

# On the International Dissemination Strategy of Shaoxing Ancient City Image under the Background of World Heritage Application

Xuchao Lou, Qiaoli Zhao, Weier Cheng

School of Foreign Languages, Shaoxing University, Shaoxing, China  
Email: 2497583053@qq.com

**How to cite this paper:** Lou, X. C., Zhao, Q. L., & Cheng, W. E. (2025). On the International Dissemination Strategy of Shaoxing Ancient City Image under the Background of World Heritage Application. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 13, 485-505.  
<https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2025.136033>

**Received:** May 12, 2025

**Accepted:** June 27, 2025

**Published:** June 30, 2025

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

## Abstract

In 2023, Shaoxing government officially proposed the goal of “applying for heritage status of the ancient city” and started the application of the ancient city. In order to cooperate with the application, it is very important to enhance the international communication influence of Shaoxing Ancient City. For this purpose, this study uses two corpus analysis tools, AntConc and KH Coder, to examine the topics and lexical collocation of news texts about Shaoxing that were gathered from Global Times, Xinhua News, and China Daily. According to the research, Shaoxing Ancient City has a long history, rich cultural sites, deep cultural deposits, and distinctive regional traits, all of which make up its special advantages and resources. However, in the international communication, the image of Shaoxing mainly revolves around culture and industry, and most of the content focuses on the Shaoxing rice wine industry, with relatively little or no presentation of other aspects. Therefore, under the guidance of the strategic communication theory, this study puts forward specific suggestions on the international communication of Shaoxing Ancient City. Three communication strategies of cultural adaptation, Shaoxing brand building and the use of visa-free transit policy are put forward in order to improve the international visibility of Shaoxing and promote the successful application of Shaoxing Ancient City as a world heritage site.

## Keywords

Shaoxing Ancient City, International Communication Strategy, UNESCO World Heritage, Corpus-Based Analysis

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background

With the deepening of globalization and the continuous enhancement of China's cultural soft power, the state attaches great importance to the development of cultural industry and the implementation of the cultural "going global" strategy, and uses diplomacy and cultural exchanges to continuously enhance the global influence of Chinese culture, especially in Asia and Africa, showing significant growth momentum. The global audience for Chinese culture has grown even more thanks to the promotion of digital platforms like TikTok and REDnote, as well as a variety of communication channels like the Internet and social media. Cultural products like films, TV shows, music, and books have also helped. Nevertheless, despite China's abundance of cultural resources, there are still numerous obstacles in the way of successfully converting them into global competitiveness.

The correct use of international communication strategy can realize the effective transformation of resources and enhance China's international competitiveness. However, the international communication of Chinese culture is faced with the following problems: First, the lack of attention to the diversity and innovation of modern culture leads to the lack of global appeal of cultural products; Second, the international communication ability is limited, the global coverage and competitiveness of cultural products are low, and there is a phenomenon of homogenization of content; Third, there are significant barriers to cross-cultural understanding, and differences in language and cultural background are easy to cause misunderstandings. The key to solve these problems is to tap the global resonance of cultural content and build cultural symbols with international influence. For example, *A Bite of China* has successfully achieved global dissemination by telling stories close to the shared life experience of a global audience.

President Xi emphasized during the 30th collective study session of the 19th Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee that "telling the story of China well, spreading the voice of China well, and showcasing the true, three-dimensional, and comprehensive China" is an important task to strengthen the country's international communication capabilities. As a significant part of China's multifaceted and cohesive cultural landscape, local culture is a vital tool for demonstrating the diversity and distinctiveness of Chinese culture. It contains rich historical memories, folk traditions, and regional characteristics. By showcasing local culture through global dissemination, one can transcend regional boundaries, increase the international community's comprehension and acknowledgement of Chinese culture, and make Chinese culture more appealing and influential globally.

Shaoxing Ancient City, a city with a long history and profound cultural heritage. As the ancient capital of the State of Yue, its history can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn Period more than 3000 years ago. After 2500 years, the Ancient City of Shaoxing still maintains its unique cultural landscape and urban appearance, and is known as a "museum without walls", which is a great miracle in

the history of Chinese cities (Chang, 2019). The Ancient City of Shaoxing not only witnessed the vicissitudes of history, but also carried profound cultural memories.

Every corner of the Ancient City of Shaoxing is filled with a strong cultural atmosphere. There are the Orchid Pavilion Preface by the calligrapher Wang Xizhi of the Eastern Jin Dynasty, the works of the brilliant Xu Wei of the Ming Dynasty in the Former Residence of Xu Wei, and Shaoxing Lu Xun Native Place of the modern literary giant Lu Xun. Each former residence of a famous person carries a rich historical story and becomes an important witness of cultural inheritance.

In addition to the famous former residences, the water scenery of the Ancient City of Shaoxing is also intoxicating. Surrounded by water and crisscrossed by inland rivers, the ancient city is known as the “Venice of the East” (Chang, 2019). Visitors can take a black-awning boat to walk through the ancient city’s waterways and feel the beauty and quiet of Jiangnan water towns. Cangqiao Street, Baziqiao Street and other historical districts are characterized by blue SLATE roads and wet moss streets. The ancient buildings on both sides of the streets complement each other with the waterways, and jointly sketch a beautiful picture of the water towns in the south of the Yangtze River.

Shaoxing Ancient City is not only a treasure trove of history and culture, but also an ideal destination that combines culture, tourism, and cuisine. Every spring and autumn, it holds a series of colorful cultural activities, where tourists can experience the traditional festival culture of Shaoxing and feel the warmth and enthusiasm of this ancient city. In terms of cuisine, Shaoxing also has unique local flavors. Shaoxing huangjiu, Stinky tofu, dried fish roasted meat and other traditional delicacies are mouth watering. Especially “Shaoxing Huangjiu”, as one of the three ancient liquors in the world, is renowned both at home and abroad for its sweet taste, clear color, fragrant aroma, and mellow taste, and is regarded as the top grade of Huangjiu. Shaoxing huangjiu was rated as one of the top ten famous products in China as early as the Qing Dynasty. Won the gold medal at the 1915 Panama International Exposition in the United States; in the 1950s and 1960s, Shaoxing yellow rice wine was rated as one of the “Eight Famous Liquors” and “Eighteen Famous Liquors” in China (Ma & Zhang, 2012).

