

### Part A: Literature

**ADLARD Benjamin James**

**Comedic Elements of Host and Hostility in Shakespeare's *The Tempest***

Richard Kearney contends that "The laws of hospitality thus reserve the right of each host to evaluate, select and choose those he/she wishes to include or exclude that is, the right to discriminate" (*Strangers, Gods and Monsters*, 68). The endeavour of my capstone was to explore comedic elements of host and hostility found in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. By first exploring the setting, that of the structure of the Globe Theatre which was inclusive of multiple economic classes and so held the perfect platform for Homi Bhabha's "third space" discourse. Secondly, defining the parameters of comedy using Northrop Frye's archetypal criticism it becomes clear that *The Tempest* is a distillation of several phases. Within this distillation we can then find moments throughout the play in which Shakespeare as a playwright invites his audience to join him at play in the familiarities of comedic genres. Both Shakespeare the playwright and Prospero have to play host to visitors to the island and leave each guest with a greater understanding of their own ideology.

**CAO Zhenying, Louise**

**Disgust and Filth: Nauseous Feelings in the Writings of Clarice Lispector's and Bik-Wan Wong**

Clarice Lispector's *The Passion According to G.H.* and Bik-Wan Wong's "Nausea" reveal a surprising number of inter-textual parallels and shared themes, that both apply the image of disgust (vomit) to reflect the nihilism of the modern age and this unusual negative feeling as a symbol representing women's inner anxiety and pain. And, to some extent, it is a blocked resistance launched from female to male as well as a hopeless (impotent) call for a Dionysian true love and passion. Under the frame of female writing (also written as "*écriture féminine*" in French) raised by Hélène Cixous, and supported by theorists like Sianne Ngai and Julia Kristeva, the ugly feeling of disgust has more illustrations in gender equality and politics. In one sense, the unconventional way of describing beauty is an important manifestation of challenging male-dominated discourse and a new possibility for women's writing, which shows female writing's feature of intuitiveness and using the body to write, more directly confronting the darkness and affects of one's interior. These female writers express themselves in a more frank way that is closer to the confession.

**CHAI Suqi**

**Abjection and Performativity: The Female Body in *Lady Oracle***

This paper combines Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection and Judith Butler's idea of performativity to conduct a textual analysis of Margaret Atwood's *Lady Oracle*. Taking the body as the entry point, this thesis analyzes how the protagonist Joan Foster's abject body and fragmented identities challenge patriarchal norms. Joan's body hovers between visible and invisible, as both the abject and a grotesque spectacle. The paper argues that Joan's body is a site of oppression and a medium for resistance. Joan's acceptance of the abject body and multiple identities challenges the patriarchal symbolic order, proposing the possibility for women to break

free from victimhood and gain agency. The paper addresses a research gap on Atwood's nuanced engagement with abjection, not merely as a tool of oppression but as a subversive force. This research contributes to feminist literary criticism by reframing abjection as a dynamic force in women's bodies, highlighting Atwood's critique of binary frames that constrain female creativity and identity.

**CHAN Sze Lam, Jayde**

**“Like a Mask”: Uncovering Interpretations within the Margins of Male Performances in Angela Carter’s *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories* (1979)**

In *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Angela Carter examines how female narrators negotiate their spectatorship and narrative agency within the performances of their male counterparts. Focusing on two short stories—“The Bloody Chamber” and “The Tiger’s Bride”—this paper aims to investigate how Carter simultaneously rewrites the notion of performance within traditional fairy tales and offers her readership interpretive reimagination by revealing the genre’s constructedness. While many critics, such as Paulina Palmer, have rightly highlighted how Carter’s women parody femininity, this research expands on current literary discourse by foregrounding how her male characters also perform—not so much on how they might imitate masculinity, but more so as obscuring rituals that conceal their true nature. Complicating Judith Butler’s theorisation in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, this paper is less focused on how Carter’s male figures perform the illusion of gender, but rather argues how these performances can simultaneously restrict and reveal readings of their masks to both the narrators and their readers, engaging us all in an interpretative process which reconstructs the genre of fairy tales.

**CHANG Yuting**

**Beyond Anthropocentrism: Crossmedia Representations of Non-Human Agencies from Olga Tokarczuk’s novel *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* to Agnieszka Holland’s Cinematic Adaptation *Spoor***

Against the backdrop of escalating ecological crises and the context of the nonhuman turn, the power of nonhuman agency has gained worldwide attention. Borrowing Bruno Latour’s interpretation of “actant”, this paper conducts a cross-media comparative analysis of nonhuman agency as represented in Olga Tokarczuk’s novel, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* (2009) and its cinematic adaption, *Spoor* (2017), directed by Agnieszka Holland, with an attempt to explore the similarities and differences of both media, that is, prose fiction and feature film, in presenting nonhuman elements and ecological issues. I contend that through her novel’s strategic synthesis of animal revenge narrative, realistic depiction of animals and other nonhuman agencies, and philosophical reflection on human materiality, Tokarczuk demonstrates the power of nonhuman agencies and destabilizes the anthropocentric framework. While making efforts to present the causal efficacy of nonhumans, the sound effect and editing technique in Holland’s cinematic rendition *Spoor* demonstrate the film media’s strengths in presenting the human-and-nonhuman relationship. Nevertheless, there are some stereotypical images of dead animal bodies in *Spoor*, which repeat the anthropocentric treatment of dead animals in the film. The paper ends by an acknowledgment of the pedagogical and political potentials of the cinema in addressing environmental problems, despite its inevitable anthropocentric nature as a medium.

**CHEN Jiaqi**

**Staying Knotted in the Anthropocene: Pain, Memory, and Survival in *The Deep* and *The Word for World is Forest***

This paper explores how survival is imagined in speculative fiction through the concept of relational knotting—a structure of suspended tension rather than resolution. Reading Rivers Solomon's *The Deep* and Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Word for World is Forest*, the essay argues that survival under the pressures of historical trauma, ecological collapse, and colonial violence requires the redistribution of pain across collective, more-than-human networks. Centralized suffering leads to fragmentation; only when memory and grief are shared—through community, ecology, and interspecies entanglement—can a durable form of survival emerge. Drawing on theoretical insights from Donna Haraway, Bruno Latour, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, this paper proposes a not Theory of Relational Survival, where knots signify the ethical practice of staying knotted—with others, with place, and with histories that resist resolution. These texts imagine survivance as ecological co-dwelling in a world that insists on unfinishedness.

**CHENG Haohao**

**Visualizing Paranoia: Zaillian's Adaptation of *The Talented Mr. Ripley***

Steven Zaillian's Netflix adaptation of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* reimagines Patricia Highsmith's novel as an exploration of paranoia in cinema, exemplifying adaptation theory's shift from fidelity-based critique to medium-specific reconstruction. Zaillian transforms Ripley's literary paranoia—traditionally conveyed through unreliable narrative—into a visceral audio-visual language, demonstrating how adaptation reinterprets through remediation. The miniseries' structural innovations—a reordered narrative timeline, a black-and-white aesthetic, and symbolic motifs such as water and Caravaggio's paintings—externalize Ripley's psychological collapse while questioning the ethics of audience complicity. This essay argues that Zaillian's approach aligns with Hutcheon's mode of adaptation that reiterates without copying, using cinematic tools to amplify Highsmith's themes of identity and guilt. The analysis reveals how contemporary adaptations prioritize experiential fidelity over textual fidelity, which provides a framework for future transmedia storytelling that prioritizes emotional resonance over formal preservation.

**DENG Xiwen**

**Unveiling Globalization's Dark Sides: Supernatural Storytelling as a Critique in Rana Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled***

This paper explores Rana Dasgupta's novel *Tokyo Cancelled* and analyzes how supernatural and mythological narratives are used to critique the negative consequences of globalization. Based on Mary Louise Pratt's concept of the "contact zone" and Homi Bhabha's theories of "mimicry" and the "third place", the study analyzes three stories from the novel, "The Billionaire's Sleep," "The Store on Madison Avenue," and "The Doll" to investigate how narrative techniques, especially magical realism, expose the ethical, cultural, and technological contradictions entangled with globalization. The analysis reveals how the characters in the stories connected with issues of technology, desire, and humanity, offer a nuanced critique of the ethical and moral implications in the context of globalization.

By blending myth and reality, Dasgupta critiques the dominance of global forces while highlighting the resilience of marginalized voices. The paper argues that *Tokyo Cancelled* serves as both a reflection on, and a critique of, globalization, and that the novel therefore urges readers to confront its complexities and contradictions. Ultimately, the paper underscores the power of

literature and the importance of remaining vigilant about the potential risks and challenges posed by globalization.

**DUAN Yiwen**

**The Janus-Faced Alcohol: A Medium of Embodied Power and Resistance in Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Sympathizer***

This project uses Chris Shilling's sociology of the body and Homi Bhabha's third space theory to examine the symbolic meanings of alcohol in Vietnamese-American writer Viet Thanh Nguyen's novel *The Sympathizer*. The essay argues that alcohol shows two opposing roles in the story. First, it acts as a hidden tool for American neocolonial power to control Vietnamese people's bodies and minds through drinking choices and rules. Second, it becomes a way for the Vietnamese to resist this power and rebuild their identities. In terms of colonial power, South Vietnamese officers' preference for whiskey hints at the tremendous impact and imposition of Western values and tastes on their culture. Besides, the strict drinking manners of American elites also spread cultural values and strengthened ideological control. Regarding resistance and identity building, Vietnamese people drank local beer during war to protect cultural memory and fight against cultural assimilation. After moving to America, alcohol helps immigrants express identity confusion and resist neocolonial control. The mixed-race character Lana combines Vietnamese and American cultural elements while drinking, showing hybridity in Bhabha's third space. Finally, the narrator uses "drunken writing" to break literary rules and adopts the plural pronoun "we" to create a shared identity, showing possibilities for rebuilding identity. The contradictory nature of alcohol reflects both Vietnam's political struggles during colonialism and its people's continuous efforts to redefine their identity. The project shows that accepting cultural mixtures and actively creating new connections are key for colonized groups to rebuild their identity in society.

**FAN Zhaohui Darcy**

**Narrating Beyond the Human: Epistemology, Deterritorialization, and Eco-Cosmopolitan Ethics in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island***

This paper offers a comparative analysis of Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island*, arguing that both novels challenge dominant anthropocentric epistemologies in the context of the Anthropocene. Departing from the conventions of Western realist fiction, each work foregrounds the agency of nonhuman actors and dramatizes the need to reconfigure narrative forms and belief systems in response to ecological crisis. The analysis draws on deterritorialization, nonhuman agency, and eco-cosmopolitan ethics to trace how each novel politicizes environmental interconnection. Tokarczuk subverts rationalist knowledge systems through an uncanny narrative of animal vengeance and astrological justice, emphasizing a radical solidarity with the nonhuman. In contrast, Ghosh reinvigorates myth as a transhistorical narrative mode that makes visible climate migration and cross-species kinship. While both novels advocate for a broader, more inclusive ethical imagination, they diverge in narrative ethics. Tokarczuk offers a vision grounded in ritual resistance and local embodiment, whereas Ghosh envisions an interconnected cosmology shaped by mythic return and linguistic memory. Together, the two works reposition literature as a vital site for negotiating environmental responsibility and imagining alternative modes of planetary belonging.

**FOK Kei Tung**

**Floating in the Flux: Urban Chaos and Eternal Sea as Critique of Modernity in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* and *The Waves***

This essay examines Virginia Woolf's modernist works, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *The Waves* (1931), through the symbols of urban chaos and the eternal sea to explore the portrayal and impact of modernity as flux. It further reviews modernity as a destabilising force through three different lenses—symbolic, temporal, and existential—to explore modernist alienation and existentialism. I argue that modernity's flux is inevitable and inescapable as a dual force that may drive individuals to a path of authenticity or destruction. In *Mrs Dalloway*, London's relentless urban pace, represented by the traffic, aeroplanes, and Big Ben, is juxtaposed with the internal struggle of the characters Clarissa and Septimus under modernity's demands. Meanwhile, *The Waves* illustrates a rhythmic and cyclical imagery of the sea that contrasts with modernity's mechanical time, making humans' existential struggle a void. The analysis of the two novels suggests that individuals' psychological integration and agency can be preserved in modernity's chaos when they choose to accept the sea's fluidity.

**GAO Yuexin**

**Fluid or Fractured: Oceanic Ontology and Resistance to Colonial and Ecological Violence in Rivers Solomon's *The Deep***

In literary narratives that recount the history of Black enslavement during the Middle Passage, the ocean is often depicted as a perilous space of death. However, Rivers Solomon's 2019 speculative fiction *The Deep* envisions the sea as a dreamlike site of rebirth for the descendants of enslaved Africans—the wajinru. This paper takes interest in the novel's oceanic motif and approaches it from the intersecting perspectives of Blue Humanities and decolonial ecology, analyzing the ontological significance of the ocean in *The Deep* and its potential as a site of resistance. Drawing on Malcom Ferdinand's theory of the "double fracture" and placing the novel in intertextual dialogue with Amitav Ghosh's climate fiction *Gun Island*, the paper further develops a reading of *The Deep* as an allegory of climate crisis. This paper argues that the novel reimagines the ocean as a future space of fluid coexistence, offering an alternative ecological ethics grounded in relation and permeability amid global climate change.

**GU Dian**

**Metaphor, Female Dissociation, and Dehumanization in Jean Rhys's Novels**

My paper discusses the function of metaphor in presenting female dehumanization and female dissociation in Jean Rhys's melancholic novels. Both Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Good Morning, Midnight* center on the experiences of women persecuted by patriarchalism as they are treated as dehumanized tools and dolls that require decoration to satisfy male desire. As a consequence, female dissociation becomes a common phenomenon among women since their authentic selves contradict the norms set by men, and inevitably results in these women characters' detachment of their sense of selfhood from the society. Some scholars who study Jean Rhys's novels have also mentioned the dissociated mental status of Jean Rhys's female protagonists but seldom relate it to the framework of metaphor. However, in these two novels, metaphors, such as mirrors and space, interplay well with the presentation of female dissociation and imply that female dissociation can also be perceived as a way of resistance.

**HAN Yan**

**Narrative Instability and the Power of Contradiction: A Rhetorical Analysis of Patricia Highsmith's *Ripley* Series**

This paper investigates how narrative instability and contradiction function as rhetorical strategies in Patricia Highsmith's *Ripley* series, particularly *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, *Ripley's Game*, and *The Boy Who Followed Ripley*. While existing scholarship often focuses on psychological or ethical explorations of the protagonist, few studies have systematically analyzed how narrative techniques contribute to the plot development and shape readers' moral engagement. Drawing on James Phelan's rhetorical narrative theory, this research addresses that gap by examining how internal conflicts within Tom Ripley, his interpersonal tensions, and his defiance of external social and moral orders generate narrative progression and ethical complexity. Through close reading, this paper identifies and analyzes three typical contradictions. First, Ripley's internal contradictions: between desires and unfulfilled reality, external calmness and internal anxiety, as well as the coexistence of cruelty and kindness. Second, his unstable relationships with other characters, notably Dickie and Trevanny. Third, the ironic misalignment between criminality and justice, violence and aesthetics. These instabilities not only drive the plot and make the characters more vivid, but also destabilize readers' ethical expectations. The study argues that such contradictions are not incidental but are deliberately constructed to challenge normative assumptions about morality and identity. By adopting the perspective of rhetorical narratology, this paper contributes to broader discussions in narrative ethics, crime fiction studies, and literary rhetoric, offering a deeper understanding of Highsmith's subversive narrative craft.

**HUANG Wei**

**Triple Individual Resistance and Its Inadequacy in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and *House of Day, House of Night***

This paper examines Olga Tokarczuk's novels *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and *House of Day, House of Night* through an ecofeminist lens. The paper argues that the characters in these novels resist their oppressions and patriarchal norms on cognitive, physical, and behavioral levels. By analyzing the consequences of this triple individual resistance, it further questions whether individual resistance against oppression and patriarchal norms is sufficient. The paper begins with an overview of ecofeminism and the narrative structures of the novels, highlighting the marginalized voices within the stories. It then delves into the analysis of characters from both novels who resist on cognitive, physical, and behavioral levels, such as Janina and Good News in *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*. Following this, the paper explores the limitations of individual resistance due to the pervasive influence of social structures. In conclusion, the paper underscores the necessity for collective action to effect real change, prompting readers to question the rationality of patriarchal norms.

