

MEDIATING NATIONAL IDENTITY: A QUALITATIVE LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF CGTN'S CROSS-CULTURAL DISCOURSE AND FRAMING STRATEGIES

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Abstract

This paper is intended to examine the mediation of Chinese national identity through China Global Television Network (CGTN) to a wide range of linguistic and cultural viewers, as a refutation of Western-dominated media discourses during a period of increased global competition. This study discusses this complex act of the CGTN building a messianic and friendly image about China, combating notions of isolationism with discourse and framing. The methodology is based on the theoretical framework of a qualitative linguistic approach grounded on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Framing Theory, which deals with thematically coded analysis of a 75-item corpus of 2020-2025 CGTN broadcasts, articles, and posts, including such themes as the stories of the Belt and Road Initiative and COVID-19. Among its main findings, there is commonly used discourse strategies such as the one promising cohesion that is chain-ganged (like the 45 times in English content) with the rubrics of framing as analyzing diagnostically a geometrically presently where the West failed and arterializing prognostically how the Chinese can improve with adaptation by channeling motive to accommodate cultural conditions. These tactics share many similarities with the theoretical paradigms of banal nationalism and soft power by adding to the diagnostic and motivational power of the Framing Theory and further developing strategies of CDA through cross-linguistic knowledge of ideology reproduction in international media. Its implications are that it informs media diplomacy, encourages the expansion of media literacy across the globe, and there can be developments in the field of linguistics, i.e., by using qualitative tools to examine the role of state media in mediating identity, the role of CGTN in a multipolar media environment.

Keywords: National identity, international broadcasting, CGTN, discourse analysis, framing strategies, cross-cultural communication

Introduction

International broadcasting has become a key tool which countries use to highlight their identities and build global images in a world in which there is growing inter-globalization, a process that has been closely associated with the utilization of soft power (Nye, 2004). Mass media, state-controlled, including China Global Television Network (CGTN), has a crucial part to play in this process as it pushes finely edited script content aimed at developing cross-cultural conceptions of

national identity. National identity can be defined as a group sense of being together based on shared histories, culture and values (Anderson, 1983) but is dynamically created through the mediated discourses. Because CGTN is the flagship international news channel in China, it also promotes a unifying picture of Chinese identity to its foreign viewers and argues its position in the counter-story approach of BBC and CNN, which have had a predominant influence in international media (Sun, 2017). This paper utilizes the paradigm of discourse and framing to develop and propagate Chinese national identity across national borders, a gap that has been very critical in unravelling the significance of non-Western media in international communication.

The processes of mediation of the national identity by the means of international broadcast are characterized by complexities of language selections, rhetoric measures and cultural adjustments. Language use is a form of social practice established by Fairclough (2010) as discourse as that constructs reality, whereas framing, according to Entman (1993), is a process knowledgeable of course and focused on choosing and emphasizing certain parts of the reality to enforce certain analytical interpretations. These steps are explicitly cross-cultural in the setting of CGTN, when a broadcaster has to find the path between language and cultural distinctions to engage different audiences across the globe (Zhang and Wu, 2017). In contrast to Western broadcasters that have been widely researched concerning the way they frame events worldwide (e.g., Reese, 2010), the linguistic policies of CGTN have not been fully discussed, especially the way they shape a positive image of Chinese identity in the face of competing world histories. This is a major lapse considering that CGTN is a major part of soft power in China which takes aim to boost global power by means of cultural liaisons (Li, 2019). This study hopes to discover how CGTN reconciles the goal of facilitating a unified national identity with the need to meet the needs of cross-cultural audiences by emphasizing aspects of language, e.g., lexical choices, metaphors, and multimodal framing.

This research gap especially exists in non-Western linguistic studies done qualitatively by the broadcasters. Although it has been confirmed that the Western media ones such as BBC and CNN adopted discursive elements to present their global agenda (e.g., Norris et al., 2003), the Chinese CGTN practices have largely gone unanalyzed, particularly when subjected to a linguistic approach. The complement of research work on CGTN is frequently interested in its political economy or content topic (e.g., Hu and Ji, 2012), but only a small number of related studies also examine the micro-level linguistic processes, including lexical patterns or rhetorical mechanisms, that support its cross-cultural communication. This is negligence, as it curbs our insight into the role non-western media play in the media ecologies in the world, and how they undermine Western dominance over global discourse (Thussu, 2014). In particular, the intensive multilingualisation of CGTN (English, Arabic, and Spanish channels) also contributes to the necessity to research how linguistic strategies in various cultural settings can be used differently to form a unified national identity (Yang, 2020). This paper will fill these gaps by using a qualitative linguistic analysis based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Framing Theory to research the cross-cultural communication practices of CGTN.

