



Construction of China's Soft Power: Comparing News Coverage of the Confucius Institute Project in China and U.S. Media

Zheng Yue E* and
Wei Xinyi

School of Journalism and Communication,
Jinan University, PR China

Abstract

This paper discusses the construction of China's soft power by comparing media coverage on one of China's dominant soft power initiatives - the Confucius Institute Project in China and U.S. media from 2014 to 2018. The paper seeks to explore challenges that the Confucius Institute project has been facing and indicate implications for other Chinese soft power projects that might be in a similar situation.

Keywords: Soft power; Confucius institute; Media coverage

Received: June 04, 2018; **Accepted:** June 09, 2018; **Published:** June 20, 2018

Introduction

China didn't overtake Japan's position as the world's second largest economy until 2010 [1], but it rose so fast that only five years later, its economy was already three times as large as Japan's. Meanwhile, China's military spending had a 900 per cent growth in the 21st century, and the country is the third largest military power by now.

However, China's soft power has hugely lagged behind its booming hard power. According to a global opinion poll in 2018, 53 per cent of survey respondents viewed China favorably, whereas 47 per cent had a negative view [2]. In contrast, 69 per cent held a favorable opinion of the U.S., and only 24 per cent expressed an unfavorable view [3].

The Chinese government has noticed the country's poor performance in soft power. It prioritized national image-building in 2007, when then-Chinese President Hu Jintao announced a national goal of "boosting China's soft power" in a report to the National Congress of the Communist Party of China [4]. By now, China has a few soft power projects, including English channels on CCTV, its national broadcasting network, targeting an international audience; active promotion of academic exchange programs, and establishment of Chinese language and cultural schools like the Confucius Institutes abroad [5].

As it hasn't been long since China initiated its multiple soft power programs, it is still too early to assess whether China has succeeded or failed in national image-building [6]. But data indicate few positive outcomes.

*Corresponding author: Zheng Yue E

✉ viveellen@gmail.com

Assistant Professor, School of Journalism and
Communication, Jinan University, PR China.

Tel: +86 85220207

Citation: Yue EZ, Xinyi W. Construction of China's Soft Power: Comparing News Coverage of the Confucius Institute Project in China and U.S. Media. *Global Media Journal* 2018, 16:31.

The purpose of this study is to discuss what has shaped China's soft power, what are some vital weaknesses in China's soft power strategies and possible solutions to existing problems by looking at the Confucius Institute Project. I compare news coverage of the project from the Xinhua News Agency, People's Daily, China Daily, and Sina News with the equivalent news outlet in the U.S., namely the Associated Press, the New York Times, the Washington Post and the Cable News Network (CNN).

Previous studies mostly analyze either domestic or foreign media coverage on the Confucius Institute (CI) Project [7], with only a handful of researches conducting cross-comparison analysis and put both sides on the stage.

The Nature of Soft Power and China's Soft Power Building

In 1939, the British realist E.H. Carr categorized international power as military, economic or power over opinion. In the 1990s, Harvard professor Joseph Nye theorized the idea of "power over opinions" into the term "soft power." Similar to Adam Smith's "invisible hand" theory in a free market, Nye defined soft power as an ability to attract people to become followers and "let them want what you want by attraction but not coercion or payment." Nye suggests that people's decisions in the marketplace for ideas are often shaped by soft power, "an intangible attraction

that persuades us to go along with others' purposes without any explicit threat or exchange taking place [8]."

Soft power is still a relatively new term for China in comparison with other large countries. It wasn't until 2007 that then-Chinese president Hu Jintao mentioned in his report to the 17th Party Congress of the CCP the urgency of "building China's cultural soft power sufficiently to meet domestic needs and increase international competitiveness." The current Chinese leader, Xi Jinping, appears to be an active advocate of soft power and has "vowed to promote China's cultural soft power by disseminating modern Chinese values and showing the charm of Chinese culture to the world" [4].

There are a few ways to measure China's soft power. Quantitatively, Portland Communications, a political consultancy agency based in the U.K., combines big data from Facebook across six categories (government, culture, education, global engagement, enterprise and digital) and international polling from 25 countries to rank top 30 countries with the strongest soft power. China ranked 30th in 2015, climbed to the 28th in 2016, and has reached the 25th in 2018 [9].

Implications from this report are minimal, as small moves up and down from one year to another are not surprising. It is also doubtful whether using big data from social media to which people in some countries don't have access is accurate and predictive.

One would also look at a country's number of global brands, immigrants the country attracts every year, popularity of its cultural products, numbers of Nobel Prize winners etc. By these standards, China's soft power is indeed weak.

Another way would be surveying other countries' views on a certain country to see if its national image has improved over time. According to the Pew Research Center, views on China among 49 countries surveyed have remained roughly the same over the past few years. Younger generations of Americans and Europeans have a more positive view toward China than the older generations; Muslim countries and sub-Saharan African nations have higher rates of positive views. Asian countries that have territorial disputes with China have significantly lower positive rates [10].