**HUANG Yuanyuan**

**The Duality of Mimicry and Its Impact on Identity Crisis: A Postcolonial Study of Rudyard Kipling's *Kim***

Mimicry is a vivid description of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. This paper aims to explore how the duality of mimicry is represented in literature and to analyze the impact of mimicry on the construction of the colonized's identity through a postcolonial study of Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*. As a famous British author who grew up in India, Rudyard Kipling's

work contains many postcolonial elements. *Kim* is a novel based on Kipling's early childhood experiences in India. Kim, the protagonist, has a special dual identity. Although his parents are both white, he has grown up in India and has a strong sense of identification with the Indian culture. This puts him in the neither-nor spot between the colonizer and the colonized. This paper uses the concepts of mimicry and hybridity proposed by Homi Bhabha, in conjunction with the identity fragmentation of the colonized proposed by Frantz Fanon, to study the impact of the duality and hybridity of mimicry on Kim and draws the following conclusions. For one thing, colonizers achieve colonial discipline and cultural hegemony by forcing the colonized to mimic their culture, language, and so on, to strengthen their domination. However, the colonized's incomplete mimicry of language and culture exposes the arbitrariness of the colonizer's cultural "superiority" and poses a threat to colonial power, demonstrating the duality of mimicry. For another, mimicry leads to hybridity, which puts the colonized into a conflict between their cultural identity and the colonial culture. This conflict makes the colonized become the "other" and causes identity fragmentation. Kim, after experiencing the fragmentation of his white identity and Indian heart, returns to nature to alleviate the pain of his hybrid identity, which offers him the possibility of transcending the duality of the "colonizer-colonized."

**JIN Shuyu**

**Manipulation, Fracture and Hope: An Analysis of Nonlinear Narratives in *The Handmaid's Tale***

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* employs a fragmented narrative structure, comprising episodic narration, dreams, memory flashbacks, and the framing device of historical notes to interrogate the manipulation of women's history under oppressive regimes. This paper argues that the novel's non-linear storytelling not only reflects the systematic segmentation and erasure of women's experiences by patriarchal power structures but also encodes possibilities of resistance. It draws on arguments of Simone de Beauvoir's feminist theory in *The Second Sex*, Spivak's revelation of the subaltern female's silence, and the views of critics who have commented about *The Handmaid's Tale*. While existing scholarship has explored the novel's dystopian feminism and narrative unreliability, this paper uniquely synthesizes discourse analysis with feminist narration to reveal how Atwood's structural choices enact a dual function: they expose the strategies of historical revisionism while simultaneously subverting them by the persistence of marginalized voices. Through textual analysis, this paper shows that fragmentation of women's histories is not merely a symptom of oppression but also the fissure through which resistance emerges. It also hints at the eternal topic of inequality between the two sexes in reality, providing confidence for the oppressed.

**LAM Kae Ning, Ashley**

**The House as a Palimpsest: Changing Spatial Relationships within the Buendía House in Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude***

While the notion of cyclic history is recognised by critics as central to the themes and messages of Gabriel García Márquez's novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, less attention has been given to reading the text as an "architectonic novel." Thus, this essay is centred around the analysis of the changing spatiality within the Buendía house with a "palimpsestic approach," so as to understand the ways in which the fictional spaces in the novel acts as a vessel carrying the cyclic succession of events and characters. The term "palimpsest" is a literal description of a reused parchment or manuscript on which new writing is superimposed on the old, with traces of the old

writing still visible beneath the new text. In recent years, the term's meaning and implication has been extended into the field of spatial studies: "palimpsest" is used as a metaphor for layers of accumulated history that make up the physical and mental images of spatial constructs and can be taken apart and further written over. This essay argues that through the use of spatial motif, symbolism, imagery and narrative voice, Marquez presents the changing spatial relationships within the Buendía house with the effect of revealing how architecture is not a physical but a cyclic entity, thus shedding light on the cyclic nature of history, the inescapability of solitude and the destructive nature of desire.

**LEUNG Wai Yan**

**Distortion as Revelation: Unravelling Ethical Fragility in Edogawa Rampo's Distorted Bodies**

This paper examines grotesque and disfigured bodies mainly in three of Edogawa Rampo's short stories, including "The Human Chair," "The Hell of Mirrors," and "The Caterpillar," to explore how the distorted image of the body expresses the obsession with unfulfilled desires. Through close reading of Rampo's works, the paper argues that these deformed figures in Rampo's short stories expose the fragility of social ethics and the vulnerability of moral boundaries. These distorted bodies emerge through eerie transformations that disrupt the boundary between normalcy and unrevealed desire. By using the transformation of the human body to challenge the perception of normality, Rampo's grotesque aesthetics reveal the underlying unethical desires repressed under social constraints. On the other hand, the distorted bodies illustrate the transgression between societal norms, where the boundary of normality is blurred in Rampo's fiction.

**LI Jing**

**Displaying, Encoding, and Decoding Symbols: An Analysis of "The Man Who Would Be King"**

This essay explores the dynamic interplay of symbolic display, encoding, and decoding in Rudyard Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King" to deconstruct the paradox of colonial logic. The analysis employs postcolonial theory, semiotics, and Mary Louise Pratt's concept of the contact zone to interrogate how colonial power structures unravel through cross-cultural misinterpretation. The essay discusses three forms of such symbolic interaction that occur in the story. Firstly, through the protagonists Carnehan and Dravot's misinterpretation of Kafiristan based on maps and encyclopedias, Kipling critiques colonial epistemic violence, revealing how outsiders reduce complex cultures to simplistic symbols to legitimize domination. Secondly, the analysis highlights the rupture between colonial encoding and indigenous decoding, which becomes a factor of destruction and local resistance. Finally, the dynamic changes in power relations reshape the symbolic meaning. The locals change from decoders to encoders of symbols. Through the use of symbols in the story, Kipling exposes the inherent paradox of colonialism—its reliance on unstable, fictional symbols that collapse under cross-cultural misinterpretation. The essay concludes that Kipling's exploration of symbolic ambiguity underscores the impossibility of controlling cultural meaning, offering a postcolonial critique of enduring stereotypes and cultural flatness. By emphasizing symbols' resistance potential, the author warns against repeating colonial logics, advocating instead for recognition of cultural dynamism and hybridity in global interactions.



**LI Qing, Sunny**

**Colonial Imagination and Narrative: Rupture and Contradiction of Empire in Kipling's Indian Stories**

This essay explores how Rudyard Kipling employs narration strategies, including frame narration and metaphor, to depict the break within empire. The term “rupture” refers to the break between the aspirations of the colonizers and the operations of imperial rule. Considering Kipling's ambivalent feelings about India, I borrow the idea of “family metaphor” from Sullivan to explain Kipling's narration strategies and imperial anxiety. I argue that, in Kipling's colonial adventure narrative, the use of contradictory narrative voices and metaphor presents and mediates his ideological contradictions and anxieties about the empire—specifically, the fear of imperial expansion beneath an outward appearance of harmony. In his Indian stories, Kipling deliberately creates contradictory and divided family relationships between colonists and the colonized, and these family metaphors also represent contradictions in colonial discourse. Kipling employs techniques such as metaphor and frame narration to mediate this anxiety in his Indian stories. The essay concludes by emphasizing how Kipling's family metaphor presents his ideological ambivalence towards empire. Through Kipling's contradictory narrative, I aim to understand the broader epistemology of empire. While previous scholars have rarely explored the narrative techniques in Kipling's Indian stories, my essay offers a fresh perspective on the anxieties embedded within Kipling's narrative voices.

**LI Yixin**

**The Fruit of Grotesque Desire: Exploring How the Seeds of Criminal Behaviors Develop Through the Characters' Psychological Activities in Edogawa Rampo's Crime Fictions**

The Japanese modernist fiction writer Edogawa Rampo's short crime stories “The Human Chair” (1925) and “The Stalker in the Attic” (1926) stand at the point where the uncanny aesthetics meet the psychological repression. The uncanny implies the vanishment of the boundary between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the death and the life, repetition compulsion, and a disorder of place and time. The two stories demonstrate the grotesque art through a series of objects as embodiments, including the chair, the attic, and the crazy addiction to peeping at others. They together form the basis of marking the protagonists' long-suppressed desires and then become the carriers of liberating the depressed. The processing of desires, in practice, is analogical to the life cycle of growing fruit plants from seeds. This essay discusses the return of the negation, as well as the imaginary and material doppelgangers used by the protagonists to play the role of the evil self. In the act, they blend into their hiding place, which reminds the readers of animism and also provides the final answer to the quest for the empty self. To end the wheel of cause and effect, the protagonists must swallow their fruits of crime alone and achieve Nirvana with the unique ending of Japanese Gothic fiction, and in effect, free themselves from the uncanny external obsession that has been haunting them like ghosts.

**LI Ziyao**

**The Empathy of Murder in *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead***

Both Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* and Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* focalize on protagonists who later turn out to be the perpetrators of a series of murders, yet both novels conclude controversially without any punishment enforced upon them, and neither of the protagonists show much remorse for their actions. While this

imbalance and peculiar characterization call for a re-examination of normative understanding of justice and crime in general, this essay aims to specifically examine the two novels through the lens of literary empathy in an unconventional way, exploring how empathy is redefined as a device of intersubjective imagination and connection respectively to achieve the abovementioned socially rhetorical function of narratives. In this way, the essay hopes to expand on existing studies of these two works and contribute a new perspective to scholarship on literary empathy.

**LIU Jianing**

**Seeds of Loss, Fruits of Change: Female Metamorphosis as Sacrifice in Contemporary Speculative Fiction**

Drawing on Donna Haraway's theory of the cyborg and Rosi Braidotti's materialist view of metamorphosis, this study analyzes metamorphosis as an act of sacrifice in three pieces of contemporary speculative fiction: "The Fruit of My Woman," "The Rain Forest," and "Who Do You Love?". Despite coming from different countries, the authors of these short stories incorporate similar plots in which the female protagonists undergo bodily metamorphosis. Over the past two decades, the concept of metamorphosis has received increasing scholarly attention from a post-humanist perspective. However, there remains a notable lack of research specifically focused on "The Rain Forest" and "Who Do You Love?", as well as on the broader phenomenon of female metamorphosis in contemporary speculative fiction. When framed as a form of sacrifice, metamorphosis in these stories reveals more than the protagonists' voluntary surrender of their human bodies and ordinary lives. It is a deliberate act directed toward a more meaningful change. This essay explores the loss and gain entailed in such metamorphoses by analyzing their origin and impact, and the reasons why these transformations are irreversible in these stories. The metamorphosis emerges from a condition in which the female protagonists find themselves unable to struggle against rigid binary structures using the conventional concept of the subject. These seemingly exaggerated transformations function to liberate not only the protagonists but also those around them from entrenched binaries such as male/female, human/nature, and organism/machine. Although none of the stories ends with the protagonist returning to a human form, this does not signify an end of extinction. Rather, it implies a promising form of integration that may offer new possibilities for addressing the complex social issues rooted in binary structure.

**LIU Xiaomeng, Melody**

**Representations of Voices: Reinterpreting Family Relations and Resisting Hegemony in Maxine Hong Kingston's Family History of *China Men* and *The Woman Warrior***

This thesis is an analysis and comparative study of the representation of voices existing in Maxine Hong Kingston's *China Men* and *The Woman Warrior*. Kingston consistently and critically reinterprets family history by employing competing narrative voices to challenge hegemonic power. Manipulating what Bakhtin has identified as the heteroglossia of novelistic discourse, Kingston exposes and challenges the hegemony in family history through a struggle for domination among contesting voices. Moreover, these works provide a space for polyphonic voices to coexist and interact with each other, deconstructing the monolithic history and challenging the hegemony in narrative. This thesis argues that in *China Men* and *The Woman Warrior*, Kingston takes advantage of representations of voices—disembodied voice, detached voice, and disenfranchised voice—as fictional strategies to reinterpret family relations and to deessentialize the confrontation of hegemonic power as the contest among polyphonic voices in the

text. Further, these strategies decentralize the dominant power both in the narrative of family history and the relations within family history, demonstrating the variability of family history in that it is actively constructed rather than passively inherited. Kingston's books decentralize the authority in family history, demonstrating how marginalized voices disrupt hegemonic control over bodies and histories. Through the interplay of representations of voices, *China Men* and *The Woman Warrior* redefine familial bonds in terms of resistance, where silence and speech reclaim agency from oppression.

**LIU Yaqi**

**In the Labyrinth of Visual Technology: Edogawa Rampo's Dual Writing on Artistic Illusion and Body Image**

Edogawa Rampo is an important figure in Japanese literature, especially in the field of suspense and detective fiction. Although previous studies have analyzed his works from theoretical perspectives such as psychoanalysis and postcolonialism, there is a lack of in-depth exploration of the role of visual technology. This study focuses on Rampo's use of visual devices—such as telescopes, mirrors, and panoramic island—in three of his classic works: “The Man Traveling with the Brocade Portrait,” “The Hell of Mirrors,” and *The Strange Tale of Panorama Island*. This study attempts to fill the gap in existing research and analyze how these technologies distort reality and induce the self-destructive behavior of the characters. Past academic scholarship, like Marling's analysis of Rampo's “radial rereading” of Edgar Allan Poe and Igarashi's application of Lacan's ideas, have established a certain basis. However, they frequently concentrate on macroscopic interpretation and overlook microscopic text analysis. This essay contends that the visual technology in Rampo's works not only creates artistic illusions, but also causes psychological alienation, laying bare the fragile essence of technological utopianism. By carefully analyzing the text, this study uncovers how these elements deconstruct modern subjectivity and criticize the obsession with technology. The findings of this research not only enhance the understanding of Rampo's works but also caution today's society about the psychological price of chasing after technology.

**LYU Mengying, Renney**

**Femininity as Ecological Mediation: Madwomen, Nature and the Nonhuman in Olga Tokarczuk's Novels**

This essay is based on the theoretical framework of ecofeminism, focusing on Olga Tokarczuk's two novels, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and *Primeval and Other Times*. It explores the theme of “femininity as ecological mediation” and analyses the interlinked relationships between women and humans, non-humans, and nature. This essay holds that femininity is an intermediary force that connects humans and non-humans, culture and ecology, rather than being essentially equivalent to nature. Under this background, the essay analyzes how two seemingly crazy madwomen interact with nature in a patriarchal society, how they resist the oppression of patriarchy, how they build a cross-species relationship network. The femininity embodied by Janina and Cornspike, two representative marginalized women regarded as crazy in the two works and the similarities and differences in the thoughts and behaviours of the two women are analyzed in detail. The two female characters jointly challenge the patriarchal authority over knowledge, including the scientific, religious and legal systems, which have long suppressed the female experience and non-anthropocentric ecological cognition. Janina interprets natural violence through astrology, while Cornspike demonstrates a mysterious way of

ecological perception through her life practice of coexisting with animals and plants. They both show the ecological mediation role of femininity. It is hoped that the above analysis can provide assistance for exploring how to view the relationship between humans and nonhumans, as well as nature.

**MA Yilan**

**Poetic Justice through Bonding Unreliability: Posthumanist Ethics and Aesthetic Estrangement in *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead***

Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* tells the story of Janina, an eccentric female murderer who challenges legal and moral conventions in her pursuit of justice on behalf of animals. Focusing on this novel, this essay explores how the novelist employs literary imagination to ethically challenge anthropocentrism and legal rationalism. To answer the question, this essay contends that the novel operates as a literary site of anti-anthropocentrism, using imagination as the vehicle for experimenting alternative forms of justice. Central to this ethical experiment are three intertwined elements—Janina's defamiliarizing narration, the transgressive spatiality of the Polish-Czech borderlands, and a Blakean mythical framework that reframes fall as ethical revelation. Posthumanist ethics takes shape through a narrative structure that decenters the human and foregrounds nonhuman subjectivity. Within this imaginative space, Tokarczuk deploys Janina's bonding unreliability, specifically through naive defamiliarization, sincere but misguided self-deprecation, and partial progress toward the norm, to entangle the reader in an affective and moral dilemma reminiscent of Nabokov's *Lolita*, where empathy risks complicity. Thus the novel calls upon readers to be "judicious spectators", ethically responsive but critically distanced.

**NGO Klarissa**

**Negotiating Selfhood in Travel: Reflective Transformation in Charles Dickens's Travelogue "Going Through France" and Gail Scott's novel *My Paris***

Travel writing offers a profound medium for exploring selfhood, particularly when different cultures encounter and reshape travellers' identities. This study examines selfhood and subjectivity in the "Going Through France" chapter of Charles Dickens's travel memoir *Pictures from Italy* (1846), with a particular focus on the narrator's observations while traveling through Parisian streets. Introducing another literary example, Gail Scott's novel *My Paris* (1999), this study further investigates how travellers' home-shaped identities influence their perceptions of foreign cultures and how travel fosters reflection and eventual discovery of a truer self. It explores how home-derived norms drive initial judgments, how travel affects these identities and the role of reflective interactions and dialogues in self-discovery. Previous scholarship, such as Di Giovine (2009), focus on collective identity but overlooks individual self-negotiation, while Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self* (1989) and Richard Kearney's *Strangers, Gods and Monsters* (2003) provide philosophical frameworks for selfhood and otherness but underexplore travel's reflective potential. This research addresses the gap by applying Taylor's rational and existential self models and Kearney's diacritical hermeneutics through comparative textual analysis. In regard to the two selected travel writers and their works, Dickens's rational self, shaped by British norms of the Victorian period, satirizes the culture and environment in Paris. Scott's existential self, on the other hand, reflects on the Parisian norms and cityscape (p. 105) through the prose of her fictional travel diary. Scott's sentences are fragmented and fabricated in such a way that each one reflects both the pace of her flânerie and the fluctuation of her self-

reflection and a self-aware out-of-placeness as a Quebecer traveling in Paris and writing in English. Both Dickens and Scott address the observer-participant tensions and explore how such tensions can be resolved through dialogues and interactions, in a manner that is supported by Kearney's framework. This study aims to advance travel writing studies by focusing on personal growth and offers insights into intercultural inclusivity.