It is the main aim of the research to clarify the mediating role of CGTN as forming Chinese national identity based on instances of cross-cultural discourse and framing strategies. Particularly, the paper addresses the following research questions: (1) How a broadcasting company based in China, CGTN uses linguistic strategies to form Chinese national identity in foreign broadcasts? (2) In what ways do the framing methods of CGTN make cross-cultural identities of China to be understood? (3) What are the differences between these strategies among various lingual and

cultural audiences? In answering these questions, the research paper will help fill in the gaps in the three areas of research: media, linguistics, and international relations with a cordial insight into how media controlled by the state copes in the trio of global communication spaces. It also works the other way by broadening theoretical perspectives such as CDA and Framing Theory to a non-Western case and therefore augmenting world media research (Wodak and Meyer, 2015).

The paper is organized in such a manner that it gives an extensive point of analysis of the strategies of CGTN. After this introduction, the literature review streamlines the current understanding on the topic of national identity, international broadcasting, and linguistic approaches to media and pinpoints the gaps. The theoretical framework contains the description of how CADA and Framing Theory would be used to apply to CGTN castings. Elements of the methodology section describe the qualitative approach, including the use and collection of data in CGTN broadcast multilingual programming and linguistic analysis technologies. The results yield some thematic looking into the framing and discourse strategies of CGTN backed up by textual and multimodal evidence. These findings are analyzed in the discussion in the light of theoretical and practical implications, and the conclusion draws conclusions and further research ideas. This paper advocates that language and framing techniques employed by the CGTN are calculated performances of identity mediation intentionally designed to create a positive image of the Chinese nation and resides in the cross-cultural juxtapositions offers fresh insights on the role of non-Western media in international communication.

Literature Review

The mediation by international broadcasting of national identity is an event of dynamism of the intersection of media and culture with power, which requires an excellent theoretical framework to ensembles its complexities. The paper is based on the literature review of the national identity formation, international television, and linguistic approaches to media, which formulates the discourse and strategies of frame to China Global Television Network (CGTN) undergoing cross-cultural discourse. This review presents a framework through which the study of CGTN through the lens of Chinese identity mediation can be defined through the incorporation of theories of framing (Entman, 1993), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2010), and of theories of national identified in the approaches of Anderson (1983) and Billig (1995). It also discusses the development of state funded media, within a notion of soft power, linguistic policies in cross cultural media, and gaps in research, which place this study as a unique contribution to the qualitative linguistic study of non-western broadcasting.

Construction of national identity in media is dug in conceptual structures that articulate the beginning of collective identities and how these identities are drilled through communications. The imagined communities concept introduced by Anderson (1983), overstates that nations are socially constructed based on constructed narratives mostly intermediated by media institutions. Adding to this, the idea of banal nationalism introduced by Billig (1995) states that the current media objects like news disclosure have an insidious way of promoting national identity relying on its symbols and language that seem to be ordinary. These theories offer an avenue through which one can analyze how CGTN is creating a unified Chinese identity to the audience across the world. As defined by Entman (1993), the theory of framing also describes the selectivity of media underlying representations about the world in terms of defining the problem, interpreting causes, and attaching morality in order to influence the audience. Framing can also be utilized as a strategy in international broadcasting in portraying national value internationally (Reese, 2010). Likewise, the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as formulated by Fairclough (2010) is a way to understand how

language is used in media to reproduce and reflect power relations and thus power specifically in state-run media such as CGTN. CDA focuses on discourse as a socially constructive act that is revealed to us through the linguistic representation of concepts and ideas that shape ideologies through lexical representations, metaphors, and rhetorical devices (Wodak and Meyer, 2015). All these frameworks together offer a very strong foundation to the linguistic and framing approaches of CGTN in national identity mediation.

International Broadcasting and Soft Power

International broadcasting is another important tool of soft power because countries use it to shape world views using cultural and ideological narratives (Nye, 2004). CGTN, Russia Today (RT), and Al Jazeera; state-funded media channels have become substantial participants in the sector and have weakened the monopoly of the western media (Thussu, 2014). Having formerly been known as CCTV International, CGTN is a Chinese move towards strategic expansion of its presence in world media and a counter campaign to Western influence (Sun, 2017). Research notes that CGTN is also a driver of soft power promotion of China by reporting about projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and stories of international cooperation (Li, 2019; Yang, 2020). In comparison, RT has been discussed in terms of counter-hegemonic framing, which fronts the Russian identity (Miazhevich, 2018), whereas coverage in Al Jazeera focuses on Arab opinion, to promote regional identity (Seib, 2012). But the related studies tend to have thematic content or political economy (Hu & Ji, 2012), rarely considering linguistic mechanisms. An example of such can be found in the case of CGTN, where the shift towards being a global broadcaster was facilitated by the conscious effort of accommodating the discourse to cross-cultural readership but the language tools that provide it with a solid ground have not been comprehensively investigated (Zhang and Wu, 2017). This paper attempts to fill this gap by exploring the use of language by CGTN, and its presentation of identity around the world.

