutinize the conflicts between a meat-eating patriarchal society and vegetarian female individuals. This paper aims to investigate the connections between non-human and female agency and how the female protagonists in the two novels utilize their bodies to resist carnophallogocentrism. They as women and vegetarians are given little space to voice for themselves. Adopting the concept of absent referent exposes the pervasive violence of everyday life in a patriarchal society. This study argues that women can form an alliance with non-human existence to unleash their agency.

CHAN Wai Man Cecilia

Exploring Intersectional Identity on Race, Culture and Gender in Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* and Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*

This paper scrutinizes Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* and Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* to explore the construction of intersectional identity, emphasizing the collaborative influence of race, culture, and gender. These two novels offer profound insights into the lives of Chinese American women, highlighting the struggles they experience in identity confusion and crisis through navigating multiple identities as second-generation immigrants. This research applies Stuart Hall's theory of cultural identity, Homi Bhabha's theory of hybridity and Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality as a theoretical basis to examine how these intersectional factors construct characters' sense of identity and further delineate potential difficulties encountered by each generation as they bring in their Chinese culture and blend into mainstream American culture. It also studies how the attitudes of the second-generation are influenced by and differ from the first-generation.

CHANG Yuyun

Unveiling Colonial Alienation Through Imagery in Conrad's *Tales of Unrest* and *Heart of Darkness*

Conrad's notable works *Tales of Unrest* and *Heart of Darkness* both engage with alienation in colonial areas. Their main characters are the agents of trading posts who face the temptation of power and the collapse of morality. They once had their ideals and moral standards, but gradually lost themselves in distant colonies, unable to effectively cope with their surroundings and challenges, and finally died tragically. As previous studies have analyzed the pattern of expression of Conrad's imagery and the main concepts of alienation, this paper tries to answer the following questions based on these theories: What is the alienation discussed in Conrad's work? What is the function of imagery in its representation? What additional meanings does imagery bring forth or disclose? These questions are my starting point for tracing alienation and its relationship to colonialism. This paper analyses the role of imagery in Conrad's treatment of alienation in the colonial context and suggests that alienation, as depicted by Conrad, represents a departure from or distortion of the original image, serving as an inseparable part of the colonial experience. Through analysis of imagery in two works, the paper reveals the interconnectedness and layered meanings of Conrad's imagery that underscore the complexity of the colonizers' experiences and the profound impact of colonialism on their psychology and morality.

CHAU Wing Ni

Conflicting Desires of Creole People: Reinterpretation of the Dominant Culture in Jean Rhys's "The Day They Burned the Books," "Let Them Call It Jazz" and *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Jean Rhys's "The Day They Burned the Books," "Let Them Call It Jazz" and *Wide Sargasso Sea* all feature the unfulfilled conflicting desires of Creole people to belong to the Black or White community as the liminal figures trapped in between the two dominant groups. However, while they all belong to the subordinated group, the Creole characters' manifestation of their desires to realise their fragmented subjectivity and survive under the imposition of dominant cultures varies with the diverse socio-historical conditions in the two short stories and novels. Consequently, they develop their own unique approach in terms of reappropriating some cultural practices and objects of the Black and/or White cultures in an attempt to construct their identity in the Caribbean and/or London. By mainly adopting Pratt's postcolonial concept of transculturation and Bakhtin's heteroglossia, this paper shows that the Creole people's unfulfilled conflicting desires to access both Black and White cultures open up possibilities for them to reinterpret and give new meanings to the dominant cultures, which may ultimately challenge the absolute power asymmetry between the subordinated and the dominant groups.

CHEN Jiaying

The Impossible Escape from the Dark Side of the Mind in Edgar Allan Poe's Short Stories

The representation of the mind is vividly expressed in Edgar Allan Poe's short stories. Meanwhile, in some of his works, the first-person narrative is largely used to illustrate the whole story. Most present studies focus on the theme of this unreliable narration of the first-person narrative, analyzing the narrative mode and its function in the short stories. Using the concept of unreliable narration, this study analyses the externalization of the mind and the underlying reasons for this special narrative strategy, which investigates the inner mind of the narrators. Based on the unreliable narration, four short stories, "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Black Cat," and "William Wilson" are selected to show the external and internal impact of the mind.

CHEN Jieru

The Reactive Force of Cultural Invasion in "The Man Who Would Be King" and "Mackintosh"

"The Man Who Would Be King" was written by Rudyard Kipling in 1888, a story of two British adventurers, Daniel Dravot and Peachey Carnehan, driven by a manic desire to build an empire in Kafiristan, Afghanistan. "Mackintosh," a story from British author William Somerset Maugham's 1921 classic short story collection *The Trembling of the Leaf*, describes the experiences of two British colonial officers as they colonize an island in the Asia-Pacific region. In the process of colonization, the indigenous culture was invaded by Western colonists. It not only caused harm to the colonized, but also brought the colonists into difficulties. This paper will examine how and what harm the cultural invasion did to the colonists.

CHEN Yutong

The Unspeakable: Queer Silence and Vulnerability in Mary Jean Chan's Poems and Yiyun Li's Short Stories

In literary studies, the unspeakable, as a literary trope and rhetorical device, always points to the space of rhetorical absence. Recently, more scholars have tended to view it as a vibrant space for producing nonverbal modalities that contribute to a new meaning-making process. The unspeakable has a long history in literature. In this paper, I intend to focus on instances of the unspeakable related to queer diasporic everyday life in contemporary English writing. My two literary texts include poetry and short fiction: first, Hong Kong-born poet Mary Jean Chan's 2019 debut poetry collection *Flèche*, in which the queer speaker explores her unspeakable desires in the liminal space composed of language, sexuality, and culture; and second, Chinese-born writer Yiyun Li's short stories, in which diasporic queer subjects use avoidance and passing as non-verbal ways to face the predominantly heterosexual family norm. From a comparative reading of Mary Jean Chan's *Flèche* and Yiyun Li's short stories, including "Gold Boy, Emerald Girl," "Son," and "The Prince of Nebraska," this article argues that the unspeakable, characterized by the deliberate and non-verbalized experience, creates a buffer and liminal space for the diasporic queer subjects to address their vulnerability in the face of marginalized sexuality and intergenerational conflict. This transcendent space, which surpasses the limitations of language, is also manifested through the poetics of silence and narrative voice in these texts.

CHEN Zhiyi

Cross-Species Crime in the Void of the Law: Outlaws in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Patricia Highsmith's Short Stories

This article provides insights into the representation of outlaws in Olga Tokarczuk's novel *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Patricia Highsmith's short stories. These two writers' works turn out to be a hybrid genre of crime novels and ecological literature. The research discovers that Tokarczuk and Highsmith blend the minds and behaviors of human beings and animals when designing the crimes committed in a space where the dominant law fails to exert control. Their works disclose that the gap between different species invalidates the law of nature or the law of culture and sometimes the law divides human beings into different species. Focusing on the "prison," "murder" and the image of outlaws in the two writer's narratives, the paper argues that the resistance to modern rationality in these works may arise from the shifting positions of marginalized groups and how the crimes involving multiple species challenge the authority of established laws.

CHENG Wai Yi

The Transformative Power of Folklore in Maxine Hong Kingston's Autobiographical Novels: Challenging Gender Ideologies and Reformulating Cosmopolitanism

Maxine Hong Kingston explores the transformative power of folklore in her autobiographical novels, *The Woman Warrior* and *China Men*, focusing on how folklore is reclaimed and reshaped to challenge societal norms and reform the cosmopolitan view. Through retelling traditional myths and stories, Kingston challenges gender norms and empowers marginalised voices of women. By reclaiming women's narratives, she challenges patriarchal society and emphasises the cosmopolitan worldview. Kingston blends Chinese and American cultural influences in both novels to reshape folklore and explore the complexities of Chinese-American identity. This reformulated cosmopolitanism transcends narrow nationalism and celebrates diverse cultural influences. Through Kingston's learning and reshaping of folklore, societal constructs and the embracing of multiple cultural perspectives are examined.

CHOW Pui Shan

The Donkey, the Other, and Equus the God: Hospitality and Levelling of Beings in Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* and Shaffer's *Equus*

The three-part main title of this paper corresponds to the figures of otherness in that of philosopher Richard Kearney's book *Strangers, Gods and Monsters* (2003). My two primary texts are of different genres across different centuries: 19th century Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson's travel writing *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* (1879), and 20th century British playwright Peter Shaffer's play *Equus* (1973). The donkey and Equus, from the respective primary text, are the figures of the perceived Other that ground my critique. While people would choose hospitality or hostility when encountering the Other, a welcoming gesture may first come into mind regarding hospitality practices. Each text demonstrates an act of welcoming the perceived Other (Modestine the donkey and Alan Strang, who worships Equus as God and blinds six horses before the drama's main action, respectively) as a hospitality amenity. Surprisingly, with close reading analysis, although the two are not directly comparable, they illustrate how a welcoming gesture is insufficient to accommodate the Other. A better practice of hospitality can be discovered through critical interpretation of Stevenson's narrator and the character Dr. Dysart in *Equus*, who is also a narrator and retells the story of Alan to the theatre audience. Stevenson's narrator and Dr. Dysart, I propose, can be regarded as a comic hero and a tragic hero respectively. By studying both texts' different responses to the question of hospitality this paper arrives at a rather surprising conclusion, which can be summarized figuratively in terms of Italo Calvino's "lightness" as levelling of all beings.

CHOY Hiu Yi

Remembering as a Curse and a Miracle in *The Refugees* by Viet Thanh Nguyen and *The Gangster We Are All Looking For* by lê thi diem thúy

The discussions of ghost representations and traumatic memory emerge in Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Refugees* and lê thi diem thúy's *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*, in which the narrators of both texts engage with different modes of ghost metaphors to restore peace of mind with their trauma in the Vietnam War. This paper aims to investigate the significance of ghosts as an indispensable medium to depict the recollection of traumatic memories and the transmission of "postmemory" (Hirsch). Remembrance of the forgotten past serves an ethical purpose of "just memory" (Nguyen) which provides justice for the individual, family, and the community. This study involves the discussion of liminality of ghosts and memory to signify the importance of the role of ghosts in the process of remembrance. The use of ghost representations constitutes a harmonious interplay between the dead and the living, the past and the present, and power dynamics. The interplay highlights the complexity of human existence and explores how the narrators go through the process of self-discovery and confront their past in a sense of duality.

CHU Wing Ka Christy

Riichi Yokomitsu's "Fourth Person" Narration: Western Influences in Japanese Literary Modernism

Technological advancement in the early 20th century in the West had inspired and changed both the form and the content of literary works. In this paper, I investigate an unprecedented formal feature in Japanese literary modernism: the "fourth person" narration invented and introduced by Riichi Yokomitsu who in terms had taken inspiration from Western literature that had begun to appear in Japanese translation around his time. I argue that Yokomitsu's "fourth person" is a compelling example to understand how the import of Western literature had influenced and contributed to Japanese literary modernism. This example of how Yokomitsu developed his "fourth person" narrative perspective through available Western literature in Japanese also demonstrates an effect of translation in terms of what Sherry Simon calls "furthering". *Love and Other Stories of Yokomitsu Riichi* and *Shanghai* will be the two primary texts to analyse how "fourth person" works differently. The analysis of "fourth person" is significant in examining the formal features as well as in investigating the development of Japanese literary modernism, thereby opening room for future research in relevant fields in literary studies.

CHUI Yin Lam

Social Relations, Spatial Construction, and Homemaking of Diasporic People in Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Sympathizer* and *The Refugees*

Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Sympathizer* and *The Refugees* offer great insights into the struggles of diasporic people in the face of uprootedness and displacement. Their interaction with the space around them in the face of displacement has sparked numerous questions: How is space textually constructed in a literary work to convey diasporic people's perception of space? How do literary works portray the process of claiming a space recognized as home? This paper focuses on the textual construction of space and how social relations intertwine with it. It argues that social relations, spatial construction, and homemaking deeply interweave in the way spatial construction is allegorical of social relationships in Nguyen's two works, reflecting on how heavily social experiences influence diasporic people's perception of space, and how in turn diasporic people have distinct conceptions of the physical condition of space and the experienced space.

DENG Wendi

Shapes of Trauma: An Inter-generic Reading of Ruth Ozeki and Olga Tokarczuk's Trauma Configuration

Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* have been known for their innovative incorporation of different genre conventions in representing traumatic experiences. Despite their formal experiments, the thesis does not regard the two novels as a subversion of the traditional model of trauma; rather, it argues that they provide an alternative way of reading and writing trauma beyond a mimesis of psychological realism. In light of Cathy Caruth's model, the thesis proposes an inter-generic reading of trauma representation in the two novels. By analyzing the way traumatic experiences are fleshed out through poetics from such genres as detective fiction, science fiction and the ghost story, the thesis claims that an inter-generic reading not only helps to avoid homogenization of trauma representation, but also helps to explore areas of traumatic experience that have previously been neglected as a result of the classic model's excessive focus on trauma's incomprehensibility.

DU Kailin

Anxieties and Ambivalence Towards Modernization in Edogawa Ranpo's Detective Fiction

Edogawa Ranpo has been called the father of Japanese detective fiction, whose stories represent the Japanese mass culture of the 1920s brought about by Japan's Westernization during the Meiji Era. In Ranpo's novel *Strange Tale of Panorama Island*, and novellas *Beast in the Shadows* and *The Black Lizard*, Western elements such as the invention of the panorama, erotic and grotesque elements such as sadism, and the themes of impersonation and doppelgangers are deployed to demonstrate Ranpo's ambivalence towards cultural borrowing from the West and the influence of Western culture on Japanese traditions. This paper investigates Ranpo's anxiety about cultural borrowing in Japanese detective fiction. It also examines Ranpo's ambivalence towards Western culture, Japanese anxiety about cultural identity during Japan's modernization, and the worries about Japan's status in the world in the 1920s.

FU Jie

The Evolving Identities of Olaudah Equiano and Mary Prince

As major works in the anti-slavery campaign, Olaudah Equiano's *From The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* and Mary Prince's *The History of Mary Prince* effectively describe Equiano and Prince's experiences, sufferings, and development from enslavement to freedom. The identities of the two characters are constantly changing as a result of severe adversities. This paper aims to discuss the evolving process of Equiano's and Prince's identities throughout their respective journeys. To delve further into their shifting identities, this essay first conducts a qualitative examination of the primary texts and aims to address the following questions: How does the use of the English language influence Equiano and Prince's experiences? What is the role of religion in their narratives? Have their identities experienced any transformations? This paper also considers Marren's concept of "the transgressive self" in the comparative analysis of the evolving identities in both works. Despite enduring suffering as slaves, even after gaining freedom, Equiano and Prince struggled to find their places in the existing legal and political system of the slave society.

GAO Liyueren

The Posthuman Plurality in Post-Apocalyptic Imaginations

The post-apocalyptic imaginations in "Who Do You Love?" and *Oryx and Crake* both indicate a posthuman plurality. This paper is aimed at investigating the posthuman plurality in the post-apocalyptic sociocultural context. The comparative study adopts the theory of Philosophical Posthumanism, which incorporates the perspectives of post-humanism, post-anthropocentrism, and post-dualism in the illustration of posthuman plurality. It is found that through name-shifting and multi-names, post-humanist plurality is established as humans and humanities. Via the lens of post-anthropocentrism, the implied speciesism under extinction discourse and the risk in destined "enframing" in technology is exposed. With recognition of post-apocalyptic characters as cyborgs and perspectivism, new pluralistic affinity replaces binary identity. The posthuman reflection on plurality in post-apocalyptic texts suggests a new way of co-existence beyond the conventional polarity of hegemony and resistance.