**NIU Xiaohe**

**Thinking and Acting like Non-Human Creatures: Female Characters' Eco-Feminist Manifestos in *The Vegetarian* and *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead***

In a patriarchal society, women's societal value is determined more by men's expectations rather than their own personality or virtue. Their situation is no different than that of meat on the shelves: both women and animals are categorized and marked with specific labels according to men's demands. Han Kang's *The Vegetarian* and Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* illustrate the objectification of women and non-human creatures by men through the experience of Yeong-hye and Duszejko. At the same time, their narratives offer a new landscape of women's eco-feminist revolt against a rigid patriarchal society. This paper argues that when faced with unjust treatment and realizing the existence of patriarchal violence in society, women have the agency to resist and liberate themselves from the oppression. For Yeong-hye and Duszejko, their behaviors of thinking and acting as non-human creatures can be seen as an eco-feminist manifesto in which they declare to the world a new cosmology, a non-hierarchical connection between human and natural creatures based on love and respect.

**PAN Xingyu**

**The Flame of Trauma: A Comparative Analysis of Jean Rhys's "The Day They Burned the Books" and *Wide Sargasso Sea***

Jean Rhys' works "The Day They Burned the Books" and *Wide Sargasso Sea*, are rooted in Caribbean colonial history, with marginalized groups as the protagonists, exploring themes such as identity crisis, racial conflict, and cultural collision brought about by colonialism. Based on the theory of decolonizing trauma studies, this capstone project investigates the narrative strategy of fire used in "The Day They Burned the Books" and *Wide Sargasso Sea*. The project's primary concern is to explore how Rhys' violent element, fire, relates to colonial trauma and how to recover from trauma. At the same time, the project also explores the symbolic meaning of fire in both works. This paper argues that in Rhys's works "The Day They Burned the Books" and *Wide Sargasso Sea*, fire serves as a narrative strategy for decolonizing trauma, exposing colonial trauma transmitted across generations and revealing indigenous ways of healing trauma. Comparing the two works, the image of fire expresses the duality of oppression and resistance as one. The difference is that in "The Day They Burned the Books", the presentation of fire is active, while in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the presentation of fire shows the state of transformation from passive to active. This project enriches the literary research on Rhys' use of the image of fire. At the same time, combined with the new decolonizing trauma theory, this project provides a new analytical perspective for the study of Rhys' works.

**QIU Rui, Rachel**

**The Resistance in Countertravel Writing: The Guides Who Do Not Pander to Tourists in Jamaica Kincaid and Gail Scott's Essays**

This essay argues that Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* and Gail Scott's "My Montréal: Notes of an Anglo-Québécois Writer" are works of countertravel writing that interrogate systemic inequalities, challenge privileged spectatorship, and reclaim the respective writers' cultural identities. Through a comparative analysis of spatial dynamics, linguistic hybridity, and confrontational dialogic strategies, the essay demonstrates how both authors use the travel guide form to critique neocolonial exploitation and inequalities of power. In *A Small Place*, Kincaid maps Antigua's postcolonial landscape as a visceral indictment of corruption and exploitation. Similarly, Scott's guided tour of Montréal weaponizes spatial transitions to unmask linguistic hierarchies and the Anglo-Québécois hybridity, signature of her works. Both authors deploy confrontational dialogue—Kincaid's hostile "you" and Scott's tense exchanges with her American friend—to rupture the traveler's privileged gaze and reject the consumption of exoticism in travel writing. Ultimately, their works challenge us to read not as tourists, but as implicated subjects, tasked with dismantling the very systems that grant us the privilege to gaze.

**SHEN Rujing, Sunny**

**Inheriting and Transforming Trauma in Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* and Viet Thanh Nguyen's "Black-Eyed Women"**

Ocean Vuong's *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (2019) and Viet Thanh Nguyen's "Black-Eyed Women" (2017) explore how the children of war survivors inherit and reinterpret trauma. From these two texts, intergenerational suffering is not passively received but actively reshaped through writing and the imagery of water and fire. Following a lead from Marianne Hirsch's theory of postmemory, this paper considers how Vuong's narrator Little Dog and Nguyen's nameless ghostwriter respectively negotiate their mothers' traumatic pasts, transcribing inherited pain into acts of remembrance. Writing is both bridge and barrier in Vuong's novel—Little Dog's letter to his mother in the English language delimits their cultural and linguistic divide, but his writing is authentic in terms of his love to his mother. In contrast, Nguyen's ghostwriter protagonist transitions from speaking other individuals' trauma to writing about her own existence, taking back her voice from the shadows of warfare. Water and fire as imagery for the fluid persistence of memory are employed in both texts, and they demonstrate how trauma endures and evolves. Ultimately, two texts illustrate that storytelling is not merely cathartic but is instead a procedure of rewriting historic narratives, and building resilience in the Vietnamese diaspora.

**SHEN Xin**

**Stay Angry, Stay Mad: Female Rage in Agnieszka Holland's *Pokot*, an Adaptation of Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead***

This essay aims to analyse the cinematic articulation of female rage in *Pokot*, Agnieszka Holland's adaptation of Olga Tokarczuk's novel *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*. Grounded in feminist theories, emotional politics and the subversive potential of female rage, it examines how the film deconstructs the stereotype of the "hysterical madwoman," elevating anger into a systemic critique of patriarchy's intertwined violence against both women and nature. Through cinematic language, character reconfiguration and narration strategies, the film

forges female anger into a blade that pierces moral hypocrisy, revealing the dual exploitation of nature and females, decoding the symbiotic violence of anthropocentric patriarchy.

**TANG Qinyingjie, Kristin**

**The Construction of the “Other” and Resistance in Colonial Discourse: A Study of Caliban’s Colonial Experience in *A Tempest* by Aimé Césaire**

This study, framed by Edward Said’s theory of Orientalism, delves into the colonizer Prospero’s discipline policies towards Caliban and Caliban’s corresponding resistance practices in Aimé Césaire’s postcolonial play *A Tempest*. As a subversive rewriting work of *The Tempest* by Shakespeare, Césaire’s work is rooted in Caribbean colonial history and the Négritude movement. By reimagining the main character of Caliban, it sharply criticizes European colonialism and bears distinct postcolonial and decolonial consciousness. This study focuses on two main questions: how Prospero uses the mechanism of Orientalist discourse to achieve colonial rule over Caliban, and how Caliban deconstructs these colonial strategies. It argues that Caliban transforms from a passive victim to an active resister, fundamentally subverting the colonial narrative and highlighting the resistance agency of the postcolonial subject. Employing a combination of close reading and theoretical exposition, the research further finds that Prospero’s colonialism is based on multiple Orientalist strategies: naming violence, knowledge domestication, spatial deprivation, and bodily discipline. Caliban, through diverse forms of resistance, not only exposes the fragility of colonial authority but also rewrites the subjectivity of the colonized in the suppressed history.

**TSUI Robert Sanchez**

**Embodied Archives and Afrocentric Futurisms: Radical Historiography and Engagement of Readers in Octavia E. Butler’s *Kindred* and Rivers Solomon’s *The Deep***

This essay investigates how Octavia E. Butler’s *Kindred* and Rivers Solomon’s *The Deep* advance Black speculative fiction by reconceptualizing the archive. Rather than consider the archive a source of documents or a static site, these novels set forth the Black body and communal practices of archiving as living archive-sites, where trauma, memory, and history are embodied, enacted, and transferred. Using embodied narratology and Afrocentric futurism as interdisciplinary frameworks, the essay addresses a noted absence in scholarship regarding the intersections of bodily lived experience and worldbuilding and, by extension, reveals how these works deconstruct Eurocentric archiving through narrative and historiography. Through an analysis of Butler’s and Solomon’s emphasis on African cosmologies, nonlinear temporalities, and communal, oral traditions, the essay explicates a biocultural understanding of the archive as sensory, participatory, and taking place in the dynamic present. Vivid depictions of bodily pain, inherited memory, and collective storytelling activate the reader’s sensorimotor empathy by inviting readers to engage ethically with the politics of memory-making and representation. Concluding the essay, I urge readers to rethink the plurality and embodiment of the archive, as *Kindred* and *The Deep* resist colonial archives and offer a decolonial historiography that foregrounds Black lived experience and the radical potential of the living archive to illuminate possible futures.

**WANG Keyi**

**The Role of Nature in the Treatment of Anti-Colonial Struggle in Carpentier's Narrative of the Marvelous Real**

This paper examines the role of nature in anti-colonial resistance as depicted in Alejo Carpentier's *The Kingdom of this World*. Focusing on the interplay between Vodou spirituality, ecological agency, and colonial subversion, the study explores how Carpentier's narrative challenges Eurocentric hierarchies by presenting nature as an active participant in Haiti's revolutionary struggles. The paper argues that Vodou's animist worldview destabilizes colonial anthropocentrism, while the vegetal baroque aesthetic embodies the untamed vitality of both tropical flora and anti-colonial fervor. Engaging with postcolonial critiques and Suzanne Césaire's theories of the "human plant" and "the great camouflage," the analysis addresses debates over Carpentier's potential exoticization of Haiti, ultimately asserting that his portrayal of nature's agency and potency subverts colonial discourse. By foregrounding the symbiosis of land and liberation, the paper reveals how Carpentier reiterates resistance through ecological frameworks, offering a decolonial vision rooted in Caribbean epistemologies.

**WANG Shujun**

**On the Verge of Loss: The Chronotopic Representations of Hong Kong in Wong Kar-wai's Films**

As one of Hong Kong's well celebrated and recognized film auteur Wong Kar-wai has consistently and masterfully deconstructed and reconstructed the cinematic portrayals of this city in most of his feature films, each of which thus becomes a window for audiences worldwide to understand Hong Kong. With reference to Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of chronotope, this essay focuses on time and space as two intertwining elements with which Wong reimagines cinematically and reconstructs cinematographically contemporary Hong Kong in each of his films. This essay delves into the chronotopic representations in two of Wong's most renowned works, *Chungking Express* (1994) and *In the Mood for Love* (2000). One salient feature shared by these two films is a noted contrast between mobility and stasis in time, space and character activities. This contrast corresponds to the hybridity and ambivalence of the Hong Kong chronotope in Wong's cinematic works. With a close analysis of both selected films, this essay argues that Wong depicts Hong Kong as a chronotope suffused with unresolvable (or unresolved) contradictions and irrecoverable (or unrecovered) losses, and through this chronotope reflects the city's cultural rupture and identity dilemma both in anticipation of and in the wake of the handover in 1997. On the other hand, the characters in the two films, I argue, transform their respective idiosyncratic space into an ambiance of nostalgia and reminiscences. Such perceived practices of transformation promisingly hint at a possible path for Hong Kong's future at a historical turning point, and demonstrate the inevitable connection between time and space, as well as between literary texts and social environment in the chronotope.

**WANG Shuxin**

**Compromise and Resistance: Trauma Translation in Viet Thanh Nguyen's *The Refugees***

Domestication and foreignization, translator's subjectivity and untranslatability theory constitute a theoretical framework for exploring the translator's role and strategic choices in the field of translation studies and reveal the translator's value orientation and mobility in translation activities from different dimensions. On this basis, taking Viet Thanh Nguyen's eight intergenerational and cross-regional stories in his short story collection *The Refugees* as the



primary text, this thesis proposes the theory of “trauma translation” and explores the process of dynamic retelling of the unspeakable trauma kernel by the traumatized subject in the text through strategic narrative reconstruction, embodied memory practices and atypical trauma translation in the cross-cultural power structure.

**WANG Sirui**

**Would-Be Kings in This-World Kingdom: Power Dynamics and Historical Negotiation in Rudyard Kipling and Alejo Carpentier**

By respectively composing a parodic epic of imperial conquest in “The Man Who Would Be King” and conjuring a kingdom between magic and reality in *The Kingdom of This World*, Rudyard Kipling and Alejo Carpentier turn their narratives into battlegrounds for conflicting elements of power dynamics in British India and colonial/postcolonial Haiti, setting the representation of history in motion to contest the static hegemony of historiography. Drawing on theories of Marxist philosophers such as Antonio Gramsci and Raymond Williams in the philosophy of praxis and historical materialism, this essay arranges a dialogue between the two texts to negotiate the representation of colonial and postcolonial history from a dialectical perspective. In discussing the historical and temporal conflicts and gaps in British India and Haiti, and the two texts’ shared interest in religion as an extension of reality, this essay also benefits from Mikhail M. Bakhtin’s theory of the chronotope and Roland Barthes’s theory of mythologies to demonstrate the driving force of social practice in historical negotiation as promoted by both texts.

**WANG Yishi, Gerald**

**Voyeurism as a Literary Device: Spatial Confinement, Hierarchy and Existential Crisis in Edogawa Rampo’s Eccentric Mystery Fiction**

With five of Edogawa Rampo’s erotic-grotesque narratives as primary texts, this paper aims to explore the multifaceted connotations of voyeurism as a literary metaphor and its reflection of the psychological crisis of Japanese society in the 1920s. The study combines Foucault’s theory of “heterotopia,” Lacan’s theory of “gaze,” and Freud’s concept of fetishism, analyzing the dual nature of confined space, the logic of overturning power and hierarchy dynamics in the behavior of voyeurism, as well as the potential relation between fetishisation and the collapse of subjectivity. The challenge of the study lies in a cross-theoretical interpretation and limited English resources for Japanese historical and cultural research. Through close reading, the paper deconstructs the abnormal deeds typical of scopophilia in “The Human Chair,” “The Hell of Mirrors,” “The Traveler with a Pasted Rag Picture,” “The Stalker in the Attic,” and *The Strange Tale of Panorama Island*, thus unveiling existential anxiety. It finds that space for peeping functions both as a fortress for anti-discipline and the confines of self-objectification. Therefore, the gazer turns into the gazed upon with a dissolution of subjectivity. The study is designed to reveal Rampo’s literary treatment of the spiritual predicament of Japan’s modernization period, providing a possibility for cross-theoretical research on his fiction.

**WANG You**

**Conflicts and Intimacy: Parent-child Relations in Viet Thanh Nguyen’s *The Refugees***

This essay examines parent-child relations in Viet Thanh Nguyen’s short story collection *The Refugees* (2017). Parent-child relations are a common and complex issue in Nguyen’s fiction of war, trauma, and refugees. Through textual analysis of seven short stories that involve parent-

child relations, the essay finds that conflicts between parents and children are widespread but usually not handled openly for a long time, which is considered by parents as unnecessary and has a lasting negative impact on children and the parent-child relationship. Despite these conflicts, the relationship between parents and children is still intimate and powerful, sometimes shown by a sudden flashback of a warm moment.

**WU Lindan**

**Illness as Metaphor in Olga Tokarczuk's *The Empusium: A Health Resort Horror Story* and *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead***

This essay explores the metaphorical meaning of illness in two of Olga Tokarczuk's novels: *The Empusium: A Health Resort Horror Story* and *Drive Your Plow over The Bones of the Dead*. Inspired by Susan Sontag's propositions in her book *Illness as Metaphor*, this paper scrutinises the textual details of the protagonists' illness and compares them to the fantasies of tuberculosis (TB) and insanity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when tuberculosis was incurable and mysterious, to work out how illness functions as a vehicle of desires and emotions in the texts. Additionally, fantasies of insanity parallel those of tuberculosis to some extent. This essay suggests that illness is the vehicle of the protagonists' hidden will and the characters' madness, while the landscape is a key element for both tuberculosis patients and the supporter of animal welfare. Through juxtaposition, the essay presents the characters' personalities as entangled with fantasies of illnesses, and how a healing landscape can be murderous at the same time.

**XIN Yutong**

**Rooted Power: Botanical Interpretation of Political Theatre in Shakespeare's *Henry V***

This essay reinterprets Shakespeare's *Henry V* through an ecocritical lens, focusing on the relationship between plants and humans and argues that botanical imagery forms a dynamic semiotic system that critiques power structures, ethnic identities, and colonial violence. Moving beyond traditional heroic narratives, the analysis reveals how plants—often overlooked in early modern political theatre—serve as metaphors for human agency, cultural resistance, and geopolitical hierarchies. By foregrounding plants as active participants in political theatre, Shakespeare destabilizes anthropocentric histories, interrogating power's entanglement with natural cycles and marginalized identities. This study not only expands ecocritical readings of Shakespearean history plays but also illuminates early modern anxieties about empire, ecology, and cultural hybridity. It invites broader reconsiderations of non-human agency in historical narratives, resonating with contemporary concerns about environmental and cultural domination.

**XIONG Yixuan**

**Dual Oppressions of Nature and Race in Prospero's Dominion in *The Tempest***

This essay examines William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* through the lens of postcolonial theory and ecocriticism to unpack the intertwined violences of environmental destruction and racial discrimination embedded in Prospero's dominion over the island and its inhabitants. By analyzing Prospero's colonial project as a microcosm of early modern imperialism, the essay reveals how his mastery over island via magic parallels the European colonization of foreign lands and exploitation of indigenous peoples. Drawing on theorists like Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak, the paper argues that Prospero's regime enacts violences, essentially plural, in twofold: it disrupts the island's ecological autonomy while reducing such native bodies as the ethereal figure Ariel and the embodied figure "Caliban", as instruments of

extraction. Through close analysis of magical practices, linguistic imperialism, physical torture and psychological manipulation, the essay situates *The Tempest* as a precursor to modern debates on environmental justice. The play, I argue, reveals how a colonial logic persists in contemporary systems of exploitation, and importantly anticipates modern environmental and racial injustice through a critical reflection on imperial dominations.