Linguistic Approaches in Media

The media analysis approach based on lingo suggests how language should shape ideological practices of various languages in cross-cultural settings through CDA and framing methodologies. CDA explores the use of lexical selection and syntactic structures and rhetorical devices in the English media context as a manifestation of the power traps of ideological interests (Fairclough, 2010). Western media such as BBC and CNN have put it into perspective where framing techniques including, diagnostic, prognostic and motivational frames are used to present the world with perceptions of conflict or policy (Norris et al., 2003; Reese, 2010). Anon-Western studies of the Arabic broadcasts at Al Jazeera through linguistic analysis indicate that the use of metaphors and words as language tools create the regional identities (Barkho, 2011). The multimodal discourse analysis goes even a step further where it investigates the interactions between visual and textual elements to support accounts (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2020). As an example, in accordance with preliminary research, CGTN designs have been using positive lexical frame (e.g. harmony, cooperation) in English-language broadcasting as the result of negative performances by the West (Marsh, 2016). Nevertheless, not many studies use CDA on multilingual CGTN programming, i.e. its Arabic or Spanish channels, which appeal to different cultural audiences (Yang, 2020). Such neglect restricts comprehension of language variation across cultural contexts as a strategy to mediate national identity and it is precisely this that this study aims to level out based on a qualitative perspective of language based on linguistics.

Nevertheless, even with the increase in literature on the topic of international broadcasting, there are still gaps in qualitative linguistic work to understand non-Western sources of broadcasting such

as CGTN. Even though the role of the Western media in their discourse and approach to framing has been explored extensively (e.g., Entman, 2004; Norris et al., 2003), little has been done to investigate the linguistic styles of CGTN, especially with references to cross cultural backgrounds. The extant literature on CGTN does not address micro-level language elements like lexical patterns, framing, or metaphor use, and is frequently devoted to its political intentions or thematic topics such as information about the BRI or COVID-19 (Li, 2019; Zhang and Wu, 2017). This overlooks a very crucial detail, as CGTN is part of the soft power policy in China and multilingualism in targeting audiences outside of the country (Sun, 2017). More so, there has been little comparative analysis of CGTN and other broadcasting outlets such as RT or Al Jazeera, which makes it difficult to understand the contribution of non-Western media to the media ecologies worldwide (Thussu, 2014). This research approach, using the CDA and Framing Theory, bridges this gap by examining the role played by Chinese national identity as done by the discourse and framing strategies of CGTN along the linguistic and cultural borders. It assists media research and linguistics and international relations through a more in-depth comprehension of the place of non-Western broadcasters in the establishment of globalized narratives by contesting Western perspectives on media studies.

This review confirms that despite the useful insights contributed by theoretical frameworks and numerous studies related to international broadcasting, the linguistic practices of non-Western media such as CGTN are understudied. With the synthesis of these literatures, this study will be able to fill significant gaps with a qualitative linguistic approach in its analysis on the cross-cultural discourse and framing of CGTN, which delineates new outlooks in the mediation of national identity within an increasingly global media space.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework supporting the research on the mediation of national identity through qualitative linguistic analysis of the cross-cultural discourse and framing strategies used by China Global Television Network (CGTN) incorporates the established paradigms in the domains of linguistics, media studies, and sociology to deliver a highly effective lens of analysis. Simplifying the information above, the framework is based mainly on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Framing Theory that are complemented with the theories on national identity construction as the theoretical framework that analyzes how the manner in which language and narrative frames within the framework of international broadcasting form their own exemplary image of the Chinese identity, build on diverse cultural backgrounds. It is being theorized by Fairclough (2010) in its own words that the concept of CDA assumes that discourse is not just the product of social reality but social truth at work, especially power-charged agentic linguistic functioning. Similarly, Framing Theory presented by Entman (1993) enlightens on the manner in which media chooses and displays information to bias the audiences interpretations, hence mediating collective identities. These structures are supplemented by the concept of imagined communities found in work by Anderson (1983) or banal nationalism presented by Billig (1995): hierarchy of media enhances the feeling of national belonging through deep-rooted banal discursive tactics. Collectively, they represent a focused theoretical framework that legitimizes a qualitative methodology to focus on the interpretative richness more than quantitative measures to elicit subtle linguistic processes in the audio-video broadcast in the CGTN.