By now, the Chinese government is mainly focusing on introducing Chinese culture and history to the world. In 2007, CCTV-4, an international channel of the government-owned China Central Television, expanded its broadcast day to 24 hours, aiming to "cover a wider range of audiences around the world" and "better coordinate the dissemination of Chinese language content, and content about China into international markets."

The Chinese government is also actively attracting foreign visitors to China through domestic infrastructure improvement and overseas promotions in places like Times Square in New York. Academic exchanges are increasingly encouraged as well, in which a large amount of money is spent on sponsoring Chinese students to study aboard or foreign students to go to China [11].

What stood out is the controversial Confucius Institute Project.

CIs are nonprofit educational organizations within overseas universities. Similar to but also different from other countries' cultural projects, like the Alliance Française or the British Council, the CI Project has attracted considerable attention as well as controversy.

Confucius Institute Project

The Confucius Institute project was launched by Hanban in 2004, aiming to promote Chinese language and culture in foreign countries. It offers various lessons on Chinese language and culture, when meanwhile hosts cultural events like exhibitions, film screenings, readings, concerts and lectures.

Different from other similar cultural institutes, like the British Council, the Alliance Française or Germany's Goethe-Institut, most of the Confucius Institutes around the world are located inside universities. They are created through a partnership between two academic institutions, one foreign and one Chinese, with Hanban providing start-up money for the institutes. Samples are like the Confucius Institute at Japan Sapporo University, a partnership between Sapporo University and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies; the Confucius Institute at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, a collaboration between Chulalongkorn University and Peking University [5].

Among China's soft power strategies, the CI project is the dominant one with the largest input. In fact, China moves in two main ways in terms of cultural diplomacy. One is "inviting in", which is holding cultural activities inside China to attract foreigners to come, then bring back and spread Chinese culture to their home countries. The other way is called "going out", which is conducting activities abroad and directly deliver the message to the local audience, like the Confucius Institutes.

Confucius Institutes have been rapidly increasing in number in recent years [12]. As of Dec. 31, 2017, there were 525 Confucius Institutes and 1,113 Confucius Classrooms around the world, stretching out to 138 countries (regions) [13]. In 2008 alone, China spent \$1.6 billion on CIs in the U.S., and the number is much larger today as the project keeps expanding rapidly, not to mention expenditures in other regions.

These numbers came at a cost. China's funding for each Confucius Institute is around \$100,000 to \$200,000 a year, some even more. Merely in 2013, China spent \$278 on the CI project, which was more than six times as much as in 2006 [14]. According to Xinhua, Hanban aims to open 1,000 Confucius Institutes by 2020 [15].

Fourteen years after the CI Project was launched with billions of dollars spent, positive outcomes are still hardly visible. Despite the growing number of overseas Chinese language-learners, neither China's cultural attractiveness nor national image have had a comparable increase or improvement.

A number of scholars abroad recognize that the rapidly expanding Confucius Institute Project as a revival of Confucianism [1], as well as a tool of China's soft power strategy that is in service of the country's foreign policy goals [6]. It is noteworthy that some scholars resonate with the idea that positive views towards China is actually declining after the CI project has been launched [16].

Significant problems involved in the project’s development include a fast expansion speed that has exceeded its ability to provide properly trained bilingual teachers, non-tailored textbooks in local languages, and a lack of systematic assessments and feedbacks throughout the project’s development [17].

Research Method

This study takes a qualitative approach to analyze media reports in both China and the U.S. related to the Confucius Institute project, comparing the two countries’ views of the functions and influences of the project.

To be more specific, we chose four news outlets in China: Xinhua News Agency, China Daily, People’s Daily, and Sina News, and four equivalents in the U.S. including the Associated Press, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and Cable News Network (CNN). They represent four different types of media that include news agencies, national newspaper publications, and influential online news sites.

We searched for news reports from the database of the eight media above from 2014-2018 under the key word “Confucius Institute”, and conducted systematic sampling by taking out all headlines of the news reports that appear in the search.

After collecting data from the eight media, we used the qualitative analysis tool ATLAS.ti to pick out the most frequently mentioned key words in the headlines that we collect in the previous step. These key words are given a percentage of its appearance compared with other highly-frequent words. From these words could we identify the overarching attitudes and judgements hidden in the news articles, and discover the differences and similarities among the eight news outlets in their reports on the Confucius Institute project.

Besides of general data analysis, we also did content analysis on data from the Washington Post and CNN, where both of them have few reports on the Confucius Institute project and do not have adequate data to do word-frequency analysis. Combined with the inclusive data analysis, our study aims at showing the larger picture of gaps of message delivery between China and the U.S. in terms of soft power building, while giving attention to

specific cases as well to obtain a more nuanced perspective.