**XU Huadan**

**Caribbean Colonial Crossroads: Race, Class, and Gender in the Fractured Female Identities of Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* and Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John***

This essay examines the construction of fragmented female identities in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) and Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John* (1985). Both novels illustrate, respectively in each case, intersecting oppressions of race, class, and gender in a colonial system, and expose the power of colonial power through the multiplicity of violence rather than the singularity of dismantles female subjectivity. Centering on each novel's respective women protagonists, Rhys's Antoinette, a Creole who loses her White privilege, and Kincaid's Annie John, a Black middle-class girl, the essay reveals women's impossibility in unifying their dual identities under colonial hierarchies, culture-erasing class mobility, and the patriarchal control of women's bodies as commodities. By employing Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality, Frantz Fanon's "zones of non-being," and Homi Bhabha's "ambivalent temporality," the paper demonstrates how racial exclusion, performative decency, and gender constraints work together to undermine female identity construction. Postcolonial study often treats race, class, and gender, each in its own right, as a singular influence, while the survey wants to bridge the research gap by reconsidering identity as a survival strategy formed in the cracks of colonialism. The endings of Antoinette's act of arson and Annie's self-imposed exile reveal the precariousness of colonial hegemony. This study contributes to feminist discourse in the Caribbean. It emphasizes the violent embodiment of colonial modernity and urges that future studies of postcolonial literature integrate more interacting factors to examine the difficulties of female identity construction under colonialism.

**YANG Huijie, Erin**

**American Hybrid Poetics: Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric* and Its Formal Revolt Against Traditional "Citizen Narratives"**

Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric* exposes the inequality of "citizenship" in American racial politics through the everyday documentation of microaggression, the experimental form of poetry, and the critical interrogation of the concept of "American citizen." For Black people, identity is not a fixed legal status, but a state of existence continually redefined through the experience of microaggression and racial violence. The work delves into the visual and contextual dimensions of racism, with a particular focus on the daily microaggressions faced by Black people, highlighting the emotional and psychological impacts these experiences have in both personal and public spheres. By dynamically transforming the first-person "I" into the second-person "you," the pronoun shift transforms lyric poetry from an expression of personal emotion into a discursive field of racial politics, challenging the traditional lyric form. As an American avant-garde poet, Rankine creates a confrontational art form to critique the continuation of racism through fragmented structures and blank space. She quotes the line of Chris Marker's film *Sans Soleil*: "If they don't see happiness in the picture, at least they'll see

the black.” Rankine prompts readers to reflect on the pervasive yet often invisible nature of racial identity and to confront the invisibility of Blackness in America.

**YANG Yaru**

**Healing the Double Fracture: Plantation Ecologies and Kinship in Rivers Solomon’s *Speculative Fictions***

This essay explores the construction of the plantation in Rivers Solomon’s *The Deep* and *An Unkindness of Ghosts*. These two novels move the scenes of plantations to fluid ecological and colonial systems. In *The Deep*, the wajinru, descendants of pregnant African women thrown into the sea during the slave trade, inhabit a submerged plantation world. In *An Unkindness of Ghosts*, the spaceship Matilda recreates a rigid racial hierarchy similar to that of the plantation. This study is based on Malcom Ferdinand’s conception of the “double fracture” (Ferdinand 215), referring both to the “colonial fracture” (175) among human groups and the “environmental fracture”(175) between humans and nature. It explores how Solomon symbolizes and reconfigures power dynamics within human ethnic groups and in the relationship between humans and the environment. Through close reading, I argue that Solomon’s black cross-species and trans-gender protagonists, Yetu and Aster, resist the plantation system and reimagine autonomy through a practice of kinship that transcends species boundaries. Solomon’s novels are not only a criticism of the past but also look forward to a decolonized future rooted in kinship to nature and ecological reciprocity. This essay aims to contribute to the ongoing discussions in the fields of decolonial ecocriticism, queer ecology, and black speculative fiction.

**ZENG Jingyi, Ginny**

**Orientalist Gaze, Native Affections, and Colonial Ambivalence: Rudyard Kipling’s Contradictory Portrayal of Colonialism in *Kim* and “The Man Who Would Be King”**

Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim* and “The Man Who Would Be King” present an ambivalent portrayal of India and British colonialism, oscillating between Orientalist stereotypes and genuine affection for India. While Kipling justifies colonial practices by depicting India as chaotic, superstitious, and primitive, thus necessitating Western intervention, he also reveals his profound attachment to its landscapes, cultures, and people. The novel *Kim* romanticizes imperial espionage as the adventurous “Great Game”, yet simultaneously critiques its dehumanizing effects, exposes the expendability of spies and the protagonist’s psychological weariness, implying doubts of the legitimacy of colonialism. Similarly, “The Man Who Would Be King” dismantles colonial fantasies by showcasing the catastrophic failure of self-proclaimed rulers in Kafiristan, underscoring the instability of imperial domination. Ultimately, the two works embody the ideological dilemma of the empire, simultaneously justifying and subverting colonialism through narrative contradictions.

**ZENG Zehong**

**Negotiating Freedom in the Courtly and Colonial Contact Zones of *Hamlet* and *The Tempest***

This paper explores how Shakespeare represents the negotiation of individual freedom within the asymmetrical power structures of *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*. Using Mary Louise Pratt’s theory of the contact zone as a critical framework and focusing on characters’ discursive strategies, it engages with scholarship by Stephen Greenblatt, Fred B. Tromly, James Kuzner, Thomas Metscher and Lauren Weindling. While *The Tempest* presents an overtly colonial setting, this

study interprets the royal court in *Hamlet* as a cultural contact zone shaped by dynastic politics and ideological tension. Through close textual analysis, it argues that in both plays the contact zones of the court and the colonial island reveal that freedom is always negotiated culturally and politically, and can only emerge through the renunciation of power within hierarchical systems. The comparative analysis illustrates how cultural and colonial frameworks respectively shape the possibilities and limitations of freedom in Shakespeare's tragedy and romance. This study contributes to Shakespearean criticism by bridging the political, cultural, and ethical dimensions of freedom, demonstrating that true autonomy in Shakespeare's plays becomes possible only through the dismantling of dominant power. The contact zone thus emerges as a space where the meaning of freedom is continually tested, challenged, and redefined.

**ZHAN Daining, Jenny**

**War Trauma and Women's Self-Redemption: The "Marauder" and "Protector" in Jayne Anne Phillips's *Night Watch***

*Night Watch* is a war novel written by the American writer Jayne Anne Phillips. It tells the story of a mother (Miss Janet) and daughter (Conalee) seeking refuge and healing their psychological trauma after the American Civil War. The novel describes the traumatic experiences of women in wartime and presents how the female characters (Miss Janet and Conalee) heal their psychological trauma to achieve self-redemption. This paper will analyse the narrative approach and characterization of *Night Watch* in terms of Conalee's first-person narrative, the non-linear timeline of the story, and the images of "marauder" and "protector". The major concern of this paper is to answer the two questions: (1) How does *Night Watch* depict the cruelty of the American Civil War and the psychological trauma of female victims through the war experiences of Miss Janet and Conalee? (2) What role does Conalee's first-person narrative and non-linear timeline play in the storytelling of *Night Watch*? This paper argues that Miss Janet and Conalee in *Night Watch* show the female power of self-redemption to overcome the pain caused by war and to heal their psychological trauma.

**ZHANG Beining**

**Love as Struggle: Power and Queer Intimacy in *The Price of Salt* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley***

This capstone analyzes how queer relationships in Patricia Highsmith's *The Price of Salt* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley* are shaped by power structures that go beyond gender or sexuality. Drawing on theories of intersectionality from Crenshaw, capital and habitus from Bourdieu, and feminist and queer thought, it discusses how class difference, economic vulnerability, and social discipline influence queer intimacy and subjectivity. The capstone argues that even in homosexual relationships, unequal power is reproduced through emotional dependence, resource control, and internalized oppression. Although queer love is often considered outside of patriarchy, Highsmith's novels show that it remains deeply connected to class-based control and heteronormative regulation. By comparing the emotional, spatial, and narrative patterns of the two novels, this capstone finds that power in queer relationships is not removed from social systems, but instead becomes another space where these systems repeat and even intensify. This research also contributes to queer literary criticism by highlighting how intimacy can become a place both of existence and inequality.

**ZHANG Jiatong, Melody**

**Time Out of Tune: Machinery, Urban, and Natural Temporality in Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities***

In this essay, the idea of time in Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* is studied in the sense that the cities portrayed in the book are represented with respect to three not-quite-compatible models, namely the mechanical, the urban, and the natural. Corresponding respectively to each model of time, the study addresses Calvino's criticism of mechanized labor, stagnant urbanity, and environmental decay through various imaginations of three cities: they are Anastasia, Eutropia, and Melania. The essay argues that Calvino's subtle but carefully distinguished models of time in *Invisible Cities* serve as an important lens through which to illustrate and account for alienation in urban modernity and desynchronization of natural rhythms due to urbanization and industrialization from the perspective of existentialism, modernity critique, and ecocriticism. *Invisible Cities* casts its cities as a web of metaphors for wider social issues that show how alienated impositions of time further aggravate ecological destruction and existential crisis. The subversion of linear time of male progress in the overall structure of *Invisible Cities*, as the essay illustrates, is a critique about the ill effects of modernity on both the individual and the environment.

**ZHANG Jiayi**

**Towards An Understanding of Destructive Women Characters in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Han Kang's *The Vegetarian***

Through an ecofeminist lens, this paper argues that the protagonists' extreme actions to dispose of life in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* and Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*—Duszejko's orchestrated serial killings and Yeong-hye's self-destructive transformation—are neither nihilistic nor reversals of patriarchal dominance. Instead, these acts emerge as radical executions of a life-affirming ethics rooted in their shared empathy with non-human beings and their rejection of patriarchal and anthropocentric hierarchies. By dismantling the dual oppressions of male-centric and human-centric ideologies, both characters present a vision of justice that transcends conventional moral boundaries, positioning them as agents of ecological and feminist assertion.

**ZHANG Yujia**

**Gendered Madness in American Gothic: Images of Female Rebellion in "The Yellow Wallpaper" and "A Rose for Emily"**

This paper examines the portrayal of female madness in Charlotte Perkin Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" and William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" and examines how representations of madness as certain women characters in these American Gothic fictions can be interpreted as a reaction to patriarchal oppression and as a way of expressing female subjectivity and contesting the space for female existence. Through comparative analysis, this paper argues that the women protagonists' descent into madness is a result of oppression by patriarchy and reflects their resistance to social constraints. In "The Yellow Wallpaper", the psychological breakdown of the unnamed narrator, who is physically and mentally confined by the authority of medical discourse, is a more introspective form of resistance. Her obsession with the yellow wallpaper symbolizes her trapped self and her subconscious struggle for autonomy. In contrast, in "A Rose for Emily", Emily Grierson engages in a more extroverted and extreme form of resistance. Her acts of murder and necrophilia represent a grotesque but deliberate challenge to the norms of Southern

aristocracy and the collective surveillance of the townspeople that have ruled her entire life. The paper also analyses the different narrative techniques and symbolic elements in the two texts, arguing that Gilman's first-person diary-style narrative enhances the authenticity of the text and the reader's sense of immersion, embodying a free, fluid, and unconventional form of *écriture féminine*. While Faulkner's third-person collective narration, using "we," appears objective but actually reinforces the male gaze and collective scrutiny on the female protagonist. The changing perceptions of the yellow wallpaper are a metaphor for the narrator's psychological collapse, while the rose in Faulkner's fiction alludes to Emily's unattainable love and the decay of the Southern feudal system. Through these two characters, this paper highlights the complex interaction between madness, female agency, and patriarchal control, and argues that the defined madness is an outlet for women's self-struggle within oppressive social structures.

**ZHAO Xinshu**

**Fluid Realities: Reimagining Time, Space, and Meaning in Alain Robbe-Grillet's *The Erasers* and Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities***

The representation of time and space is one of the central aspects of both Alain Robbe-Grillet's and Italo Calvino's fictional writings. Robbe-Grillet's *The Erasers* and Calvino's *Invisible Cities*, while differing in style and structure, both interrogate the stability of these fundamental narrative coordinates. In *The Erasers*, Robbe-Grillet destabilizes linear temporality through recursive patterns and unreliable narration, reflecting the protagonist's psychological disintegration. In *Invisible Cities*, Calvino detaches space and time from fixed coordinates and presents them instead as layered, metaphorical, and deeply subjective. In both works, we witness a continual erosion of the conventional boundaries between past, present, and future, as well as a subversion of spatial coherence. While scholars have noted these themes in both works, their comparative destabilization of narrative coherence and epistemological implications remain underexplored. Based on this gap, the article seeks to examine how Robbe-Grillet and Calvino reimagine narrative temporality and spatiality, offering radically different but equally subversive alternatives to realist traditions.

**ZHENG Tongyan**

**Disrupting the Gaze and Erupting the Frame: Mu Shiying's Rebellion in the Presentation of Gender**

This paper analyzes three short stories by New Sensationist writer Mu Shiying—"A Platinum Statue of the Female Body," "Craven 'A'," and "The Man Who Was Treated as a Plaything"—under the theoretical framework of the male gaze and cinematic narrative from Mulvey's essay. In these stories, women are exploited as their bodies are sexualized and objectified by the male gaze, and they are also controlled by the male-centred narrative structure; however, the pleasure of the male gaze and narrative control is disrupted by dehumanizing metaphors and women's voices outside the narrative frame. The existence of disruptions raises moral questions about the male-centered mode of writing, as well as the flaws of this mode in representing women and writing the truth of gender.

**ZHOU Fangrui**

**The Three Faces of Postcolonial Ecological Violence: The Interconnectedness of the Environment and People in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, "The Lagoon" and "An Outpost of Progress"**

As a pioneering figure in the history of British literature, Joseph Conrad's works, *Heart of Darkness*, "The Lagoon" and "An Outpost of Progress," examine the multifaceted nature of colonial violence from a unique perspective. By revealing the dynamic and diverse relationship between human beings and nature, Conrad challenges traditional anthropocentrism and the opposing relationship between civilization and barbarism. This paper combines ecological criticism with postcolonial theory and analyzes several of Conrad's works to present the multi-level interaction of colonial ecological violence. The paper holds that by recognizing that the ecological environment not only plays the role of a "silent witness" and an "active avenger" in the colonial context but also has a mirror image relationship with human destiny and condition, Conrad's works successfully transcend the traditional division between humans and ecology, affirming the initiative and subjectivity of the natural world. Through meticulous textual analysis, the essay also exposes the ecological damage caused by colonialism in Conrad's stories and metaphorically describes the spiritual predicament of humanity through the depiction of the environment. Although the violent nature of colonialism is reflected in all three works, they also imply the inevitability of the disillusionment of colonial myths.

**ZHU Hongcheng, Alex**

**Dancing in Fetters: A Case Study of the Ring in *The Merchant of Venice***

In Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, the female protagonist plays a pivotal role. The ring serves as a link among the four female characters: Portia, Nerissa, Jessica, and Leah, while also embodying profound symbolic significance. Jessica inherits her ring from her mother, Leah, while Portia and Nerissa respectively bestow wedding rings, symbols of marriage and the right of the husband, upon their lovers: Bassanio and Gratiano. The rings of Jessica and Portia represent two distinct paths of rebellion against patriarchy. This essay will analyze the paths of female awakening and their revolt against patriarchy as exemplified by Jessica and Portia, exploring the spatial constraints and the intergenerational oppression and surveillance towards women imposed by the patriarchal system represented by the ring. It will examine how female characters resist and mock patriarchy in the commercial society, transcend masculinity, and employ strategic tactics to utilize the patriarchal system to oppose patriarchy.



## **Part B: Linguistics**

**BAI Ruixue**

### **Fandom Discourse and Identity Construction: A Case Study of Chinese Boy Band Teens in Times**

This paper investigates the dynamic relationship between discourse and identity construction by taking the online discourse of fans of Teens in Times (TNT), a Chinese idol group, as an example. The author selected 20 TNT fans' posts from Weibo as research data. Adapting Bucholtz and Hall's identity theory as a theoretical framework (with a particular focus on the principle of indexicality therein), and applying visual grammar and qualitative analysis as research methods, the study aims to explore which indexical symbols (including direct and indirect symbols) are employed by TNT fans, as well as how these symbols help them construct fans identities. The author concludes that fans usually employ linguistic and visual symbols for the construction of multiple identities. The identity indexing system of verbal symbols is divided into direct indexing and indirect indexing. Direct indexing mainly refers to the direct inclusion of appellations that show one's identity in the text, while indirect indexing mainly contains lyrics, positive expressions of praise, and fans' original cultural codes. Visual symbols are embodied in pictures, which convey the triple meanings of reproducing, interactive, and compositional, and intuitively present the identity of fans. By combining linguistic and visual symbols, the identities of mum fan, girlfriend fan, guardian, propagandist, etc., are vividly presented.