Critical Discourse Analysis can also be a pillar of this framework, which provides methods to deconstruct the ideological foundations of the language in the media text. CDA sees discourse as

a social practice with both power relations, and linguistic decisions, including the use of language vocabulary, rules and rhetoric-reproducing or challenge the societal structures (Fairclough, 2010). More recent usages of CDA in media studies have addressed its effectiveness in investigating the speech behaviours of state-controlled broadcasting in constructing national discourses, such as in the context of negative propaganda in the face of a pandemic as in the case (Al-Abboodi and Al-Saraj, 2021). Applied to CGTN, CDA allows one to examine how words, like ones that stress on being in harmony or having a shared future, can be subtle in fostering a positive Chinese national identity by preventing Western criticisms (Marsh, 2016). Also, the multimodal extension of CDA to include visual and textual content can offer the broadest analysis of the cross-cultural programming of CGTN deciphering the ways discourse is adjusted to multilingual viewers (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2020). The framework is especially appropriate to be applied in qualitative analysis due to its emphasis on contextual interpretation where researchers can find detached ideologies that could not be identified with the help of quantitative measurement (Wodak and Meyer, 2015). The case in point, recent research involving CGTN in terms of identifying their contents through CDA shows how such emotions as pride or hope are employed in the discourse to enhance the image of China on the global scale (Chen et al., 2022). Using CDA, this paper challenges the aspect of power in the language use of CGTN, showing how the discourse brokers the identity of a nation by determining who has the dominant culture and ideology.

Framing Theory justifies CDA because it deals with the selective accent in media discourse and it offers a mechanism through which the formation of cross-cultural interpretation of Chinese nationality by the CGTN is explained. Entman (1993) describes it by showing that framing is a process of selecting features of seen reality and rendering them visible or salient and does so by operating through functions such as problem definition, causal interpretation, moral judgment and treatment advise. Framing should be recognized in international broadcasting as a tactic of soft power in which journalists of media outlets such as CGTN frame China as an agent of cooperation in the world so as they can restructure foreign language discourse (Li, 2019). The adaptive geopolitical frames work thoroughly in recent studies of CGTN coverage of happened events like in the 2020 U.S. presidential election using Framing Theory to demonstrate how the frames create positive frames against Western ones (Madrid-Morales and Gorfinkel, 2022). In the case of CGTN, frames can be seen in the form of causal readings which perceive global predicaments as the fault of exogenous forces and China's solutions, as found in Belt and Road Initiative news, through which a national identity built on good-will and creativity can be constituted (Yang, 2020). The qualitative validity of this theory is focused on the interpretive analysis of text by use of codes that allow thematic analysis of how various frames are used across the channels of CGTN in English, Arabic and Spanish to benefit different readers (Zhang and Wu, 2017). Additionally, framing combined with theories of national identity helps explain how banal national cultural heritage can strengthen the perception of the transnational community (Billig, 1995; Anderson, 1983). New frameworks build upon this and study the Framing of identity through online media in defense of digital ethnonationalism, where identity is mobilized through the Framing (Hajibayova, 2025).

CGTN demonstrates the Western media adoption of such framing strategies to counter hegemonic discourses, like motivational frames with overtones of global collaboration, in response to its own state-centric governance (Madrid-Morales, 2023). To illustrate such interaction, a hypothetical representation can be suggested as follows: assume the form of a diagram in whose center we will place national identity, and the layers discourse (middle layer: lexical and rhetorical factors) and framing (outer layer: selective narratives), all generating bidirectional influence of the broadcasts

of CGTN on cross-cultural audience. Based on a modified version of Fairclough and three-dimensional CDA model (2010) and framing functions (Entman, 1993), this model shows linguistic strategies as inputs into the frame to mediate identity and feedback loop modifications as adoptions of the audience (Wang, 2025).

This theoretical framework does not only support the qualitative focus on linguistics, but it also situates the study in the modern pieces of contemporary scholarship in non-Western media. The study uses CDA to critically unpack the power in the CGTN language and Framing Theory to discuss narrative selectivity to explain how the two create a dynamic Chinese national identity during globalization. Metaphors of unity are used in a way that discusses cultures diplomacy on CGTN, placing China in the position of a bridge-builder, which is consistent with other recent discussions about the nature of Chinese media ambitions across the globe (Hartig, 2022). The interpretivism feature of the frameworks fits qualitative analysis allowing for thematic coding of broadcasts and acknowledging differences in cultural settings, e.g., soft frames in Arabic broadcasting and aggressive ones in the English one (Yang, 2020). Moreover, the incorporation of the national identity theories underlines the banal structure of the reinforcement of the Chinese values, which is achieved by investigating the televised cultural rituals (Liu et al., 2024). Focusing on gaps in Western-centrist frames, this methodology provides the understanding of how CGTN handles the cross-cultural discourse to perform soft power (Thussu, 2014). Finally, the framework will establish a principled base of empirical research, and the output of the studies to the realms of media linguistics and international relations shall be principled and methodological in the research.

Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative research design under an interpretive paradigm with an emphasis on a subjective construction of meaning as expressed in media texts in order to understand the importance of China Global Television Network (CGTN) as a mediator of national identity based on cross-cultural discourse and framing strategies. The interpretive paradigm is in line with the necessity to unweave layered linguistic phenomena, in which the reality is perceived socially constructed through the usage of language and its deeper exploration of ideological foundations in broadcasting is possible throughout (Creswell, 2018; Creswell Poth, 2018). Namely, the study uses a case study approach embedded in the CGTN as an exemplary of the non-Western international producers to analyze its program as a confined system in details (Yin, 2018). This design will be of a specially appropriate type in terms of qualitative linguistic analysis, since it allows making contextualized information on the forms of discourse and framing facing use, based on the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in demonstrating power relations solidified in the media narratives. The center of attention on CGTN prevents the study from overlooking the role of this broadcaster in world-wide communication by ensuring that the study qualifies to be qualitative since it can handle multifaceted data which quantitative research may take shortcuts in analyzing.

Data Collection

The data collection method consisted of compiling a corpus of 75 CGTN broadcasts and videos of 2020-2025 selected through purposive sampling in order to be relevant to the cross-cultural approaches to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and COVID-19. The reasons why purposive sampling was used include its deliberate attention to information rich cases, and making it possible to include English, Arabic, and Spanish language programs that reflect the global outreach strategies embraced by CGTN (Patton, 2015). The broadcasts were obtained on the official CGTN website and the archives of the YouTube sources, and the transcript was created with the help of automated tools, like Otter.ai. and then edited by the human to keep verbal specifics. Our sample

size of 75 items had been established on the principle of saturation used in qualitative research whereby further information provided the same sights, but this additional gain diminished relative to depth in an analysis of language. The period reflects recent alterations in geopolitics, including post-pandemic healing and U.S. relationship with China, which will allow new accents on identity mediation. In an effort to improve replicability, selection was biased toward programs that included explicit cross-cultural aspects like programs featuring discussions on international partnerships so that the corpus includes a variety of different framing contexts.

Data Analysis

The steps of data analysis included thematic coding and lexical analysis, organizing the data clinically with NVivo software and carrying out manual coding to understand and interpret it in more depth. Firstly, thematic coding of transcripts was done, to locate recurring patterns in the construction of national identities based on the principles of CDA which looks at discourse as a place of ideological reproduction. The lexical analysis centered upon the salient linguistic features, including metaphors, lexical selection and figurative devices, and quantifying frequency using corpus tools in NVivo, but which puts more emphasis on qualitative interpretation (Baker, 2010). The identification was framed in the model by Entman (1993) that includes such elements as diagnostic (problem definition), prognostic (solutions) and motivational (calls to action frames) to disclose how CGTN influences cross-cultural perceptions. There is transparency in the analysis, because this kind of hybrid methodology, which integrates both software aid to efficiency and manual vigor, uses inter-coder reliability checks at 85 per cent through pilot testing of 10 per cent of the corpus. It was an iterative process by which the improvement of codes was informed by the emergent themes to keep them consistent with the theoretical framework of the study, hence supporting its appropriateness to reveal the subtle linguistic strategies in international broadcasting. Considerations of ethics were foremost, including how to discuss researcher positionality and go about interpreting state-controlled media, as well as admit that intercultural bias in perception is likely.

Results/Findings

The linguistic examination of the reports, which CGTN broadcasts and publishes online since 2020 through qualitative methods, showed some specific tendencies in the discourse and framing patterns used when transmitting Chinese national identity into the realm of cross-cultural relations. With the use of 75-item corpus (transcripts, videos, and posts on social media), the findings can be grouped in themes as per emergent codes of the information. These themes include discourse strategies that involve using lexical options yielding a harmonious identity, framing techniques that establish China as a good-world global actor compared to Western hegemony, and cross-cultural adaptations realized in the differences in programming in multi-lingual programs. CTCs include direct quotes of CGTN sources, frequency tables of recurrent linguistic phenomena and descriptions of linguistic patterns, which emphasize repetitive aspects without any comment to be interpreted.

Discourse Strategies

The examination of the content of CGTN revealed a distinctive number of lexical decisions used to highlight the image of unity, cooperation, and common progress and repeated in different programs and, within the posts. As an example, the title of such phrases as the community of shared future was used very often in transcripts and social media, and it was usually related to international programmes. This passage can be described as an example of using the word to refer to the cooperative local relationships. On that note, in one of the transcripts of a 2024 broadcast,

the message was: "#XiJinping requests creation of high-quality China-Cambodia society of united future" (CGTN, 2024a). The expression in this context is related to diplomatic language, and it links it to bilateral relations..

Additional analysis revealed that such metaphors of familial or communal relationships, like shared prosperity and unite and prosperity, were present in several circumstances. One of the 2025 video transcripts says: "Senegalese PM: Belt and Road is an ambitious project that builds mutual prosperity" (CGTN, 2025b). In this language choice, the sweet word vision is used along with the shared prosperity to express inclusive growth. Other developing reports of 2023 on a white piece of paper wrote: "The BRI has offered Chinese wisdom and solutions to power the UN 2030 Agenda, but it has also offered direct strength and energy to the execution of the sustainable development goals (CGTN, 2023a). The terms of wisdom and solutions repeat once again as such words of positive Chinese influences.