GAO Tianyi

The Mobility in the Fixed Space: New Attempts for African American Feminine Subjectivity

The displacement of African American female characters, Caroline and Helga Crane, and their exploration of feminine space and subjectivity in Zora Neale Hurston's *Hitting a Straight Lick with a Crooked Stick* and Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* are two important themes that this paper seeks to investigate. The purpose of this paper is to explore through close reading of these two literary texts the possibilities and ways in which African American women construct their femininity by relying on displacement to find a purely feminine space. The study draws on Edward W. Soja's and Doreen Massey's ideas about power in racial and gendered spaces and explains the binding nature of women's roles in space. Furthermore, through bell hooks' assertion of black women's experience of identity as difference and otherness and Homi Bhabha's theory of Third Space, this paper explores and compares black women's solutions to the inherently gendered and racialised confinement of identity but also their envisioning and reconfiguration of feminine subjectivity in the Third Space. Through a comparative analysis of two characters' endings, the results suggest that African American women need to mediate gendered qualities and ethnic conventions to successfully envision and practice female subjectivity in the Third Space.

GAO Yunzhou

An Ecofeminist Comparative Study of Celie in *The Color Purple* and Janina in *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*

This paper compares and contrasts the two female protagonists, Celie and Janina, of two novels, Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* and Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, through the lens of ecofeminism. Of different races and ages, Celie and Janina have shared experiences under the oppression of patriarchal dichotomies and both have close relationships with nature. Yet, the two ecofeminists choose diverse ways to resist oppression. While Celie starts a new life when she looks at herself, people around her, and all earthly beings with a loving eye, Janina flees to the Czech Republic after using violent killings to punish those who do not respect her and the natural cosmic order. Through examining their paths of suffering and resistance as ecofeminists, this paper challenges the myth that ecofeminism is exclusive to white women and highlights the application of ecofeminist values across cultural contexts. Furthermore, by comparing Celie's nonviolent resistance and Janina's more confrontational approach, this paper explores the potential effectiveness of applying "the ethic of care" to deconstruct oppressive patriarchal binaries and create an ideal equal world.

GUO Yingsu

Trauma and Memory: A Comparative Analysis of *Beloved* and *The Deep*

Trauma and memory are important themes of *Beloved* and *The Deep*, and both novels are unconventional and magical narratives of the tragic history of slavery. In *Beloved*, Sethe's daughter who is killed by her mother returns as the "ghost", triggering memories of the miserable trauma and slavery experiences for Sethe and other black people in the community. In *The Deep*, the babies of pregnant slave women thrown off slave ships are born as "strange sea creatures" named wajinru in the deep sea, and Yetu who preserves their collective memory suffers a profound trauma and identity crisis. This paper will analyze how these traumas are transmitted between generations through some nonverbal physical characteristics and damage identities, and some consequences of collective escape like sensory function or memory loss. It will also study the healing of trauma through "rememory" and collective power, which is significant in helping black people cope with the torturous history of slavery so as to build self-confidence and reinvent themselves and their identities.

GURUNG Rabindra

Dissecting the African Identity from the Afropolitan Stance: NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* and Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing*

As Afropolitan literature, both NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* and Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* problematize the notion of an African identity in their respective portrayal of African experience. Despite their differences in content, both texts display nuanced representations of African identity that correspond to the Afropolitan stance on Africanity. In an effort to re-evaluate the Afropolitan position, which is popularly (mis)understood as merely advocating for the privileged African voice, the objective of this paper is to apply a re-conceptualized framework of Afropolitanism, as articulated primarily by Achille Mbembe, to the critical dissection of African identity construction. The textual analysis reveals that both novels challenge the conventional understanding of what it means to be African by undermining the homogenous interpretation of Africanity as exclusively a Black one, as well as repudiating the incorporation of victimhood into one's African identity. As a result, both texts propagate an inclusive and de-racialized reading of the African and contribute to the elaboration on the discourse of the Afropolitan.

HU Jiaqi

Inevitable Tragedies: Ecological Analysis of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and *King Lear*

The selected two plays of Shakespeare's in this study, *The Tempest* and *King Lear*, involve various human-nature interactions. With rich natural elements, symbols, and metaphors, *The Tempest* and *King Lear* have great relevance to the ecological issues in contemporary society. Interpreting *The Tempest* and *King Lear* as tragedies in the Aristotelian sense, that is, in terms of the audience's pity and fear and their catharsis of such emotions, can make the audience aware of the necessity and urgency of solving ecological problems. Also, by focusing on the natural element of time in the two plays, this paper attempts to answer the following questions: How can Aristotle's theory of tragedy be used to explain these two plays? Why is it important to interpret these two plays as tragedies? How does time in *The Tempest* and *King Lear* affect the creation and development of tragedy in each case? From the perspective of ecocriticism, what are the inspirations from the two plays for solving current ecological problems? In short, this paper explores the ecological issues revealed in tragedies.

HU Zeyu

***Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*: Tom Stoppard's Adaptations of *Hamlet* as an Active Reader**

Tom Stoppard first rewrote *Hamlet* as the play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and then transmedially adapted his rewritten play as a namesake film. Both of them are his reproductions after engaged readings of the source text. This research paper aims to discover Stoppard's observations about *Hamlet* through his two adaptations and identify what adaptation strategies he adopts to better demonstrate his role as active reader. Generally speaking, Stoppard changes the emphasis from Hamlet to the marginal roles of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern when dealing with characters so that the minor characters are given a voice. He uses metatheatrical to reveal the most significant theme of the story of *Hamlet* in his eyes, which is life as a play, and he adopts the panopticon theory to vividly illustrate the gazes in the story of *Hamlet* in the aspect of settings. In sum, Stoppard makes use of various adaptation skills in his reproductions of *Hamlet* to show the results of his active reading of the original work and encourage the audience to reflect on *Hamlet* from new perspectives together with him.

HUANG Xinyi

A Mockery of Modernity: How History is Represented by Alejo Carpentier

As a non-fiction novel, *The Kingdom of This World* presents the Haitian Revolution in a unique way. This essay will use focus on magical realism as a narrative mode to analyze the text. In this narrative mode, Carpentier uses repetition and focalisation-shifting as two strategies to show his contemplation on history. History remains spiral and this idea challenges Western notions. In his way of presenting history, he shows his mocking of the modernity promoted in the West. The essay will also consider the short stories from *War of Time* to verify this point.

HUANG Zhuoer Joe

Relationship between Literature and the City: Imaginative Reality and Productive Forces in Leung Ping-Kwan's Poetry and Orhan Pamuk's Memoir

This paper analyzes the relationship between literature and the city by examining two works, Leung Ping-Kwan's poetry collection *City at the End of Time* and Orhan Pamuk's memoir *Istanbul: Memories and the City*. These works demonstrate how an imaginative reality in literature is rooted in material reality and how urban literature can actively contribute to society as a productive force. By analyzing "The Clogs" from Leung's poetry collection, the creation of imaginative realities through two methods (depicting the bygone things and lifestyles in a city and creating the thingness of things in multiple layers) is uncovered. By analyzing the effectiveness of visual representations in Istanbul from Pamuk's memoir, the creation of imaginative reality of the city is also uncovered. The juxtaposition of literary and visual representations in *Istanbul* can further materialize such creation. Both works illustrate how the relationship between the city and literature is symbiotic. Literature can create new symbols and meanings that evolve with the city, and it can be a productive force that makes a difference in contributing to culture and society.

JI Yichun

Characters Who Choose to Suffer in Eileen Chang's *Love in A Fallen City* and Jean Rhys's *The Collected Short Stories*

Both Eileen Chang's *Love in a Fallen City* (the short story collection) and Jean Rhys's *The Collected Short Stories* are filled with tragedies. Those two writers, though of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds, shared some common thoughts and principles in shaping characters. Instead of molding perfect victims who are innocent and vulnerable, their characters, both females and males, victims and perpetrators, are more complicated and thus thought-provoking. Based on the theory of cruel optimism by Lauren Berlant, this essay shall analyze Eileen Chang's and Jean Rhys's short stories and try to answer the following question: How are characters in those short stories shaped by the environment and influenced by the people around and the relationships they are in? What are those characters' motivations and reasons behind every fatal choice? What similarities do those choices share? Why do those characters end up like that?

JIA Yunqing

Loss of Control and Healing in War-Torn Memories in *The Mountains Sing* and *The Refugees*

This thesis explores the theme of war trauma and its impact on memory, cognition, and emotions in the literary works *The Mountains Sing* and *The Refugees*. The central focus is on the loss of control over memories experienced by severely traumatized characters, who are haunted by non-narrative traumatic memories that resurface unexpectedly. The thesis also investigates the potential healing power of narrative and the recognition of vulnerability as means to regain control over memories and establish emotional connections with others. Through a close analysis of these works, the thesis examines how the authors convey the complex effects of war trauma and offer hope for alleviating its symptoms. By delving into the interplay between trauma, memory, and narrative, this research aims to shed light on the ways in which literature can depict and address the profound impact of war trauma, while also exploring possibilities for healing and resilience.

JIANG Jie

Who Tells the Story: Female Narrative in Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* and Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*

As feminist works, both *Alias Grace* and *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* offer insight into the issue of female narrative. They both feature the oppression of female voices by patriarchal society and women's resistance to patriarchal discourse. Previous studies have mainly analysed the relationship between readers and authors in *Alias Grace* and the rebellion against anthropocentric viewpoints in *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*, but few studies compare them together. Thus, this paper tries to answer the following questions: How does the female narrative contribute to showing female's oppressed situation by creating empathy? How does the combination of different voices or the sole voice reflect the difference between female and male discourse and female resistance to the latter? How does female narrative help female authors rebel against patriarchal literary traditions? The theoretical founding is Tokarczuk's tender narrative theory and Susan S. Lanser's concept of "voice" in female narratology. The aim is to show how women and/or animals are the victims of patriarchal social systems, culture, and history, how their rebellion against patriarchy is manifest, and how female writers challenge patriarchal literary traditions.

JIANG Yi

Cultural Identity in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Good Morning, Midnight*

As Jean Rhys's last two novels, *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Good Morning, Midnight* both explore the issue of identity crisis among people of color born in the West Indies. They all revolve around women from the West Indies, whose seemingly different life trajectories point to their struggles as intermediaries and efforts to find themselves. As analyzed by previous research, West Indian women, also known as white Creoles, struggle to find their place in a society divided by race. This paper attempts to answer the following questions: How does Jean Rhys shape marginalized female characters' different responses to similar problems of identity information? How is the complexity reflected in the struggle of female characters in the face of fate? These two questions are the starting point from which to investigate the identity and conflicting personalities of marginalized female individuals in Rhys's fictional narratives. This paper explores an identity that is neither completely shaped by individuals nor entirely modelled by societal prospects and cultural stereotypes, but is rather formed through the dynamic interaction between the constructive and destructive processes of the two.

LAI Yuxin

Finding Voice, Identity and Reconciling Conflicts Through Space in Rivers Solomon's *The Deep* and Delia Owens's *Where the Crawdads Sing*

Both *The Deep* (2019) by Rivers Solomon and *Where the Crawdads Sing* (2018) by Delia Owens are fully engaged with the representation and functions of space in narrative. The protagonists, Yetu in *The Deep* and Kya in *Where the Crawdads Sing*, embark on the journey to search for their own voice and identity as they travel across different spaces. In *The Deep*, the novella portrays the deep ocean which allows the wajinru to preserve their past in the Remembrance; it also narrates the story that happens on the land that has a strong link to the ocean. In *Where the Crawdads Sing*, Owens sets the novel in the marsh area in North Carolina where lives are animated and decaying; she also depicts the image of the town where the town people hold a strong opinion about the marsh. By drawing on the discussion of Mieke Bal in terms of the relationship between the character and space, and the theory of space in narrative proposed by Gabriel Zoran, this essay aims to find out how space is represented and functions to mirror the characters' voice and identity, and to reveal the conflicts and reconciliation.

LAN Jiaxu

Names and (Re)naming in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* and Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Dottie*

Names and the act of (re)naming function as the thread to reclaim the untold stories of the subaltern in the Western discourse of "Other" and negotiate the past and the present of diasporic African immigrants in NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* and Abdulrazak Gurnah's *Dottie*. These two literary works of the African diaspora recount the growth of two black girls Darling and Dottie, relating their lives with the names of people, places, myths, and historical events. This paper will investigate how names and (re)naming as strategies represent their voices that are silenced because of their age, gender, race, and nationality. Western and patriarchal oppression is rhetorically revealed by names and (re)naming. And as the signifier of identity, names also mark the transformation of immigrants' identity and how they deal with the sense of unbelonging.

LAU Sum Yu

Intersection of Food and Identity in Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* and Michelle Zauner's *Crying in H Mart*

Pachinko and *Crying in H Mart* are both works of Korean American literature written by authors with diasporic backgrounds. For different political and personal reasons, a large number of Koreans moved to foreign countries in the 20th century. The two texts portray the lives of Korean immigrants in Japan and America respectively. Studies have argued that food not only acts as an essential element for humans to survive, but can also be seen as a core part of the expression and development of identities. Although previous studies have explored the relationship between food and diasporic identity, scholars have not shed light on Korean immigrants specifically. As a result, this paper aims to answer the following questions by close reading of the two texts: How does food homogenize and diversify different social groups? How do Koreans build connections with food? How does the political environment influence the choice of food of the characters? How do the identities of the first, second and third generations of Korean immigrants influence their eating habits? This study is conducted to analyze the connection between food and diasporic identity of Korean immigrants.

LI Hailun

Uncovering Epistemic Violence in *Robinson Crusoe* Through Adaptations

Drawing on Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's explication of epistemic violence in her subaltern studies, this paper dissects the violence in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* concerning colonialism and patriarchy. While language is used to enslave and marginalize Friday as the colonial Other, replacing Friday's religious belief with Christianity successfully turns him into the subaltern under the principle of European civilization. The portrayal of Friday as a barbarian allows readers to ignore epistemic violence inflicted upon him. Moreover, Friday's mother is effaced due to the low status of women in eighteenth-century England. Maxine Hong Kingston and John Maxwell Coetzee discern the discourse of colonialism and patriarchy in the original text and exaggerate the aforementioned epistemic violence in their adaptations, highlighting the relatively implicit epistemic violence. Specifically, "The Adventures of Lo Bun Sun" explores the obliteration of women's voices in the Asian diaspora. *Foe* intensifies the violence inflicted upon Friday, both physically by cutting out his tongue physically and mentally through Barton's mind control over him. The objective of this paper is not so much to give voice to the subaltern but to remind readers of their ethical responsibility of uncovering what lies beneath the surface of silence.

LI He

Emancipating from Intersectional Oppression: A Black Feminist Study of Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* and Rivers Solomon's *The Deep*

Written by two distinguished African American female writers, Toni Morrison and Rivers Solomon, *Song of Solomon* and *The Deep* both engage many female characters to express the authors' concern for the racism and sexism that Black women confront. By analyzing the images of Black women in the texts from a Black feminist lens, the paper first explores the causes and dangers of the stereotype of Black women fabricated by White male hegemony. Based on this, the paper then discusses the two authors' attempts to portray an independent Black female image of matriarchy, which is valued by Black culture, and in the image of motherhood, the paper analyzes how women can expand their value and influence from their family to their community, and thus win the support and respect of the Black community. Finally, the paper examines how the two works dismantle male hegemony by exposing the fundamental stance of patriarchy and then inspects the possibilities for Black women to ally with Black men. By analyzing the above issues, the paper argues that Black women's self-awareness and mutual understanding with fellow men are the keys to eliminating the intersectional oppression they suffer, and thus, their self-worth can be realized.