As a famous cultural city in China, Shaoxing Ancient City has extremely rich cultural resources. There are many local opera genres such as Yue Opera, Shao Opera, Diaoqiang, and Lianhua Luo here, especially Yue Opera is the second largest opera genre in the country and enjoys a high reputation. Shaoxing is still the hometown of Chinese calligraphy, and many calligraphy masters have deep roots in this land. In addition, Shaoxing also has numerous historical relics and cultural attractions, such as Lan Pavilion, East Lake, Dayu Mausoleum, Shen Garden, etc.

Therefore, Shaoxing Ancient City is a city that integrates history, culture, tourism, scenery, and cuisine. It is not only an important representative of Chinese culture, but also an important candidate site in the application for world cultural heritage, with unique charm and unlimited exploration value.

In recent years, the academic research on the cultural image of ancient Chinese cities has continued to deepen, and many achievements have been accumulated

both domestically and internationally. In the field of international cultural communication, foreign research mainly focuses on the protection and dissemination of cultural heritage, as well as the impact of cultural communication on local image shaping, particularly emphasizing the role of new media in cultural communication, and the importance of cultural adaptability and localization strategies in enhancing communication effectiveness. At the same time, domestic scholars have conducted numerous studies on the international dissemination of Chinese ancient city culture, particularly in the context of new media, driven by the development of the national cultural industry and the cultural “going global” strategy. For example, Dou (2018) took Pingyao Ancient City as an example to study its tourism image dissemination strategy and proposed optimization suggestions; Kou (2018) explored the brand communication strategy of Pingyao Ancient City in the era of new media, and analyzed the impact of advertisement and news media on tourism brands. However, research on the Ancient City of Shaoxing has mainly focused on domestic communication strategies, with relatively insufficient systematic exploration of its international communication pathways, especially in the context of its application for World Heritage status, where analysis and practical strategies have not yet formed a complete system.

This study aims to fill this research gap, analyze the cultural connotation and international communication status of Shaoxing Ancient City from the perspective of cultural heritage communication, learn from domestic and foreign research results, build cultural communication strategies that adapt to international audiences, and provide support for the process of Shaoxing Ancient City’s application for world heritage. Theoretically, this study will enrich the research in the field of cultural communication and cultural heritage communication, and provide a new theoretical perspective for the transmission of local culture under the background of globalization. In practice, this study is helpful to enhance the international visibility of Shaoxing Ancient City, promote the construction of local cultural brand, and provide a reference for the implementation of Chinese culture “going global” strategy. The research results not only provide new impetus for the development of Shaoxing culture, but also provide useful reference for the international dissemination of other cultures.

## **1.2. Purpose and Significance of the Study**

This study aims to systematically collect and collate Shaoxing related news content on the three major international news communication platforms of Global Times, Xinhua News, and China Daily, and analyze the collated text by using AntConc and KH Coder, fully showing the objective image of Shaoxing in the world. On this basis, the study will formulate communication strategies suitable for the international development of Shaoxing Ancient City, in order to enhance its international competitiveness in the process of applying for World heritage status. In addition, this study is also committed to expanding the cultural influence of Shaoxing Ancient City, not only let the Chinese people more deeply understand

the cultural value of Shaoxing Ancient City, but also let the international community more comprehensive understanding of Shaoxing, enhance its international visibility, and further promote the realization of the goal of applying for world heritage.

This research has significant cultural and practical implications. In addition to providing a through portrayal of Shaoxing in international communications, the methodical gathering, aggregation, and analysis of Shaoxing-related news content on the international news communication platform can also raise public awareness of the historical and cultural significance of Shaoxing Ancient City and offer the public useful cultural resources. At the same time, through the international communication strategy formulated by the research program, the advantages and disadvantages of Shaoxing Ancient City in the application of World cultural heritage can be found, so as to enhance its competitiveness and improve the possibility of successful application.

In addition, by expanding the cultural influence of Shaoxing Ancient City, this study will promote more Chinese people to understand the cultural value of Shaoxing Ancient City, and at the same time show its unique charm to the international community. By telling the story of Shaoxing well to spread Chinese culture, this study will provide new ideas for Chinese culture to go globally, and become an important bridge connecting the cultural exchanges between China and foreign countries. At the same time, the research results will also help Shaoxing's tourism development, attract more domestic and foreign tourists, promote local economic growth, and further consolidate the status and influence of Shaoxing Ancient City in the field of culture and tourism.

### 1.3. Thesis Structure

This study consists of six parts: Introduction, Literature Review, Research Design, Findings and Discussion, International Communication Strategy of Shaoxing Ancient City, and Conclusion.

The first part of Introduction includes Research Background, Purpose and Significance of the Study, and Thesis Structure. This section introduces the background and significance of the research, and proposes the topic of how Shaoxing Ancient City can enhance its international influence through cultural dissemination.

The second part of Literature Review covers International Communication Strategy, Corpus-based Studies, and Corpus Based Studies on International Communication. This section provides a solid theoretical foundation for this study, ensuring the logic and rationality of the research.

The third part of Research Design includes three parts: Analysis Framework, Corpus Construction, and Analysis Methods. In this section, three research methods are identified: surveys, case studies, corpus-based studies. In addition, this section also constructed a corpus framework to assist in the analysis of Shaoxing's image, making the research path clearer.

The fourth part of Findings and Discussion includes Topic Analysis, Collocation Analysis, and Analysis of the Image of Shaoxing Ancient City. This section uses AntConc and KH Coder to conduct in-depth analysis of the corpus text, providing real data support and providing a basis for formulating specific communication strategies for the Shaoxing Ancient City.

The next part of International Communication Strategy of Shaoxing Ancient City proposes three key strategies: Cultural Adaptation, Building the Shaoxing Brand, and Leveraging Visa-Free Transit Policy. These strategies aim to enhance the international visibility and influence of Shaoxing Ancient City.

Finally, the Conclusion section summarizes the main content of this study, while raising questions, it also points out the limitations of this study, providing direction for further exploration and research.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. International Communication Strategy

#### 2.1.1. Studies Abroad

The research of international communication strategy has been widely concerned in the world. [Lindita \(2019\)](#) finds that international communication studies are occupying the central position of communication studies through the investigation of several major international communication academic journals since the 1970s, and extracts three interrelated important viewpoints: The role of the state in global media communication, the relationship between structure and culture in the production, circulation, consumption and influence of global media texts, and the hybridity of culture. These viewpoints highlight the significance of national roles, cultural adaptability, and international cultural exchange while offering a theoretical foundation for the spread of local ancient city culture internationally.

