Language Consumption under the "Belt and Road Initiatives" in Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area

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Abstract
Language service industry makes great contribution to the local economy and modernization. But it has not become more of a concern and vigorously supported in terms of economic policy as an emerging industry in China. So does the Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA). However, with the continuous promotion of the Belt and Road initiatives since September, 2013 and the release of the "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area" since February, 2019 respectively, the GBA has been confronted with countless language consumption no matter in international trade or interpersonal communication. Using qualitative analysis, this paper aims to outline the potential language market profile in Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the Belt and Road Initiatives. Findings show that there are many genres subjects of language consumption in GBA and each of them has different types of demands. This paper contributes to the field of language economics studies and the field of language services of GBA by examining the subjects of language consumption, demands of the language consumption, objects of language consumption (language products and services) and suppliers in GBA for the first time.

Keywords: language market, language service, language consumption
Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Belt and Road initiatives

Introduction

Language services are conducive to promoting cross-country, inter-regional, cross-cultural and inter-ethnic mutual communication and understanding; therefore, the development of the language industry will undoubtedly become a language intercommunication between the Greater Bay Area and the countries along the "Belt and Road". From a global perspective, Marsehak Jacob, a professor of economics at University of California at Los Angeles as well as an pioneer of language economics, published a paper called "the Economics of Language" in 1965, which link the language to economics firstly. While in 2002, François Grin, a professor from University of Geneve, pointed out that language services have not been an essential part of international language economics studies(Grin, 2002). However, as time pass by, language service industry now has become one of the most dynamically growing point of the contemporary economy (Yazhi Yao, 2016; Wen Ye, 2016). However, in China, the development of language service industry is relatively slow, which has just been included in the national industry classification for a few years. With the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiatives by Chinese government in 2013 , aiming to promoting policy coordination, facilities connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds, language service industry has attracted considerable attention by researchers from various disciplines(Li Yan, 2016). Given that language service industry is at the initial stage in China, scholars mainly concentrate on its definition and research paradigm. For the definition, language services are defined as productions referring to language, including language publications, language training, language translation, language therapy etc., which meet the language consumption needs(Li Yan, 2012). In terms of the research paradigm, classification of the language consumption is emphasized due to different demands from consumers (Li Yan, 2016; Gao Chuanzhi, 2016). Moreover, Li Yan pointed out that the current study of language consumption should analyze consumer subjects, consumer objects, consumer demand, consumption patterns, and supply subjects (Li, 2017). In the absence of qualitative research on the needs and expectations of language market in GBA, this paper is specifically concerned with identifying the language market profile in GBA involving various subjects of language consumption.

With the release of the "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area" and the continuous promotion of the Belt and Road initiatives, Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area is playing an increasingly essential role in China's modernization. On the one hand, immense foreign investment is absorbed through its advanced financial system. On the other hand, enterprises in the Greater Bay Area also invest in industries of countries along the Belt and Road for industrial transformation and upgrading. There is no doubt that the Greater Bay Area will be confronted with countless linguistic problems in communications. Simultaneously, it will also inevitably be accompanied by considerable language consumption.

Based on the background of the Belt and Road initiatives, this paper explores the supply and demand of language consumers and language consumption objects, namely language services in the development of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area by combing the relevant research on language consumption in the region. The purpose is to propose relevant supply countermeasures for the language

needs of this region.

On February 18, 2019, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area", clearly pointing out the important role of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in the construction of the the Belt and Road initiatives and proposed the establishment of a world-class bay. The phased development goal of the regional and world-class urban agglomeration framework.[1] Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area consists of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen, Zhaoqing, Hong Kong and Macao. As an important support for the construction of the the Belt and Road initiatives, Greater Bay Area is promoting the effective docking of two markets and two resources at home and abroad, participating in international economic cooperation and competition at a higher level, and striving to build an international transportation logistics hub with important influence. The process of internationalization will unavoidably encounter with language consumption problems. Whether the demand for language consumption can be effectively and satisfactorily met will affect the development speed and scale of this location. Therefore, language consumption studies should be pay attention to for the advancement of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

1.1 Language consumption

Language consumption studies are subordinate to linguistic economics (Li Xianle, 2018), with the dual concepts of linguistics and economics.[2] On the one hand, language consumption studies involve language itself. On the other hand, language consumption studies are related to economic aspects. The connotation of language consumption is bounded by 2010 years, and there is a more obvious evolution process in the more than 10 years before and after, which is closely related to the research of "language industry" and "language service" by scholars.[3] Before 2010, language consumption was defined as a kind of consumer activity that arose in the course of "language learning".[4] The definition limits language consumption only to the field of "language learning" and ignoring other possible dimensions because of the knowledge of "language services" by scholars at the time. With the study of language economy, language industry and language service by scholars, the concept of language consumption has been expanded. Represented by the study of Li Yuming (2016), he broadened the boundaries of language consumption through the further definition of "language service". He pointed out that the content of language services was mainly related to how language services were defined. In his view, the services of "using all derivatives in languages (including text), language knowledge, language art, language