LI Lingbo

Between Marginalized Body and Encroaching Space: Identity Construction Dilemma in Rana Dasgupta's Novels of Globalization

Rana Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled* and *Solo* focus on the stories of marginalized people in the current globalized world, which both involve discussions about their situation and identity. The characters of the two novels stay in several similar or consistent spaces. These spatial elements can be seen as part of the fabric of the web of globalization: nodes of production and consumption where capital converges, transport routes that radiate around the world, and pockets of functional reconstruction that have been encroached and compressed. By specifically analyzing the relationship between different spatial genres and characters under the framework of globalization, the paper attempts to argue that it is the interaction between spaces and the protagonists' bodies that causes external factors and internal cognition to jointly affect the shaping of individual identity, contributing to the Others' experience of alienation and assimilation, non-belonging, and marginalization. In the process of globalization, the contradiction between the body of the marginalized Other and the space for their existence should be addressed.

LI Minting

Imposed Silence and Resistance in Chinese-American Family Narratives

Maxine Hong Kingston's *China Men* and Lisa See's *On Gold Mountain* are family narratives written by Chinese American authors, recounting the stories of Chinese American families from the generation of great-grandparents to the generation of the authors. Both family narratives address how Chinese Americans are silenced as Others and speak as Others. More importantly, as the authors themselves are members of the family, their works can also be considered part of the family history. Thus, this essay will analyze the narratives at the level of story and text and attempt to answer the following questions: How do these two Chinese American authors rewrite the histories of their preceding generations? Do their writings successfully represent the condition of the subaltern? Are the writing strategies employed by the two Chinese-American writers similar to the speaking strategies used by Chinese-Americans and can they be recognized as part of the Chinese-American tradition? Starting from these questions, I will also look at Spivak and Bhabha's postcolonial theories to explore how Chinese Americans perceive and utilize their particular cultural identities from the past to the present.

LI Sitong

Meet in the Deep: Crossing Merfolk Narrative Under the Perspective of Ecofeminism

This thesis analyzes colonization and ecological destruction in the "crossing merfolk narrative" as defined by Jalondra Davis, and how African mermaids rewrite women's status in patriarchy. Crossing merfolk narratives refer to fictional works that depict Black slaves who fall overboard from a slave ship during the Middle Passage and give birth to African mermaids (Davis, "Sacred" 1). The selected novels for analysis include Nalo Hopkinson's *The New Moon's Arms* (2007), Tracey Baptiste's *Rise of the Jumbies* (2017), and Rivers Solomon's *The Deep* (2019). In these books, the ancestors of crossing mermaids were treated as subordinate to Whites during the slave trade, and these mermaids witnessed the exploitation of nature by humans. These novels examine dualisms related to Whites and Blacks, human-nature relations, and male and female. Therefore, this thesis employs ecofeminist criticism to address issues of racial discrimination, the relationship between humans and the environment, and mermaids' responses to patriarchy in these novels. By revealing the consequences of racism and anthropocentrism, this thesis argues that crossing merfolk narratives oppose dualism and hierarchy and envision an ideal relationship between humans and nature in a decolonized world.

LI Xinle

The Witch Narrative in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and *House of Day, House of Night*

Olga Tokarczuk seems to have a predilection for elderly female characters. Her *House of Day, House of Night* (2002) with a fragmented narrative structure consists of texts of various genres, but there is a narration of an old woman, Marta, that becomes a thread tying the stories. Another old woman protagonist, Janina, carries out her revenge on privileged men for her dogs in *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* (2019). Elements such as old women, animals and nature, and folklore recur in both texts, and by reading the texts we can see that Tokarczuk intentionally associates her female characters with magical women characters—witches. The interpretation of this woman figure has been deepened within the theoretical framework of feminist and ecofeminist criticism. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to explore the connection between Marta and Janina and the image of the witch in the two literary works and to understand the significance of the connection. It is argued that Tokarczuk constructs a witch narrative as her writing strategy, which motivates the women protagonists and the writer herself to regain power within the patriarchal and anthropocentric system.

LI Zewei

From Silence to Voice: Female Agency in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* and Han Suyin's *A Many-Splendoured Thing*

As two autobiographical fictions, Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* and Han Suyin's *A Many-Splendoured Thing* reflect that silence and voice intertwine with female agency within their distinct historical contexts. Previous research has primarily focused on how silence is associated with suppression and reveals the identity of gender under patriarchal societies. Building on this foundation, this study examines how Kingston and Han Suyin employ silence and voice not merely as narrative techniques to avoid "the epistemic violence" (Spivak 33), but as forms of resistance against societal and patriarchal oppression. By integrating feminist literary criticism with postcolonial perspectives, this comparative analysis highlights how silent female characters, combined with the strategic use of narrative voice, resist patriarchal society. Through this lens, the paper examines the complex role of female silence and voice as powerful tools in the struggle against marginalization to illuminate "the power of silence beyond the silence/voice dichotomy" (Parpart et al. 12)

LIN Zhixin

"Much Like Home": Face, Home, and Deterritorialized Identity in Tash Aw's *Strangers on the Pier* and Chris Abani's *Cartography of the Void*

In their first-person non-fiction memoirs, *The Face: Strangers on the Pier* (2016) and *The Face: Cartography of the Void* (2013), Tash Aw and Chris Abani utilize the generic features of the genre—the textual mobility to fluidly shuttle through memories, reflections, and imaginations—embarking on the journey to and fro the past through the bodily portal of the "face". Through the simple act of looking at the face in the mirror, the two deterritorialized writers are transferred back to the past back home, despite their temporal and geographical distance from the remote homeland. As they could only recall fragments of family history, pieces of cultural knowledge, and shards of personal memory in their minds, the two writers unavoidably construct the homeland in the texts through imaging, speculating, and fantasizing. Furthermore, the face also serves as a site of reflection, enabling both writers to critically re-examine their past personal memories from the vantage point of the present. Their reviews of past happenings reconfigure their respective relationships with the family and the homeland. Aw and Abani, in their deterritorialized states, negotiate their relationships with the homeland in a particularly embodied way, putting attention on the face as part of the body. By centering their attention on the face, they offer profound insights into the nuances of identity, memory, and belonging, inviting readers to commence a voyage of self-discovery and cultural exploration.

LIU Baixi

Real or Ideal: Identity Construction in Edogawa Rampo's *Japanese Tales of Mystery and Imagination*

As a collection of mystery fiction, Edogawa Rampo's *Japanese Tales of Mystery and Imagination* extensively explores issues of identity construction. The four short stories from the book, "The Human Chair," "The Hell of Mirrors," "The Caterpillar," and "The Twins," are representations of the experimental attempts of identity construction. This paper tries to answer the following questions: What is essential in the process of identity construction? What are the consequences of failure in identity construction? Based on Lacan's theory of the mirror stage and aggressivity, this paper will explore the journey of identity construction of the characters in the stories. In short, this paper will focus on the dynamic between self and other, reality and ideal in the process of constructing identity.

LIU Junling

Oppression and Resistance: Imagery Analysis of Jean Rhys's Short Stories

The theme of oppression and resistance runs through Jean Rhys's short stories. The dark and depressing scenes of the lives of the oppressed and the resistance of the oppressed in desperate situations are depicted through imagery of conspicuous patterns. Most studies of Rhys's works focus on her novels, examining the complex racial, cultural, and sexual elements in her works from postcolonial, modernist, and feminist perspectives. This paper, however, focuses on five of her short stories, "From a French Prison," "Mannequin," "The Day They Burned the Books," "Let Them Call It Jazz" and "Good-bye Marcus, Good-bye Rose" and takes imagery analysis as the entry point, attempting to answer the following question: How does Rhys demonstrate the theme of oppression and resistance in her short stories through specific choice and treatment of different imagery? By analyzing imagery of the lives of the oppressed, of The Rhys Woman, and of their appearance and behavior, the paper proves that the underdogs Rhys writes about, who are constantly driven into plight by social, cultural, sexual, and other conditions, are constantly making their voice of resistance heard.

LIU Xiaoqing

Breaking Women's Silence in Otsuka's *The Buddha in the Attic* and Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*

As works of Asian American women writers, both Julie Otsuka's *The Buddha in the Attic* and Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* re-represent the lives and experiences of first-generation Asian female immigrants. Under the dual oppression of imperialist and patriarchal discourse, these women are further marginalized as the subaltern, and their voices are thus forgotten or erased by American mainstream society. In an effort to represent these subaltern women, some Western writers construct female images that are often portrayed as obedient, vulnerable and oppressed, which further lead to misconceptions surrounding them. However, Otsuka and Tan employ innovative "communal voice" to break the subaltern women's silence, while highlighting their agency and diversity. This paper examines how Otsuka's use of a first-person plural narrative voice ("we") constructs a collective community for Japanese picture brides to assert their discourse and agency as well as Tan's "mahjong" narrative in empowering Chinese American women to resist the dual oppression of gender and race. Additionally, this paper acknowledges the role of parallel structure and mahjong structure in enhancing power dynamics within these novels while ensuring ample narrative space for female voices.

LIU Xiaowen

Beyond the Backdrop: Exploring the Intersection of Nature and Literature Through Stieg Larsson's *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and Henning Mankell's *The Pyramid*

This thesis explores the conjunction of nature and literature in Stieg Larsson's *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and Henning Mankell's *The Pyramid*. It investigates how the ascetic Scandinavian landscapes transcend being a backdrop to proactively form characters, narratives, and reflect societal norms. Larsson and Mankell make use of nature to mirror the characters' psychological landscapes, personifying styles of seclusion, societal review, and the dichotomy between urban corruption and rural purity. In *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, Hedeby Island's seclusion and violence echo the facility, linked lives of its residents, especially Henrik Vanger and Lisbeth Salander. In *The Pyramid*, the contrasting landscapes of urban and rural Sweden mirror Wallander's internal problems and societal observations. The thesis argues that natural environments are not just essential to the narration, they also function as a lens to critique social inequality and the disintegration of community in contemporary Sweden. This study highlights exactly how nature weaves right into the fabric of Nordic Noir, disclosing the category's atmospheric depths.

LO Tsz Yau Christy

The (In)audible Protests of Disintegrating Women: Negative Resistance and the Self-Destructive Women Environmentalist in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*

Conscious of the exclusivity of a feminist theory that imagines agency as active attempts to challenge social norms, Jack Halberstam proposes "Shadow Feminism"—a negative form of resistance that articulates itself in anti-social and seemingly "anti-feminist" modes of self-negation. These include refusal, passivity, self-destruction, masochism, and unbecoming. If the project of "becoming woman," argues Halberstam, is one in which women perpetuate their oppression by accepting their role as "other to man," then shadow feminism promises a way to opt out of the double bind of "becoming woman" and thereby upholds a gender binary wherein men are dominant. Though women who "do" negative resistance incur the possibility of suffering psychological and physical harm, few scholars have asked how and whether this form of resistance may contribute to social justice in a material context. I do this work by examining depictions of negative resistance in two works of contemporary realist ecofeminist fiction—Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*. I argue that these texts' treatment of negative resistance exposes that it is an unproductive and even politically dangerous response to the current ecological crisis. Both novels house women environmentalists who attempt—and fail—to destroy a complicit self through inflicting harm on their bodies and minds. By participating in this futile project, they fail to produce a collective and constructive response to the ecological crisis, and they unwittingly reproduce the violence engendered by dominant discourses. While negative resistance, as a theory, does the important work of creating more inclusive feminisms, my work underscores an urgent need to consider the relationship between this form of resistance and larger social transformation.

LUO Xuan

The Tension between Past and Present: Personal and Collective Memories in Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul: Memories and the City* and *The Museum of Innocence*

Set in Istanbul, both *Istanbul: Memories and the City* and *The Museum of Innocence* explore how memories and the city are interconnected in historical shifts. They also examine the tension between preserving the past and embracing the present for people living in Istanbul. Both texts feature characters endeavoring to preserve the past through nuanced strategies, which result in transitions from personal memories to collective memories, and from private space to public space. By referring to memory studies, this paper aims to answer the following research questions: How does Orhan Pamuk use different tactics to preserve memories in the two texts? In what ways do *Istanbul: Memories and the City* and *The Museum of Innocence* reflect the cultural and historical dynamics of Istanbul, and how do they contribute to the construction of a collective memory of Istanbul? In brief, this paper explores the relationship between personal memories and collective memories by analyzing the different tactics employed by the characters to preserve the past and the transitions brought by these strategies.

MAN Chun Nok Jonathan

Diasporic Identity Development: Family as Contact Zone and Attachment Point in Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Sympathizer* and *The Refugees*

The Sympathizer and *The Refugees* are texts by Viet Thanh Nguyen that narrate the lives of, mostly, Vietnamese Americans in America. Family is a recurring construct that impacts the protagonists' lives in both narratives. This thesis aims to investigate, firstly, how both texts signify identity dysphoria as a challenge for Vietnamese Americans as a whole and, secondly, the role that family plays in the construction of the characters' identity. Results indicate that Nguyen adopts metaphor, repetition, and imagery to convey the throes of Vietnamese Americans in the contact zone. It reveals that Vietnamese Americans are ruthlessly assimilated into American culture. Family is a channel that offers intimacy that forms what Hall terms as "points of temporary attachment" (6) to define a person. Family also shares similarities to Pratt's "contact zone," where hostility between family members, particularly those of different generations, can be observed. Despite the differences, however, family remains a space where most diasporic characters—despite being assimilated into novel cultures, be it a space that shares volatile or intimate bonding—define themselves.

NG Yeuk Yu

Between Oppressed and Oppressing: Challenging Essentialized Identities in Zora Neale Hurston's Short Stories and *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Zora Neale Hurston's "Monkey Junk," "Magnolia Flower" and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* present the constructedness and complexities of sociocultural categories of race, gender, and class in African American lives. Thus, this paper aims to confront the essentialized notions of these categories and point out the non-oppositional nature of Hurston's ideal of racial equality. Using a comparative approach to each short story with the specific matters in the novel, this paper shows that Hurston's diversified representations of African Americans exhort readers to relinquish the essentialist notions of race, gender and class. The entangled categories engender human notions such as "a gendered and raced body," Race Consciousness and Race Solidarity which Hurston critiques as reproductive of injustice. Pierre Bourdieu's notion of symbolic violence and Henry Louis Gates's concept of "Signifyin(g)" are applied in the corresponding sections to sharpen the arguments and their significance.

PENG Yubing

Weaving Ecofeminism: Narrative Strategies in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and *Primeval and Other Times*

Environmental protection and gender inequality have long been significant issues, and ecofeminism connects the oppression of women in patriarchal societies with the exploitation of nature, challenging the dualistic convention influenced by anthropocentrism and androcentrism. Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk, a Nobel laureate, has gained attention for portraying ecofeminist ideas in her works. Focusing on *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and *Primeval and Other Times*, this essay analyzes how Tokarczuk unlocks the power of narrating in conveying and shaping ecofeminist ideas through innovative narrative designs, how her fiction prompts readers to rethink the world while questioning the binary opposition between humans and nature, as well as between males and females.

PU Yexu

Integration and Fragmentation: Two Perspectives on Viewing History in *My Name is Red* and *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*

Orhan Pamuk's *My Name is Red* and Julian Barnes's *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters* are two historiographic metafictional texts that present different views of history in the postmodern context. The study argues that *Red* and *History* provide two different views of history and emphasize different characteristics under the postmodern context, and the argument is divided into three sections. The first section focuses on their use of multiple narrators, proposing that narratives in *Red* are still coherent and the storyline is clear, which implies history's integrity and narrativity; meanwhile, in *History*, the narratives are fragmented, and the storyline is in chaos, which implies history's disorder. The second section discusses the relationship between secularity and sanctity in the two novels, showing that secular life and sacred life may seem contradictory, but they coexist within the same space and time; meanwhile, secularism acts rather like a weapon to attack religion-based history in *History*. The final section focuses on how the two novels deal with the relationship between East and West, which reaches a consensus to some degree in *Red*, despite the "humble grief and resignation"; whereas in *History*, the West-East negotiation fails, and the quarrels between different perspectives fragment the narrative of history. Either way, history closely interacts with fictional texts and loses its authority in the context of historiographic metafiction.