According to [Hallahan \(1999\)](#), strategic communication is a planned communication activity that stresses integration and coordination in the communication process and is intended to accomplish an organization's overall goal. The strategic communication theory places a strong emphasis on the methodical and well-coordinated nature of communication activities in the context of local ancient cities' cultural communication in order to guarantee both the audience's favourable reaction and the successful dissemination of cultural information.

Furthermore, [Terhi \(2005\)](#) noted that one of the dominant paradigms of international communication research is strategic communication, which stresses the integration of different aspects of the communication process in the context of globalization. This viewpoint highlights that, in light of globalization, local ancient city cultural communication must incorporate a variety of communication channels and tactics in order to accommodate audiences from diverse cultural backgrounds.

#### 2.1.2. Studies in China

In China, the research of international communication strategy has also made im-

portant progress. Yu & Pan (2021) propose strategies to enhance China's cultural influence from the perspective of communication studies, including expanding the main body of communication from the government to the participation of the whole people in the link of information access, and taking the communication effect with a normal mind in the communication concept. These strategies are of great significance to the dissemination of local ancient city culture and emphasize the role of national participation and rational expectation in cultural dissemination.

Hong (2014) summarized the status of international communication research since the 1990s as three key shifts: from the debate on cultural imperialism to the attention on cultural globalization; From focusing on the new world information and communication order to focusing on soft power; From focusing on the impact of communication on social development to focusing on the role of new media in social change. These changes provide a new perspective for the dissemination of local ancient city culture, and emphasize the importance of cultural globalization, soft power and new media in cultural communication.

In addition, Shi & Tong (2021) discussed the context adaptation and path transformation from international communication to strategic communication, emphasizing that under the background of the new era, strategic communication needs to make overall and long-term planning in combination with its own resources and environmental characteristics. This point of view has guiding significance for the formulation of communication strategies of local ancient city culture, and emphasizes the importance of resource integration and environmental adaptability in communication strategies.

In general, domestic and foreign scholars' research on international communication strategies mainly focuses on the theoretical construction of strategic communication, the shaping of national cultural image, the application of new media technology and the adaptability of cross-cultural communication. These studies provide an important theoretical basis and practical guidance for the international communication of local ancient city culture, and emphasize the key role of strategy, integration and adaptability in cultural communication.

## 2.2. Corpus-Based Studies

Corpus research is a corpus-based linguistic research method that analyses naturally occurring language data in order to provide a scientific foundation for language description and research. Real written or spoken language transcriptions are typically used to create corpuses, which are rigorously sampled and processed to guarantee the data's representativeness and authenticity. This method is different from the traditional language research which relies on intuition and introspection, and pays more attention to the objectivity and systematicness of the data.

Crystal (1991), a famous linguist, defined corpus as a collection of linguistic data, including both written texts and transcriptions of recorded speech, which can serve as a starting point for linguistic description or as a means of verifying

hypotheses about a language. The corpus linguist Sinclair (1991) further pointed out that, a collection of naturally-occurring language text, is chosen to characterize a state or variety of a language. Both scholars' definitions emphasize the authenticity and scientificity of corpus and its important role in language research.

The primary function of a corpus is to represent a language or language variants. It is a machine-readable electronic text made up of real language following rigorous sampling (McEnery et al., 2006). As a result, corpus data is reliable and provides a strong basis for language study.

The authenticity of the data and its broad representativeness are crucial for corpus research. Particularly, a lot of corpus linguists stress that the language data used in studies needs to capture the variety of a language or language variety accurately. In contrast, some ordinary language researchers may ignore the representativeness of the corpus and rely only on a small number of writers or language materials in a single dictionary, which makes it difficult to reflect the full picture of the language. Therefore, corpus based research methods are more objective and scientific, providing important support for the description and theorization of language (Liang, 2016).

Nowadays, corpus research has been widely used in many fields, such as lexicography, language teaching, machine translation and natural language processing, and has become an indispensable tool in modern linguistic research.

### **2.3. Corpus Based Studies on International Communication**

The study of international communication strategies based on corpus research needs to be based on multidisciplinary theories such as linguistics and communication science, and provide systematic theoretical support and methodological guidance for the study.

The technical foundation of the study is corpus linguistics theory. By analyzing naturally occurring language texts, corpus linguistics offers data-driven support for the development of international communication strategies. A scientific foundation for the accuracy of the communication content is provided by the corpus's representativeness and authenticity, which allow it to disclose the objective rules of language use, such as keyword distribution, grammatical structure, and discourse characteristics. Additionally, corpus analysis can help maximise the expression of international communication by identifying common features and possible trends in language use across regions.

For the analysis of information's path and impact in an international setting, communication theory offers crucial direction. By examining the frequency of keywords and the distribution of topics in the corpus, the agenda setting theory can show how the media affects the concerns of global audiences. By examining the text's structure and narrative mode, the framework theory can help determine the communication content's tendencies and possible effects (Zhang, 2001). By offering a theoretical framework for developing communication strategies, these theories help to better tailor communication content to the target audience's

needs and cognitive preferences.

An essential tool for researching the ideology and power dynamics underlying language is critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Piao, 2015). In international communication, we can efficiently determine the ideological inclination and discourse power distribution in the communication content by examining the word choice, discourse framework, and narrative mode of language texts using corpora. The authenticity and diversity of communication language, as well as how to foster cross-cultural understanding and communication through balanced language expression, are highlighted by critical discourse analysis (Piao, 2015). The design of international communication content can be strongly supported by this analysis, which can also increase the content's persuasiveness, cultural sensitivity, and worldwide influence.

Thus, a strong basis for the scientificity, objectivity, and relevance of communication content is provided by the study of international communication strategies based on corpus research, with the technical assistance of corpus linguistics, alongside the theoretical framework of communication and critical discourse analysis. This research method can optimize the language expression of international communication and improve the communication effect and global influence.