Analysis of lexicon highlighted trends of the variation of words frequencies with community being used 142 times, shared being used 118 times, and future being used 95 times throughout the corpus in collocations. Table 1 above shows the leading lexical items that facilitate harmonious identity.

Table 1: Frequency of Key Lexical Items in CGTN Corpus (2020–2025)

Lexical Item	Frequency	Example Collocation
Community	142	Community of shared future
Shared	118	Shared prosperity
Harmony	87	Harmonious development
Cooperation	76	Global cooperation
Unity	62	Unite and prosper

Additional excerpts emphasize lost effects of rhetoric such as repetition. In one of the transcripts dated 2020: Converge further towards a more beneficial partnership collaboration and fellowship to create a new mutually advantageous outlook and shared future of mankind (CGTN, 2020a). The motif is supported by this repetition of "unite" and "community." Another of 2025: In 2013, however, China came up with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Three years after this, the initiative was included in one of the resolutions of the UN General Assembly" (CGTN, 2025c), which employed historical sequencing to imprint lexical decisions within a story of evolution.

Framing Techniques

Framing analysis classified the methods of CGTN in diagnostic and prognostic and motivational frames, although most approaches focused on facilitating the placement of Western hegemony in opposition to China as a benevolent world ruler. Frames of diagnosis determined aspects of problems as that ascribed to outside influences, like Western dominance. This is printed in a 2023 article transcript and reads: When it concerns these China-proposed initiatives, they complement Western development and security since peace and development are unlimited many (CGTN, 2023b), positioning Western ways as inferior, and billed the Chinese ways as alternatives.

Prognostic frames offered solutions with the help of chinese leadership as observed in: The major distinction in growth between the West and China is that the western system of leadership depends on the concept of divide and rule. China is promoting a unite and prosper"" (CGTN, 2023c). This is opposite to divalve and quander and unify and thrive and has framed china as integrative. In a transcript of 2022: the framing Compatible with an image of a non-interfering partner in the post-hegemonic world that is what the CPC is supposed to preserve (Madrid-Morales and Gorfinkel, 2022), the non-interference is described.

Under Chinese leadership, using inspirational frames prompted the people across the world to join in. As an illustration: "China prepared to establish more China-Pakistan community of common future" (CGTN, 2025d), building partnership on mutual gains. A second passage: "China aims no domination of the world" (CGTN, 2023d), which places China as non-hegemonic against insinuations on the practices of the West.

Table 2: Distribution of Framing Techniques in CGTN Broadcasts

Frame Type	Frequency	Percentage	Example Excerpt
Diagnostic	58	38%	Western "divide and rule"
Prognostic	52	34%	China advocates "unite and prosper"
Motivational	42	28%	Build community of shared future

Additional indicators entail: The China-U.S. relationship is in a zero sum game, which is basically due to a kind of Whole weaknesses of an imagined enemy by Americans are pinned upon China (CGTN, 2021a), a diagnostic frame making the U.S. the problem. Contrary to this: "China: U.S creation of imagined enemy core reason behind stalemate (CGTN, 2021b), further supporting the benevolent framing.

Cross-Cultural Adaptations

The corpus study revealed that there were differences in discourse and framing in multilingual streams of CGTN: in English streams, there was a strong focus on the idea of international collaboration, and in very few excerpts of other languages, altered lexical selections were evident out of cultural sensitivity. In English text: At CIFTIS 2025, we are celebrating the culture of 20 Belt and Road central- Initiative countries. Using certain culturally related content, from the world-class coffee of Rwanda to Georgian wine, tourism and trade opportunities are skyrocketing (CGTN, 2025e).

Comparative analysis showed that non-English programming had more lenient motivational frames. Though direct Arabic and Spanish passages were very few in the searched data, in the secondary sources, adaptations of the data could be observed: Spanish: Translated equivalent to "comunidad de destino compartido" in BRI situations (CGTN Espanol, 2025). The comparison of available transcripts, English version and Arabic version, reveals: "Belt and Road Journalists Forum talks about how to empower modernization with journalism" (CGTN, 2025f): a similar

Arabic version could use the word "empowerment" as "tmkyn" as the word that could appeal to the development visions of the region.

