

Name of the student:	Julian Theseira
Title of the thesis:	An Inductive Empirical Case Study Of China's Exercise Of Discourse Power: A Topic Model Based Analysis Of Xinhua's English-Language Facebook Posts About The War In Ukraine In 2022 – 2023
Reviewer:	Marcin Zubek

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

The thesis constitutes an inductive exercise to analyse a so-called “discourse of power” employed by the Chinese authorities through Xinhua’s social media (FB) in reference to the war in Ukraine. The topic is surely relevant and up-to-date. It is also important to understand the researched phenomenon better, especially since China has become a “risen power” and very much contests the western order and uses the war in Ukraine to emphasise this.

The research questions indicate that the study is exploratory, not explanatory, which in itself I do not consider a problem, since we are trying to understand PRC’s discursive practices. He only doubt I have is about answering a question on the effectiveness of those discursive practices.

2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The methodological chapter is very extensive, but then again the methods used are rather advanced and it is very clear that they have been thoroughly thought-through. The theoretical framework seems also very much applicable. The choice of corpus for analysis has been justified and makes sense. Also, I very much liked how the qualitative and the quantitative aspect of the research and data was presented next to one another, with a complementary fashion.

3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

Conclusions are clearly linked with data and research questions in the 5th chapter. The answer to the 2nd RQ is however somewhat weak, as expressions such as “possibly”, “may have” or “potentially”. The author recognises those weaknesses and should be praised for trying to do an impact assessment, but I would say that this was perhaps too ambitious in the first place.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

No problems here

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

The thesis is very strong empirically as well as conceptually. The analysis has also been done in a very systematic way. The author has gathered a very interesting and rich material and he can actually build his academic career on this, by analysing them from various approaches, through different lenses. The only weak point I see are the conclusions regarding the impact assessment.

Grade (A-F):	A
Date:	Signature:
11/09/2023	Marcin Zubek

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	Range	%	Score	%	Range	%	Range	%
A (91-100)	91-100 %	8,5%	5	6,7%	8,5-10	5,3%	9-10	5,5 %
B (81-90)	81-90 %	16,3%	4,5	11,7%	7,5-8,4	16,4%	8-8,9	11,0 %
C (71-80)	71-80 %	16,3%	4	20%	6,5-7,4	36,2%	7-7,9	18,4 %
D (61-70)	61-70 %	24%	3,5	28,3%			6-6,9	35,2 %
E (51-60)	51-60 %	34,9%	3	33,4 %	6-6,4	42,1 %	5-5,9	30,1 %

Assessment criteria:

Excellent (A): 'Outstanding performance with only minor errors';

Very good (B): 'Above the average standard but with some errors';

Good (C): 'Generally sound work but with a number of notable errors';

Satisfactory (D): 'Fair but with significant shortcomings';

Sufficient (E): 'Performance meets the minimum criteria';

Fail: 'Some/considerable more work required before the credit can be awarded'.