### 3. Research Design

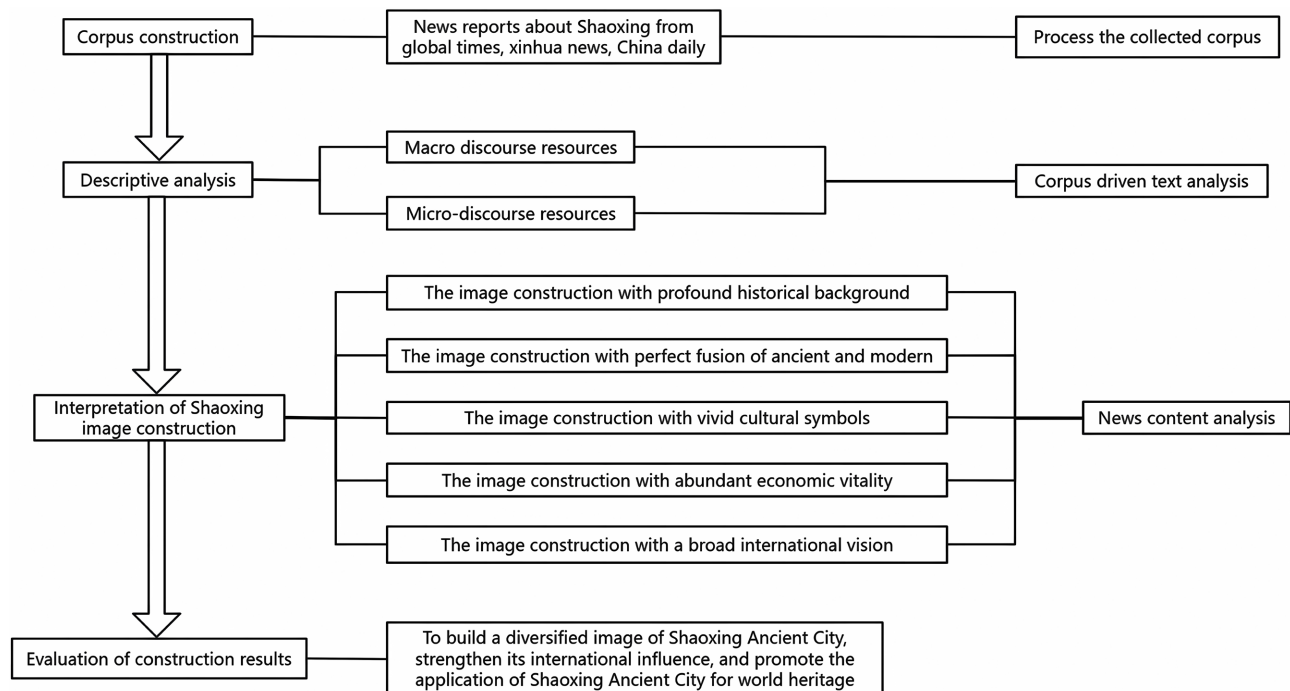
#### 3.1. Analysis Framework

Based on the above analysis, this paper takes corpus driven as the research path, adopts surveys, case studies and corpus-based studies to analyze the news reports about Shaoxing from Global Times, Xinhua News, China Daily. The whole research framework is divided into four stages: corpus construction, descriptive analysis, interpretation of Shaoxing image construction, and evaluation of construction results. Specifically, corpus construction refers to the integration, format transformation, cleaning and processing of the collected news materials. Descriptive analysis includes two levels: First, the macro level, which is mainly based on topic model analysis; Second, at the micro level, collocation analysis is the main method. The interpretation of Shaoxing image construction refers to the analysis of the content of news text and the construction of its multicultural image based on the Shaoxing news corpus. The evaluation of the construction result refers to the evaluation of the construction result of Shaoxing image according to the application requirements of intangible cultural heritage and the international dissemination of Shaoxing. The specific analysis framework is shown in **Figure 1**.

#### 3.2. Corpus Construction

The corpus was selected from Global Times, Xinhua News, China Daily. The news tagged "Shaoxing" was manually selected to ensure that all the news content was about Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, China, not other regions. After screening, a total of 113 news reports were obtained, including 5 from *Xinhua news*, covering the period from February 7, 2023 to April 25, 2024, 18 from *Global Times*, cover-

ing the period from November 15, 2009 to December 14, 2023, and 90 from *China Daily*, covering the period from March 8, 2002 to June 21, 2024. Based on this, the Shaoxing News Corpus is constructed, which contains 33071 tokens.



**Figure 1.** Corpus-assisted Shaoxing image analysis framework.

### 3.3. Analysis Methods

This paper mainly uses the corpus analysis software AntConc and KH Coder to conduct data quantitative analysis and text content mining. AntConc software is used for topic analysis and KH Coder software is used for word collocation analysis.

Firstly, AntConc topic analysis model is used to analyze the processed corpus and extract the main topic. The extracted topics can reflect the characteristics and tendencies of the corpus in topic selection. By analyzing and extracting the topic, we can see whether the image of Shaoxing in international communication is true and comprehensive, which can further improve the image of Shaoxing Ancient City and promote its application for world heritage.

After that, the word frequency analysis function built in KH Coder is used for word frequency statistics, and key words are selected according to occurrence frequency and topic relevance for collocation index analysis. On the basis of topic analysis, through the analysis of keywords and their collocation, this step can describe how Shaoxing International News can represent the image of Shaoxing with profound history, perfect integration of ancient and modern, bright cultural symbols, abundant economic vitality and broad international vision through the collocation of words.

The above statistical analysis uses corpus analysis software to discuss from two aspects: macro-topic model analysis and micro-semantic collocation analysis, and

analyzes the construction of Shaoxing image by the three international news communication platforms: *Global Times*, *Xinhua News*, *China Daily*.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

### 4.1. Topic Analysis

Topic analysis aims to extract key topics and their representative words by analyzing semantic structure and meaning sources in corpus text, so as to form a complete topic framework. By analyzing and summarizing the text, KH Coder is used to classify and extract the core words in the corpus. The results are as follows:

According to the division in **Table 1**, Shaoxing mainly has 8 thematic units among the three international news communication platforms: *Global Times*, *Xinhua news*, *China Daily*. They are “The Orchid Pavilion Preface (Shaoxing Calligraphy)”, “Shaoxing archaeology”, “Shaoxing industry”, “Shaoxing writers”, “Yue opera”, “Shaoxing scenic spots”, “Shaoxing yellow wine” and “Shaoxing cultural heritage”.