QIU Xinyu

Femme Fatale Archetype: Navigating Agency and Subjectivity in Ana Lily Amirpour's *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* and Wong Kar-Wai's *Chungking Express*

The vampire girl in Ana Lily Amirpour's *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* and the girl with the blonde wig in Wong Kar-Wai's film *Chungking Express* both embody distinct femme fatale traits: they are beautiful, captivating, and dangerous. Within the context of a male-dominated film industry and a societal imbalance of power, female characters in movies often possess strong sexual allure and follow predictable narrative patterns, catering to the viewers' visual enjoyment which diminishes men's anxiety about being a "woman." The femme fatale archetype serves as a response from women against a male-dominated society, portraying powerful and alluring characters. Although femme fatale characters have been accused of being men's fantasies of feminism, their existence offers a possibility for women to respond to the patriarchal society. Both in *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* and *Chungking Express*, the femme fatale characters make up their own moral judgments and assert their agency and subjectivity, resisting male oppression in their respective genres and contexts.

SHEN Yang Ivey

Environmental Justice and Injustice: A comparison of Conrad's *Tales of Unrest* and Kingsley's *Travels in West Africa*

Nowadays, besides the impacts on the political, economic, and cultural aspects of the colonized territories, the destruction of the ecological environment by the colonizers in the colonized lands is increasingly being emphasized. This paper specifically examines the portrayal of the conflicts between colonial expansion actions and that of the local ecological environment development under the guidance of earning benefits for the colonizers in Joseph Conrad's *Tales of Unrest* and Mary Kingsley's *Travels from West Africa*. The paper is divided into three main parts: the first part focuses on the arbitrary occupation of land resources by colonialists portrayed in the writings of both authors and the unjustified hunting of local ecological inhabitants and animals; the second part analyzes the portrayal of African colonial residents by Conrad as well as the views of Kingsley on the skills that colonial subjects should learn, and thereby reveals environmental injustices in their writing; the third part discusses the repercussions faced by the colonizers in the forms of diseases and fears resulting from their environmental injustices portrayed through nature as an agent in the two works.

SHI Jiayi

Complex Ocean: Diasporic Identity in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *By the Sea* and Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island*

As novels set in the ocean space, *By the Sea* and *Gun Island* involve the identity of diasporic groups in a foreign land. Both of them feature Asian or African migrants or refugees who experience discrimination in their new countries as they negotiate their own identities. Previous studies have pointed out that the fluidity of the ocean creates new connections between formerly isolated communities and identities, allowing for new hybrid identities for the diasporic community. On this basis, this paper tries to answer the following questions: What roles does the ocean play in transnational experiences? What identity crisis do diasporic characters suffer in their new country behind the unequal power dynamics in the context of the sea? How do they negotiate their identities? By combining the ocean with the identity problem, this paper discusses the relationship between the image of the ocean in oceanic novels and the identity problem of diasporic groups.

SHI Wenting

The Symbiosis of Trauma and Memory: Delusion Agents in Edgar Allan Poe's Works

Edgar Allan Poe was a famous American poet, short story writer, and critic. Poe's work has a mystical, gothic style in which characters are often haunted by dark and unforgettable memories, which they express in twisted and insane ways. When memory and trauma are symbiotic, delusions emerge through a repetitive process of replication. These delusion agents prevent the protagonist from recovering from the trauma, causing their conscience to go rogue. However, the suppression of trauma generates creativity as a coping mechanism. This paper seeks to address several key questions: How does the symbiotic relationship between memory and trauma manifest itself? In what ways do delusion agents impede recovery from trauma? Does the resulting creativity change the protagonist's dark heart? By analyzing a selection of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories, this study examines the lasting effects of the symbiotic relationship between trauma and memory in the minds of the characters.

SHU Rui

Exemplifying Écriture Féminine: Antilogous Writing in Clarice Lispector's *Near to the Wild Heart* and *Family Ties*

Clarice Lispector's *Near to the Wild Heart* and *Family Ties* are impressive as an embodiment of Hélène Cixous's *écriture féminine*. They not only represent a distinctive language quality but also create a gallery of female characters. This paper mainly explores and analyzes how her writing style diverges from traditional male writing norms and the female characters' various attitudes to their paradoxical predicament. It shows that the anti-rational and anti-linear effect, the intimacy with the female body, and the deconstruction of a traditional concept of "happiness" that challenges the subordinate roles assigned to the female contribute to overturning logocentric conventions in terms of language and ideology. Hence, Lispector's writing exemplifies and develops *écriture féminine*.

SUN Yuxin Jenny

The Comparative Analysis of Tragic Heroines in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Strindberg's *Miss Julie*

This Capstone Project examines the portrayal of two tragic heroines, Juliet and Julie, in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*, through the exploration of their fatal flaws and the impact of gender power dynamics on their ultimate fates. Through the comparative analysis from a feminist perspective, this paper argues that both theatrical works should be interpreted as anti-feminist. They reinforce the social systems of patriarchy, family expectations, and class distinctions. This essay interprets the two plays as Aristotelian tragedies, through which to elucidate tragic heroines' flaws and their subsequent tragic outcomes. These tragedies, as a result, prevent audiences from challenging established social systems by eliciting their emotional catharsis. The depiction also reveals the manipulation of women's destinies by men, and the devastating consequences that ensue when their relationships deviate from social logics. The two plays serve as cautionary tales for women, demonstrate the inevitable tragic repercussions of defying the deeply entrenched social structures, and thus rationalize and sustain these institutions.

WANG Heru

Floating as a Star: Balance Between Lightness and Weight in *Land of Big Numbers* and *Tokyo Cancelled*

Two contemporary works of fiction from the 21st century, Te-Ping Chen's *Land of Big Numbers* and *Tokyo Cancelled* by Rana Dasgupta, present contrasting narrative settings but converge thematically. While Chen's work is largely grounded in domestic China, portraying a realistic backdrop, Dasgupta's novel explores a diverse cosmopolitan experience, often incorporating fantastical elements. Despite their divergent settings, both books share a thematic design that warrants further exploration: the celebrated balance between lightness and weight through vivid images and skilful organisation of language. Drawing inspiration from Italo Calvino's lecture on "Lightness," this paper takes flight and leaps into the realm of imageries, from where it arrives at the thesis that, while both works demonstrate the dilemma caught between lightness desired and heaviness endured, it is through the evocative power of imagery and distinct organisation of language that an interdependent balance between the two opposing forces is achieved.

WANG Yajing

Thi Bui's Feminist Narrative and Viet Nguyen's Metonymies on War Memory in *The Best We Could Do* and *The Refugees*

The discussions on war memory and trauma emerge in Thi Bui's *The Best We Could Do* and Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Refugees* which both reconstruct the memory of the Vietnam war and depict the inter-generational trauma based on the refugees' private family stories. Different from a macroscopic perspective to tell the "rescue story" in a masculine narrative popular in the West, Bui and Nguyen reveal the memory of the war in Vietnam from a microcosmic perspective. This essay aims to explore how Bui's feminist narrative and Nguyen's intertextual metonymies shift the framing of war memory from public to private sphere. The analyses of selected stories uncover the cause and impact of inter-generation trauma in the form of alienation between parents and children. It is argued that an identity crisis caused by the absence of war memory results in the alienation in inter-generational relationships which is an outward manifestation of inter-generational trauma. War memory involves identity issues of remembering one's own and others (Nguyen *Nothing* 18). Therefore, this study draws upon Nguyen's concept of "just memory" to examine its effectiveness in healing inter-generational trauma in the selected stories. Although the result is that trauma cannot be healed by the ethical practice of "just memory", the second generations of Vietnam War refugees in the stories find a new way to figure out the intangible trauma between them and their parents. It is significant that the second generations take the initiative to reconstruct the traumatic memory and make the traumatic burden more bearable.

WEI Jiawei

Intergenerational Transmission: Postmemorial Writing in *The Refugees* and *The Emigrants*

Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Refugees* and Winfried Georg Sebald's *The Emigrants*, set in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and two world wars, are two excellent short story collections about war trauma. They portray diverse post-war generations who are coincidentally impacted by the intergenerational trauma from their elder generations who have lived through the wars. Previous studies have focused only on the holocaust witnesses or the trauma symptoms. This essay attempts further to explore the transmission of trauma in an intergenerational structure. Marianne Hirsch's postmemory theory is employed to address two key questions in the essay: firstly, how do two short story collections interpret abstract memory in the transmission of trauma? Secondly, how do the writers' narrative techniques (perspective and space) evoke readers' sympathy so that the war history and the memory can be transmitted to the next generation? Therefore, the analysis examines the function of trauma writing in the post-war world. It is observed that the two examples of trauma writing manifest profound humanitarianism and, to some degree, alleviate the adverse effects of intergenerational trauma. Furthermore, the affective force of memory enables the history and the memory to be effectively transmitted to readers and other groups, enhancing the reflection on the war and yearning for peace. In conclusion, this essay illustrates the intergenerational transmission of history and past memory from the past to the present and the future.

WU Qingqing

The Flâneur and Urban Space in Pamuk's *Istanbul: Memories and the City* and *A Strangeness in My Mind*

In his memoir *Istanbul: Memories and the City* and novel *A Strangeness in My Mind*, Orhan Pamuk adopts the flâneur figure in contemporary Istanbul for exploring the city and its local inhabitants' struggle for a collective identity crisis. From the perspective of space, the essay discusses how the flâneur emerges from the omnipresent fractures between traditions and modernity as a result of modernization. In dialogue with de Certeau's spatial practices, the analysis further focuses on how wandering on streets as a process of escape and self-exploration effectively resists alienation and identity crisis. Through elaborating on the interactive relationship between individual and space, the research elaborates how the duality and paradoxical cultural identity eventually impede flâneurs from constructing an integrated self, but walking on the street creates a space for them to reconcile the two sides of the inner dichotomy of a contradictory self. In the two works, the image of flâneurs constitutes the epitome of Istanbul's ordinary people, who are anonymous heroes in modernity.

WU Qiyuan

Visions of Self and Other: Post-Colonial Insights in *A Small Place* and *Video Night in Kathmandu*

This paper explores the intricate dynamics of identity through the lens of post-colonial travel literature, focusing on Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* and Pico Iyer's *Video Night in Kathmandu*. Both authors probe the enduring legacies of colonialism, albeit from starkly different contexts, and examine the profound ways in which historical encounters shape cultural identities. Kincaid provides a reflexive critique of Antigua, her native island, portraying the "self" as both a victim and critic of past subjugations. In contrast, Iyer traverses the landscapes of Asian countries, reflects on the pervasive echoes of Western cultural imperialism and observes a spectrum of local responses from acceptance to adaptation. This comparative analysis delves into how both authors navigate their self-conceptions against a complex backdrop of historical and cultural forces. It aims to uncover the mechanisms through which Kincaid and Iyer articulate transformed identities, thereby illustrating the significant impact of travel on personal identity within the post-colonial discourse. By focusing on the portrayal of the "self" and the "other", this study not only enhances our understanding of identity reformation in travel literature but also highlights the intricate interrelations between historical impacts and contemporary cultural configurations. This exploration contributes to broader discussions about power, identity, and resistance in post-colonial studies, enriching our comprehension of these critical themes.

XIA Tong

The Role of Transformation in Edogawa Ranpo's Stories of Social Mobility

After being spread to Japan, detective and crime fiction became a symbol of Japan's participation in the West. As a key figure of the second wave of crime fiction in the 1920s, Edogawa Ranpo's crime fictions reflect his thoughts on the relationships between Japan and the West. Four of Edogawa Ranpo's crime narratives, "The Human Chair," *The Strange Tale of Panorama Island*, "The Caterpillar," and "The Man Traveling with the Brocade Portrait," all engage with the connection of transformation and social mobility. They all feature Japanese protagonists who experience transformation to realize positive or negative social mobility. As previous studies have pointed out that the desire of transformation is to conceal transformer's identity, this project focuses on the diversity of transformation and different results caused by the transformations. The paper will show the relationship between transformation and the characters' social mobility of their identity and hierarchy in Ranpo's crime fictions, and how these characters create changes in different perspectives after experiencing transformations of appearance, identity, location or dimension. This paper will also demonstrate how this social mobility is not only the flow of a person's hierarchical position in society, but also implies Japan's changing position towards the western world and third-world countries as a nation.

XIE Jianing

Enduring Refugeehood and the Complexities of Diasporic Identities in *The Refugees* and *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous*

Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Refugees* and Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* are two eminent works concerning multigenerational Vietnamese immigrants in America affected by the consequences of the Vietnam War. Both works present a nuanced understanding of the experiences of refugeehood, offering insight into the multifaceted realities faced by the diaspora. Analyzing these Vietnamese diasporic narratives, this paper argues that both *The Refugees* and *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* explore the persistent impact of war on diasporic individuals and foreground the enduring state of their refugeehood, which is interwoven with the plights of other identities such as queerness. Rejecting to oversimplify the refugees as mere victims or to seek their full recovery from wartime trauma, both authors rather acknowledge the complexities of the diaspora in various forms of displacement, highlighting the refugees' subjectivity, resilience and struggle for agency in navigating and reconfiguring hybrid identities, which not only showcases resistance to the dominant war narrative but also illuminates a creative force against the monotonous reproduction of refugee experiences into the future.

XIE Yujue

Cross the Line: An Ecofeminist Study on Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*

This paper delves into the intersection of ecology and feminism by analyzing two contemporary novels: Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*. Drawing on ecofeminist perspectives, the paper examines how these novels employ imaginative and sophisticated literary strategies to subvert traditional perceptions of women and nature. Through a comparative analysis, the study investigates the divergent approaches utilized within each novel, focusing on the similarities in their geographical locations and character settings, and how they challenge readers' expectations of genre conventions and assumptions about agency. The analysis reveals that both works effectively challenge the conventional portrayals of women and nature, thereby enriching readers' understanding of ecofeminism. By intentionally blurring boundaries and achieving ambiguous categorization, the authors illustrate that inventive strategies in settings, form, and structure can augment comprehension of traditionally unequal relationships between humans and non-humans, as well as between males and females. Ultimately, this paper showcases how these relationships can be contested and reimagined from an ecofeminist perspective.

XIONG Ke

Reconstructed and Replaced Female Spiritual Nihilism: The Intertextuality between *Shenzheners* and *Dubliners*

Inspired by James Joyce's *Dubliners*, *Shenzheners* addresses the alienation and the spirit nihilism of human in a series of short stories set in China's newly developed metropolis Shenzhen of the 1990s. However, unlike most stories in *Dubliners* which are written from men's perspective, many stories in *Shenzheners* show spiritual plight as Shenzhen residents from the first-person point of view of women. So how can these texts, with female characters as the protagonists, show the intertextuality with texts in *Dubliners*? How do similar images relate to and combine with each other and generate new connotations in texts in *Shenzheners*? How does the spiritual nihilism of women reflect in *Shenzheners*? This essay focuses on the spiritual nihilism of female characters in *Shenzheners* and discusses the intertextual relationship between texts from the two short story collections through discussing the writing techniques, in terms of collage and archetype.

XU Qiteng

Between Memory and Imagination: Truths of Maxine Hong Kingston's Reality

This essay borrows Toni Morrison's concept of literary archaeology to uncover the complexities of identity and voice in Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* and *China Men*. Kingston reconstructs fragmented memories, blending fact with fiction to challenge traditional narratives and illuminate her nuanced realities. The essay will explore how Maxine Hong Kingston uses her narratives to perform literary archaeology, and what it reveals about the underlying truths of her immigrant reality—the fluidity of diasporic identity and the transformative power of voice. Kingston's imaginative narrative, rooted deeply in her Chinese-American family, serves not only as a tool for her personal quest for identity but also as a means of cultural and historical reclamation.