**CAO Yutong**

### **Suspense Building in Chinese TV Trailers: A Multimodal Analysis**

This study employs a qualitative analytical framework rooted in multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) and visual grammar to examine how Chinese suspense TV series trailers utilize visual, auditory, and linguistic resources to collectively construct tension and shape viewer expectations. Based on the *Douban* platform ratings, this study selected fourteen trailers of Chinese suspense TV series released between 2015 and 2024 as samples, and systematically analyzed the representational meaning, interactive meaning, and compositional meaning of these trailers. Taking the top-rated trailer of *The Bad Kids* as an example, this study observed how the trailer's camera angles, color variations, jarring sound cues, and strategically placed on-screen text jointly create a suspenseful atmosphere of danger and arouse audience expectation. This article applies Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001, 2020) theoretical framework to an underexplored genre and cultural context—Chinese TV series trailers—thus extending the empirical scope of MDA and visual grammar beyond the study of Western film trailers. This study fills the relatively vacant research field by analyzing the effective use of multimodality in trailers for Chinese suspense TV series, and provides insights for producers on how to effectively use multimodal techniques to attract audiences in the highly competitive streaming environment, further filling the academic research on the use of MDA in different research field.

**CHEN Cheng**

### **Illuminating Linguistic Change: Exploring Diurnal and Nocturnal Variation in Hong Kong's Linguistic Landscape**

The study compares three selected places in Hong Kong, and is intended to discuss the diurnal and nocturnal variation of linguistic landscapes. A total of 2006 visual linguistic items are examined, with 1419 items from the daytime, and 587 illuminated during the night. Findings

reveal strict adherence to the English-Chinese bilingual policy at the top-down level. Even though there is a sharp reduction of these official signs after dark, the overall language configuration structure remains stable. The diurnal linguistic landscape at the bottom-up level exhibits localized multilingual diversity, and the nocturnal linguistic landscape increasingly prioritize English as a lingua franca. Besides, linguistic items in the three recorded areas are found to present distinctive functions, representing diurnal linguistic landscapes in Hong Kong. This research provides a comparative insight for night linguistic landscape rather than a static linguistic perspective for cities with vitality.

**CHEN Jiajia**

**A Comparative Critical Discourse Analysis of Feminine Identity in *Vogue China* and American *Vogue* (2020–2024)**

This study presents a comparative critical discourse analysis of how *Vogue China* and American *Vogue* represent feminine identities through their covers from 2020 to 2024. Combining Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and multimodal discourse analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar), the study adopts a qualitative analysis to explore the diversified transformation of feminine identities in different cultural contexts and their negotiation methods in localization and globalization ideology. The study finds that *Vogue China* constructs an introverted, elegant and harmonious female image through eastern aesthetics, natural images and traditional symbols, reflecting the emphasis on national identity. In contrast, American *Vogue* shows a more diverse, open and politicized representation, emphasizing physical autonomy, racial diversity and gender fluidity. The two reflect how the media acts as a significant participant in cultural discourse and shapes a specific female image and its ideology in the collaboration of visual and textual elements. This study not only expands the application of CDA and visual grammar theory in non-Western texts, but also provides theoretical and methodological reference for gender discourse analysis in cross-cultural contexts.

**CHEN Naduo**

**Advertising for Popular Sports Brands in China: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis**

This study critically examines how three dominant sports brands in China—Lululemon, Arc'teryx, and Salomon—semiotically construct middle-class identity through their advertising discourse, and how these advertisements reflect ideologies such as consumerism, elitism, or any implicit exclusivity. Applying van Leeuwen's (2008) framework of recontextualization, the study finds the ads accomplish the following: (1) construct exclusivity and accessible elitism by substituting and deleting social actors; (2) bind consumption with moral superiority by rearranging and adding symbolic values to social practices; and (3) implement hidden discipline to individuals through body and health narratives. By deconstructing the "three must-haves of middle class" in Chinese social media, this study can help us better understand how the social media advertising constructs and disseminates idealized class identities in a consumerist society. This study also elucidates the particularity of the formation of the Chinese middle class, namely, the intersection of the ideals advocated by the state and global consumerism.

**CHEUNG Ching Long**

**Constructing "Hybrid" Masculinities: A Multimodal Study on Online Digital Grooming Video Advertisements**

Grooming products have long been heavily marketed to women, but recent years have seen a shift in advertising focus to men as well. Shifting norms around masculinity have led to the rise of the market for male grooming products. While traditional studies have focused on gender representation in such ads within the print media, its representation in digital ads remain understudied. This paper hopes to address such gap through analysing how masculinity is constructed in digital ads for male grooming products, focusing on the brands L'Oreal Men Expert and Dove Men + Care. Our analysis reveals several recurring themes including grooming practice as body control, agency, and family. Our findings reveal that while these advertisements promote progressive ideals of self-care and empowerment, they simultaneously uphold traditional masculine values, serving to both challenge and sustain the current gender hierarchy. We argue this seems to construct “hybrid masculinity,” a form of masculinity involving the integration of marginalized masculinity elements into one’s traditional gender performance.

### **CHI Shenxing**

#### **Negotiating Power and Desire: Racialized Narratives in Intercultural Romance on Douyin**

This paper employs critical discourse analysis to examine how racialized power dynamics in intercultural romances of Chinese male-white female couples are constructed, reinforced, and challenged on the Chinese social media platform Douyin. Taking the “Keno-Monroe couple” account as the research object, the paper analyzes the most-liked comments extracted from the three user engagement phases of the account, revealing how power relations in intercultural romance are discursively constructed through user engagement. Drawing on theories of Orientalism, sexual mobility, and intercultural romance, the paper demonstrates that while the comments on the intimacy of Chinese male and white female partners initially breaks the paradigm of Western-centered thinking, the sharp decline in user engagement as the video content shifts to family narratives reveals that intercultural romance on social media is still constructed as a cultural spectacle that performs cultural differences. This paper ultimately reveals that user engagement makes the power dynamics of intercultural romance in social media consistently and powerfully influenced by race and sexuality.

### **CHOI Yee Wing Lillian**

#### **Remediatising Non-Standard Cantonese Catchphrase: Linguistic Power and Digital Enregisterment in Hong Kong**

This study examines the enregisterment of non-standard Cantonese through the viral catchphrase “出街瞓” (“Go sleep on the streets”) on Hong Kong’s Instagram posts, focusing on how digital platforms shape social identities and power dynamics. Originating from mainland Chinese immigrant, Ho Tai, this Cantonese phrase’s influenced with Mandarin features become a catchphrase for humour, resistance, and commodification. Using appraisal framework and critical discourse analysis, the study analyses how content creators and viewers recontextualise the phrase into memes and parodies, reinforcing linguistic stigma by facilitating its enregisterment while challenging Mainland influence. Findings reveal that Instagram’s algorithms and user interactions transform non-standard Cantonese into a viral, profitable cultural product, amplifying localist sentiments and gendered power shifts in Hong Kong’s post-2019 digital culture. This study underscores the role of social media in negotiating linguistic hierarchies and sociopolitical identities.

**GAO Yuemeng**

**Language, Ideology, and Identity: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Comments on *The Story of Minglan***

This study examines stancetaking in viewer comments on the Chinese costume drama *The Story of Minglan*, analyzing the linguistic and discursive strategies employed as well as the underlying ideologies reflected in these interactions. Previous studies on Chinese dramas establish the academic context for this research and underscore its significance. This study focuses on comments on Chinese costume dramas from the perspective of linguistics and investigates the conflicts between modern Chinese audience values and traditional ones as well as discussions surrounding gender. This research conducts a qualitative analysis of the comments. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) serves as both the research method and framework for this research, which unfolds according to Fairclough's (1992) three perspectives: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. This study finds that commenters simultaneously challenge and uphold traditional Confucian familial hierarchy and gender norms to some extent through their diverse stances on the drama, its characters, and their intricate relationships. The commenters eventually construct a hybrid identity: young individuals who reject blind filial piety while still conforming to unequal family dynamics, and who are open-minded yet uncritical of the drama's feminist themes.

**GUAN Leyi**

**The Discourse of Video Covers and Titles Published by the Hong Kong Tourism Board from 2023–2024: A Multimodality Analysis**

This study sets out to investigate the utilization of visual strategies in the design of promotional video covers published on Youtube by the Hong Kong Tourism Board after Covid-19, aiming to uncover the semiotics practices adopted on creating visually attractive video covers for catching viewers' attention and exploring the evolving city brands embedded within these visuals. Given that most previous studies focused on enhancing the appeal of tourism during Covid-19, recovering tourism in the post-pandemic period is not given due attention and the changing branding of the city implied is also not studied sufficiently. To fill the two research gaps, both the qualitative and quantitative methods will be applied to conduct a multimodal discourse analysis. The study finds that narrative representation, offering medium images in frontal and eye-level angles, and strongly framing the left-and-right information are three principal visual strategies in tourism promotion, suggesting inclusiveness, diversity, safety, comfort, affinity and harmonious integration of fine tradition and progress are the Hong Kong brands. This study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of how visual communication adapts to the changing tourists and the shifting city branding in the post-pandemic context.

**GUO Sitong**

**Translanguaging in Multimodal Spaces: Analyzing TikTok Refugees' Language Use on RedNote**

Social media platforms provides people with the opportunities to explore, express, and connect with various linguistic and cultural communities online (Higgins, 2024), and on these platforms, the pressure to cater to global audience and attract followers also requires different content creation and methods (Curran & Jenks, 2023). This study examines the translanguaging practices and multilingual identity construction of "TikTok Refugees" on RedNote, a Chinese short-video platform, under the context of TikTok's U.S. ban, which prompted resistance from users

migrating to RedNote. The research explores how geopolitical platform shifts shape digital communication and self-representation. This study combines multimodal analysis (Norris, 2016) and translation theory (Li, 2018) to investigate the language strategies and identity reconstruction of displaced users on RedNote. The study focuses on three interconnected dimensions: first, the linguistic strategies employed in posts, such as Chinese-English alternation, and hybrid hashtags. Second, the identity positions emerging from these practices. Thirdly, the collaborative shaping of identity through audience interactions, such as comment threads debating language choices or validating hybrid expressions. The research aims to reveal how forced platform migration transforms multilingual creativity into a tool for performing transnational digital citizenship. By examining how displaced creators repurpose “imperfect” multilingualism and culturally hybrid aesthetics, the study reveals translanguaging not merely as a communicative tool but as a form of algorithmic resistance. This reframing challenges dominant narratives of platform nationalism, where algorithms prioritize linguistic and cultural purity, by demonstrating how marginalized users exploit platform affordances to carve out transnational third spaces.

**HE Tiantian**

### **From Cantonese Promotion to Dialect Preservation: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Cantonese-Related Contents on Social Media Platforms**

The dominance of Mandarin in China’s language policy has led to the marginalization of many regional dialects, including Cantonese, despite its continued everyday use among millions of speakers. While prior research about varieties preservation has focused on family practices (Liu, 2021) and language policies (Wang & King, 2024), little attention has been paid to the role of social media in preserving dialects and constructing regional identity. Addressing this gap, the present study explores how short Cantonese videos centered on regional comparison contribute to identity construction and reinforcement in online spaces. Using Halliday’s (1978) metafunctional theory and Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2020) visual grammar, the study analyzes four widely circulated videos by Cantonese content creator with more than 100,000 followers across three dimensions: representative, compositional, and interactive meaning. The analysis reveals that linguistic features, culturally coded visuals, and audience engagement work together to create a shared sense of “Guangdong identity” while subtly excluding non-Cantonese speakers. Through the strengthened collective identity in the digital areas, user-generated content can function as a site for dialect preservation and cultural negotiation, highlighting the role of multimodal discourse in shaping digital sociolinguistic landscapes.

**HO Kenis Ka Ching**

### **A Rhetorical Analysis of Christian Sermons: Comparing Persuasive Strategies of the Catholic Church and the LDS Church**

Religions play an indispensable role in shaping societal values in modern society, and persuasion is the key for leaders to extend their influence. However, little research exists on exploring the persuasive strategies across Christianity. This study aims to address the gap by comparing the persuasive strategies of the scripted sermons of two Christian leaders: Pope Francis (Roman Catholic) and Russell M. Nelson (LDS church). Using content analysis and rhetorical analysis, the study identifies the similarities and differences in the use of persuasive strategies. The finding reveals a predominance of usage in pathos strategies, like metaphor and comparison, in Christian discourse. Leaders employ different approaches to persuade the audience while constructing different leadership images. Pope Francis made use of strategies like religious

authority, using more negative emotions, comparisons, and minimal use of first-person pronouns to establish an authoritative and trustworthy image. President Nelson utilized personal anecdotes and word choices to build a friendly leadership style. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of persuasive language use in Christian discourse and how it varies between different churches.

**HU Xinyi**

### **A Critical Discourse Analysis of China's 2024 Olympic Table Tennis Reporting in State Media**

This study examines how China's state media, Xinhua Net specifically, reported the nation's table tennis wins in the 2024 Paris Olympics. Using critical discourse analysis (CDA), this study examined 18 English news articles to search for recurring themes and linguistic practices. Three master narratives emerged from the analysis. National pride and shared victory were emphasized by evaluative language, framing victories as a shared success for the Chinese people. Second, ideological continuity and heritage were highlighted by linking recent achievements to China's past dominance of the sport through temporal framing to foster an unbroken tradition. Third, the news stories employed soft power and international reputation and intertextuality to frame China as a global leader, projecting sporting excellence to advance diplomatic influence. The research explores how these stories have purposes beyond sporting journalism. By focusing on unity, the media unites national identity in the midst of internal and external threats. Connecting present victories to past victories benefits the state's ideological agenda, presenting China as a persistent giant. Along the way, maintaining a positive global image enables the nation's geopolitical agendas. This study sheds light on the role of sports journalism in ideological communication, showing how language builds perceptions in a politically charged context.

**HUANG Chibei**

### **Conflict and Integration of Languages in Chinese Popular Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Language Use by TikTok Refugees on RedNote**

This study explores the linguistic landscape and cultural dynamics on RedNote, a Chinese-language social media platform, following the influx of American users fleeing TikTok due to its prohibition in the U.S. Critical discourse analysis serves as the methodological framework, examining bilingual strategies employed by users to bridge linguistic gaps and foster cross-cultural communication. Data were collected from user-generated content on RedNote that garnered more than 100,000 likes from January 14, 2025 onwards. The analysis focuses on 53 posts and videos relevant to the research theme, containing tags, titles, or content related to "TikTok Refugee(s)" or "refugee(s)." The findings underscore that users commonly employ bilingual strategies to facilitate cross-cultural communication. It also shows that foreign users construct distinct identities, positioning themselves as "TikTok refugees" or "guests" based on their integration level into the platform. Furthermore, the power dynamics between Chinese and foreign users differ. These findings provide valuable insights into the role of social media platforms in facilitating cross-cultural communication and shaping power relations in the digital age.

**HUANG Sijia**

**A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Interpersonal Meanings in Chinese Sun Protection Clothing Advertisements**

This study focuses on the multimodal discourse of Chinese sun protection clothing advertisements, with the aim of exploring how verbal and visual modalities are utilized to convey interpersonal and interactive meanings, as well as the ideological messages embedded in these advertisements. Though previous research has conducted a relatively comprehensive multimodal discourse analysis of advertisements, given that sun protection clothing is an emergent product category, it is necessary to explore its advertisements from the perspective of interpersonal meanings. This study employs a qualitative approach to analyze five advertisements from different Chinese brands. The findings are that in verbal modality, declaratives and imperatives are commonly used, which establishes a professional and authoritative identity and denotes the underlying science-driven trust in promotion and brands. In visual modality, demand acts, low angle shots, and social distances are prevalent. These elements reflect that advertisers attempt to utilize various visual resources to construct an aspirational identity and to fantasize consumption as a means of self-empowerment and self-actualization.

**JIANG Ning**

**A Multimodal Analysis: Exploring YouTubers and Their Viewers' Attitudes Towards Their First Trip to China**

This study takes Youtube videos of foreign creators' first-time travel to China as research objects, employing a multimodal discourse analysis and appraisal theory framework to systematically explore their narrative strategies and cross-cultural impact mechanisms. The research selected four groups of videos themed "First Trip to China," with content covering diverse travel scenarios including family trips and friend excursions. All videos were published between 2022 and 2025, each exceeding 100,000 views. This paper focuses on the synergistic effects of visual modalities (shot composition, framing techniques), auditory modalities (background music, ambient sound effects) and linguistic modalities (narrative tone, emotional expression). Combining this with coding of emotional tendencies and cognitive feedback in audience comments, the study reveals the construction pathways of cross-cultural attitudes. Findings reveal that creators achieve precise attitudinal expression through differentiated configurations of multimodal resources—where wide-angle shots and dynamic follow-up filming intensify modernization narratives, ambient sound recording and non-musical designs enhance immersion, while paradoxical rhetoric and action-chain storytelling deconstruct cultural biases. Audience comments exhibit a three-phase response pattern of cognitive deconstruction (appreciation) → emotional resonance (affect) → practical transformation (judgement). The study proposes that China's international communication could adopt strategies like "de-propagandized narration" and "participatory culture cultivation," optimizing global discourse expression through immersive depictions of everyday scenes and algorithm-adapted content matrices.