It is worth mentioning that our study is by no means a complete analysis of all views on the CI project from both side of the U.S. and China. Limitations rest upon the impossibility of covering all articles on CIs as well as being fully objective when categorizing different key words while sampling in the sentimental analysis section. Our aim is to take a step forward in gaining a better understanding of what has gone wrong in the CI project from the perspective of communications and media, and provide a framework for future studies on either the CI project or mis-signaling in China’s soft power building.

Research questions

RQ1: What are the similarities and differences between the news reports on Confucius Institute in China and US media?

RQ2: What are the implications for other Chinese soft power projects?

Results

Data of Xinhua news agency

We chose eight mainstream media outlets from China and the U.S., including Xinhua News Agency, China Daily, People’s Daily and Sina News (English), and their equivalents in the U.S., namely the Associated Press, the Washington Post, the New York Times and CNN. We searched “Confucius Institute” in each of the news outlet’s data base, and the results are as follows (Figure 1).

According to the search results, Xinhua News Agency has 258 articles about Confucius Institute and soft power, while Sina News (English) has zero.

From the headlines of 258 articles in Xinhua News Net, the ten most frequently mentioned key words are Chinese, Confucius Institute, language, university, bridge, Africa, mandarin, ambassador and global. They are mainly talking about the language and cultural side of the Confucius Institute, how it teaches the world Chinese language, helping the world understand Chinese culture, and identifying the CI project as a “cultural ambassador” that functions as a bridge between China and the world (Figures 2 and 3).

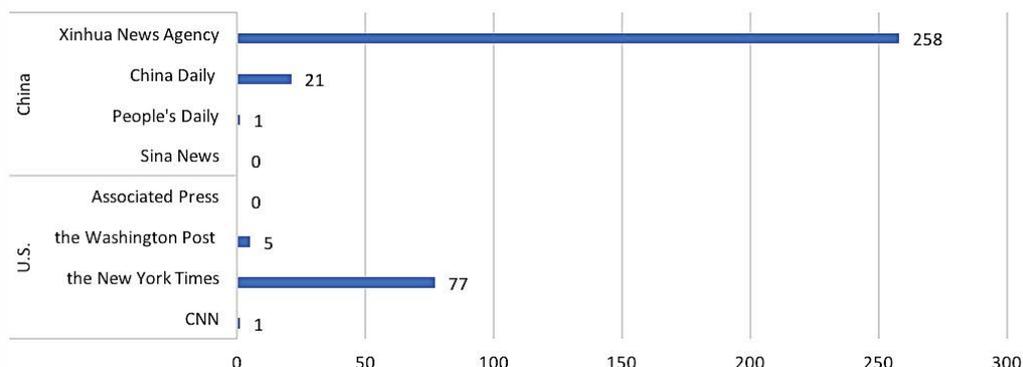


Figure 1 Number of articles from each news outlet.

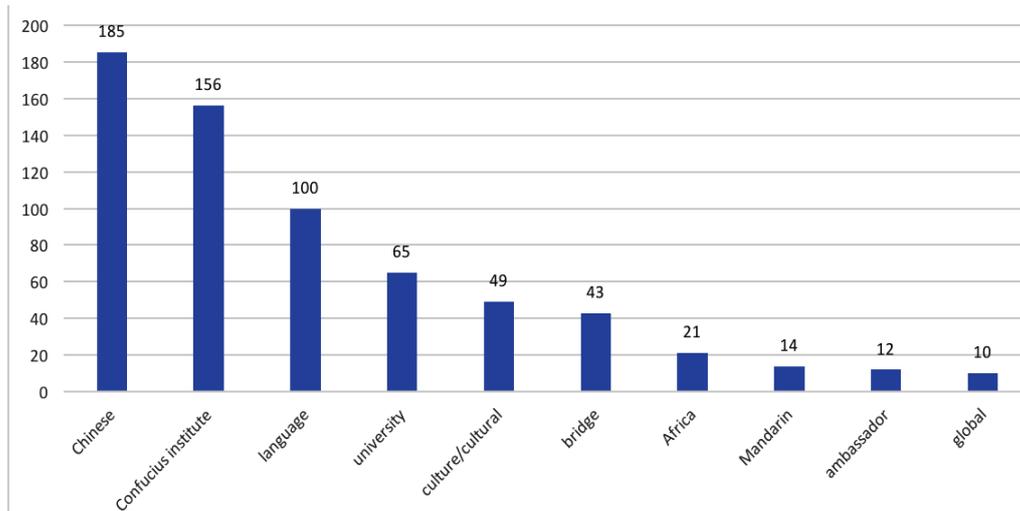


Figure 2 Ten most frequent key words in Xinhua news.