**Table 1.** Analysis of Shaoxing related topics.

Sequence	Topic	Word	
		Noun	Adjective
1	The Orchid Pavilion Preface (Shaoxing Calligraphy)	calligraphy, Pavilion	
2	Shaoxing archaeology	site, Yue, name, Zhou, Dynasty, BC, century, (Da)Yu, area, mountain, stone	
3	Shaoxing industry	country, industry, textile, tea, market, company, product	
4	Shaoxing writers	LU XUN	
5	Yue opera	opera, yue ju	
6	Shaoxing scenic spots	district, building, sugar (figure made of maltose), culture, bridge, water (~town), boat	old, local, unique
7	Shaoxing yellow wine	wine, brewing, town (Shaoxing huangjiu town), production, Chinese (~yellow liquid), history, huangjiu, development, rice	best, famous, ancient, traditional, young
8	Shaoxing cultural heritage	technique, heritage	cultural, intangible

“The Orchid Pavilion Preface (Shaoxing Calligraphy)” with calligraphy and Lan Pavilion as the theme, fully demonstrates the cultural connotation and artistic value of this famous work, highlights the important position of calligraphy in history and culture and its unique aesthetic charm; “Shaoxing Archaeology” focuses on the rich archaeological resources in Shaoxing area, and reveals the historical inheritance of Yue culture and its important development in the Zhou Dynasty and other historical periods through the excavation of sites and in-depth research of cultural relics. “Shaoxing Industry” focuses on the traditional and modern industries of Shaoxing, covering many fields such as textile industry and tea industry, highlighting the characteristics of Shaoxing regional economy and the strong competitiveness of its products in domestic and foreign markets, and also showing

the historical context and innovation path of industrial development. The “Shaoxing Writers” part takes Lu Xun’s literary works and thoughts as the core, emphasizes the cultural heritage of Shaoxing as Lu Xun’s hometown, and the profound influence of the inheritance of Lu Xun’s spirit on the development of modern culture; The part of “Yue Opera” focuses on the artistic characteristics of Shaoxing local opera, and elaborates the performance form, cultural value and its wide spread and far-reaching influence throughout the country. “Shaoxing Scenic Spot” takes Shaoxing’s unique water town style, cultural relics and local characteristics as the core, including ancient bridge, black-awning boat, sugar figure and other elements, showing the perfect blend of Shaoxing local history and modern tourism culture; The “Shaoxing Yellow Wine” part focuses on Shaoxing yellow wine and deeply discusses its brewing technique, historical origin and market development. Among them, the adjectives “ancient”, “traditional” and “young” vividly describe the innovative development of traditional yellow wine, highlighting the innovative performance of yellow rice wine as a combination of traditional drinks and modern trends. Furthermore, “best” also highlights how competitive rice wine is on the global market; “Shaoxing Cultural Heritage” highlights Shaoxing’s intangible cultural heritage and skill inheritance, such as traditional handicrafts and regional cultural traits, highlighting Shaoxing’s special significance as a key conduit for cultural preservation and dissemination.

These themes encompass Shaoxing’s many cultural, historical, industrial, and tourism-related traits and provide a comprehensive overview of Shaoxing’s rich cultural legacy, as well as its innovation and inheritance against the backdrop of modernization.

In the topic division, Shaoxing related topics focus on the following characteristics: First, cultural depth, such as “The Orchid Pavilion Preface”, “Lu Xun”, “Yue opera” and other topics, highlighting the important position of Shaoxing in Chinese culture, highlighting its far-reaching influence in calligraphy, literature and opera art; The second is historical inheritance, such as “Shaoxing Archaeology”, which shows the historical significance of Shaoxing as the birthplace of ancient Yue civilization through rich archaeological discoveries; Third, industry and innovation, such as “Shaoxing industry” and “Shaoxing yellow wine”, not only show the uniqueness of Shaoxing’s traditional industry, but also highlight its innovation path combined with the modern trend; Fourth, tourism resources, such as “Shaoxing scenic spots” and “Shaoxing cultural heritage”, show the integration of local characteristics and cultural tourism through water town, ancient bridges and intangible cultural heritage skills.

By combining these subjects, it is evident that Shaoxing has demonstrated a strong capacity for all-encompassing development in the areas of industry, tourism, culture, and history, demonstrating the allure of both significant historical accumulation and contemporary development.

## 4.2. Collocation Analysis

AntConc software was used in the study, and the three words with the highest

frequency were selected from the word frequency statistics (Figure 2), namely “Shaoxing”, “wine” and “rice”, according to the research theme and corpus word frequency statistics. The collocation analysis of three key words “Shaoxing”, “wine” and “rice” was carried out to explore their co-occurrence relationship in the text and their effect on the construction of local image.

	Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1	the	1	2025	1
2	of	2	1089	1
3	and	3	846	1
4	in	4	804	1
5	a	5	670	1
6	to	6	540	1
7	is	7	406	1
8	shaoxing	8	402	1
9	s	9	331	1
10	for	10	258	1
11	wine	11	256	1
12	as	12	223	1
13	with	13	217	1
14	china	14	178	1
15	rice	15	177	1

Figure 2. The top 15 words in word frequency statistics.

#### 4.2.1. “Shaoxing”

The number of occurrences of “Shaoxing” in the corpus was 402, ranking 8th in the total word frequency statistics. Use AntConc’s built-in related word search function to get the frequency table of “Shaoxing” collocation words; The frequency table of collocation words can be obtained by typing the keyword “Shaoxing” (Figure 3). After in-depth analysis of the collocation words closely related to “Shaoxing”, words such as “Zhejiang”, “province”, “city”, “wine”, “China” and “opera” can be found, which jointly reflect the unique style and rich connotation of Shaoxing city.

	Collocate	Rank	Freq(Scaled)	FreqL	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
1	zhejiang	1	1540	8	81	1	121.668	2.045
2	province	2	1130	8	56	1	85.224	2.016
3	in	3	8040	163	51	1	76.071	0.927
4	east	4	710	1	42	1	61.692	2.113
5	city	5	1040	11	41	1	59.237	1.836
6	wine	6	2560	26	63	1	57.418	1.312
7	s	7	3310	21	75	1	41.898	1.051
8	china	8	1780	12	44	1	29.314	1.168
9	brewing	9	350	17	3	1	26.784	2.029
10	rice	10	1770	17	35	1	23.253	1.069
11	the	11	20250	113	97	1	22.707	-0.433
12	opera	12	1200	15	24	1	21.828	1.215
13	has	13	1490	6	36	1	16.919	1.009

Figure 3. Sequencing of “Shaoxing” collocation words.