**JU Qian**

**Intercultural Visual Rhetoric in East-West Award-Winning Animated Posters**

In an increasingly interconnected media environment, animated short film posters are an important site for visual rhetoric to negotiate cultural identity and universal appeal. While existing studies have explored multimodal discourses in Western animated propaganda, comparative analyses of East-West visual rhetoric remain limited. To address this gap, this study

investigates how award-winning Chinese and Western animated short film posters employ hybrid visual rhetoric to mediate cultural narratives while promoting cross-cultural empathy. Guided by Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar and Shi-xu's (2016) cultural discourse analysis, this study examines six purposely selected posters: three Western Oscar-winning works and three Chinese works that have been highly acclaimed at international film festivals. The analysis reveals different cultural strategies: Chinese posters prioritise symbolic abstraction through ink aesthetics to encode the collective values of Confucianism-Daoism, whereas Western posters emphasise tactile materiality to universalise the immediacy of personal emotions. Despite their differences, both employ gaze-avoidance and minimalist compositional approaches to strike a balance between cultural specificity and global legibility. Key findings highlight how compositional choices reflect anti-anthropocentric philosophies and individual agency. By combining Eastern aesthetic philosophy with Western semiotics, this study challenges the Eurocentric paradigm of analysis, providing theoretical insights into visual communication research and practical guidelines for creators to navigate cultural globalisation.

**LI Jia, Lia**

### **Identity Construction in International Online Interactions: A Case Study of “Reply to Li Hua” on RedNote**

This study investigates the identity construction strategies employed by American users on the Chinese social media platform RedNote following the viral “Reply to Li Hua” phenomenon, which emerged after the 2025 TikTok ban in the United States. Adopting Chen's pragmatic identity framework, the research analyzes 20 bilingual posts by American users responding to “Li Hua,” a fictional character traditionally used in Chinese English-learning contexts. Through discourse analysis, the study identifies key strategies, including nostalgic childhood metaphors, bilingual code-switching, and performative apologies that American users employ to negotiate individual, relational, and collective identities. Findings reveal that these strategies aim to foster emotional reciprocity, bridge cultural divides, and integrate into the Chinese-dominated RedNote community by emphasizing shared humanity over geopolitical tensions.

**LI Ruofei**

### **National Identity Construction in China's NEV Advertising: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis**

This study investigates how national identity is constructed through multimodal discourse in new energy vehicle (NEV) advertising in mainland China, with a focus on content distributed on Xiaohongshu. As China leads the world in NEV production and sales, NEVs have become emblematic not only of technological progress but also of national pride. While multimodal discourse analysis (MDA) research on automobile advertising has focused on topics such as environmental or gender discourse, its role in shaping national identity has rarely been explored. This gap is particularly noteworthy given the close connection between NEVs and Chinese political discourse. Drawing on multimodal discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA), this study analyzes advertisements from both state-owned and private NEV brands. It identifies two dominant strategies: inward-facing narratives that highlight cultural heritage, and outward-facing ones that emphasize international recognition. The findings suggest that institutional affiliation influences discursive tone—central state brands employ restrained symbolism, while private brands adopt a more direct and assertive approach. Platform context also shapes expression: affective language, visual symbolism, and patriotic hashtags are often



used to embed national identity within emotionally resonant, consumer-friendly discourse. The study contributes to understanding how national identity is negotiated in commercial media, showing how NEV advertising participates in the aesthetic and ideological construction of a technologically modern Chinese nation.

**LI Tianai**

**EFL Teachers' Responses to Students' Oral Mistakes: A CA-based Qualitative Analysis**

This study concentrates on English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' response to students' oral errors, which are called teachers' "Oral Corrective Feedback" (OCF). OCF can be divided into recasts, explicit corrections and prompts (elicitation, metalinguistic clue, repetition, clarification requests, and paralinguistic signal). Prompts, teachers' inspiration of learners' self-repair, have been proven to be the most effective OCF. However, most previous studies applied meta-analysis methods, excluding prompt categorization and teachers' correcting process. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a qualitative analysis to investigate how EFL teachers utilize prompts and reveal their mistake-correcting process. The conversation analysis (CA) method is used to consider teachers' corrections as interactive process. This study finds three prompt strategies: "prompt only," "prompt with explicit correction," and "prompt with recast." Prompt only was applied most, followed by prompt with explicit correction, and prompt with recast received the least utilization. Teachers' prompt choices were influenced by factors including mistake types, students' performances, and class time limitation. Besides prompts, in the correcting process teachers also tended to use encouragement and praise to help inspire students' reflection on their mistakes. It is noticeable that among all OCF types, elicitation received the most implementation. Teachers are advised to utilize other prompts more to diversify in-class teacher-student interactions and choose appropriate prompt strategies to improve teaching efficiency. This study can help better understand EFL teachers' prompt use and contribute to teacher education.

**LI Xixi, Cicy**

**Constructing Ideological Narratives and Political Identities: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Donald Trump and Kamala Harris**

In the 2024 US election, the performance of Donald Trump and Kamala Harris was excellent in the only live debate. Their multi-dimensional debate on the abortion issue was worth studying for understanding how they constructed their ideological narratives and political identities, which was the aim of this research. During the 10-minute abortion policy debate, Harris claimed her support for abortion rights for women in America directly, while Trump supported state-level abortion bans to please his base supporters and refused to veto a nationwide abortion ban to attract swing voters. After stating their standpoints, the debate moved to narrative construction with examples and situation descriptions. Both populist Trump and feminist Harris designed proper strategies to attract their target audiences. At the end, the debate became an oral conflict where both of them questioned the weaknesses of each other's standpoints, demonstrating a clash of ideologies, which was populism vs. feminism. The research used MCDA to analyse the verbal and visual elements, trying to build a vivid picture of how they constructed their ideological narratives and political identities simultaneously.

**LIN Weixi**

**Transnational Vloggers' Identity Construction: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of "Lao Wang in China" Videos**

This study investigates the identity construction process of transnational influencers on Chinese social media platforms, with a focus on the Iraqi vlogger "Lao Wang in China" on Bilibili. Most previous research concentrates on video content, neglecting the analysis of audience feedback. This study integrates Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) identity construction theory with Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal discourse analysis framework to reveal the multimodal discursive strategies employed in self-representation. It conducts qualitative discourse analysis of ten videos and three types of comments (high-engagement, controversial, and long-text). The findings reveal that the vlogger's cultural identity emerges dynamically through interaction, manifesting as a "Chinese cultural admirer" and a "cross-cultural bridge." He employs various linguistic strategies, including high Mandarin proficiency and affective markers. The close-ups and kinship terms help establish intimacy with viewers. Visual elements (body language, subtitles) and auditory components work synergistically with verbal content to enhance identity performance. Audience perceptions of identity occur through two discursive patterns: cultural identity recognition and performative authenticity critique. This study can advance the understanding of transnational influencers' identity construction from a perspective of audience interpretation.

**LIU Siqu**

**Do Users Hold the Discourse Power? A Critical Discourse Analysis of Commodified Comments in the Wang Xing Incident**

This study examines commodified discourse on RedNote during the 2025 Wang Xing incident—a high-profile case involving a Chinese actor's kidnapping in Thailand—by bridging the gap between user agency (e.g., Bucholtz & Hall's identity construction) and structural domination (e.g., van Dijck & Poell's platform logic) through an analysis of how users, brands, and platforms dynamically negotiate power in commodified comment sections. Using qualitative critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1993) on 100 top-liked RedNote comments (50 pre-rescue, 50 post-rescue), the research reveals that pre-rescue discourse framed the event as entertainment (e.g., jokes about casting Wang in *No More Bets 2*), while post-rescue comments shifted toward traffic-driven promotion (e.g., Ken's repeated pushes for a scam-related livestream), exemplifying a phase-shifting commodification of public sentiment. Although users deployed humor and emotion actively, their visibility was shaped by algorithmic preferences for emotionally charged, shareable content that aligned with commercial interests, such as free publicity for *No More Bets*. By exposing how platforms convert emotional expression into "consumable capital," the study urges public vigilance and challenges brands to balance profit motives with social responsibility. Ultimately, this work maps the interdiscursive entanglement of news, entertainment, and marketing, offering a critical framework for analyzing similar algorithm-driven publicity cycles.

**LIU Siyue**

**From Culture to Sovereignty: Strategic Use of Attitudinal Resources in Japanese News Coverage of Whaling**

Adopting Martin and White's (2005) appraisal theory, the study investigates how *The Japan News* linguistically rationalizes Japanese whaling across three different discursive contexts: culture, sovereignty, and technology. Attitudinal resource, as a subcategory of appraisal resource,

has been widely applied to media discourse analysis, but its application in Japanese news coverage of whaling remains unexplored. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods, the study reveals how attitudinal resources are used to justify whaling. Findings show that *The Japan News* mainly relies on appreciation resource to emphasize whale meat's high value, framing it as an irreplaceable element in Japanese culture. In the context of sovereignty, judgement is the dominant resource, through which a legal and illegal dichotomy is created. Within technological narratives, a balanced proportion of judgment and appreciation resources position whaling as a symbol of scientific progress. These discursive strategies illustrate how media outlets adapt language to rationalize controversial issues in different contexts. By connecting appraisal theory with environmental issues, the study highlights the potential for news media to reconstruct human-nonhuman relationships through ecologically beneficial discourse while navigating complex sociopolitical agendas.

**LIU Yingzhuo**

**Multimodal Discourse Analysis: Redefinition of Femininity to Empower Women in *Legally Blonde***

In contemporary popular culture, images of women are often reduced to stereotypical symbols, while the film *Legally Blonde* provides an innovative path for female empowerment through the synergy of multimodal symbols. Using multimodal discourse analysis and gender performance theory as a framework, this study explores how the film reconstructs femininity and challenges traditional gender norms. The study finds that pink is gradually transformed from a stereotypical label symbolising childish superficiality, such as the pink dress in the opening scene, to a professional and authoritative symbol, such as the pink suit in the courtroom, and its semantic reversal reveals the empowering potential of symbol re-contextualisation. In addition, the design of the space in the film breaks down the gender division of labour in the public and private spheres, and Ellie reconfigures the symbolic order of the institutional space by implanting female symbols, such as diamond-encrusted notebooks and pink highlighters, into the male-dominated law school. Body language in the film also serves as a key empowerment tool. From the sweet gestures that cater to the male gaze in the early stages to the precise hand gestures and upright physique in the courtroom in the later stages, the female protagonist Elle's physical practices dissolve the rational/sensual dichotomy, proving that femininity can be transformed into intellectual expression. This study reveals the possibility of gender political reconstruction in popular culture through the critical appropriation of symbols, providing a new analytical perspective for post-feminist media criticism.

**LIU Yiqian**

**Language Attitude Towards English Varieties: A Case Study in the University of Hong Kong From the Perspective of ELF**

This study investigates mainland Chinese students' attitudes toward four English varieties (British, American, Hong Kong, and Chinese English) at the University of Hong Kong, employing both direct and indirect (verbal-guise technique) methods within an English as a lingua franca (ELF) framework. Results reveal a persistent hierarchy favoring native varieties (British > American > Hong Kong > Chinese English) across power, solidarity, and linguistic quality dimensions, challenging assumptions about solidarity advantages for local accents. Notably, Hong Kong English outperformed Chinese English, reflecting colonial legacy and cosmopolitan capital. A key contradiction emerged: while participants explicitly endorsed

Chinese English as an identity marker, implicit measures (VGT) revealed strong subconscious bias against it, exposing tensions between ideological acceptance and internalized native-speaker norms. The findings highlight how Hong Kong's EMI context and postcolonial linguistic hierarchies shape attitudes, suggesting that ELF-oriented pedagogy must address both cognitive and affective dimensions to reconcile policy with practice.

**NING Yipeng**

**Code-Switching Phenomena Among Chinese Mainland Mandarin-Speaking Students During Master's Studies in Hong Kong: A Sociolinguistic Analysis**

This study discusses the phenomenon of code-switching among the students coming from the Guangdong Province, Guangxi Province or other parts of mainland China for a Master's Degree at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). The study evaluates how code-switching between Mandarin, Cantonese, and English impacts cultural adaptation and identity construction. The study employs a mixed-methods approach by conducting interviews and discourse analysis of the interviews of 8 students and a questionnaire survey of 20 students. The findings emphasise frequent use of English in academic contexts and a tendency to switch between Mandarin and Cantonese depending on social settings, language proficiency, and regional background. The study shows that Cantonese is more commonly used by students from Guangdong and Guangxi, while non-Cantonese speakers integrate Cantonese strategically. The study also shows that Mandarin, despite previous social stigma, has gained prominence in academic and informal peer communication. Thus, the study evaluates the code-switching phenomenon to understand the negotiations of the linguistic boundaries to align with the trilingual identity of Hong Kong. The study necessitates code-switching as a key practice for social integration and has future research implications for long-term studies with larger datasets.

**PENG Yiyi**

**Narrative Positioning as Self-Empowerment: Elderly Chinese Internet Users Narrating Job-Related Stories**

Nowadays, stories shared by elderly people are becoming increasingly popular online in China. In this article, Bamberg's narrative positioning theory (1997) is applied to analyze the stories and narration of elderly users in Xiaohongshu (XHS), one of China's largest social media platforms. Focusing on job-related stories, the study examines 34 postings from eight elderly XHS users over the age of 60. Three kinds of images constructed by the selected narrators across three levels of positioning are identified: "imperfect learners," "generous anchors," and "not stragglers." By exploring the self-image building of the elderly through storytelling, this study suggests that their narrative should be valued as a strategy to recognize themselves, convince themselves, and thereby empower themselves.

**QIU Zikai**

**Hybrid Voices, Digital Identities: Translanguaging and Multimodal Practices of Hong Kong Youths on Instagram**

This study explores how Hong Kong youth construct a "glocal" identity on Instagram through the mixture of Cantonese and English languages and multimodal symbols (emojis, hashtags, images) to balance the inheritance of local culture, the demands of globalization, and the resistance to cultural homogenization. The research focuses on two major themes: personal life (such as diet and leisure) and academic life (such as exam pressure and graduation ceremonies),

and employs critical discourse analysis and multimodal social semiotics methods to analyze 15 posts by Hong Kong youth users. The findings reveal that in personal life, the mixture of Cantonese and English innovates local symbols through cultural translation, reinforcing local belonging. In academic scenarios, English terms internalize global academic hegemony, while Cantonese emotional expression and humorous symbols deconstruct its oppressiveness. Users systematically avoid Mandarin and strategically utilize the international legitimacy of English and the local authenticity of Cantonese to respond to the dual pressures of mainland cultural infiltration and global norms. The study indicates that language mixture is not only a communication tool but also a micro-political practice, providing a new perspective for digital identity negotiation in multilingual societies.

**RUAN Wenli**

### **A Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis of Chinese Women's Film *Her Story***

Although the critical discourse analysis (CDA) emphasizes how to resist social injustice, abuse of power, and other issues, most research has focused on deconstructing, rather than reconstructing acts of oppression. To fill this lacuna, this study employs a feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) as the primary framework, aiming to investigate how Chinese women's film *Her Story* challenges patriarchal structures, resists gender stereotypes, and reconstructs female agency through its postfeminist narrative strategies. Through close analysis of character dialogue, multimodal cues, and sociocultural contexts, three core strategies are identified: (1) confronting female anxiety and calling for agency, (2) resisting gender stereotypes through reimagined masculinities, and (3) criticizing patriarchy while rewriting gender norms. I argue that these strategies, though being framed within fictional narratives, help reconstruct gender roles and contribute to female empowerment, aiming to foster mutual growth and achieve real equality. This study concludes by advocating for the development of postfeminist media, requiring them to amplify marginalized voices, challenge representational constraints, and align media discourses with broader efforts toward social justice and transformation.

**SONG Jingjing**

### **Translanguaging Practices and Expertise Construction in Online English Language Teaching on Douyin**

This research concerns the translanguaging practices in online English language teaching videos in Chinese digital contexts. It aims to explore how English instructors employ translanguaging practices in their videos to establish online English language teaching (ELT) expertise. While there are many previous studies about translanguaging practices in online ELT, they focus on a case study. In light of this, this study expands the research scope and conducts a comparative analysis of videos from two English instructors on Douyin (Chinese TikTok). A qualitative social semiotics approach is applied in data analysis. The findings reveal that both English instructors construct their online ELT expertise with multimodal design in their videos as the embodiment of translanguaging practices, in terms of bilingual written texts in Chinese and English, visual resources such as color, sound effects, and gesture. Pedagogical and linguistic knowledge are presented in one instructor's video, while authentic learning contexts are provided by another instructor to establish their ELT expertise in digital settings. These translanguaging practices conducted by the instructors take account of learners' multilingual and multi-semiotic repertoire to scaffold their online language learning. The study sheds light on translanguaging

practices through professional multimodal video design to build an inclusive online language learning environment.