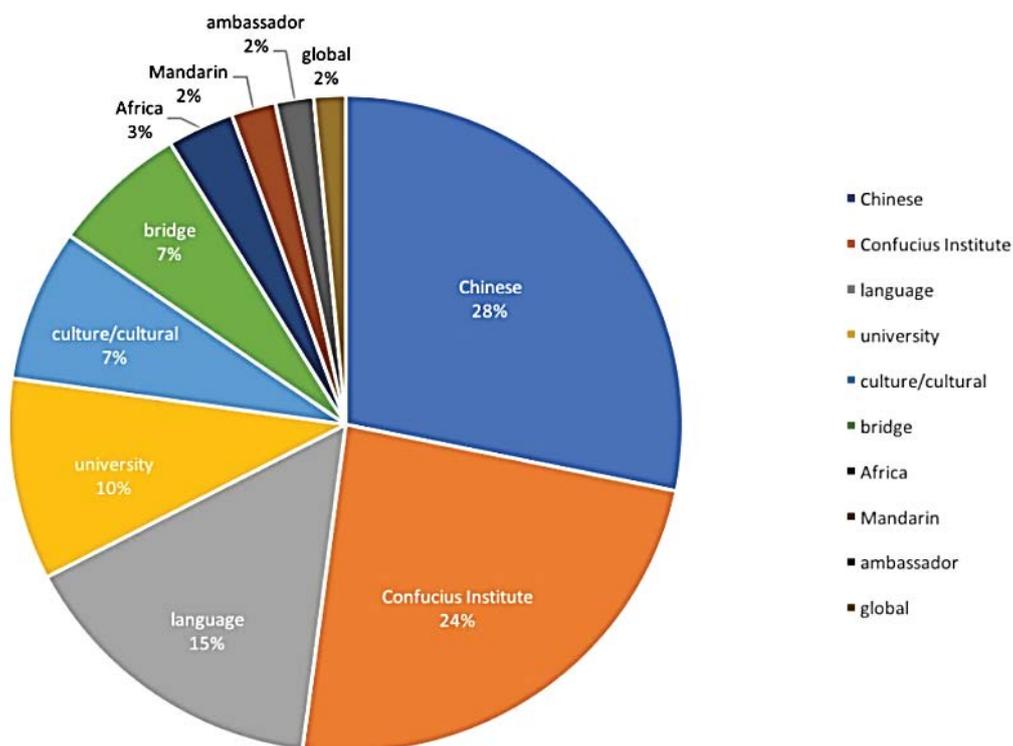


Figure 3 Percentage of the ten most frequent key words in Xinhua news.

Among the 258 articles, the majority of them are reporting about newly established CI centers in a new location, news about events held in CI centers during special holidays, and discussing the contributions CIs have made in terms of introducing mandarin, Chinese history and language to the world. They rarely mention politics — key words like power, politics, international relations could hardly be spotted.

It is also worth noticing that Africa is also one of the ten most frequently mentioned key words. One might doubt that it is because Africa has the highest number of CIs, but it's not — there

are 173 CIs in Europe, 161 CIs in the America, and only 54 in Africa. The reason that African CIs gained so much attention from Xinhua is in line with China's recently foreign policy, where Africa is China's new economic and trading target as well as foreign relations alliance.

Data of the New York Times

Comparatively, there was no news coverage of the Confucius Institute project in the Associated Press. Therefore, on the U.S. side, the New York Times stands out from the crowd when it comes to CI reports (**Figures 4 and 5**).

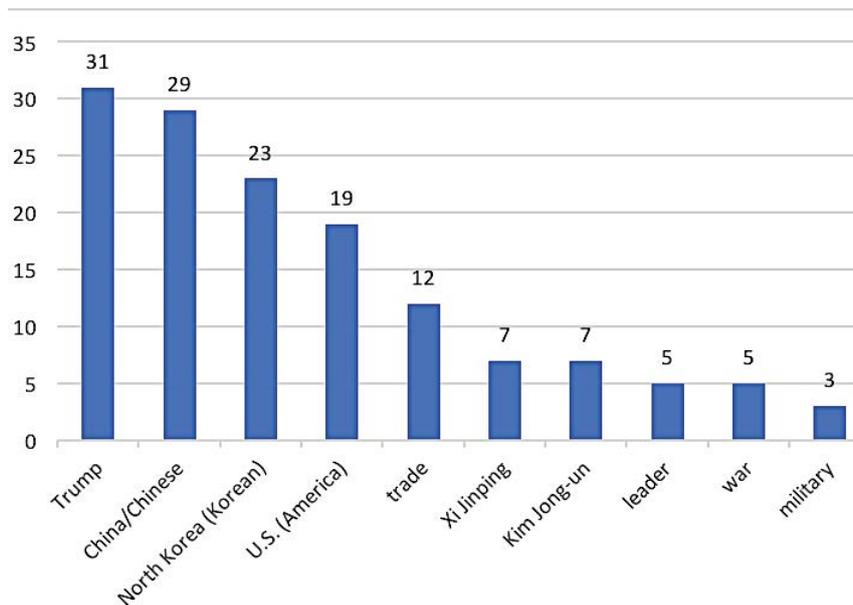


Figure 4 Ten most frequent key words in New York Times.