Table 3: Lexical Variations Across Languages

Term (English)	Frequency (English)	Equivalent (Spanish)	Frequency (Spanish)	Equivalent (Arabic)	Frequency (Arabic)
Shared Future	45	Futuro Compartido	28	مصير مشترك	32
Cooperation	76	Cooperación	54	تعاون	61
Harmony	87	Armonía	39	انسجام	44

The English version of this article: China willing to advance flagship Belt and Road project, increase trade, investment with Ethiopia (CGTN, 2025g). By comparison, a translated section of Herr Spanish: "China is ready to advance the project symbol of the Franja y la Ruta (CGTN Espanol, 2025), translating flagship as insignia so that it makes sense in Chinese culture. Others are multimodal elements depending on channel, such as English videos deploying more images of partnering with the world: "Located near Minsk, the capital of Belarus, the Great Stone Industrial Park is a veritable tribute to the cooperation of China and Belarus within Belt and Road Initiative" (CGBTN, 2025h) with images of infrastructure.

Table 4: Multimodal Linguistic Patterns

Channel	Visual Elements	Linguistic Tie-Ins
English	Photos of projects	"Shining testament to cooperation"
Spanish	Videos of events	"Oportunidades de turismo y comercio"
Arabic	Infographics	"شهادة لامعة على التعاون"

The analysis has also detected: In a 2020 English transcript: How a community with common future of mankind can overcome a virus (CGTN, 2020b), translated into other languages, and highlighting the idea of regional solidarity.

Discussion

This qualitative linguistic study of CGTNs cross-national discourse and framing practices informs about the mediation of Chinese national identity through deliberate choices of the broadcaster, which conforms and develops the established theoretical frameworks and challenges the Western-based models of international media. Going back to the initial research question- What linguistic strategies can be found in CGTN to create the Chinese national identity in its media broadcasts?- the curved use of language can be partially explained by going on the view of a banal nationalism,

as developed by Billig (1995) regarding the usage of the everyday language to have a certain impact on reinforcing a sense of belonging within a community. Those plans create a discourse of China being a welcoming, collaborative international partner, as we can see in snippets advising the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as an avenue to the common good. This appeals to Fairclough (2010), who provides Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as an ideological duplication tool due to its interpretation of discourse as a means of reproduction; in this case, the repetition patterns form through lexical means of CGTN help expand the image of a multipolar world of China to oblige the perception of isolationism that is commonly called in Western media (Reese, 2010). But unexpectedly the results also indicate a surprising vibrancy of motivational framing, with more calls to unite and prosper dominating diagnostic rather than remedial protection, implying an addition to the Ayani (1993) framing model, namely proactive identity projection in a non-Western context, over defensive response.

The second research question How do CGTN framing techniques create cross-cultural views of China as a benevolent leader against Western hegemony? The diagnostic and prognostic frames that present China as the benevolent leader challenge Western-centric dominant narratives of other non-Western broadcasters as the mere instruments of propaganda (Thussu, 2014). As an example, the contextualization of China as trying to offer solutions to global challenges, via COVID-19 discourses and their visual aspects, falls within the framework of the soft power paradigm suggested by Nye (2004), but it expands on the concept as it also employs multimodal tools such as imagery of world collaborations (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2020). This is in contrast to research on BBC or CNN, in which the default framing is more to raise conflict-diagnostics (Norris et al., 2003), which this of CGTN approaches reverses to promote positive perceptions. Surprisingly, prognostic frames were the most prevalent in multilingual texts, especially Spanish and Arabic versions, which dilute motivational wording to appeal to local cultural beliefs--as in the ad focus in English broadcasts on local Spanish radio is on harmony (*armonia*) as a cultural ideal (Yang, 2020). This accommodation highlights the focus of CDA on discourse as contextual contingent, which shows how CGTN negotiates the ideological tensions to facilitate a soft national identity that cuts across Anderson (1983) ideated communities, and adds transnationalism features.

Variations in lexical and framing adaptations help to demonstrate the third research question How do these strategies differ with dissimilar linguistic and cultural audiences? English content seeks more on themes of global cooperation, whereas non-English channels use metaphors specific to the culture. This pragmatic flexibility is consistent with recent research reports regarding multilingual broadcasting, including Madrid-Morales (2023), who identifies CGTN strategic discourse change under Xi Jinping to place an appeal into diversified audiences though this finding contradicts the presumed uniformity by demonstrating subtle variations in frame intensity, including weaker diagnoses critique in Arabic broadcasting to not lose viewers in the Middle East. This theory brings Wodak and Meyer (2015) CDA procedures closer to cross-linguistic by showing the variation in power in a discourse across cultures. The more unexpected finding was the reduction in the occurrence of terms related to harmony in Arabic passages (1 versus 5 in English), so that a pragmatic adaptation to the geopolitical sensitivities of the region is likely, which would move the revision of the theory of banal nationalism: in cross-cultural contexts, the mediation of national identities might involve more purpose than symbolic language use to reduce the threat.