**SUN Yihan**

### **A Discursive Study of Parental Identity Construction in a Chinese Parent-Child Reality Show**

Based on the framework of critical discourse analysis, this study explores the categories, discursive strategies and cultural factors of the construction of parental identities in the Chinese parent-child reality show *Teenager Said* (少年说). The study has found that when parents encounter conflicts with their children, they mainly construct the goal-oriented authoritative identity and the experience-driven authoritarian identity. They mainly construct different identities through the use of modal verbs, metaphors, kinship terms and rhetorical questions. The difference is that the former guides children to understand their own educational methods through explanation and negotiation. The latter, however, ignores the emotional needs of children and emphasizes forcing them to accept their own educational concepts through their own experiences and authority. Additionally, the parental identity construction is influenced by Confucianism in traditional Chinese culture, such as benevolence, propriety and restraint. The findings emphasize that parents should balance the relationship between cultural inheritance and social development, and build the parent-child relationship based on the principle of equality and respect.

**TANG Xinyu**

### **From “Dear Li Hua” to “Digging a Hole to China”: Exploring Multimodal Identity Construction in Intercultural Communication on RedNote**

This study examines the multimodal identity construction of foreign users on Rednote. It focuses on their interactions with the figure “Li Hua” in the context of cross-cultural communication. With the migration of “TikTok refugees” to Rednote following the ban on TikTok in the United States, this research investigates the identities foreign users present through text, images, and emoticons, as well as their strategies for cultural adaptation. The study employs a qualitative approach and analyzes representative comments from high-engagement posts under the hashtag #LiHua. Through multimodal discourse analysis, six key identities emerged: “global citizens and active cultural explorers,” “friendly communicators and relationship builders,” “advocates for collective progress and world unity,” “active cultural mediators,” “appreciators and reciprocators,” and “active integrators and aspiring belongers.” These identities highlight foreign users’ efforts to integrate into digital Chinese community. The findings reveal that most foreign users adopt the integration strategy, which aligns with RedNote’s inclusive environment. While the majority successfully adapt, a minority still find it challenging in overcoming feelings of otherness. The study underscores RedNote’s potential as a platform for cross-cultural communication, facilitated by its technical affordances and welcoming atmosphere.

**TIAN Chenxuan, Sparkling**

### **The Impact of Shanxi Dialects on English Phonetic Acquisition: An Empirical Study of Local Speakers**

This study analyzes the impact of Jin Chinese (晋语) on English phonetic acquisition through a test participated by local bilingual speakers (English and Chinese in general). In this paper, 35 local participants are invited to run a 1-minute speaking test to see if there are features of Jin

Chinese influencing local speakers' English phonetic acquisition. One obvious feature of Jin is the rising intonation unique to the Bingzhou subgroup, and it may be retained among local speakers and disturb the order of sentences in English. Several common mispronunciations and change of intonation are discussed in the following parts. Multiple foundational works of Jin and linguistics are used in this study. By adopting MDA, SLM, and acoustic analysis, it serves as a detailed report on how dialects phonetically influence local speakers in Shanxi and provides empirical evidence for scholars in this field.

**TIAN Linglin, Linner**

**Stigmatization and Resistance: Stancetaking in Weibo Comments on Transgender Women**

This paper offers discourse analysis of the comments on J.K. Rowling's transgender-related statements on the online social media platform Weibo, in which commenters construct and resist the stigmatized trans women identity through stancetaking. Taking Du Bois' (2007) stance triangle as an analytical framework, the paper analyzes 30 comments and identifies three dominant themes the comments centred on: gender authenticity, feminist tensions, and Western ideological infiltration. The paper finds that stigmatizing commenters' self-position as a defender of truth and science, convergently aligning with biological essentialism, competitive victimhood, and nationalist discourse to position trans women as inauthentic, threatening, or ideologically foreign. In contrast, resisting commenters take epistemic and affective stances to reposition trans identities as legitimate, lived, and morally valid. These stancetaking are shaped by broader sociocultural ideologies in China, including state-endorsed cisnormativity and cyber-nationalism. Stancetaking in these online interactions not only reflects but actively reproduces and contests dominant ideologies, shaping the discursive construction of transgender identity in Chinese digital public discourse. This study discovers some language patterns of both stigmatizing and resistance and uncovers the hidden gender ideologies shaping these narratives, which helps reduce the stigmatization and discursively empowers trans individuals to defend their rights.

**WANG Han**

**The Illusion of Empowerment: Analyzing Power Femininity in Post-2000 Hollywood Chick Flick Posters**

This study examines the articulation of power femininity in Hollywood "chick flick" posters from the 2000s through Lazar's (2006) theoretical framework, employing multimodal discourse analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021) to interrogate how visual and textual elements construct gendered ideologies. Focusing on seven commercially successful films, the analysis reveals four key dimensions of power femininity: empowered beauty, knowledge as power, agentive power, and sexual power. Although the posters celebrate woman's educational and professional achievements, autonomy, and self-determination, they still predominantly frame empowerment individually and through consumerism, which hides fundamental gender inequality. Further, despite opposing traditional victimhood tropes, the posters reinforce a patriarchal gaze by associating femininity with power which are traditionally masculine traits. These findings demonstrate that post-feminism empowerment commodification is critiqued when chick flick posters are shown to erase collective resistance under a marketed imagery disguised as feminist rhetoric. This research contributes to feminist media studies by exposing the contested terrain of power femininity in popular culture and calls for deeper scrutiny of multimodal gender representations beyond Western contexts.

**WANG Meng**

**Disneyfication of Día de los Muertos: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of *Coco***

Disney films have long been known for their globalized narrative strategies, which possess high market appeal by transforming local cultures into standardized entertainment commodities through Disneyfication (Bryman, 2004). Existing studies have mostly focused on Disney's business empire in Western contexts, such as animated films and theme park design, and criticized its tendency of cultural homogenization (Schickel, 1986), but the mechanism of differentiated treatment of non-Western cultures has been under-explored. This study examines the Disneyfication of Mexican cultural symbols and values through a multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) of promotional posters for *Coco* (2017). Drawing on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual grammar framework, the study examines how Disney reconfigures Mexican traditions into a marketable narrative that conforms to American entertainment values. The analysis focuses on three areas: representational, interactional, and compositional meanings. The findings suggest that Disney downplays the Mexican collectivist character by highlighting the composition placing the protagonist, Miguel, at the center, thus prioritizing individualism, while marginalizing the family hierarchy. In addition, the narrative strategy of reinforcing the carnivalesque nature through visual metaphors (e.g., use of color, fireworks) is consistent with Disney's entertainment-oriented ideology. The study found that the film works by highlighting individual hero narratives, weakening collective rituals, and transforming seriousized cultural symbols into cartoonish visual elements. By extending the study of Disneyfication to non-Western contexts and highlighting the need for ethical localization that balances authenticity and global appeal, the study contributes to scholarship in the direction of Disney's commercial development and media promotion strategies.

**WANG Qinwen**

**Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Workplace Culture Critique Through Short Videos in Shanghainese**

Short video platforms have become an important medium for reconstructing urban workplace culture through the collaborative narrative of dialect and multimodal symbols. This study selects the short video "If Shanghainese People Speak the Truth When Working Overtime" from the RedNote account of "Menqiang," a famous Shanghai blogger and talk show comedian, as the sample. Based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2021) multimodal discourse analysis framework and social semiotic theories, the study analyses how the short videos in Shanghainese critique the power relations and structural contradictions in the workplace culture of Shanghai through the decoding and encoding of verbal, visual and auditory modalities. The study finds that the Shanghainese becomes a "cultural code" to resist workplace discipline through phonetic features and lexical reconstruction; visual symbols reveal the fragmentation of workplace identity through the metaphorical design of clothing, space and colours; and the rhythmic switching of auditory modalities and dialectal rhythms reinforce the emotional tension. Compared with another short video "If Shanghainese People Speak the Truth When Hosting Job Fair on Campus," the logic of platform economy may dilute the purity of cultural critique, but the local character of dialect still provides a unique deconstruction path for workplace alienation.



**WANG Yilian**

**A Critical Discourse Analysis of Trump's Discursive Strategies in Republican National Convention Speeches**

At the intersection of language and society, political discourse analysis is of great importance. Donald Trump's 2016 and 2024 RNC speeches are valuable for research as they were crucial for his political career. Adopting Fairclough's three-dimensional framework, this study combines rhetorical theory and critical discourse analysis to explore Trump's discursive strategies, and how they shaped his image and ideology. Results show that at the textual level, Trump used metaphor, repetition, hyperbole, and binary opposition. His team simplified policies in discourse practice, sparking public discussion and consolidating support. In social practice, these strategies integrated with different social contexts, strengthening his "leader," "defender" and "guardian" image. The two speeches differed in themes, rhetorical usages, communication modes and many ways. For Trump supporters, Trump's speech had a significant effect in reinforcing nationalism, populism, and conservatism. Theoretically, this study broadens the perspective of Trump's political discourse analysis. Practically, this study helps political communicators and improves voters' understanding of political discourse.

**WANG Yingzi**

**Language on the Move: Linguistic Landscapes in Hong Kong's MTR Stations**

This study focuses on the linguistic landscape of the MTR system, analyzing 592 signs in six MTR stations to explore the relationship between linguistic power under the "Biliteracy and Trilingualism"(兩文三語) language policy. The study finds that bilingual signage dominates (73.48%), with Chinese being prioritized in 88.91% of cases, demonstrating the highest language power. English is more visible in core business districts, while Chinese is more dominant in traditional residential areas. Official signage uses "duplicating" information presentation (86.34%) to emphasize normality, while private signage uses "complementary" (29.93%) to filter the audience. Minority languages are relatively less vibrant in Hong Kong's linguistic landscape and do not correspond to the population ratio. Japanese and French are highly visible due to their cultural power far exceeding their population ratio (1.87%), while South Asian languages are hardly visible due to cultural disadvantage and lower social status. The study reveals the linguistic landscape of Hong Kong and the speech rights and social inequalities in the linguistic landscape.

**WANG Youran**

**The Construction of Chinese Images in US-China Media Discourse on DeepSeek**

The construction of national image plays an important role in improving national soft power. DeepSeek, a leading Chinese artificial intelligence company, serves as a symbol of China's technological rise. At the same time, its rise has also made it the focus of global artificial intelligence ethics and Sino-US technological competition. This study examines the comparative construction of China's image by Chinese and U.S.'s media through their reports on DeepSeek, and explores the different social ideologies hidden behind it. This study chooses fifteen articles from *The New York Times* and *The People's Daily* respectively, and analyzes the keyword list, concordance line and modality with the help of AntConc 3.2.1 software. The results show that *The People's Daily* uses positive and confident keywords and modal verbs to describe DeepSeek's achievements as a symbol of national progress. In contrast, *The New York Times* portrays China's rise through the perspective of geopolitical risks, uses speculative modality, and

emphasizes ethical and security concerns. These differences reflect deeper ideological differences: China advocates collectivism, while the United States advocates individualism.

**WANG Yujue**

**From Stigma to Empowerment: A Critical Discourse Analysis of “无孩爱猫女” (“Childless Cat Lady”) on Chinese Social Media**

After the term “childless cat lady” was introduced to China and translated as “无孩爱猫女,” it sparked intense debates on Chinese social media. This research focuses on comments related to the term on Chinese social media, exploring how users employ various linguistic strategies to neutralize the derogatory connotations of this expression and challenge social norms. Fairclough’s three-dimensions critical discourse analysis is adopted to analyze the 100 highly-liked comments collected from Weibo from the perspectives of text, discourse practice, and social practice. In addition, the research combines quantitative and qualitative analyses to comprehensively examine the data. The findings show that users deconstruct and then reconstruct the meaning of the term and link it with positive words, like “wealthy.” Meanwhile, users attract more people to participate in the discussion through the mention function of social media. In pronatalist China, this semantic redefinition reflects resistance to patriarchal mandates. By separating motherhood from womanhood, “无孩爱猫女” proposes a new model of female identity.

**WANG Yuqi**

**Marketization and University Re-Branding: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of HKU YouTube Videos**

This paper adopts a multimodal discourse analysis perspective to examine the marketization and branding discourse of the University of Hong Kong (HKU). The main goal is to understand how HKU uses various social semiotic activities to shape its image. To analyze YouTube videos from the official HKU account, the research applies a combination of register typology and visual grammar. The findings reveal that HKU mainly utilizes strategies reporting, sharing, and explaining to promote its brand, enhance university life, and share knowledge. The integration of visual resources significantly supports these communicative efforts. Additionally, HKU effectively constructs its image as a global, innovative, and prestigious institution that values students, humanity, and the wider world. Thus, this study not only highlights strategies for university branding using multimodal discourse but also offers insights for research related to marketization in higher education. Overall, the findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how universities can enhance their public identity.

**WANG Zhimai, Miles**

**Gender-Fluid Self-Presentation and Identity-Construction of Men Wearing Skirts on Xiaohongshu**

This research investigates how men wearing skirts strategically present themselves, construct gender-fluid identities, and deal with societal expectations during their self-presentation. Fifty posts of men wearing skirts on Xiaohongshu are collected. Multimodal discourse analysis is used to examine how they interactively use both visual and written modes to express gender fluidity and challenge gender binary and hegemonic masculinity. Three types of self-presentation strategies are classified according to their overall look, including men with a female overall look, gender-neutral overall look, as well as male overall look. Firstly, men having a female look

present complete female gender performances, construct a complex hybrid identity, and prefer to conform to social expectations. Moreover, men with a gender-neutral look present themselves by creating personal vibes, construct a non-binary identity by reconstructing masculinity and fitting into social groups, and have blurred reactions to social expectations. Furthermore, men with a male overall look confidently present themselves, construct a free and non-conforming identity, and directly challenge social expectations by naturalizing skirts-wearing. Self-presentation strategies match the extent to which they challenge gender dichotomy and hegemonic masculinity. Gender fluidity is negotiated when these men intentionally negotiate different forms of masculinity.

**WEI Nan**

### **A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Post-Feminist Discourse in Nike's Female Empowerment Advertisements**

This study investigates how post-feminist discourses are constructed and reflected in Nike's female empowerment advertisements, focusing on the interplay between texts and visual images. Drawing on multimodal discourse analysis, the paper analyzes three Nike's female empowered advertisements. By applying Halliday's metafunctional framework and Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar, the research identifies three dominant post-feminist discourses in the advertisements in physical, behavioral and mental levels: self-discipline and celebrating strength, self-reinvention and breaking the boundaries and self-love and self identification. While these messages appear to challenge traditional gender norms, the analysis reveals that the empowerment presented in the advertisements is reframed as an individual emotional changes, emphasizing self-discipline, confidence, and self-love, which ignore gender inequality as a social and political problem. Besides, the campaigns reflect a form of commodity feminism, where feminist values are selectively appropriated to reinforce brand identity while avoiding structural critiques of gender inequality. The study argues that the female empowerment messages conveyed by Nike have limited influence on females and fail to break the traditional gender norm, and are used to construct the brand identity, encouraging women who are emotionally resonant and agree with their values to purchase their products rather than solely empowering women. The study concludes that although Nike's advertisements expand the visibility of female subjectivities and offered emotionally resonant messages, they ultimately promote a depoliticized and market-driven version of empowerment. This raises important questions about the limits of feminist messaging in corporate media and the role of branding in shaping contemporary gender discourse.

**WONG Hoi Yan**

### **Presentations of the Persona of Unmarried Females and Its Resistance to Marriage**

This study concentrates on the presentations of the persona of unmarried females in the comic *Three Unmarried Women*, aiming to reveal how the persona is presented in differently and the way it challenges traditional societal norms on marriage. While there are previous studies focusing on contemporary females' attitude towards marriage and the social phenomenon behind the derogatory label "leftover women," there is no existing research investigating marriage issues from the perspective of persona, and therefore this research is conducted. Multimodal critical discourse analysis is applied to analyze the comics and comments left by audience on Instagram. This study finds that the three main characters, Sirong, Sitong and Siyu, are very different, in terms of appearance, professional roles and the way they conduct social interactions, yet

commonly show resistance to patriarchal influences on females and demonstrate features against the derogatory labels and traditional perspectives on marriage. The persona is presented as the opposition to the way they are negatively portrayed in the society and brings up several core messages about marriage: not getting married and divorced would not make one unfortunate, unmarried women are not unattractive or leftover and remain single would not lead to poor elderhood.

### **WU Zhiqing**

#### **How a Real Dreamland is Constructed: A Social Semiotic Approach to Shanghai Disney Resort Advertisement Series “Have a Magical Day”**

This study concentrates on nine posters of the “Have a Magical Day” advertising campaign of Shanghai Disney Resort that started from September 2024, aiming to discover how the poster series constructs a context connecting dreamland with reality, and how brand values related to happiness and emotional fulfilment are spread through the integrated visual elements. The social semiotic approach by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) is applied to conduct the analysis. The study finds that various visual elements of the posters, including the background, participants and colours, coordinate to represent the dreamland. Meanwhile, the series gives viewers the sense of authenticity with user-generated content about real moments in the Resort of ordinary people, as well as narrative processes of ongoing actions. By reflecting people’s real-life experiences, emotions and thoughts in the visual storytelling with themed words, the posters indicate accessibility of inner fulfilment and emotional equilibrium in the Resort, thus promoting viewers’ emotional engagement and a close and positive relationship building between people and the brand. This study can help us understand the effective application of visual elements in the poster series, and also remain critical of consumerism behind promotional materials.