First of all, from the perspective of geography, the four words “Zhejiang”, “province”, “China” and “city” not only highlight Shaoxing’s superior location advantage in Zhejiang Province, but also emphasize its important position in the whole geographical map of China. With its unique regional culture, Shaoxing has become a vivid portrayal of Zhejiang culture and even the diversity of Chinese culture, which has won more attention and praise for Shaoxing on the international stage. From the perspective of history and tradition, the two key words “china” and “opera” reflect the unique position of Shaoxing in traditional Chinese culture. As the origin of Shaoxing Opera, Shaoxing not only carries the profound tradition of drama art, but also becomes one of the important birthplace of Chinese opera culture with its unique cultural charm. These words reflect Shaoxing’s profound cultural heritage and colorful traditional art culture. At the level of industry and modernization, the two words “wine” and “brewing” once again focus on Shaoxing’s rice wine industry. As a landmark industry of Shaoxing, rice wine not only carries the historical memory and cultural identity of the city, but also radiates new vitality and vitality in the process of modernization. The frequent occurrence of these words is undoubtedly the best interpretation of Shaoxing yellow wine industry in the construction of local image.

From the collocation analysis of “Shaoxing”, it can be seen that Shaoxing is a city integrating culture, history and industry, with both traditional and modern characteristics. It is not only a cultural treasure of Zhejiang, but also an important historical and cultural city in China.

#### 4.2.2. “Wine” and “Rice”

The number of occurrences of “wine” in the corpus is 256, ranking 11th in the total word frequency statistics. “Rice” appears 177 times in the corpus, ranking 15th in the total word frequency statistics. From the word frequency data, the occurrence of the word “wine” is much higher than that of “rice”, indicating that Shaoxing rice wine is more inclined to the overall concept of wine in language use, rather than simply emphasizing its main raw materials. However, as the core raw material of rice wine brewing, “rice” and “wine” are inseparable, and together build the cultural symbol and industrial characteristics of Shaoxing rice wine.

The frequency table of collocation words of “wine” and “rice” is obtained by using AntConc’s built-in search function. Then enter “wine” and “rice” respectively, to get the frequency table of collocation words (**Figure 4** and **Figure 5**). These words reflect the profound heritage and extensive international influence of Shaoxing yellow wine culture from different angles.

From a cultural and traditional point of view, “wine” is most often co-found with “rice” and “yellow”. Glutinous rice is the main raw material of rice wine, and “yellow” is not only the iconic color of rice wine, but also symbolizes its special status in Chinese wine culture. The golden color of yellow rice wine comes from pigment substances produced during fermentation, a visual feature that makes it unique among many wines. In addition, “yuanhong” refers to the yuanhong yellow wine, “jiafanwine” is rice wine. These two are different categories of yellow

rice wine, which reflect the richness of Shaoxing rice wine types.

	Collocate	Rank	Freq(Scaled)	FreqL	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
1	rice	1	1770	136	12	1	415.383	3.229
2	yellow	2	740	71	4	1	236.249	3.507
3	shaoxing	3	4020	63	26	1	57.418	1.312
4	brewing	4	350	13	8	1	45.375	2.750
5	workshops	5	30	2	4	1	27.057	4.487
6	sweet	6	90	3	5	1	23.014	3.317
7	brewery	7	50	1	5	1	20.746	3.750
8	every	8	150	5	4	1	19.416	2.750
9	slight	9	20	2	2	1	18.035	4.487
10	shrimp	10	10	1	2	1	16.230	5.072
11	inns	10	10	1	2	1	16.230	5.072
12	yuanhong	10	10	2	1	1	16.230	5.072
13	jiafanwine	10	10	1	2	1	16.230	5.072

**Figure 4.** Sequencing of “wine” collocation words.

	Collocate	Rank	Freq(Scaled)	FreqL	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
1	wine	1	2560	12	136	1	415.383	3.229
2	yellow	2	740	50	2	1	162.625	3.511
3	spikelet	3	20	2	6	1	54.685	6.020
4	brewing	4	350	14	5	1	49.970	3.138
5	husks	5	20	2	4	1	36.824	5.605
6	sticky	6	150	11	0	1	35.079	3.572
7	glutinous	7	80	8	0	1	30.331	4.020
8	include	8	70	7	0	1	26.536	4.020
9	shaoxing	9	4020	35	17	1	23.253	1.069
10	fermented	10	130	5	3	1	22.853	3.319
11	mortar	11	80	1	5	1	19.377	3.605
12	rice	12	1770	14	14	1	18.929	1.359

**Figure 5.** Sequencing of “rice” collocation words.

In terms of brewing technology and industrial development, “brewing” is an important collocation word for “wine” and “rice”. “Brewing” covers the whole process from glutinous rice soaking, steaming, fermentation to aging, revealing the brewing core of Shaoxing rice wine. At the same time, “fermented” in the collocation of “rice” also highlights the key step of fermentation. During this process, the “sticky/glutinous”(rice) provides ideal sticky conditions for fermentation due to its rich starch and viscosity, which also gives Shaoxing rice wine its mellow taste. At the same time, the emergence of traditional tools such as “mortar” also reflects the precision of Shaoxing rice wine production process, indicating that Shaoxing rice wine has retained traditional manual skills, but also gradually moved toward a modern, large-scale production model. The high frequency of the word “brewery” indicates that Shaoxing rice wine has gradually developed from the traditional family production to a modern brewing industry, which not only guarantees the quality, but also improves the production efficiency and market competitiveness.

In terms of flavor characteristics and innovative development, “sweet”, as a high-

frequency collocation word for “wine”, accurately describes the mellow and sweet taste characteristics of Shaoxing rice wine. Yellow rice wine is loved by domestic and foreign consumers because of its unique flavor. At the same time, the taste of yellow rice wine is also constantly innovative, such as in the wine exhibition, bartenders mixed Shaoxing yellow rice wine with other wines to produce a unique flavor of yellow rice wine cocktails, attracting the attention of many young consumers. In addition, the appearance of the collocation word “shrimp” indicates that Shaoxing rice wine also plays a role in Chinese cuisine, such as the production of traditional food such as drunken shrimp, so that rice wine is closely integrated with food culture, providing more possibilities for its market promotion.

In terms of international market expansion, the word “wine” helps Shaoxing rice wine to establish associations with other world-renowned wines and improve its international recognition. As the iconic color of rice wine, “yellow” is not only highly recognizable in the domestic market, but also becomes an important symbol of cultural communication in the world. In addition, words such as “brewing” and “fermented” demonstrate the distinction between Shaoxing rice wine and industrially-produced alcohol, emphasising its hand-made craftsmanship, a cultural value that has attracted a growing number of international consumers who are keen to ferment traditional craft. At the same time, with the promotion of Shaoxing yellow wine in the global market, it has gradually become an important representative of the soft power of Chinese culture, showing the unique charm of traditional Chinese winemaking skills.