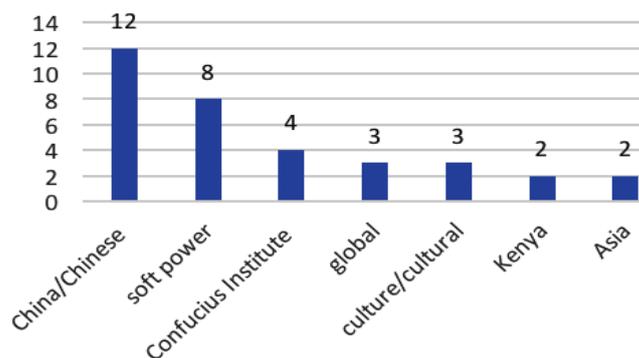


Figure 5 Percentages of the ten most frequent key words in New York Times.

New York Times (NYT) had 77 articles mentioning the Confucius Institute, the second highest among the eight news outlets that I investigated into. The ten mostly mentioned key words among the headlines of these 77 articles are Trump, China (Chinese), North Korea (Korean), U.S. (America), trade, Xi Jinping, Kim Jong-un, leader, war and military.

Contrary to Xinhua, the New York Times focuses on the total opposite side. While Xinhua focused on the culture and mandarin, the NYT focused on U.S.-China relations, China’s potential capability of becoming the new world leader and the U.S.-China-North Korea triangle.

It will be fair to say that the NYT considers the “cultural ambassador” role of the CI project only a disguise, where the true intention of this project is to expand China’s cultural influence in the international society and to boost the country’s soft power. The NYT mainly approaches this project from the point view of international relations, which always links China with Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un’s new actions and shifts from talking about soft power to hard power, like trade, war military, and hegemonic leadership.

This is typical constructivism way of thinking, where it believes that in international relations, maximizing its power is each country’s ultimate goal. One could notice that the emphasis of Xinhua and the NYT is contrastive, where the former avoids getting politics involved and only talks about the cultural side of the CI project, while the later deliberately circumvents away from the cultural impact of the project, but majorly focuses on the political side, and frequently links the CIs with the power expansion and suspects China’s ambition of obtaining global leadership through this initiative.

Data of China Daily

Another news media that stood out was China Daily, which had 21 articles about the CI project, the third highest among the eight news outlets (**Figures 6 and 7**).

There are seven key words that are mentioned more than twice, including China (Chinese), soft power, Confucius Institute, global, culture (cultural), Kenya and Asia. Similar to Xinhua, China Daily also puts its emphasis on the cultural side of the CI project’s

influence, as well as paying much attention on Africa (Kenya), and Asia. Meanwhile, it is different in the way that “soft power” is put to the stage. Reports are not only about the cultural side of the CI project, but expands to talking a little about politics.

Comparing to the New York Times, though, China Daily mainly focuses on mentioning “soft power”, but does not move on discussing deeply about international relations, hard power and so on. The later acknowledges the CI’s intention of boost China’s soft power while chooses to stay in the safety zone and not to link soft power with hard power and China’s foreign relations.

Interestingly, the most frequently mentioned key word in NYT was “Trump”, while in China Daily, it’s “China”. From this minor difference, one could see that each country’s news outlet usually focuses more on itself, and cares more about the object’s impact on its country but not vice versa.

Data of People’s Daily

In terms of People’s Daily, it shares a similar situation of Xinhua. The ten most frequently mentioned words are China (Chinese), Confucius Institute, culture (cultural), students, university, bridge, language, cooperation, ties and education. It is obvious that the majority of attention is placed on discussing the cultural and language side of the CI project, and political topics like “soft power”, “international relations” or “leadership” are not put much weight on (Figures 8 and 9).

To be more specific, it is worth noticing that People’s Daily also frequently mention “bridge”, “cooperation” and “ties”, which is emphasizing the CI’s role of working as a cultural ambassador. More importantly, these words are generally positive, contrary to words like “expand into”, “insert into” etc. This is indicating the CI is playing a positive role that is peaceful and harmonious, but not assertive and ambitious.

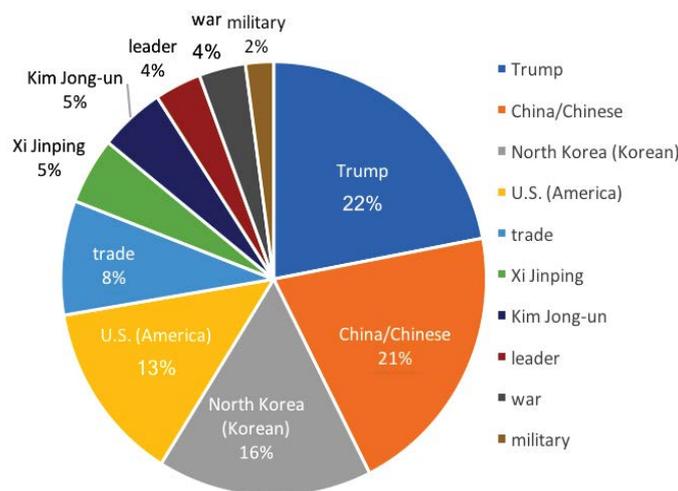


Figure 6 Seven most frequent keywords in China Daily.