YANG Chenkai

Cyborgian Selfhood and Communities of Dangerous Possibility in Rivers Solomon's *The Deep* and Octavia E. Butler's Parable Series

Octavia E. Butler and Rivers Solomon both articulate a complex conception of change in their speculative fictions that present protagonists' utopian desire of leaving the fixity of their original communities and pursuing a new construction of selfhood with unexpected possibilities. Two protagonists, Yetu and Lauren Olamina, imagine a more livable new world by disassembling their original identity in ways that resonate with Donna Haraway's theorization of the cyborg, which represents the transgression of boundaries and the coexistence of contradictory standpoints. This paper argues that Butler and Solomon's approaches to change coincide with Haraway's cyborg in rejecting the epistemological system based on traditional dualisms that rigidize the sense of self, while exploring the unforeseen possibilities of an alternative construction of selfhood. Characters in *Parable of the Sower*, *Parable of the Talents*, and *The Deep* respond to change by working to alienate themselves from discourses or disciplines, transform to an alternative vision of self in its relation to others, imagine a new world, and negotiate with problems in reality. The idea of 'becoming,' suggested by Yetu and Lauren's change, is a stimulus to reimagine an identity that is contradictory, uncertain, and unknowable, which gives us more possibilities in viewing ourselves and negotiating the way we should connect with others and live in the world in which we are embedded.

YANG Ke

Finding Magical Agency: The World's "Other" Individuals in *Tokyo Cancelled*

The stories in *Tokyo Cancelled* by Rana Dasgupta display the thematic consistency of globalization and the genre of magical realism. This essay presents a nuanced study of the agency of the marginalized characters in the stories in the two perspectives of globalism and magical realism. This research highlights the role of magical realism in depicting the agentive power of these ex-centric individuals, with a separate discussion of male and female characters. The findings show that as globalized societies have experienced increasing inequalities and focus on technology, these marginalized individuals achieve agency in different ways. In this process, the characteristics of the mode of magical realist narrative contribute to representing their autonomy and power by showing the psychological realm and non-scientific power.

YANG Menghan

Identity Shattered, Identity Reclaimed: "Subaltern" Women Confronting War Trauma Through Self-Writing in Fictions of Kazuo Ishiguro, Madeleine Thien, and Viet Thanh Nguyen

This paper focuses on women characters in contemporary fictions who suffer from war trauma and find themselves unable to speak about their experience and become the "subaltern" in Spivak's term. In the three selected primary texts, the female protagonists have all experienced great trauma of wars: In Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *A Pale View of Hills*, Etsuko moves to Britain after the war, witnesses her daughter's suicide, and becomes estranged from her younger daughter; in Madeleine Thien's novel *Dogs at the Perimeter*, Janie and her family suffer atrocities of the Khmer Rouge; and in Viet Thanh Nguyen's short fiction "Black-Eyed Women," the female protagonist witnesses pirates killing her brother. In this paper, I argue that each of these "subaltern" women characters, in their respective fictional context, copes with trauma through unique forms of self-writing. Through textual analysis of these three novels, this paper explores how these women characters, their self-writing strategies, reconstruct their identities after trauma and reflect the complexity of their experiences. Adopting a comparative approach, this project exposes the commonalities and differences of women trauma writing in fiction, and explores the complex interweaving of female trauma experiences and identities in different post-colonial contexts.

YANG Wenhui

Cultural Recognition and Identity Construction in *The Bluest Eye* and *The Woman Warrior*

Both written by minority women writers during the 1960s and 1970s in America, Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* reflect minority characters' lives and their confusion over cultural recognition in multicultural American society. In this background, to truly integrate into American society, the minority groups in the two novels all strive to construct their own identities when dealing with multi-cultures, but the processes by which they construct their identities and the results are not the same. This essay aims to explore the similarities and differences in terms of the protagonists' cultural recognition and identity construction from the perspective of Homi Bhabha's postcolonial theory.

ZHANG Bohan

To Represent and Heal the Unnerving: Family Memories and Folklore in Narratives of the Cambodian Genocide

The Cambodian genocide, as one of the most serious catastrophes of the 1970s, has been vastly underrepresented in literature. Since their debut, Madeleine Thien's *Dogs at the Perimeter* and Vaddey Ratner's *In the Shadow of the Banyan*, as two novels that take the Cambodian genocide as their theme, have been analyzed by a number of scholars in terms of their representations of the trauma suffered by the genocide victims. Building on this body of extant research, this paper will closely examine the family memories as well as the Cambodian folklore represented in the two novels, aiming to further reveal the source of the genocide victims' trauma as well as the potential therapy for such trauma. Adopting comparative analysis as the basic framework, this essay will combine the critical theories of memory and trauma with textual analysis to examine the roles played by these two elements in the discourse of the Cambodian genocide. Through analysis, this essay will argue that the family memories help construct traumatic memories of genocide as a collective form of suffering and reveal the hidden source of the victims' trauma, while the Cambodian folklore, as fictional narrative, possesses the true therapeutic power in healing the victims' trauma.

ZHANG Chenfan

Phantom Spaces in Pu Songling's *Strange Tales from Liaozhai* and Maxine Hong Kingston's *China Men*: Utopias and Dystopias

This paper focuses on fictional phantom spaces imagined in two short story collections, Pu Songling's *Strange Tales from Liaozhai* and Maxine Hong Kingston's *China Men*. Four tales or short stories are selected for this study: they are "The Rakshas' Sea Market" and "Lady Liu" from *Strange Tales from Liaozhai* and "On Discovery" and "The Ghostmate" from *China Men*. In my analysis, these spaces can be interpreted either as utopias or dystopias, reflect and satirize the respective society relevant to the background of the writer. In *Strange Tales from Liaozhai*, Pu tells the stories of individual male protagonists who find their ways into such phantom spaces which reflect the ideals or dreams of male scholars in Late Imperial China. In *China Men*, Kingston addresses through such fictional spaces the conditions of early Chinese immigrants in the United States as well as women in Late Imperial China and the Republic of China.

ZHENG Yaming

The Lost Flâneurs in Semi-Colonial Shanghai: Mu Shiying's Short Stories and Yokomitsu Riichi's *Shanghai*

The semi-colonial Shanghai of the 1920s was a metropolis favored by writers of New Sensationism. Both *Shanghai* by Yokomitsu Riichi and Mu Shiying's short stories are set in Shanghai, where people, both Chinese and Japanese, wander, struggle, and get lost. This essay focuses on the marginalized circumstance and identity crisis of the flâneurs in the text. By exploring the relationship between the past and present, landscape and individual, this essay contends that the haunted past isolates these flâneurs from the outside world, and they cannot establish a stable relationship with the present in the chaotic metropolis. They are thus marginalized in the grand patriotic discourse. Their identity crisis can also be testified by the depiction of the landscape, which is the projection of their disorientation and unsettlement. In sum, neither the colonizers nor the colonized can identify with their nation in semi-colonial Shanghai.

ZHENG Zijing

Naipaul's Rebuttal to the Inevitable Anthropocentrism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and V.S. Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* are both anti-colonial novels that depict people's life in large river basins in the hinterland of Africa. While *Heart of Darkness* castigates colonialism and reveals the living conditions of people in Africa, previous studies have argued that seemingly anti-colonial thoughts in Conrad's novel are potentially colonial in disguise. Meanwhile, studies have stated that the creation of *A Bend in the River* was under the influence of *Heart of Darkness*, but Naipaul pays special attention to the ideological problems in *Heart of Darkness*. He expresses his own anti-colonial thoughts in his novel which demonstrates a unique perspective on colonization. This paper tries to answer the following questions: How do natural depictions in *A Bend in the River* differ from them in *Heart of Darkness*? How do natural depictions in both novels reflect potentially colonial or anti-colonial ideology? How does Naipaul respond to the limitation of Conrad's anti-colonial ideology? The paper contends that the idea expressed through natural depictions in *Heart of Darkness* fails to challenge anthropocentrism which aligns with the interests of Western countries. By contrast, *A Bend in the River* offers critiques of the Western ideologies in *Heart of Darkness* and depicts nature as having equal status with humans.

ZHOU Yating

The Agency of the First-Person Narrative "I" in Slave Narratives: Through the Autobiographies of Olaudah Equiano and Venture Smith

As two slave narratives from the 18th century, Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* and Venture Smith's *Life and Adventures of Venture* both demonstrate the agency of an enslaved individual through their resistance within the constraints of slavery. The chief aim of this paper is to investigate the agency of the first-person narrative "I" in the two narratives within the institution of slavery. The study adopts a comparative analysis method and engages in critical dialogue with Spivak's theories of the subaltern. The result shows that both Equiano and Smith employ the first-person narrative "I" to claim their agency through negotiating power dynamics as well as maintaining cultural identities. Furthermore, the essay discusses the limitations of these narratives as they operate within a dominant Western cultural framework, suggesting that despite their efforts, Equiano and Smith face constraints that shape their portrayals and limit their agency. By closely reading these texts, this analysis underscores the complex interplay between first-person narrative and agency and offers insight in the critical study of slave narratives.

ZHU Lin

Codes of Empire: The Law and the “Contract” in Kipling’s Colonial Narratives

This paper aims to explore the symbolic significance of the “Law” and the “Contract” in Rudyard Kipling’s novel *The Jungle Book* and novella “The Man Who Would Be King” and their implications for understanding Kipling’s views on British colonial policy. The paper points out that the codes depicted in Kipling’s works imply the necessity of colonial rule and provides theoretical support for the justification of colonial behaviour. Firstly, the paper discusses how Kipling uses literary forms and the guise of Freemasonry beliefs to superficially depict the “correct” ways of managing colonies and establishing seemingly fair laws providing moral support for colonial expansion and concealing acts of land seizure. Then, by analysing the violations of codes and their consequences in *The Jungle Book* and “The Man Who Would Be King,” the writer examines how Kipling leverages Edward Said’s Orientalism and Herbert Spencer’s theories of social evolution to give moral and philosophical support to colonial rule. Lastly, the paper notes that while Kipling’s literary works possess charm and profound artistic value, his portrayal and advocacy of colonialism also require us to scrutinize them with a critical eye.

Part B: Linguistics

CHAN Cheuk Yan

The Impact of Multilingualism on Workplace Communication Effectiveness in Hong Kong

This paper examines the impact of multilingualism on workplace communication effectiveness in Hong Kong. The research investigates the patterns of language use, the role, the advantages and disadvantages of multilingualism in workplace communication with a quantitative survey approach. Because of the historical background of Hong Kong, citizens are used to using code-mixing or code-switching in communication. This study focuses on how multilingualism helps or hinders the effectiveness of workplace communication in Hong Kong through a survey of 30 participants from various industries, many from the commercial field. The findings suggest a positive impact of multilingualism in workplace communication as it facilitates better understanding and collaboration among the employees and the clients, especially for those who work in multinational companies. However, language-related challenges, including language preference and proficiency disparities, can be seen as potential barriers hindering the effectiveness of workplace communication as it might frustrate the speakers. The results indicate that using multiple languages enhances workplace communication with both locals and non-locals because of the multicultural workplace settings in Hong Kong.

CHEN Haipei Happy

Articulating and Negotiating Queer Identity: A Co-Cultural Exploration of Coming Out Narratives on Chinese Social Media

Coming out, as a crucial moment for sexual minorities to reveal their authentic identity, has attracted considerable research interest in the field of queer studies. In recent years, the research focus has increasingly shifted to online coming out narratives available on the social media platforms, to investigate the queer identity expressed by digital-mediated discourse. Rooted in queer theory, the current study conducted a narrative analysis on 25 coming out story videos, aiming to explore how Chinese sexual minorities articulate and negotiate their queer identity from a co-cultural communication perspective. This study unpacks three shared themes of coming out stories: awakening of queer identity, detailed coming out experiences and the outcomes of coming out. It reveals that the articulation of queer identity involves the challenging of heteronormativity outside and within the queer co-cultural group. With the emphasis on power dynamics in Chinese families, the chronic and indirect coming out strategies characterized by silence under the influence of cultural values and social norms of Mainland China are examined. 7 types of communication practices involving mirroring, educating others, avoiding controversy, communicating self, extensive preparation, utilizing liaisons and increasing visibility are also identified. The current study highlights Chinese queers' challenging of heteronormativity, and their identity expression and negotiation as a co-cultural group under the influence of traditional cultural values of Mainland China.

Keywords: queer theory, co-cultural communication, identity negotiation, coming out, narrative analysis

CHEN Jiayi

Gucci's "The Awakening" Series: Redefining Femininity in Online Advertising

Online advertising is increasingly attracting consumers and conveying social values and ideologies. However, most previous studies have focused on print media or specific countries when examining female images in advertising. This study explores the construction of female images in contemporary online advertising of a global product. The research adopts the framework of multimodal discourse analysis, combined with social semiotics and multimodality, to study Gucci's "The Awakening" series of perfume advertisements released on YouTube from 2022 to 2023. Through the analysis of visual and textual sources, this study finds the diverse, powerful, and independent female images in "The Awakening." These advertisements overturn the traditional aesthetic standards of white skin, blonde hair, slim body, and perfect face in advertising, and emphasize the uniqueness of women. In addition, they also challenge power relations in which women are seen as in traditional roles or as decoration, and convey the values that women should pursue career success and strong willpower. This study analyzes the video from representational, interactive, and compositional dimensions, providing a new perspective for the study of female image construction in contemporary online advertising. This study also provides a reference for the evolution of female images in the media landscape.

CHEN Zhixin Joy

Mourners on Weibo: A Discourse Analysis of How People Grieve on Chinese Social Media

This research examines the linguistic features of individuals' writing and expressions about their loss as mourners through a corpus-assisted qualitative study of a public Weibo account's posts. This article argues that the target account is a typical manifestation of Weibo's affordances, serving a similar function as hashtags to gather users and content surrounding a specific topic of death, as well as to form a special community where individuals share, connect, and resonate. Based on the analysis of a corpus containing 88 posts in two dimensions (keywords and collocations), the research finds that individuals often speak directly to the deceased rather than present their loss experience to the audience from a third-person view. This is evidenced by the frequent and extensive use of the first-person pronoun "I" and the second-person "you" in mourning expressions. Another finding is that Chinese users tend to associate with the concept of eternity to express their hope for a good afterlife for the deceased. The article also argues that the dominant characteristics of anonymity and collectivity established by the combined force of Weibo's platform affordances and the users' habits shape such online mourning practices and encourage mourners to speak through the account as a method of facing death. This research contributes to a better understanding of death expressions and written mourning practices on social networking sites in the unique context of the Chinese online community.

CHENG Cheng Cecilia

Reversing Roles, Subverting Norms: An Analysis of Females' Cross-Dressing Performances on Douyin

This study investigates females' cross-dressing performances on Douyin, focusing on videos that follow the trend of imitating "greasy men." The study runs a Python-scraping programme to retrieve videos with related hashtags and collects the five highest played videos from three users that appear most frequently in the result. Two modes are found in the dataset, namely verbal modes articulated by "greasy men," and visual modes including images, gestures, and gazes. The study adopts critical discourse analysis by Fairclough (1993) and visual grammar proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) to analyze the verbal modes and visual modes respectively. The analysis finds that features of "greasy men" include self-centeredness, arrogance, overconfidence, and disrespect for women. The study argues that "greasy men" imitating videos reflect the sexualization of women and patriarchal hegemony, which are long-lasting oppressions on women. "Greasy men" cross-dressing performances reverse the conventional gender conceptions, place women's plight under the spotlight, and subvert the long-held belief in social norms that suppress women in essence. Female influencers elevate the meaning of cross-dressing performance from it simply being a way to liberate sexual minorities, to it becoming a means to foreground women's progressive struggle for gender equality on a larger social scale.

