

Name of the student:	Theseira, Julian Anthony
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:	Daniela Kolenovská

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

The submitted text is unbalanced in many respects; in some parts it is excellent, in others it lags behind the standard of a master's thesis. Therefore, I have to divide my evaluation into two parts.

First, the author paid a lot of energy and attention to quantitative analysis. He studied the theory of computational analysis thoroughly and presented this knowledge well. It is obvious that he paid a lot of attention to this part of the work and used it to topic modelling. He was therefore able to skillfully conduct a quantitative analysis of the chosen Facebook account.

Second, the author failed to interpret the data connection to the field. This is due to the fact that he did not reflect other relevant theoretical context of his project, public diplomacy in particular. Generally, the thesis remained captive to the PRC's official definition of discursive power. It does not seek any challenges and interpretations.

The definition of the key terms with which the text operates is weak. For example, there is no explanation of "global audiences", its internal structures and roles in the world discourse. Similarly, the position of social media in international communication, its relation to the geographical location of audiences or to classical diplomatic tools is not clarified.

2. ANALYSIS

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

Unfortunately, the submitted thesis did not result from systematic supervision. The student did not attend regular consultations and was inadequately prepared for the online consultations offered by me for this reason. Ad hoc discussions with his colleagues and some experts in various fields or presentations at workshops and conferences did not create an environment for systematic work, methodological and theoretical backing.

The thesis is only little associated with the topic and questions set out both in the original and refined project e.g. *How is the war in Ukraine covered by China's state news agency, Xinhua? Sub-Research Questions: What are the similarities and differences in the frames used in Xinhua's coverage of the war in Ukraine on its English, French, and Chinese news websites? What patterns are there in Xinhua's coverage of the war in Ukraine on its English, French, and Chinese news websites?*

The new research question is too narrow, concentrated on a single English-language Facebook profile of the Chinese news agency Xinhua. No reference data set was used, which would be based on other than the primary analysis of the monitored FB profile. The comparison of the agenda communicated in the three languages was undertaken neither. This allowed the original ambition to be fulfilled only partially.

Subsequently, the conclusion could only be uncertain in many aspects. The thesis did describe the relevant topics of the English-language Facebook page well, but it did

not answer questions raised around the PRC's effectiveness in the field of the Digital Agenda-Setting.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

The thesis suffers from low sensitivity to theoretical overlap with international relations. The link between data and conclusions exists but it lags behind the project's goals.
The text emerged spontaneously, as a result of the author's sudden interest in computational analysis; it even changed its title radically at the last moment.
The persuasiveness of the achievement is low and the conclusions are valid only within the limits of the chosen method and highly specialised example.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

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

The language, citation style and layout are appropriate. In terms of academic standards, the list of resources used is problematic as it is not adequately structured. It does not distinguish primary and secondary sources, nor does it distinguish scientific monographs and policy papers or newspapers.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

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

As mentioned above, I appreciate the student's interest in digital science. I consider the student's work unsystematic and poorly organised. The small amount of time the student devoted to the context and conclusion of his thesis had a critical impact on his findings.

Grade (A-F):	D
Date:11.9.2023	Signature:

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	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'.