In general, the analysis of collocation words of “wine” and “rice” fully reflects the cultural value, technological characteristics and international influence of Shaoxing rice wine. “wine” is its core keyword, while “rice”, as an important raw material of rice wine, plays a key role in the production process and flavor characteristics. Through the persistence of traditional skills, the development of modern industry and the expansion of the international market, Shaoxing rice wine is not only a representative of Chinese wine culture, but also gradually going globally, becoming an important bridge connecting Eastern and Western food cultures.

### 4.3. Analysis of the Image of Shaoxing Ancient City

Through collocation analysis, it can be seen that the most prominent feature of Shaoxing’s image is its profound cultural heritage and historical accumulation. Shaoxing, which bears a strong cultural tradition, is the birthplace of Yue opera, but also an important birthplace of Yue culture. Furthermore, Shaoxing exhibits a modernization trend while preserving the traits of traditional culture. Shaoxing yellow rice wine continues to grow its global market and establish a global brand by using traditional brewing methods, which further stresses Shaoxing’s efforts to modernize and transform traditional industries.

However, according to the topic analysis, the Ancient City of Shaoxing has many advantages, such as a long history, profound cultural heritage, rich cultural relics and scenic spots, and rapid industrial development. By comparison, it can

be found that Global Times, Xinhua News, and China Daily involve a wide range of topics about Shaoxing, but the depth of specific discussions is relatively limited. Through understanding, we can find that Shaoxing has bred many cultural celebrities, including Lu Xun, who is well-known. However, a lot of news only focus on Lu Xun's birth place which is Shaoxing, and lack of in-depth excavation of Lu Xun. At the same time, there is no presentation of Shaoxing's broader celebrity cultural resources. Secondly, Shaoxing has a long history and rich cultural heritage. It is an important birthplace of ancient Yue culture, one of the Baiyue cultures. It also has a rich folk culture. In addition to the yellow rice wine culture, Shaoxing also has a variety of cultural elements such as Yue opera. Besides the yellow rice wine industry, Shaoxing also has a very mature textile industry and a relatively mature tea industry. However, the above contents are only superficial, without in-depth and detailed discussion.

Xu (2016) has sorted and analyzed the cultural resources of Shaoxing, as shown in Table 2. It can be seen that the Ancient City of Shaoxing has many resources and advantages, such as a long history, a galaxy of talents, profound cultural heritage, rich cultural relics and scenic spots, and distinctive regional cultural characteristics. However, from the analysis of research topics and collocations, it can be seen that the shaping of Shaoxing's image is very limited, focusing too much on the inherent labels, that is, yellow rice wine and Lu Xun, while the analysis of other cultures is less or even none.

**Table 2.** Classification of cultural tourism resources in Shaoxing.

Type	Content
Landscape culture	Fushan, Tashan, Jishan...
Architectural culture	ancient pagoda, pavilions...
Celebrity culture	former residence of celebrities, celebrity mausoleum, celebrity memorial hall...
History culture	ancient monuments in Yue, various historical attractions and monuments...
Religious culture	Longhua Temple...
Garden culture	Orchid Pavilion, East Lake, Shenyuan Garden...
Folk culture	folk culture hall includes Yue opera, Huangjiu and so on...
Festival culture	Lanting Calligraphy Festival, Huangjiu Festival, Sacrifice to Yu the Great...

In addition, the image of Shaoxing is mainly centered on traditional culture, while there are few reports on its modernization development and scientific and technological innovation. Also, Shaoxing's international image is relatively weak. Although it is mentioned that Shaoxing yellow rice wine has a great fame in the world and is mixed with other foreign wines to form a yellow rice wine cocktail, there is a slight lack of content in other aspects. What's more, most of the focus of these news is at home, which leads to the lack of confidence in the image of

Shaoxing. In addition, on the whole, when building the image of Shaoxing, more content is about Shaoxing culture, and less diversity of its social development, such as economy, society and so on. Such a single city image may lead to a too simple impression of Shaoxing in people's minds and lack of multi-dimensional display of urban development.

Therefore, through topic analysis and collocation analysis, it can be seen that Global Times, Xinhua News, China Daily have successfully shaped the image of Shaoxing Ancient City with profound historical and cultural heritage and highlighted the development of local industries, but they are too simple and only have a small coverage.

## **5. International Communication Strategy of Shaoxing Ancient City**

### **5.1. Cultural Adaptation**

In order to realize the international promotion of Shaoxing culture, it is necessary to establish the connection between Shaoxing culture and other cultures, and one of the key strategies is to find cultural commonalities to promote the cultural resonance of the global audience.

Here is a case, huangjiu (Shaoxing yellow rice wine) can be associated with wines and cocktails. Associating huangjiu with wine can help international audiences understand that huangjiu is a fermented wine, similar to the way wine is made. The combination of huangjiu and cocktail can show the diversity and adaptability of huangjiu. In the frequency table of collocation words of "wine", it is found that "sweet" is a high-frequency collocation word of "wine". After further analysis, it can be understood that in the international wine exhibition, huangjiu is also mixed with other wines to make huangjiu flavour cocktails. This shows that huangjiu can not only be drunk alone, but also can be blended with other wines to create a cocktail with unique flavor. This can not only expand the international market of huangjiu, but also enhance its influence in global wine culture, so that more foreign consumers accept and love huangjiu.

In addition, huangjiu is not only a drink, but also widely used in cooking, giving food a unique flavor, which is also an important way to promote Shaoxing culture. In the frequency table of collocation words of "wine", it can also be found that "shrimp" is a high-frequency collocation word of "wine". The combination of huangjiu and shrimp is a classic Shaoxing dish, which not only retains the flavor and taste of shrimp, but also highlights the charming aroma of huangjiu. In addition, huangjiu can also be used in steak cooking, stews or sauces to blend with Western food culture. For example, huangjiu can be combined with French Boeuf Bourguignon to make beef stew in huangjiu, making it a special condiment with international appeal. In this way, huangjiu can not only enter the international market as a drink, but also integrate into the food culture around the world as a cooking material, and further expand the influence of Shaoxing culture.

Through cultural adaptation strategy, Shaoxing Culture is able to establish

broader connections globally, bring its unique cultural elements closer to the world audience, thereby enhancing Shaoxing's international visibility and attracting more tourists and consumers to become interested in Shaoxing culture.