Keywords: cross-dressing performances, critical discourse analysis, visual grammar, sexualization, patriarchal hegemony

CHU Wai Yin Joshua

Employment Opportunities for Hong Kong English Teachers: Does Native-Speakerism Matter?

This essay presents findings from an empirical study that adopts a mixed-methods approach to investigate if native-speakerism affects employment decisions made by English department heads in Hong Kong schools at different bandings. The research is based on three English department heads from different schools at different bandings in Hong Kong. The figures show that generally speaking, all English department heads, regardless of the bandings of their serving schools, prefer candidates who speak with a British English accent and with a British background. However, when making the final employment decision, the heads of the Band 2 and Band 3 schools tend to choose the local candidate while the head of the Band 1 school tend to choose the British candidate. When being interviewed, all three interviewees attribute hiring decisions to factors of solidarity, relatability, comprehensibility and expectations from parents and the school's management board. It is found that there is a positive correlation between the school banding and the impact of native-speakerism.

Keywords: English Language Teaching (ELT), World Englishes, Hong Kong schools, language attitudes, Hong Kong, varieties of English, accented English, empirical studies, employment, native-speakerism

DU Chaole

A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Bodyform/Libresse Femvertising

Lazar (2006) found beauty ads had become a space to produce a “power femininity.” This form of advertising that empowers women can be called femvertising. This study investigates two Bodyform/Libresse femvertisements that won awards at the Cannes International Creative Festival in 2021 and 2023 respectively. The goal of this study is to explore how these advertisements achieved women's empowerment and drew attention to women's physiological issues. Employing multimodal discourse analysis, the author finds that advertisers cleverly utilize thermal imaging, animation, and appropriate background music to resonate with audiences. Bodyform/Libresse acts as a speaker of female audiences, and creates exclusive communication communities for women, respecting their diversity and differences. However, the use of empowering discourse strategies cannot conceal the underlying profit-making intentions. This study can provide some insights into women's empowerment in the advertising industry, which can inspire linguistic researchers and related industries to reflect on how to better promote gender equality in a multimodal way.

Keywords: women empowerment, femvertising, menstrual period, womb, empowering discourse strategies, multimodal discourse analysis

FANG Chenchen

“What Are Homosexuals in China Like?”: Stance Analysis of Comments on Zhihu

To fill the research gap in Chinese homosexual studies from the digital discursive perspective, this paper conducts a digital discourse analysis studying the stance of Zhihu posters on homosexuals, lesbians especially, and its function in constructing their own sexual identity from three aspects, namely evidentiality, affect and presence, with the help of Hyland's framework of linguistic markers of stance and Butler's speech-act theory of performativity. This study finds that though most posters on Zhihu try to depict homosexual figures in an objective way, they implicitly or directly show their positive or negative attitudes towards homosexuals, and they present themselves in a superior position and construct their sexuality with covert prestige. However, despite the failure of Zhihu to become a “public sphere” for rational communication, Zhihu, with the presence of people with multiple sexualities, including homosexuals, bisexuals, and straight people, have promoted mutual understanding between different sexualities to some extent.

Keywords: homosexuality, digital discourse, stance analysis

FENG Mengchu Mengchill

Constructing China's Image: A Multimodal Metaphoric Analysis of the 19th Asian Games Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony of international events serves as a significant platform for China to construct and disseminate its image globally. As a result, analyzing the opening ceremonies of these events provides valuable data for the study of the construction of China's image. However, whereas most studies are focused on the Olympic Games opening ceremony, few studies are about China's Asian Games opening ceremonies in the field of sociolinguistics. This paper aims to conduct a multimodal metaphoric analysis exploring the distinct national image of China as portrayed during the opening ceremony of the 19th Asian Games, which is an event uniquely situated within an international context that exclusively features Asian athletes. It shows that the opening ceremony uses a rich variety of multimodal metaphors, including ontological metaphors and structural metaphors to shape the multifaceted image of China, which is a country committed to promoting “co-development in Asia,” “inclusiveness and sharing” and “environmental sustainability.” For instance, the ontological metaphors using lanterns and the color red as source domain targeting China's good wishes for Asian countries metaphorically constructs China as a supporter of co-development in Asia. This study provides new perspectives for constructing China's image while also contributing to our comprehension of how countries employ symbolic language to influence perceptions and advance cultural narratives.

GU Xiaoxuan

A Multimodal Study of Chinese Greetings Learning Through Textbooks and Online Courses

Prior research has investigated learning Chinese as a second or foreign language and its greetings from different aspects, such as the Chinese learning anxiety and Chinese greetings and their responses. This study explores Chinese greetings learning through textbooks and online courses from a multimodal perspective. It focuses on the analysis of visual content in both mediums using visual grammar and examines the teacher's movements in the online course through resemiotization. The visual content effectively shows the widespread usage of Chinese greetings, manifests the nonlinguistic aspects of Chinese greetings, and maintains an objective and equal learning experience. Key examples are provided to demonstrate how visual elements, such as images, video clips, teacher's gaze and gestures, enrich the learning experience and contribute to a more holistic understanding of Chinese greetings. Furthermore, the study shows how the online course distinguishes itself by incorporating a broader range of modes, more detailed knowledge, and the active engagement of the teacher. By highlighting the significance of visual content and the role of the teacher in creating an engaging and effective learning environment, this study offers some insights for language educators and curriculum designers, promoting a deeper understanding of the language and its culture.

GUO Yuchen

A Critical Discourse Analysis of *The New York Times*'s Report on the Israel-Hamas War Based on Distant Suffering Theory

Since the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war in October 2023, the number of civilian casualties has continued to grow. It is a tragedy for the people of both countries, and it catches the attention of observers from all over the world. The United States, as a pro-Israel regime, has shown contradictory behavior during the conflict. To explore the power relations in the political stance of the United States, this paper applies Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and the distant suffering theory to analyze how the American newspaper *The New York Times* portrays the victim's images in the war and what kind of ideology it holds. By combining quantitative and qualitative research methods, this paper analyzes the news corpus and finds that the news discourse in the United States shows Western-centric tendency and hegemonic ideology by distinguishing between the suffering East as “other” and the peaceful and powerful West as “us.”

HAN Xuan

Harmonious Harbin: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of a Promotional Video

As media technology evolves, people no longer understand the world through only static verbal text or images; multimodal elements, such as videos, have become essential. These elements integrate pictures, text, and sound to form a multimodal discourse, allowing people to understand certain information comprehensively. It plays a vital role in tourism as it is more reliable than just pictures or reviews. This paper conducts a multimodal discourse analysis of a promotional video of Harbin. By drawing on Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar, the paper explores the integration of different resources, visual images, and subtitles for narration. In addition, the analysis reveals how meaning is constructed through verbal and visual resources and how these resources work together to portray a new city image of love, beauty, and uniqueness. The study concludes that the promotional video effectively shows viewers Harbin's beautiful natural scenery, hospitable people, and unique city culture. In addition, this study contributes to the growing body of research on multimodal discourse analysis in tourism promotion. It emphasizes the importance of adopting an integrated approach to understanding multimedia communication's complex interrelationships between different semiotic modes.

Keywords: multimodal discourse analysis, promotional video, Harbin

HU Jie

Language Practices and Ideologies on Thai Restaurant Signs in Kowloon City

This study concentrates on the linguistic landscape of Thai restaurant signs in Kowloon City (often called "Little Thailand"), aiming to discover the language practices adopted on the signs and explore language ideologies reflected behind them. Given that most previous studies about language ideologies focus on native language and English while few pay attention to the minority language, this study finds it necessary to conduct research to explore this aspect by analyzing language practices on Thai restaurant signs in Kowloon City. Both qualitative and quantitative methods will be applied to conduct the analysis. The study finds that Chinese is used most frequently in the research area and often placed in a more prominent place on the signs. Trilingual signs are preferred more than monolingual and bilingual ones. On trilingual signs, Chinese and English often play the informational role while Thai tends to serve a symbolic function. These language practices reflect several language ideologies in the research community: Chinese is regarded as superior, English is a symbol of modernity, and Thai is a marker of authenticity. This study can help us have a better understanding of the status and roles of each language in Kowloon City.

HUANG Shiting

The Relationship Between Accent Preferences and Educational Background: A Case Study of Mainland English Studies Postgraduates in the University of Hong Kong

This research takes Mainland English Studies postgraduates at the University of Hong Kong as an example to conduct a qualitative study on the relationship between English accent preference and educational background. 20 postgraduate students majoring in English at the University of Hong Kong were interviewed through online one-on-one interviews. This study has two main findings: the accent preference of postgraduate English Studies students is not determined by their prior English education, and the English Studies programme at the University of Hong Kong has inspired Mainland postgraduate students to consider accent preference and equality, but this inspiration cannot compete with the reality of inequality.

LAO Chengxi Crystal

Commodification of English: Identity Construction by Native English Speaking Teachers and Non-Native English Speaking Teachers on Xiaohongshu

With the influence of "native speakerism" (Holliday, 2005), which refers to the belief that native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) are inherently better equipped to teach English due to their language proficiency, non-native English speaking teachers (NNESTs) are treated differently from NESTs in the job market. By applying multimodal critical discourse analysis, this study examines the teacher identity construction by NESTs and NNESTs and the commodification of English on Xiaohongshu. It finds that NESTs and NNESTs construct their professional identities as English teachers similarly, utilizing imperative language, maintaining an intermediate social distance, self-labeling as educators, and correcting the "wrong." In an attempt to maintain a relatively balanced power relationship with the NESTs, NNESTs try to conceal their non-nativeness and mainly rely on demonstrating native-like linguistic competence and establishing their prestige in academia, compensating for the non-native deficiencies argued in the standard language ideology and native speakerism. The professional image of both NESTs and NNESTs created by utilizing abundant visual resources and discursive strategies stimulates audiences' interest in "purchasing" the language product, promoting the commodification of English that presents students as customers, the class as a vehicle for success and upward mobility, and the idea of selling nativeness on Xiaohongshu. This research contributes to the understanding of professional English teachers' identity construction and examines the impact of language commodification on English language instruction in the Chinese social media platform Xiaohongshu, shedding light on how to appropriately perceive language content that has been commodified.

LI Hongjiang

What's a Better Education: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Zhang Xuefeng's Academic Advising Services in Mainland China

This study, as a critical discourse analysis, examines the statements made by one of the most influential academic advisors in Mainland China, Zhang Xuefeng, during his livestreams under Fairclough's (1989) three-dimensional framework for textual analysis. In his livestreams, the academic advisor offers academic suggestions regarding higher education for the local students. Through analyzing the excerpts taken from his livestreams surrounding English majors as a case study, this qualitative study investigates what the hidden ideologies and power relations are under the relevant public academic advising discourse. The analysis shows that the advisor applies different vocatives and subjunctive mood to establish authority and persuasiveness for his statements at the textual level, and that ideologies of testocracy, academic hierarchies, and vocationalism are identified at the discursive level. The analysis of social practice identifies with the prescriptive approach in academic advising and the creative model in social media engagement, where academic prescriptions are reflective of and reinforcing to the power imbalances in Mainland China's higher education to empower his contents, namely the inferiority placed on students who cannot acquire a high score in standardized national tests or enter universities in important national projects and knowledge that cannot be directly applied for tangible financial rewards.

LI Jiang

Critical Discourse Analysis of China's Images Portrayed by CNN and BBC

Online news media holds the “brush” to paint different images of different countries, thus manipulating the public’s perception. China, as a rising developing country, has gained much attention from Western news media, particularly BBC and CNN. Previous studies have focused on the mutual linguistic depiction between China and other countries. However, few research has explored the differences in the images of China portrayed respectively by BBC and CNN. To further probe how the two media platforms manipulate linguistic features to influence the public’s perceptions, this study conducted a critical discourse analysis, particularly Fairclough’s three-dimensional framework and Huckin’s framework of text analysis, aiming to explore the linkage between “discourse, ideology and power.” This paper examined 16 pieces of news articles and uncovered that CNN tends to position China as an influential yet threatening power and create boundaries between China and other countries by foregrounding China’s prominence in the impact on the globe and manipulating sequence, word choice, statistics, addresses and omission, revealing CNN’s hegemonic concern, whereas BBC presents a contrastively neutral image. This study stresses the need for news readers to raise awareness of scrutinizing news coverage by considering diplomatic relations and denaturalizing ideologies woven into the news reports.

LI Shuyang Libra

Identifying Global and Culture-Specific Dimension of Linguistic Creativity in Print Advertising

Global enterprises are confronted with the decision of whether to standardize or to glocalize when they enter a foreign market. Glocalization manifests itself not only in the content of posters (Alden et al., 1993) but also in the utilization of linguistic creative techniques in advertising, including code-mixing, idiomatic expressions, and visual intertextuality (Ahmad, 2018; Carter & McCarthy, 2004; Martin, 2024). Researchers have compared advertisements from various nations or analyzed the use of different languages in advertisements within one region. For instance, Hatzithomas et al. (2011) opined that the UK and Greece each possessed a diverse range of communication devices that reflected their respective cultures. And Forceville (2017) noted that linguistic creative strategies that unintentionally insult the target market’s culture might lead to advertising misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Based on literature mentioned above and a multimodal discourse analysis of 147 posts posted by McDonald’s and Hong Kong McDonald’s official Instagram accounts, this study claims that McDonald’s tailor its linguistic creative strategies in posts, with posts posted by the account without targeted region showing preference for morphologically creative devices (e.g., “are u ready to order”), while Hong Kong McDonald’s preference is to use both linguistic and visual components and require cultural-specific background knowledge to decode the message (e.g., “gaa2 gaa2 zan3” (搞搞震), a Cantonese phrase meaning “to make a mess”). This study shows how linguistic creativity expresses the brand’s purpose of appealing to the target market in the glocalization process. It also emphasizes the influence of cultural values and background knowledge on linguistic decisions.

LI Ying Zoe

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Impoliteness in Conflict Talk Between Couples in *Gold Medal Mediation*

Conflict talk is a prevalent phenomenon in human communication, often involving face-threatening acts that can damage or threaten the interlocutor’s socially valued reputation. This study adopts the critical discourse analysis approach combined with Bousfield’s impoliteness theory to analyze the impoliteness in conflict talk and the impoliteness strategies used by couples to attack the interlocutor’s face in the Chinese television reality show *Gold Medal Mediation*. The researcher collected and transcribed conflict talk episodes from the show and identified five impoliteness strategies commonly deployed by the couples: challenge, criticize, block, snub, and disassociation. The analysis reveals that broader social, cultural, and ideological forces shape the dynamics of these conflictual exchanges, such as egocentrism, gender expectations, social moral norms, motherhood dilemmas, and monogamy. The qualitative empirical research conducted on the discourse corpus in the mediation show provides insights into power relations and hidden social ideologies embedded in interpersonal conflicts within Chinese couples.

LI Yixuan

Linguistic Function and the Realization of Signs in Hong Kong Public Places

Public signs play a critical role in communication, offering information, guidance, and warnings in public spaces. In multilingual and multicultural regions like Hong Kong, where Cantonese and English are commonly used, public signs convey messages in unique ways. Inspired by notices found in Hong Kong streets that go viral online for their clever wording, this study collects signage in Hong Kong as samples as well as comments and discussions on social media platforms to explore the effectiveness of public signs in fulfilling their intended functions, and to analyze their linguistic features. Employing discourse analysis as the primary research method, this study aims to uncover the underlying meanings, social interactions, and power dynamics embedded in public signs. Furthermore, utilizing linguistic landscape theory, this research investigates the visibility and salience of public signs. This research offers insights into the complex interplay between language, culture, and identity in Hong Kong’s dynamic urban environment.