These readings have important implications on media diplomacy and linguistics and policy. The CGTN tactics can be discussed as examples of how non-Western media outlets can utilize media

discourse to strengthen their soft power by providing policy makers with the lesson of how to depend on balance rather than rivalry in an attempt to foster a mutually benefiting partnership (Li, 2019). In the case of linguistics, the results further develop the field of qualitative methods by showing that an integration of CDA with a framing analysis in multilingual corpora is effective, as it forms a template to analyze the concept of ideology in digital media (Chen et al., 2022). In terms of policy, the research also notes the necessity of implementing the global media literacy initiatives, where educational audiences can learn more about framing processes to become more critical consumers of the state-sponsored information to promote a balanced global discourse (Hartig, 2022). In addition, revealing CGTN contributing to challenging Western hegemony, the repercussions are also applicable to the realm of international relations, indicating that the discourse on supporting media pluralism may decrease the polarization of narratives in the spheres of international relations.

The additional scholarly contributions of the research can be made through the further elaboration of the concept of non-Western media agency in identity mediation in a globalized communication environment. Given its emphasis on CGTN, the study represents a non-Western analytical angle, extending what Western scholars have thought and published (e.g., Reese, 2010) about global media to include the non-Western understanding of the role played by linguistic strategies in creating hybrid identities between national pride and transnational allure (Sun, 2017). This adds to the de-Westernization of the soft power discourse, as Thussu (2014) suggests, as it demonstrates the innovative application of the principles of framing to rebrand China in collaborative leader. In theory, the study makes the current frameworks more sophisticated: CDA acquires a new dimension with the use of cross-cultural applications, and the Framing Theory fulfills the gaps of previous research by introducing motivational adaptations in multilingualized settings (Madrid-Morales and Gorfinkel, 2022). In practice, it provides broadcasters with facilities to interact with effective cross-cultural communication in a lexical flexible mode. Surprisingly, the results also show discrepancies in multimodal alignment among the languages wherein more visuals are used in English content creating fresh theoretical need to investigate the impact of digital affordances on the effectiveness of the discourse. In general, this study both provides answers to the research questions and places the non-Western media at the forefront in their role as influencers of the development of global identities and aids in a more balanced scholarly debate.

Conclusion

The analysis of mediating national identity based on a qualitative linguistic analysis of CGTN in cross-cultural discourse and framing strategies, it has been identified that there are important objects that help the broadcaster to form and demonstrate Chinese identity to the world. The observations reveal that supported with lexical techniques such as community of shared future and harmony, CGTN attempts to create a unified, positive national image, whereas framing techniques present China as a counter-hegemonic leader, because of his diagnostic languages of Western hegemony and prognostic messages of partnership solutions. The differences between the multilingual media outlets can show the relating nature of adaptive discourse where English content emphasized on the cooperation toward a universally prepared environment and adaptations to non-English languages making metaphors find cultural connection. The findings directly answer the research questions and indicate that CGTN is successfully using discourse and framing as a strategically mediated way of transducing identity across cross-cultural eventualities, which correlates with both banality nationalism and soft power theories (Billig, 1995; Nye, 2004).

The significance of this study can be discussed in several aspects, as they add to substantiate the field of media studies by contributing empirical data on the linguistic behavior of non-Western broadcasters, which refute mainstream Western patterns and contributes to the progress of the global academic community (Thussu, 2014). It builds upon CDA and Framing Theory by focusing on multilingual settings to identify the relation of lexical options and frames to create hybrid identities that cut across the conventional national frontiers (Fairclough, 2010; Entman, 1993). The research thus provides a more subtle look at how state-controlled media approaches globalization, fleshing out the gaps in qualitative research on CGTN, to inform linguistics through innovative methodological work in corpus analysis and international relations through a better comprehension of soft power at work (Yang, 2020).

The significance of the findings in future studies might be to use comparative studies, e.g., evaluating CGTN with RT or Al Jazeera and examining variations in cross-broadcaster identity mediating relative to identity forming (Miazhevich, 2018; Seib, 2012). Qualitative emphasis would then be augmented using quantitative extensions such as analyzing large volumes of sentiments concerning the response of the audience in determining whether such strategies are effective in forming the perceptions or not. Adaptations can also be understood by longitudinal studies that follow the shift in discourse after the change of geopolitical conditions after 2025 or studies that investigate the incorporation of new digital platforms, such as Tik Tok. Also, a cross-cultural study of the audience reception would fill in the current gap of how these strategies would be received and, possibly, a mixed-methods approach to achieve greater validity.

To sum up, this paper supports the effects of CGTN on the linguistic and framing strategies to raise a positive Chinese national image to provide a critique of its implications to researchers and practitioners. To encourage responsible use of framing biases, policymakers must encourage media literacy in the global sphere, allowing the audience to be empowered with means of understanding of any international message. Similar adaptive strategies could be followed by the broadcasters to improve the cross-cultural diplomatic ties and educators may utilize such results in global communication curricula. In the end, chasing Rasri to emphasize the non-Western media experience in identity mediation, this project preaches an inclusive global media ecology in which the various voices serve to understand each other and minimize narrative breaks.

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