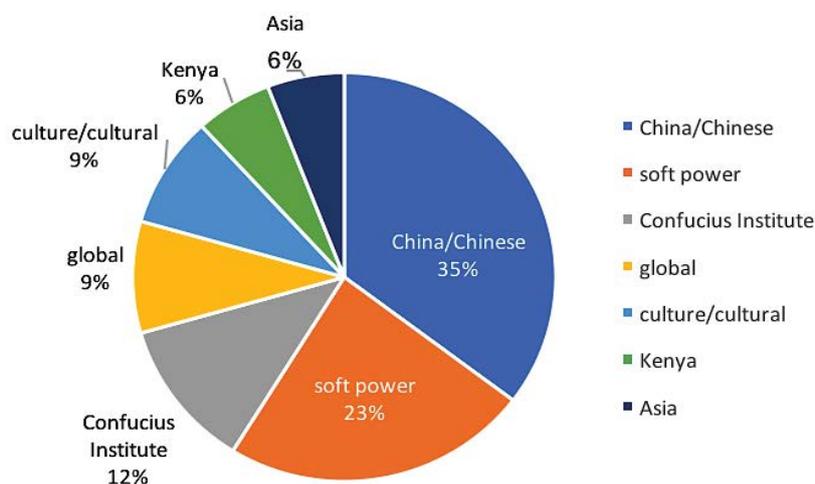


Figure 7 Percentages of the seven most frequent key words in China Daily.

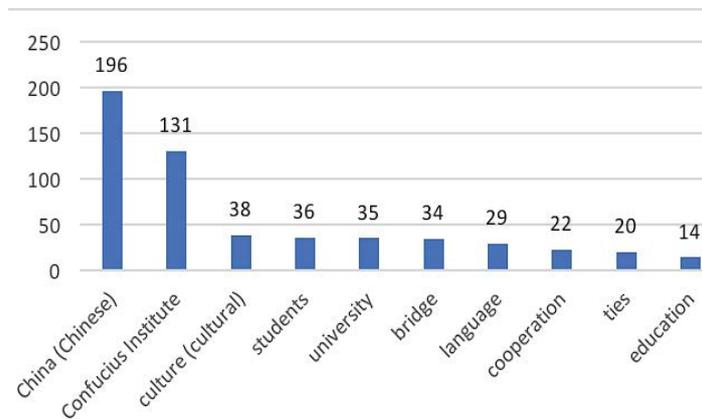


Figure 8 Ten most frequent keywords in People's Daily.

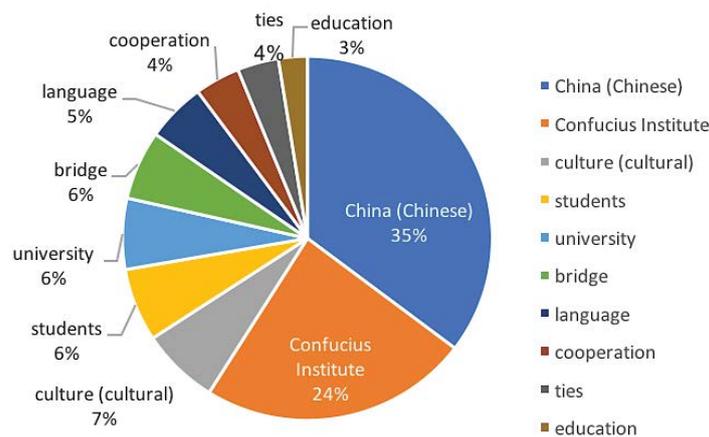


Figure 9 Percentage of the ten most frequent key words in People's Daily's search.

Content analysis on the Washington post

Among the eight news outlets, CNN has only one news report, while the Washington Post has five. Therefore, I conduct content analysis on the data from the two news outlets mentioned above (Table 1).

In the Washington Post, there are five news reports in total about the Confucius Institute, which the majority of them were in 2017. By applying content analysis to these news headlines, we could see that all of them are discussing the impact of the Confucius Institute project within the context of international relations.

The earliest one was about China's potential of taking over America's leadership position in the world as the former's both soft power and hard power was growing rapidly in May 2017. It claimed that China had been under a huge "campaign for global power" that spanned from military expansion to influencing international rules and norms. At the end, the report concluded that "the sooner the United States acknowledges that reality, the better chance we have of responding".

Table 1: Headline of the Five Articles on CI in Washington Post.