### **XIA Xiaohan**

#### **Power Femininity in Humor: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Ali Wong’s Stand-up Comedies**

This study examines how Ali Wong’s stand-up comedy contains feminist empowerment. It draws on Lazar’s (2006) framework of power femininity. Through critical discourse analysis of transcriptions of Wong’s specials *Baby Cobra* and *Single Lady*, the research explores her representations of motherhood, sexuality, and beauty standards. The findings reveal that Wong aligns with Lazar’s dimensions of agentive power and sexual power. By celebrating agency in sex and career success, she reclaims female agency through humor. However, she subverts the ideal of empowered beauty by stressing the realities of female bodies, such as postpartum trauma and aging, thereby challenging marketable femininity. While Lazar critiques power femininity for depoliticizing feminism through consumerism, Wong’s stand-up comedies resists commodification. Overall, the underlying discourse in Wong’s stand-ups complicates Lazar’s framework. It demonstrates how humor can reframe bodily experiences as acts of resistance. This study contributes to feminist studies by highlighting stand-up comedy’s unique potential for social critique. Future research could explore intersectional identities in Wong’s comedy, comparative analysis of female comedians across cultural contexts, and audience reception.

**XIAO Hongying**

**“I’m So Pretty!”: An Empirical Study of Chinese and English Online Self-Praise Responses on RedNote and X**

This study examines the Chinese and English online self-praise responses on RedNote and X (formerly Twitter), aiming to discover how Chinese speakers and English speakers adopt various pragmatic strategies when responding to self-praise online and reveal the politeness phenomena underlying their replies. Relevant studies have concentrated on the speech act of self-praise, while how self-praise is responded to is still under-researched. Quantitative analysis is conducted to identify the general patterns of strategies used by commenters. Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory and Leech’s (1983) maxims of politeness principle are applied to interpret the data. The results show that both Chinese speakers on RedNote and English speakers on X prefer giving a positive response to self-praise, preserving the positive face of the posters and conforming to the agreement maxim and approbation maxim in Leech’s politeness principle. In contrast, negative response is infrequently used, especially in the Chinese dataset, which implies a change in the status of the modesty maxim in Chinese politeness. This study offers new evidence for the online self-praise response in Chinese and English and contributes to the understanding of the politeness phenomena embedded in this speech act.

**XU Junhao**

**A Critical Discourse Analysis of Elon Musk’s Tweets During the 2024 US Presidential Election**

The thriving social media platforms have remarkably transformed the landscape of political discourse dissemination. An increasing number of political figures have been using X (formerly Twitter) as a political instrument of propaganda, which draws the attention of discourse analysts to investigate the discursive process of political discourse on social media platforms. This essay employs a novel method that combines latent Dirichlet allocation, a computational method for topic modeling, with the critical discourse analysis framework proposed by van Dijk to investigate the portrayal of us-groups and others-groups in Elon Musk’s tweets during 2024 US Presidential Election. The study finds that Musk’s tweets indicate a negative others-presentation centering on the Democratic Party and a populist positive self-presentation, which discursively reconstructs the political division into the populist binary of “people versus (media/political) elites.” The findings of this study offer an in-depth insight into how social practice is discursively reconstructed through political discourse on social media platforms.

**YANG Jiao**

**A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Hong Kong Media’s Headlines on YouTube**

This study examines the multimodal discourse strategies of Hong Kong news media on YouTube, focusing on headlines and thumbnails covering the giant pandas An An and Co Co’s arrival in 2024. According to Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) visual grammar, the study investigates how five mainstream outlets—*香港01 (HK01)*, *Channel C HK*, *HOY 資訊台 × 有線新聞 I-Cable News*, *無綫新聞 TVB News Official*, and *星島頭條 (Headline Daily)*—employ text, images, and layout to enhance affective involvement, informativeness, and political concordance while balancing click-through rates and journalistic fidelity. Through a controlled analysis of five videos, findings indicate that larger outlets feature vibrant visuals and interactivity with hashtags to create maximum engagement, often at the expense of meaningful political messages, while smaller outlets prioritize compositional restraint and institutional authority. Pandas, as

multimodal metonyms of cross-border peace, align with discursively constructed values of news. This paper sheds light on the sociolinguistic role of multimodal resources in mediating Hong Kong's dense media ecology.

**YANG Yufei**

**Renegotiating Chineseness: Translanguaging Practices and Transnational Identities in Chinese Study Abroad Students' Xiaohongshu Vlogs**

Existing research on Chinese study abroad (SA) students' identity construction has primarily relied on interviews to explore their ideological shifts in English usage during offline communication. However, limited literature addresses their translanguaging practices and transnational identity negotiations, particularly within multimodal social media contexts. This study investigates how Chinese SA students renegotiate Chineseness in their transnational identities through multimodal translanguaging practices on Xiaohongshu, a youth-centric Chinese social media platform. Through multimodal discourse analysis of two female vloggers' storytelling vlogs, the research demonstrates how these students mobilize linguistic (e.g., Mandarin, English, dialects), audiovisual (e.g., voice, facial expressions), and cultural (e.g., Chinese marriage expectations) resources to shape transnational identities during overseas experiences. Findings reveal three dimensions of transnational identity negotiation: firstly, balancing belonging and resistance toward Chinese cultural norms; secondly, redefining Chineseness through cultural conflicts; and thirdly, cultivating relatable personas for Chinese audiences. By conceptualizing translanguaging as a dynamic meaning-making practice, the study challenges static conceptions of transnational identity and contributes to understanding how SA students demonstrate Chineseness when engaging in online discussions about cultural norms. The results call for educators and SA students' families to recognize translanguaging competence as a valuable skill in utilizing linguistic repertoires, transcending traditional emphasis on native-like language proficiency.

**YAO Xinran**

**Multilingualism in Hong Kong: A Linguistic Landscape Study of the Cooked Food Center in Centre Street Market**

As an international city with a colonial history, Hong Kong has always been recognized as one of the multilingual cities, attracting growing academic interest in its unique linguistic landscapes. However, most previous studies have focused on tourist scenarios such as shopping malls and Stanley. Therefore, examining the extent of multilingualism in highly localized and lived-in environments like the cooked food center is necessary. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, with a total of 48 items as a database, this study conducts a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences between official and nonofficial signs to determine language distribution, language ideology, and their underlying relationships. The results revealed that (1) in quantitative terms, there are more official signs than nonofficial signs, suggesting that authorities rather than individuals shape the local landscape. (2) In terms of configuration, Chinese as a symbol of solidarity combined with English as a symbol of modernity form the most preferred coded pattern, while traditional Chinese is the most prominent language in the linguistic landscapes, consistently holding the top position. Furthermore, Southeast Asian languages as decorative symbols on the signs reflect the ethnic composition of the area. (3) In terms of interaction, complementary, repetitive, and mutual translational relationships are found between the linguistic and non-linguistic elements in a sign. This research enhances our

understanding of the power and role of different languages and their interrelationships in promoting the cooked food center's signs.

**YAO Yanying**

### **The Role of Teacher Discourse in Shaping Classroom Interaction in Junior High School English Classes**

This study focuses on the junior high school English open class videos from the National Youth Education Competition for Junior High School English and various junior high school portals in mainland China, aiming to explore the influence mechanism of teacher discourse on student engagement and classroom participation by employing conversation analysis as a research method. Considering previous studies have rarely concentrated on the special context of open classes, which nevertheless serve as crucial learning resources for teacher training, the study selects eight segments transcribed through the Jefferson transcription system from multiple high-quality open classes of junior high school English as data for research. The study finds that junior high school English teachers can effectively enhance the depth and breadth of student engagement through well-designed discourse strategies, such as the multimodal discourse practice, the compound turn-holding strategy, the rhythmic speech regulation strategy and spiral discourse. The techniques outlined can help improve the conventional power equation in class and serve as practical inspirations to create inclusive and highly participatory classrooms.

**YE Zi**

### **A Multimodal Analysis of Reconstructed Identity of Chinese “Married, Child-Free” Women on Douyin**

This study analyzes how Chinese “married, child-free” women on Douyin (China's TikTok) reconstruct identity narratives while navigating traditional gender norms. Drawing from 30 high-engagement posts tagged #已婚无娃 (#married, child-free), the study employs multimodal discourse analysis to uncover three performative tactics: age markers, companionate marriages, and aestheticized domesticity. Participants strategically emphasize birth-era labels (“post-90s”) to decouple biological age from reproductive timelines, framing adult life as self-development phases rather than childbearing countdowns. Marital relationships get reimagined through pet parenting and chore-sharing rituals that challenge patrilineal family models while maintaining spousal harmony. Domestic spaces emerge as curated stages featuring Scandinavian furniture and AI appliances that perform triple functions—asserting middle-class modernity, visualizing life order, and implicitly contrasting with child-rearing chaos. The analysis reveals how platform-specific feature—“soft resistance”—facilitates coded critiques of pronatalism through meme culture and lifestyle aesthetics rather than direct confrontation. These digital practices reflect urban China's paradoxical modernity where tech-enabled individualism coexists with persistent familism, constituting what scholars term “hashtag feminism with Chinese characteristics.” By mapping the interplay involved in reconciling personal choice with social expectation, this study expands understanding of digital gender politics beyond Eurocentric models, offering fresh perspectives on techno-social change in contemporary China.

**YU Chen**

### **Roosevelt vs. Reagan: A Functional Grammar Analysis of Economic Crisis Discourses**

Faced with economic crisis, Roosevelt and Reagan adopted different strategies and political ideologies. This research focuses on the language patterns in their inaugural speeches, aiming to

undercover how the high-frequency words and grammatical structures construct government roles differently and how these linguistic strategies reflect the major differences of the two presidents' economic policies. In the field of critical discourse analysis, substantial research has been done on the analysis of political texts, while few researchers have ventured into the analysis of presidential inaugural addresses. Consequently, this research functions to explore this field, and finds that Roosevelt's lexical preferences legitimize the agency of government and the collective responsibility, and Reagan's lexical preferences strengthen the agency of American people and the individual responsibility. For example, in Roosevelt's speech, he raises "this Nation asks for action, and action now" to prove the government's action is a response to the voice of the nation and the people, which adds legitimacy for the government's action. Hopefully, this research can function to provide an example in the analysis of presidents' inaugural speeches.

**YUAN Fang Fei, Rebecca**

### **Teaching at the Intersection of English, Cantonese, and Mandarin: Translanguaging Used by Mainland ESL Teachers in HK**

Translanguaging, the fluid deployment of the speakers' full linguistic repertoire (Otheguy et al., 2015), has received increasing attention from researchers, with special focus on its employment in an educational context. In recent years, with the political and societal changes, more and more ESL teachers in HK are from mainland China due to a closer connection between the two governments (Gan, 2018). Standing at the intersection of the English, Cantonese, and Mandarin, this group of teachers take up the same teaching task as local HK teachers, but do not have the privilege of sharing the same native language with the local students who speak Cantonese instead of Mandarin as their mother tongue, resulting in a unique experience of translanguaging practice in the classroom. Little research has focused on this minority group of teachers and their translanguaging practice in the classroom. To fill the research gap, this study aims to provide a picture of the translanguaging usage by mainland ESL teachers in HK and how their unique linguistic repertoire affects their teacher identity. Interviews are conducted with seven participants, and the qualitative data are analyzed based on Sahan and Rose's (2021) translanguaging framework, and Gee's (2000) identity framework. Findings suggest that mainland ESL teachers in HK local schools exhibit a dynamic and fluid employment of translanguaging practice for content transmission, classroom management, and for social and affective functions. Their unique multilingual repertoire—Mandarin as L1 and Cantonese as L3—is generally not viewed as a barrier by themselves and can contribute positively to their teacher identity development, especially when building rapport with mainland students. However, there are also various challenges in their translanguaging practice, especially the policy restriction and negative perceptions from students and parents regarding their Cantonese ability.

**ZHANG Wenqing**

### **Decoding Discourse of Medical Cosmetology Hashtags on Xiaohongshu**

This study focuses on medical cosmetology hashtags on the Chinese social media platform Xiaohongshu, with purposes of exploring their dual functions in language forms and ideological dissemination. Through manually coding 321 standardized hashtags in the 60 posts from institutional or professional medical cosmetology studios' accounts, the study adopts a three-leveled critical discourse analysis including Foucault's (1978) bio-power definition and Gill's (2007) post-feminist media sensibility theory. It finds that metaphorical structures are the most critical micro-language strategy of collected hashtags. Specifically, spatial-oriented metaphors



and war metaphors reshape facial aging characteristics into a problematic state of needing improvement. At discourse practice level, the medical discourse and consumerist discourse are closely integrated, constructing a surface empowerment narrative of juxtaposing expressions of spreading medical knowledge and giving consumers' autonomy. It thus penetrates ideology of making viewers (potential consumers) subconsciously take appearance management of their physical flaws as self-responsibility and reinforcing their assertions of making self-choice under the media-driven context.

**ZHAO Jinghong**

**A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Male and Female Fitness Influencers' Identity Construction on Xiaohongshu**

This study explores the identity construction of male and female fitness influencers on the Chinese social media platform Xiaohongshu, with the focus on their use of multimodal resources to enhance professionalism and approachability. The research analyzes the top five male and top five female fitness influencers by examining their most popular exercise guidance videos. Employing multimodal discourse analysis, this study employs Martin and White's appraisal theory (2005) to analyze the linguistic resources, such as bios and video titles and introduction, and Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar is used to analyze profile photos, background pictures, and video covers. Findings suggest that male and female fitness influencers construct professional identity differently. While males highlight authority and dominance, females present highly polished bio photos and video covers. They also build approachability in distinct ways, as male influencers tend to perform inclusive masculinity to express their personal feelings, but female influencers demonstrate warmth and intimacy by fostering interactive relationships.

**ZHAO Mingjia**

**Feminist Empowerment in Chinese Stand-Up Comedies: A Study of Cultural Adaptation and Western Methods**

This study analyzes how Chinese female stand-up comedians strategically localize Western feminist empowerment approaches to fit China's sociopolitical constraints and contrasts them with the approaches of Western comedians. While previous studies acknowledge the existence of cultural adaptation, few have deconstructed the discursive mechanisms behind this adaptation. This study uses two perspectives of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, namely power distance and individualism vs. collectivism, and Fairclough's critical discourse analysis to analyze four comedy clips (two from China's *Rock & Roast* and two from *Saturday Night Live*). The findings show that Chinese comedians (e.g., Siwen, Yan Yi/Yan Yue) use metaphors and family-centered narratives to indirectly criticize patriarchal norms and avoid overt political confrontations. In contrast, Western comedians (e.g., Kate McKinnon, Leslie Jones) use sharp parody and institutional critiques, reflecting low power distance and individualistic tendencies. Theoretically, this study challenges the effectiveness of directly using Western feminist methods in comedies and proposes "adaptive resistance" as a cultural strategy for Chinese feminists. Chinese comedians depoliticize gender critiques through family discourse, thereby subtly challenging male hegemony in comedy industry while coping with censorship. This study calls for the building of culturally sensitive feminist framework and leaves the investigation of underground comedy and male comedians as possible future research directions.

**ZHOU Wei**

**Semiotic Practices of International Students on Chinese TikTok: A Multimodal Analysis**

This study explores the semiotic practices of international students on Chinese TikTok through a multimodal lens, examining their identity performances within this digital space. The emergence of the “international students” community on Chinese TikTok has prompted a closer investigation of how these individuals navigate their class and cultural identities through various modes of expression. By drawing on Kress and van Leeuwen’s theoretical framework, this research explores how international students represent themselves in video blogs using linguistic, visual, audio and behavioral modalities, and how these multimodal resources negotiate the dichotomy between their global elitism and localized “new rich” identities. The study employs a qualitative approach, focusing on a case-study design with in-depth analysis of 10 samples sourced from Chinese TikTok. The findings demonstrate how international students navigate conflicts between their class and cultural identities in the digital sphere, providing new perspectives on the semiotic strategies used by this community on Chinese TikTok to shape their identities.

**ZHOU Ziqian, Zeekin**

**A Reception Study of the Visual Design of English Language Learning Short Videos**

College students access English language learning (ELL) short videos on various platforms. This project investigates how the visual design of ELL short videos can better attract students and enhance learning outcomes by analysing the videos based on the visual grammar theory (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021) and empirical data from the audience. The study collects students’ while-watching eye movement data, post-test scores, and questionnaire feedback to solidify or deny the visual grammar assumptions of the ways that visual works achieve interactive effects in the specific setting of ELL. The result reveals that adopting visual grammar in ELL video design cannot purely depend on the theoretical assumptions but needs modifications that suit the context. This study is thus valuable in sorting out the effective practical suggestions, which are concluded based on empirical investigation by analysing students’ needs and cognitive loads while receiving the visual information. The paper presents a logical methodology for studying empirical multimodality and concludes with practical visual design strategies for the ELL short videos’ visual design for future reference by visual producers and researchers.