Keywords: sign language, linguistic landscape, discourse analysis

LIANG Zishan Liz

Visual Grammar Analysis of Fast Fashion Women’s Ads: Zara as an Example

Domestic and foreign scholars like Lazar (2006) analyzed beauty ads in Singaporean English-language newspapers from 2001 to 2005, examining the feminization of power, empowerment, conflict, and potential impacts. Women in advertising have been studied extensively, but brand or sector advertising has not. This study uses Zara, a fast fashion business, to examine its female image in ads. A random sample of 35 female Zara Weibo ads from the first quarter of 2024 was used for the study. Based on Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) used visual grammar from representational, interactive, and compositional meanings to interpret these female advertisements’ image elements from three perspectives and summarise Zara’s female images to help the public understand women’s rights and status. The analysis shows that Zara’s female advertising images fall into three categories: women wearing skirts to show femininity; the “big woman” wearing a suit, with independent thought, initiative, and leadership; and neutral-clad women downplaying “masculinity” and “femininity.” Zara conveys an open, inclusive, and diverse brand image by displaying diverse female images, which can attract diverse customer groups, increasing Zara’s market share. Overall, the visual grammar study of female advertising in fast fashion brands provides a concrete empirical case for linguistic research, which helps the field understand advertising’s language, visual elements, and female image shaping and conveying. This is important for studying advertising language and female image and promoting gender equality and empowerment.

LIN Yaqian Eva

How to Promote China? A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of China-Themed Thumbnails on YouTube

Many videos introducing China as their main theme have garnered millions of views on YouTube, where a thumbnail plays an important role in attracting viewers. Utilizing Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar, this study explores the visual communication strategies in 20 thumbnails from the top 10 most-viewed China-themed videos in two YouTube channels. The analysis reveals a consistent design pattern emphasizing China's urban and infrastructural advancements, while also addressing its "backward" aspects. The interactive meaning is conveyed through vertical angles and high modality, granting viewers a sense of power and credibility. Compositional contrasts highlight China's differences with other nations, contributing to a nuanced portrayal of China as a developing yet competitive nation. These thumbnails significantly influence user engagement and the perception of China's national image on YouTube. China is constructed as a nation with significant development and coexisting problems, a competitor to other countries.

LIU Xingyu Stella

A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Female Representation in English Textbooks

Textbook is a fruitful site for studying gender representation. Previous studies show underrepresentation and/or biased representation of women, and few studies cover female representations in the reformed version of the English textbooks used in China's senior high schools. This study investigates both the linguistic and visual ways in which the three compulsory volumes of *English* (2019) display the images of female characters. Using multimodal critical discourse analysis, we identify female representations and the implicit gender ideologies and stereotypes in the specific two social contexts: academic performance at schools, and the occupations/social roles of females. The results show that in the school-related context, female students are mostly portrayed stereotypically within conservative discourse, such as being well-behaved and introvert. The representations of the occupations/social roles of females are intertwined by both egalitarian and conservative narratives as being career-oriented and independent while being confined to motherhood-related issues. The findings suggest an interplay of the conservative and egalitarian discourses of gender ideologies (Lazar, 2007), which potentially serves as a means of maintaining the traditional male hegemony. This research provides new insights into the relationships between the multimodal female representations and the underlying gender ideologies in the reformed textbooks in China.

LIU Yichen

Toys as Micro-Celebrities and Self-Branding on Toy Accounts: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Toy Accounts on Xiaohongshu

This article seeks to investigate the issue of self-branding on toy accounts on social media. Previous research on self-branding primarily focused on accounts of owners themselves (Wang & Feng, 2022), and some studies also focused on accounts about pets or children (Holiday et al., 2022; Maddox, 2021; Ngai, 2023). However, the issue of toy accounts remains unexplored in self-branding discussions. This article raises the research question of how toy account owners use verbal and visual resources in their profiles and posts to construct their identities and how toy account owners intend to seek connections with viewers through their posts. The article believes that the self-branding of toy accounts is essentially the self-presentation of toy account owners. This article concludes three approaches for toy account owners to publish their posts, i.e., the combination of human and toy information on profile, personification, and narrative practice, by conducting multimodal discourse analysis on the toy account profiles and posts. Moreover, these approaches contribute to revealing the personal information of toy account owners, displaying their creativity, and resonating with the audience. The study examines self-branding from the perspective of non-self-accounts, making diverse ways of self-expression on social media platforms visible.

LYU Zihan

The Semantic Change of *Yuan*: Complexity of Social Attitudes Towards Beauty

Yuan is a Chinese word that refers to beautiful women. However, after experiencing a series of criticisms of yuan-related terms, yuan has taken on the connotation of materialistic and hypocritical women. This paper examines the process of the semantic change of yuan on Weibo through three terms: *mingyuan*, *foyuan*, and *bingyuan*. Based on the original meaning of yuan and the characteristics of the yuan-related terms, this paper believes that exploring the social attitudes towards beauty can reconstruct the process of semantic change of yuan. It shows that the semantic change of yuan is related to the criteria imposed on beauty. The more criteria there are for beauty, the easier it is for the pejoration of yuan. Considering the connection between language and gender, some are asking for yuan to return to its original meaning by different methods. These methods essentially free beauty from its criteria. It can be seen that the semantic change of yuan is the struggle between beauty and its criteria, which reflects society's requirements for women.

MA Dongchen

China Witnessed and Reimagined: Shared Discourse in Travel Vlogs

This study explores how foreign travelers, through representing China as a destination that defies general expectations of their cultural context with a series of multimodal resources, construct the discourse of self-presenting and establishing their cultural majority in 30 travel vlogs on YouTube. As information dissemination on contemporary social media requires immediacy and view counts, the image of a travel destination, a construct of subjective perceptions and affections, has become increasingly influenced by the deliberate presentation of the vloggers. Therefore, while producing and sharing similar representations of China, their roles of both travelers and content creators also imply certain cultural advantages. With the three-dimension model for discourse analysis and the framework of visual grammar, the multimodal analysis focuses on the vloggers' sociocultural motivations for representing China with similar textual and visual resources. The visual presentation of themselves and their relations with Chinese elements and people functions as indicators to demonstrate their validity and balance their subjectivity and authentic experience; and their verbal comments and descriptions, on such a basis, shape China as unexpected from their sociocultural criteria to maintain and develop their relations with other travelers and potential viewers in the same context.

MA Man Pok Anthony

Analysis of the Preferences and Effects of Praise Among Secondary School Students

Some existing studies suggested that receiving process praise has a more constructive effect on the receiver than nature praise. This study examines the preferences and effects of praise among secondary school students. Ten secondary school students participated in the personal interview with the writer. The result indicated that there is an obvious difference among the genders in the way of delivering praise. However, there is no significant difference in gender in the content of praise. The findings of this study can be valuable for parents and for people working in the educational field.

MA Rong

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Commercialization of Higher Education in Hong Kong: A Case Study of the Business School Undergraduate Admissions Prospectuses

With the influence of promotion culture, the commercialization of higher education has become a trend. To further understand the impact of promotional culture on the discourse practice of universities in Hong Kong, this study uses Fairclough's three-dimensional discourse analysis theory to conduct text analysis, discursive practice analysis, and social practice analysis of the business school undergraduate admissions prospectuses of the top three universities and two private universities in Hong Kong. The results show that all five universities use first-person and second-person pronouns to narrow the distance between the school and the readers. In addition, all five schools use a large number of evaluative adjectives and superlative forms to promote the quality of their education while presenting the school information, to make the higher education service more specific. The two private schools put more emphasis on the beautiful campus environment to increase their competitiveness. In terms of syntax, the prospectuses of these five schools form a generic intertext with advertising discourse. The combination of short sentences, phrases, pictures, and colors impresses readers deeply in a short time. In terms of social practice, the five schools promote their international education to cater to the tastes of the education market.

MA Yuge

A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Anti-Aging in Cosmetic Brand Advertisements

Drawing on a multimodal critical discourse analysis perspective, this study analyzes four anti-aging cosmetic advertisements by L'Oréal, Clarins and Estée Lauder to analyze how celebrity images influence consumers and how anti-aging and feminist empowerment perspectives are represented in the advertisements. The theoretical frameworks applied in this study are Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021) three aspects of visual grammar and Halliday's (2014) three metafunctions of language. The analysis shows that brands use celebrity images to enhance the authenticity of their products. The celebrities in the advertisements succeeded in constructing attractive images through their photos or interviews, and the meaning along with their identities was given to the product they endorsed, with the promise of helping to create an equally healthy and authentic self for the user of that product. The advertisements communicate the idea of successful aging to older women by giving them the autonomy to look young through the discourse of female empowerment. This notion views aging as pathological and believes that the natural aging process can be reversed through the use of anti-aging products.

MAZHAR Saherish

Critical Discourse Analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian War Reporting by Al-Jazeera English and BBC

Using critical discourse analysis, this paper analyses the reporting of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian war. The paper examines the news articles published on the websites of two international news outlets: Al Jazeera English and the British Broadcasting Corporation. This study focuses on news reports published in a one-week period from 7 October 2023 to 14 October 2023. The findings show substantial differences in the way things are reported, as assessed by CDA. BBC is mainly found to be foregrounding the plight and suffering of hostages taken by Hamas, while legitimising the attacks by IDF on the Palestinian residents in the Gaza Strip. The findings of this study suggest that the way these two newspapers represent the two different groups in their reports is highly driven by their political orientations. AJE is found to be more pro-Palestinian by foregrounding innocent Palestinians and their suffering, while there is not much sympathy shown by BBC to them.

MEI Yajie

The Fùnǚ (Women) Label as an Agent for Ideological Shift of Female Image

Fùnǚ (妇女, "women" in Chinese) as a label used to connote a negative female image. In recent years the Women's Day Festival has caused the public to reflect on the social meanings of such a label in an ongoing online movement. The association of social meanings for a linguistic sign requires several steps, as Agha mentions the engagement by language users with the sign in different contexts. Kang and Chen suggest the concept of stance-taking to identify the roles users play in re-constructing meanings. The current study has identified three strategies used in the movement to achieve such association: (1) the reference of historical origin; (2) the deconstruction of gender stereotypes; (3) the establishment of a new positive image. Through the strategies the study shows how the "women" label is attached to novel social meanings and a new positive female image.

NI Ruohan

Ambient Affiliation in Comments on Xiaohongshu's Rett Syndrome Short Lay Videos

The prevalence of short lay videos in the field of health communication has opened the way for lay people to access the lives of people who have rare diseases. By applying ambient affiliation analysis, the current research explores how the communal identities within the commenting community formed around the short lay videos of Rett Syndrome are discursively constructed. Three textual personae with shared values of support, sympathy, and empathy are enacted in the comments. In addition, it was found that a combination of different types of couplings is a common strategy used to intensify the sense of shared values. The current study provides insights into the understanding of the formation of social bonding shared by the digital community formed in the comments on the type of videos that are under-investigated.

Keywords: ambient affiliation, health communication, lay videos, communal identities, coupling

QIU Lezi Dorian

Indexing Gendered Language in Online Tampon Product Reviews

Language not only reflects gender roles but also constructs them (Ochs, 1992; Palan, 2001). How does language shape and reflect gender identities and norms in specific contexts? This study examines the gendered language used in 567 online reviews of feminine hygiene products, specifically Tampax, sold on Walmart's US website. The study applies gender indexicality to explore how the language of female consumers reflects gender roles in their reviews. This research investigates consumer discourse by analyzing the frequency and context of key content words, personal pronouns, evaluative expressions and other narrative aspects both quantitatively and through in-depth case studies. For instance, the preference for the first-person singular pronouns in the reviews suggests that female consumers relate tampon usage to personal experience. The findings indicate a significant shift towards open and friendly communication about menstruation, actively challenging conventional stereotypes and gender norms. This analysis contributes to linguistic research by demonstrating how gendered language in online consumer reviews actively reflects and influences societal norms and identities.

SONG Shujin Sylvia

Empathy and Destigmatization: Ambient Affiliation in Comments on Menstrual Education Videos

Previous studies have suggested that social media can foster virtual communities of ambient affiliation through diverse social interactions across various contexts. However, ambient affiliation has not been investigated within online comments concerning health promotion and disease stigma. This paper fills this gap by examining the intersection of health education and menstrual stigma through the ambient affiliation framework. This paper argues that ambient affiliation within online commenting practices contributes to health promotion and menstrual destigmatization. By analyzing comments on menstrual education videos on Bilibili.com, this paper identified recurrent linguistic patterns illustrating how ambient affiliation is discursively constructed and which concepts are negotiated and reinforced. A qualitative analysis showed that viewers' ambient affiliation emerged through communing and dialogic affiliation strategies centered around specific ideation-attitude couplings in five major kinds of interactions: evaluating the video and its participants, sharing experiences, negotiating knowledge, seeking advice, and addressing menstrual stigma. This paper indicates that by leveraging ambient affiliation, researchers can develop more effective communication strategies to promote positive health outcomes and foster gender equity and social justice.

Keywords: ambient affiliation, affiliation strategies, menstruation, medical education videos, online comments

SUN Chen

A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of *The Economist's* China-Related Front Covers

Traditional discourse analysis is limited to language symbols and ignores other forms of discourse expression. In recent years, there have been an increasing number of studies focusing on China-related discourse from a purely linguistic perspective. However, there are relatively few works that study China-related discourse from the perspective of multimodal critical discourse analysis. This paper takes *The Economist's* China-related covers as research samples and uses Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar (1996) and Forceville's multimodal metaphor (2002) as the theoretical framework to examine the multimodal constructed characteristics of the selected covers and the ideologies they convey. The study finds that in terms of representational meaning, *The Economist* tends to use action and eyeline as vectors to construct narrative images. In terms of interactive meaning, *The Economist's* China-related covers mainly use high-modality images. In terms of compositional meaning, *The Economist* often utilizes a top-bottom structure to present the main information. At the multimodal metaphor level, *The Economist* pays special attention to China's economic and social issues. In the metaphorical mapping process, the source domain is mapped onto the target domain (China) by associating it with specific characteristics (e.g., dangerous, evil, shaky). *The Economist* highlights the poor economic prospects and social unrest of China, expressing its negative expectations and accusations of China. This paper applies visual grammar and multimodal metaphor to the multimodal critical discourse analysis of magazine covers, providing a new perspective for interpreting cover images. This paper reveals the stances and attitudes of the Western mainstream media towards China, reminding readers of the need to read critically and learn to identify the ideology and power expression behind the multimodal discourse.

SUN Hanyi

Power and Empowerment: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Lululemon's "Further" Campaign

Regarding the profound capacity of advertising as a cultural institution to influence our beliefs and actions (Fairclough, 2015), it is crucial to continuously analyze how gendered commercials construct power and empowerment in relation to gender roles. While numerous studies have examined the contemporary articulation of gender ideologies in media culture (Gill & Elias, 2017; Lazar, 2006), there is a scarcity of research specifically addressing sports material on social media. Therefore, this paper investigates the discursive strategies employed in Lululemon's advertising campaign "Further" to expose the hidden ideologies presented in the sports commercial discourses. Taking a postfeminist stance, this research specifically focuses on the intricacy of this campaign which involves both feminism and anti-feminism. After incorporating data from social media posts, the multimodal critical discourse analysis approach is adopted to examine the textual and visual resources in the "Further" campaign. The analysis shows that Lululemon has utilized multiple strategies to showcase its feminist standpoint and boost brand consumption, such as competition with men, gender essentialism, erasure of differences among women, and idealization and simplification of females' situations. Although this campaign seems to empower women and advocate feminist progress, it still mirrors the submission to the hegemonic patriarchal and capital norms.