Date	Headlines
02.05.2018	With everyone focused on Russia, China is quietly expanding its influence across Europe
12.14.2017	China's 'long arm' of influence stretches ever further
12.11.2017	China's foreign influence operations are causing alarm in Washington
06.22.2017	The price of Confucius Institutes
05.17.2017	Trump prepares to pass the world leadership baton to China

In June, the Post continue talking about the negative effects of allowing the CI project to expand in the U.S., as the project was suspected of interference of academic freedom in its centers on U.S. campuses. It defined the CI project as a part of China's "overseas propaganda setup", and insisted that "educational exchange should not come at the expense of free speech." This report's main purpose was mainly warning the U.S. academic society about the negative impact of the CI project.

In December 2017, the Post had two articles discussing about the

CI project. The China's foreign influence operations are causing alarm in Washington had the same content as the June one, but changed its headline. The 12.14 article was debating about China's increasing influence on different country's economy and politics, via hard power, like coercion, and soft power, like the Confucius Institute project. Countries like Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and many African countries were under increasing influence of China's global power expansion, the Post claimed.

The most recent one shared similar ideas, where it still linked the CI project with China's global power growth, and considered China as a potential danger that would evoke wariness. The Post claimed that China "appear(s) to be keen on exploiting the E.U.'s weaknesses", when "leaders of European Union countries appear too willing to overlook China's authoritarian ambitions".

Content analysis on CNN

Within the research time span, there was only one news report from CNN on October 21, 2014, titled "China's Confucius Institutes: Self-promotion or cultural imperialism?" It has four key messages. Firstly, nowadays, China has been recognized as a strong economic and military power in the world brought by the country's miraculous growth in the past two decades, and the government was aiming at boosting its soft power for the next step. Secondly, the Confucius Institutes was considered to be an overseas ideological campaign, and had evoked criticisms to the government. Thirdly, some U.S. educational institutions expressed their concerns over academic freedom in CI centers on U.S. campuses. Fourthly, it was promoted that China attract more foreigners by scholarships and cultural products but not projects like the CI one.

This article recognized both the cultural and political side of the Confucius Institute project. Culturally, it thought that using Confucianism as the main ideology in the project was not a smart move, as some core values in Confucianism, like centralism and hierarchical society are "at odds" with some dominant values in the contemporary world. Meanwhile, the article also stated that the CI was mainly introducing ancient China to the world, but it thought that modern Chinese culture could "easily resonate with people around the world" more efficiently.

Politically, the article defined the CI project as a "soft power push", the article claimed that it was not enough to only have "appealing cultural products and business innovations," but "fundamental reforms in the Chinese body politic" was essential as well. Therefore, the author believed that the pushbacks of the CI project was not only because some problems in the institutes, but also about Chinese politics itself.

Generally speaking, this article could be defined as an editorial that contains the writer's own perspectives and views on the CI project. Through content analysis, it is fair to say that this article has an objective observation of the project. It acknowledges both the cultural and political impacts of the project, as well as listing out some prevalent pushbacks that the project has been facing with. Additionally, this article also provided some solutions for the existing problems.

On the other hand, CNN's equivalent in China-Sina News (English) does not have news report regarding the Confucius Institute, as it was mainly using reports from Xinhua News Agency, which we have had analyzed in previous sections.

Discussion

After conducting qualitative analysis on the news reports of the eight news outlets, our data could be analyzed in two dimensions.

The first dimension is to look at China and America's news outlets separately. The four Chinese news outlets, except Sina News (English), share similar traits. Their pendulum stays on the cultural impact of the Confucius Institute project, recognizing the project's function of introducing Chinese culture to the globe, including Chinese language, history and philosophies. They also focus on acknowledging the CI's role as a cultural ambassador, bridging China and the world and helping the world understand China better. "Global" and "culture (cultural)" are the three's mutual most frequent key words.

Meanwhile, the three outlets put a fair amount of attention on Africa and Asia. "Europe" and "America" have never been frequent words on the charts, while Kenya and Africa are being spotlighted. The intention is clear, that African and Asian audiences are the CI project's main focus. This is also in line with China's recent global economic strategy, where Africa and "One Belt, One Road" related countries in Asia are China's focused trading and business target in the following decade or two. This reflects the reality that one of the CI project's mission is to let the China's cultural influence keep pace of as well as facilitate its economic growth around the globe.

On the other hand, the political aspect of the CI project is rarely discussed in the reports among these three news outlets. From time to time, some news will point out that the CI project is a part of China's overseas soft power strategy, but will not move on to talk about the positive impacts and pushbacks from the international society that the CI project has been facing with. There is one exception, however, where China Daily did mention soft power a considerable amount of times that the term was listed as the second most frequently mentioned ranking after the word "China". Among the ten high-frequency key words, "soft power" takes up 23 per cent of the space. However, China Daily's discussion on soft power does not go deep either, maybe due to its political sensitivity.