## 5.2. Building the Shaoxing Brand

Build a complete Shaoxing brand to improve Shaoxing's global popularity. The overall Shaoxing brand should cover all aspects of Shaoxing, and explain each content in detail to ensure that the Shaoxing brand is complete, detailed and authentic. **Table 3** lists the three levels of sub brands of Shaoxing brand:

**Table 3.** The three sub-brands of Shaoxing brand.

Level	Content
Top-level	The core brand of Shaoxing represents the overall image of Shaoxing.
Middle-level	Shaoxing's resources are classified from different angles, such as culture and economy, forming different resource blocks. Each block briefly lists the content of resources and has its corresponding introduction.
Bottom-level	Specific resource content, with clear definition and elaboration, can see comprehensive and detailed content, and equipped with authentic photos.

After the brand has been continuously improved, a bilingual website in Chinese and English can be established on this basis, which is convenient for domestic and foreign tourists to visit. At the same time, with the continuous expansion of the website, other language options can be introduced to further improve accessibility.

## 5.3. Leveraging Visa-Free Transit Policy

In order to promote international exchanges and cooperation, the Chinese government has issued and implemented the 72/144 hour transit visa free policy in China, which has stimulated many foreigners to travel to China, including many tourism bloggers. Under this policy, the Shaoxing government can try to introduce a series of preferential policies for foreigners, such as free admission fees for scenic spots, to encourage more international tourism bloggers to visit Shaoxing. Tourism bloggers record the tourism life in Shaoxing through video shooting, and share their real experience in Shaoxing with audiences around the world. This grassroots promotion strategy will more effectively attract international tourists and generate strong interest in Shaoxing.

A case in Shanghai has achieved remarkable results. At the beginning of 2025, Shanghai welcomed a large number of South Korean tourists, and many South Korean bloggers filmed their tours in Shanghai and uploaded them to YouTube, attracting many foreign tourists to follow these videos to visit Shanghai. Driven by this trend, many Shanghai merchants have introduced special packages "Korean tourists' favorite" and added Korean-speaking staff to provide more conven-

ient service. These measures have effectively improved the travel experience of Korean tourists and further promoted the development of Shanghai's tourism market. Shaoxing can learn from this experience by working with international travel bloggers to promote local cuisine, cultural experiences and tour routes to attract more foreign tourists to Shaoxing, thus promoting the international development of local tourism.

## 6. Conclusion

After extracting the news text about Shaoxing from three international news communication platforms: Global Times, Xinhua News, and China Daily, this study applied AntConc and KH Coder corpus analysis software to process it. This paper analyzes the characteristics and shortcomings of Shaoxing Ancient City image building, and probes into the international communication strategy of Shaoxing Ancient City. However, it should be noted that the corpus collected and analyzed in this study were all from international news communication platforms dominated by China, and did not involve foreign platforms. Therefore, the results of this study have some limitations, and it is difficult to fully reflect the overall image of Shaoxing in international communication.

The results show that the international communication of Shaoxing mainly focuses on the culture and industry, especially on the Shaoxing yellow rice wine industry, while there are relatively few or no expressions in other aspects. Therefore, in the international communication, Shaoxing should pay more attention to the diversification of narrative, balance the traditional and modern, and enhance the appeal of the global audience.

Based on the above research, this paper proposes that the international communication of Shaoxing Ancient city should follow the principle of combining cultural self-confidence and global vision, and tell the story of Shaoxing well with a more international discourse system while paying attention to local characteristics. In terms of communication strategy, the international recognition and influence of Shaoxing Ancient City can be improved through cultural adaptation, brand building and expanding narrative perspective. In addition, strengthen Shaoxing brand building, build the image of Shaoxing Ancient City, promote Shaoxing, and apply for World Cultural Heritage, so that the world can more comprehensively understand a time-honored, culturally rich, open and inclusive Shaoxing.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

## References

- Chang, Y. (2019). Research on the Protection and Utilization of Shaoxing Ancient City from the Perspective of Cultural and Tourism Integration. *China Business Review*, No. 22, 187-188. (In Chinese)
- Crystal, D. (1991). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Basil Blackwell Ltd.

- Dou, Y. (2018). *Research on the communication of Pingyao Ancient City Tourism Image*. Master's Thesis, Guangxi Normal University. (In Chinese)
- Hallahan, K. (1999). Seven Models of Framing: Implications for Public Relations. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 11, 205-242.  
[https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532754xjpr1103\\_02](https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532754xjpr1103_02)
- Hong, J. (2014). *New Trends in Communication Studies (Part 1)*. Tsinghua University Press. (In Chinese)
- Kou, L. (2018). Research on the Communication Strategy of Pingyao Ancient City Tourism Brand Based on the New Media Era. *China Nationalities Expo*, No. 12, 67-68. (In Chinese)
- Liang, M. (2016). *What Is Corpus Linguistics*. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. (In Chinese)
- Lindita, C. (2019). An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research. In D. W. Stacks, M. B. Salwen, & K. C. Eichhorn (Eds.), *International Communication* (3rd ed., pp. 169-183). Routledge.
- Ma, W., & Zhang, Y. (2012). Research on the Current Situation and Development of Shaoxing Rice Wine Industry. *China Business*, No. 7, 240-241. (In Chinese)
- McEnery, T., Xiao, R., & Tono, Y. (2006). *Corpus-Based Language Studies: An Advanced Resource Book*. Routledge.
- Piao, X. (2015). Research on the Translation of Social Science Texts under Critical Discourse Analysis—Taking “China’s Road to Transform China’s Market Economy” as an Example. *Times Literature (Second Half of the Month)*, No. 1, 40-41. (In Chinese)
- Shi, A., & Tong, T. (2021). From International Communication to Strategic Communication: Context Adaptation and Path Transformation in the New Era. *News and Writing*, No. 10, 14-22. (In Chinese)
- Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation*. Oxford University Press.
- Terhi, R. (2005). Cosmopolitanization-Now! *Global Media and Communication*, 1, 247-263.
- Xu, S. (2016). Research on the Development of Cultural Tourism in Shaoxing Ancient City. *Journal of Shaoxing University of Arts and Sciences (Philosophy and Social Sciences)*, No. 4, 21-26. (In Chinese)
- Yu, G., & Pan, J. (2021). On the Paths and Strategies of My Country’s International Cultural Influence Communication. *Media Observation*, No. 4, 11-18. (In Chinese)
- Zhang, H. (2001). On the Relationship between the Agenda Setting Theory and the Framework Theory of Mass Communication. *Journal of Southwest University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, No. 10, 88-91. (In Chinese)