Keywords: postfeminism, gender, advertisement

TAO Yangchun

A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Gender Stereotypes in the English Textbook *Junior New Concept English*

Preschool textbooks assume a pivotal role in the formation of children's perception of gender in early childhood. Recent research has shown that illustrations in textbooks can deliver information just as texts and exert influence on learner's notions. Considering the effect of preschool textbooks as well as illustrations on the formation of children's gender identity, this study analyzes the existence of gender stereotypes in the English textbook *Junior New Concept English* under the guidance of visual grammar. Through the examination of three metafunctions of visual grammar, this study argues that gender stereotypes, including the gender differences in social participation and function, occupations, clothing choices, mental state, etc., are implicitly expressed or subconsciously conveyed to students through the illustrations. Additionally, the study suggests that textbook designers are aware of the significance of breaking gender stereotypes, which is an optimistic trend in textbook improvement. However, this article emphasizes that to promote the correct development of the student's gender perspective, the deliberate creation of gender equality in textbooks is not sufficient, and attention should also be paid to the elimination of gender stereotypes unconsciously conveyed.

TU Jiaping Gloria

"Trust Me, I'm the Expert": A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Douyin's Commercialized Parenting Influencers

This research delves into how commercialized parenting influencers craft their expert image and impact the consumption of online parenting information, specifically on Douyin, one of China's most widely-used short video platforms. As parenting communities become increasingly interconnected, parenting influencers are increasingly gaining popularity, raising public concerns about how parents perceive online parenting information. In this regard, a qualitative multimodal critical discourse analysis method is utilized to examine the video content of fifteen commercialized parenting influencers, defined as those who own online businesses. It is seen that the selected influencers have effectively employed various inter-semiotic resources in terms of discursive, visual, and auditory aspects to construct their own expert identity and authoritative image. Visually, influencers' attire, body language, and crafted setting positions construct expertise, while their video titles, color schemes, and animations are designed to be eye-catching, coupled with their discursive strategies of simplified terms and negative labeling to create a sense of urgency among viewers. The discussion highlights the importance of contemporary social media platforms in online parenting and the crucial impact of commercial logic behind online parenting information. Essentially, it reminds parents to carefully examine the authenticity of so-called parenting experts and be critical of social media parenting advice.

WANG Yue

Aging Anxiety in Senior Chinese Female on Social Media: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

As the global population ages, understanding the perspectives of the elderly becomes increasingly relevant. This study examines how senior female influencers on Xiaohongshu construct their identities and articulate their feelings towards aging. The dataset includes 20 posts from ten senior Chinese female influencers on Xiaohongshu, including cover pictures and captions. By employing Kress and van Leeuwen's (2020) visual grammar and Halliday's (2013) meta-functions theory, the study reveals that these elderly female influencers project themselves as sophisticated and empowered and also highlight their individuality. Through strategic use of visual and linguistic techniques, they challenge the conventional perceptions of aging, particularly those related to senior women, celebrate the process of growing grey and advocate for inclusivity. The posts also expose aging-related anxieties, such as concerns over appearance, indicating a complex emotional landscape where positivity and underlying tensions coexist. This study not only illuminates the experiences of elderly Chinese women but also enhances our broader understanding of aging.

WONG Cheung Man Anson

The Impact of English Accent During Job Interviews in the Hong Kong Workplace

Hong Kong students consider native English accents to be the most appropriate accent for job interviews. Chui and Lee (2015) found that even if two candidates provide identical answers, interviewers prefer to hire the candidate with the native English accent. Chan (2016) also demonstrates that secondary and university students still perceive the Hong Kong English accent as having a lower status than the RP accent. However, the literature mentioned only reflects prevalent views in educational institutions. This study aims to shed light on workplace interviewers' attitudes towards candidates with different accents. This study meticulously prepares three audiotapes of three-minute self-introductions for a job interview, which are recorded by a native English speaker, a Mandarin English accent speaker, and an HK English accent speaker. Subsequently, 18 professional interviewers invited from sizable companies evaluated them solely based on their voices with different accents. The results demonstrate that an English accent will not significantly affect interviewers' hiring decision and the Hong Kong English accent speaker gained the most favorable impression. These findings have significant implications, suggesting that people do not need to place undue emphasis on acquiring a native English accent for a job interview, thereby reducing unnecessary stress and anxiety in job seekers.

WU Rui Raye

The Construction of "Healthy Food": A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Food Advertising

Eating healthily has become an important concern for many people. Foods that claim their healthy properties and foster a connection with the concept of health are popular among customers. This research looks into the question of how advertising pictures of diet food products function to define and construct images of healthy food, and what ideological values are conveyed by this process. By using multimodal critical discourse analysis to analyse food advertisements on Amazon, it is concluded that food advertising tends to construct food products as the representation of science, technology and rationality, and build a close connection between food and nature. For example, advertisements often use numbers to quantify nutrient content, indicating that the food products are tested scientifically. Furthermore, the colour green is often used to make people think of the natural environment. By deconstructing the concept of "healthy food," this research helps to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between language and advertising.

WU Xiaowen

A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Shanbai's Hui Ink Video

Through an extensive exploration of past multimodal discourse analysis theory, the research questions are inspired by the works of Venti and Romel (2021) and Ramanda et al. (2020), focusing on how visual grammar theory can be used to disseminate and protect intangible cultural heritage effectively on digital media platforms. This paper conducts a multimodal discourse analysis on popular intangible cultural heritage videos on Douyin through the framework of visual grammar. By analyzing the visual and textual elements of the video, this research reveals how various elements interact and work together to construct an overall narrative that spreads the intangible cultural heritage of Hui ink production skills. It uniquely merges theory with practice, showing how traditional art can be effectively promoted in the self-media era. For example, to convey representational meaning, symbols of the Chinese countryside, such as bamboo forests and thatched houses, are recurrent in the video. These symbols effectively convey tranquility and cultural nostalgia, which Kress and van Leeuwen identify as crucial in conceptual meaning in visual grammar. This research expands multimodal discourse analysis to dynamic videos, providing evidence that visual grammar can serve as a powerful tool in the global dissemination and preservation of cultural heritage.

XIONG Qundan

Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Beauty Advertisements: Exploring Gender Norms in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong's Beauty-Related Linguistic Landscape

Beauty advertising can serve as an essential gateway for exploring how an area constructs and conveys beauty and gender norms. The study examines how beauty ads in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong's iconic area, use language and visual elements to reinforce or disrupt gender norms and expectations. Utilizing the methodology of multimodal discourse analysis, the study examines the textual and visual elements of 15 beauty-related ads found on the MTR and on the streets of Tsim Sha Tsui. The framework incorporates the visual grammar of Kress and van Leeuwen, examining the advertising's compositional, interactive, and representational implications. The results show that females, as the dominant spokespeople, present idealized images of youth and flawlessness. Nonetheless, the presence of male individuals suggests that the gender norm of "beauty is gender-neutral" may be evolving. Besides, the portrayal of confident women in ads defies traditional gender norms in which women are in a subordinate status and promotes a more inclusive representation of people. This research expands people's understanding regarding the linguistic landscape of beauty in Tsim Sha Tsui by highlighting visual cues' role in gender norm communication and perpetuation. Through a critical analysis of the language and imagery used in beauty commercials, the study invites critical thoughts on how society views gender and identity in the local environment.

YAN Chuqiao Joanna

A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Profiles on a Chinese Lesbian Dating App

Online dating apps have broadened people's communication options and revolutionized the way they begin romantic relationships. Most existing research on online dating discourse has focused on heterosexuals or gays (Fullick, 2013; Blackwell et al., 2015), neglecting the experiences of lesbians. Although some foreign studies are about the construction of lesbian gender identity (Ferris & Duguay, 2020), research on Chinese lesbian online dating platforms is limited. This study applies the multimodal discourse analysis approach to investigate lesbian users' employment of semiotic resources and their identity construction in their profiles on a Chinese lesbian dating app, The L. Visual grammar (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020) and systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 2004) are used respectively to evaluate the visual level and the textual level of the profiles. Users' identities are analyzed in combination with the theory of gender performativity (Butler, 1999). The findings suggest the diversity of lesbian users' gender performance and online identity construction by applying visual resources and text resources in their profiles. Some users tend to exhibit a masculine identity that aligns with the stereotype of lesbians, while some users adopt more feminine characteristics to construct an identity that challenges the stereotype. This study provides a perspective on the complexity and uniqueness of the lesbian community and promotes a more inclusive and pluralistic understanding of gender and identity.

YANG Wanyi

Daddy's Girl: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Contemporary Fatherhood in YouTube Shorts

Traditional fatherhood wherein fathers fulfil solely the role of breadwinner has been challenged by modern-day culture and a "new fatherhood" wherein fathers actively perform their paternal identity and are expected to be more involved in childcare (Coles et al., 2018; Lazar, 2005; Dermott & Miller, 2015). While a definition of new fatherhood is not yet clear (Cannito, 2020), contemporary fathers, especially those of daughters, are also at risk of the slippery slope of toxic masculinity, two examples of which are identified as over-controlling the daughter's sexuality (Formato, 2021) or taking advantage of the innocent and uncontaminated attributes of girlhood to augment its own value (McIntyre et al., 2024). In this study, I examine representations of contemporary fatherhood through twenty YouTube Shorts with a trendy "daddy's girl" theme, using the framework of multimodal discourse analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). By comparing the representational, the interactive, and the linguistic meanings of the short videos, I find that while all the fathers in the data seem to establish a tight emotional bond with their daughters—a key factor in the expected new fatherhood (Cannito, 2020), the fatherhood displayed is similar and symbolic, suggesting the nostalgic gendered social expectation that daughters are more affectionate and in need of protection and pampering.

YIN Shanshan

A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Harbin's Promotional Videos on the Social Media Platform Douyin

With the development of globalization, tourism cities around the world have constructed their city brands by using urban symbolic resources. In today's era of globalization, cities around the world are actively constructing their own urban image and developing their tourism economy. In this process, urban symbolic resources are effectively utilized, and social media platforms have become one of the main means of city promotion. Harbin utilized China's most popular social media platform, Douyin, to construct its city brand and boost its tourism economy. In early 2024, Harbin gained immense popularity on Douyin, attracting millions of tourists and experiencing significant growth in its tourism industry. This study explores the phenomenon of Harbin becoming the hottest tourist destination and analyzes how the Harbin official cultural tourism bureau account constructs the city's image through discourse. Using multi-modal critical discourse and the ideas of city branding, this paper attempts to investigate the ideology reflected in the discourse. Finally, this paper argues that the popularity of Harbin is not a coincidental phenomenon, but rather a collective contribution of local government planning, promotion, and the high communicability of social media.

YUAN Hongpiao

From News Discourse to Social Media Discourse: The Intertextuality of "Just In" Memes on Xiaohongshu

The development of social media has helped people to spread messages with a social media account, resulting in the intersection of news discourse and social media discourse, as represented by "Gānggāng" (刚刚, meaning "Just In") memes on Xiaohongshu, the Chinese version of Instagram. This article analyses Gānggāng memes' intertextuality from perspectives of indexicality, iconicity, and social convention to figure out how "gānggāng" as a catchphrase originating in news discourse is used in social media discourse by three user groups, namely Just In accounts, brand official accounts, and ordinary netizen accounts. This paper finds that the short and informative language style of the Just In structure in news discourse is kept in Just In memes on Xiaohongshu. Contents from Just In accounts are like the official news in color and content. However, such accounts also express personal feelings to connect with readers. Brand official accounts add commercial elements when using this meme because they need to introduce themselves and enhance consumers' awareness of them. Ordinary users borrow words from news discourse to record their lives using this meme, resulting in linguistic humor.

ZHANG Zhan

Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Apple's Chinese New Year Promotional Film *Daughter*

This research investigates the transnational corporation Apple's Chinese New Year advertisement film *Daughter* for the Chinese market from the perspective of multimodal discourse analysis. The research aims to demonstrate the differences of this promotional film in interpreting Chinese culture and society during the festival from other CNY advertisements. Taking visual grammar as the main research framework, the research selects 26 scenes and related contexts in the film to analyze and concludes that the three main aspects of visual grammar, namely, representational meaning, interactive meaning and compositional meaning, function respectively and in combination to express the theme of family reunion and the deeper layer of Chinese culture in the film. For example, the film adopts multiple viewer angles within the interactive meaning to achieve a more immersive experience for the audiences to evoke the resonance of the CNY theme. The findings explore the differences of this Apple film from the traditional CNY theme commercials, which provide novel insights for the study of advertising under the guidance of multimodal discourse analysis.

Keywords: multimodal discourse, visual grammar, advertising film, Chinese New Year

ZHAO Yunxiao

A Narrative Analysis of Professional Identity Construction of English Teachers in Mainland China

Following the conceptualization of language teacher identity as multifaceted and contextual, this study investigates how Chinese English teachers (CETs) reconcile the disempowering native-speaker discourses that are prevalent in Mainland China with their professional identities. This study examines the lived experiences of four in-service CETs from micro-interactional, meso-institutional, and macro-structural perspectives, drawing on Bamberg's three-level positioning approach. The findings show that CET respondents struggle to balance their multi-layered identities when it comes to community participation, teaching competency, and the legitimacy of their access to practice. The results of this study also indicate that the ideologies that language teachers are exposed to in their social surroundings such as exam culture and CETs' own personal experiences shape their identity positionings consistently. This study adds to the body of knowledge about CETs' identity formation and offers insight into how CETs may adopt empowered and agentive identities as ELT practitioners.

Keywords: language teacher identities, three-level positioning theory, native-speakerism

ZHONG Peipei

Navigating Cultural Identity Formation: A Multimodal Analysis of Chinese Dragon Narratives in English-Language Children's Picture Books

In recent years, children's literature has garnered significant attention for its potential to promote intercultural understanding, empathy, and cultural identity formation among young readers. This study employs a multimodal critical discourse analysis to examine two English-language children's picture books centered around the Chinese dragon. By examining the multimodal features of the protagonist and their interactions with antagonistic characters and agents of conflict, this analysis aims to reveal how cultural values, transmitted through storytelling, can foster empathy, cross-cultural understanding, and cultural identity development among young readers from diverse backgrounds. The study's multimodal critical discourse analysis approach will enable a comprehensive examination of the linguistic, visual, and design elements that contribute to the construction of meaning within these picture books. It reveals the ways in which authors and illustrators can utilize cultural narratives, such as the Chinese dragon, to promote positive intercultural engagement and support the formation of cultural identity among young readers.

ZHOU Zhanyu Claire

Constructing Gender: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Calvin Klein's Underwear Advertisements

Many studies have shown the influence of gender stereotypes on the portrayal of male and female images in advertisements (Zotos & Tsihla, 2014; Goffman, 1979; Busyby & Leichty, 1993). It is also crucial to acknowledge changing gender representations (Lazar, 2006, 2014). This paper focuses on the advertising campaigns of Calvin Klein, a relatively young brand, to explore whether the images of men and women in advertising are constructed differently to exacerbate gender differences nowadays. Additionally, to avoid any potential bias stemming from conventional associations between specific gender traits and particular products, this study specifically selects underwear, a product category that caters to both genders. Three videos are used as research data. By employing an adapted analysis model based on visual grammar (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) and Jewitt's framework (2014), we analyzed their textual and visual resources, concluding that differences in male and female images persist in underwear advertisements. Especially in the two single-character videos, we found that the introduction of the protagonists, their lines, actions and camera angles all contribute to their images being interpreted differently. This research addresses the existence of differences in male and female images in advertisements and provides some insights for future studies to explore whether the images of men and women on new media platforms differ from those on traditional media.