The four American news outlets share similar views among themselves as well, which is mainly focusing on the political side of the project. The New York Times considers the CIs as tools for the Chinese government to expand its impact around the world and to boost China's global leadership. Whenever talking about the Confucius Institute, President Trump, U.S.-China relations, leader, North Korea will be likely to appear along the way. The Washington Post was more of an extreme, where all of its articles being sampled are all harshly criticizing China's ambition and assertiveness hidden in the CI project, and was constantly warning its readers of the danger of China's soft power programs as they will facilitate China to take over America's global leadership.

Interestingly, CNN did not have much news coverage on the Confucius Institute project, and the only editorial it had was on a fairly objective standpoint. It mentioned both the political and cultural influences of the project, problems of both sides and possible solutions. The New York Times and the Washington Post simply neglected the cultural side.

We could also compare horizontally. As there was no news report on the Associated Press and Sina News (English), we can compare China Daily with the New York Times as well as People's Daily and the Washington Post. After comparison, I found that both groups have similar divergences. They are both focusing on different sides of the topic, one heavily on culture while the other cares more about politics; one puts much effort on portraying the increasing amount of the CI centers and students around the world, when the other expresses growing wariness towards the enlarging number as it could be translated into power in international relations.

Conclusion

From the analysis above, it is fair to say that the Chinese and American media are moving in two parallel directions. The former mainly focuses on talking about the cultural side of the project and avoid mentioning politics. The latter is majorly concerned about the political impact of the Confucius Institute, and inserts a considerate amount of western ideologies into its reports when analyzing this Chinese project.

Therefore, neither side responds to the other's concern. Since the Chinese news outlets only discuss about Chinese culture and language, foreigners who have political questions towards the CI project fail to hear about the answer from the Chinese

side. This means that the Chinese media, who has China's best interest in mind, loses its chance to respond to the concerns. This automatically gives the stage to the western media, which usually won't approach Chinese affairs with positive perspectives.

On the other hand, biases of the western media (the U.S. media in our case) unable the Chinese media to receive the full response of the CI project from the world. The American media rarely talks about the positive cultural functions of the CI project, and does not recognize the usefulness of China's soft power initiative.

By using the Confucius Institute project as a case study, it is fair to conclude that there are miscommunications between the Chinese and American media. It seems that China has become obsessed with soft power building but the degree of attraction is still not high. This is either due to different political standpoint and national interest, or social values between the two countries that lead to the total divergence of news coverage on the same CI project.

As Nye and the American China expert David Shambaugh once pointed out, soft power naturally draws from and ultimately depends on the sources from which it derives – culture, attractiveness of political values and foreign policies. Interest doesn't equal appreciation, and only appreciation can be turned into a source of soft power. China's soft power strategies are still focused mostly on promoting its culture or history to attract interest, but they lack the ability to establish appreciation of its political values and institutions. According to Tao Xie (The diplomat, 2015), "Instead of military coercion or economic payments, a country can achieve its foreign policy goals through willing support and cooperation from others." To be able to achieve such a goal, China still has a long way to go.

References

- 1 The New York Times (2010) China Passes Japan as Second-Largest Economy.
- 2 Gall Up (2018) Is your overall opinion of China very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable or very unfavorable.
- 3 Pew Research Center (2016) America's International Image.
- 4 China Organization (2007) Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive for New Victories in Building a Moderately Prosperous Society in all.
- 5 Paradise JF (2009) China and International Harmony: The Role of Confucius Institutes in Bolstering Beijing's Soft Power. *Asian Survey* 49: 649.
- 6 Hartig F (2011) Confucius Institutes and the Rise of China, *Journal of Chinese Political Science/Association of Chinese Political Studies*, p: 71.
- 7 Ye Ying (2015) The Image of the Confucius Institute in Foreign Media Reports. *Journal of Sichuan University (Social Science Edition)* 3: 57
- 8 Joseph Nye (2004) Soft power: The Means to Success in World Politics. *New York Public Affairs*, p: 5
- 9 The Soft Power 30 (2017) Over all ranking 2017.
- 10 Pew Research Center (2014) China's Image.
- 11 China Scholarship Council (2018).
- 12 Tullock A (2013) China's So Power Offensive in the United States: Cultural Diplomacy, Media Campaigning, and Congressional Lobbying. *Claremont McKenna College*, p: 23.
- 13 Hanban (2017) Data of Confucius Institute.
- 14 The Economist (2014) Confucius Says.
- 15 Su-Yan Pan (2013) Confucius Institute project: China's cultural diplomacy and soft power projection. *Asian Education and Development Studies* 2: 30
- 16 Govers R (2008) Place Branding and Public Diplomacy 4, *Palgrave Macmillan UK*, 147-158 *Statistics Times*, 2018, List of Countries by Projected GDP.
- 17 Tin-yau Lo J, Pan S (2004) Confucius Institutes and China's soft power: practices and paradoxes. *A Journal of Comparative and International Education* 46: 512-532.