[1] "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong- Macao Greater Bay Area": https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1625818230992850738&wfr=spider&for=pc
[2] Li, Xianle. (2018). Some thoughts on the study of language service. *Journal of Yunnan Normal University (philosophy and Social Sciences edition), 50 (02): 52.*
[3] Li, Yan. (2017). Language consumption: basic theoretical problems and the research framework to be built urgently. *Applied linguistics, 133-134.*
[4] Hou, Lei. (2003). Some thoughts on the current phenomenon of "language consumption". *Nanjing Journal of Social Sciences, 84*

technology, language standards, language data, language products, etc., to meet the needs of Governments, society and families and individuals" are "language services".[5] This definition not only refers to the horizontal widening of language consumption, but also to the longitudinal deep excavation of language consumption issues.

In addition, Li Yan (2017) studies language consumption through different research perspectives. She believes that the consumers of language services use language as the core element to meet their language needs. However, if we consider other fields, such as sociology, communication, economics, and other fields of humanities and social sciences, the subjects of language consumption can be extended to non-verbal industries even any industries that require language communication. For example, the product descriptions, the spoken language of service personnel, etc., have a certain impact on the conduct of consumer activities and the spread of culture.

To sum up, language consumption can be defined from the content of "language services", so that the subjects of language consumption covers government, society, and family and individuals. The object of language consumption also contains derivatives of all languages. From different research perspectives, language consumption can be divided into "typical language consumption" and "concomitant language consumption".[6]

It is found that the current special research on language consumption in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has not yet started and there are few related studies. The "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong- Macao Greater Bay Area" emphasizes that there are still outstanding contradictions and problems in the economic operation of Greater Bay Area, such as overcapacity and imbalance between supply and demand structure. Mainland enterprises in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area are realizing industrial transfer and upgrading, so it is necessary to face language consumption problems. Therefore, under the Belt and Road initiatives, the language consumption problem in the region needs to be clarified and analyzed in depth, and then a countermeasure plan for the region is required to be proposed.

1.2 Analysis of goals of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

According to the "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area", we can extract different language consumption subjects, and further find out the demand for consumption and provide corresponding supply countermeasures.

The "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area" proposes five goals correlated to language consumption.

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[5] Li, Yuming. (2016). Language services and language industry. *Oriental translation, (04): 6.*

[6] Xu Daming. (2012). Language services and language consumption can expand domestic demand. *Journal of Chinese social Science, B06.*

1.2.1 Developing an International Innovation and Technology Hub

This goal aims to implement the innovation-driven development strategy in great intensity, deepen innovation cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, build an open community for coordinated innovation in the region that encompasses integrated development, pool together international innovation resources, enhance the innovation system and policy environment, focus on enhancing the capability for the commercial application of technological achievements, and develop a focused area of global technological innovation and a major source of emerging industries.

1.2.2 Expediting Infrastructural Connectivity

This section are going to strengthen infrastructural development, enhance external and internal connectivity, take forward the establishment of an infrastructural network with a rational layout, comprehensive functions, smooth connections and efficient operations, and provide solid support for social-economic development in the Greater Bay Area.

1.2.3 Building a Globally Competitive Modern Industrial System

This goal focuses on deepening supply-side structural reform, striving to nurture new industries, new types and new models of businesses, supporting the transformation and upgrading of traditional industries, expediting the development of advanced manufacturing and modern service industries, raising industriousness of development to advanced international standards, promoting the complementarity, closing cooperation and interconnected development of industries, and nurturing the development of a number of world-class industry clusters.

1.2.4 Developing a Quality Living Circle for Living, Working and Travelling

GBA's government wants to uphold the philosophy of people-centred development, proactively expand cooperation in such fields as education, culture, tourism and social security in the Greater Bay Area, and jointly develop a quality living circle with excellent public services for living, working and travelling.

1.2.5 Strengthening Cooperation and Jointly Participating in the Belt and Road Initiatives

deepen cooperation among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, further enhance the investment and business environment in the nine PRD municipalities, increase the extent of market integration in the Greater Bay Area, fully align with advanced international market regulatory regimes and standards, expedite the establishment of new institutional arrangements for an open economy, create an environment for opening up, jointly develop new edges in international economic and trade cooperation, and provide solid support for the Belt and Road Initiative.

In this outline, Xi pointed out that an international science, technology and Innovation Center should be an open regional collaborative innovation Community. Since it is the docking of global innovative resources, we will certainly be exposed to talent, science and technology around the world, drawing on international experience, so we need to

solve some problems due to the exchange and collision of different language and culture. Similarly, accelerating infrastructure connectivity and building a modern industrial system that is internationally competitive.

The outline particularly pointed out that promoting tourism in Greater Bay Area relays on the status of Hong Kong International Shipping Center. At the same time, it is necessary to optimize the "144-hour transit visa-free" policy in the Pearl River Delta region to facilitate foreigners to travel in the Greater Bay Area. Maffi (2001) believed that language, value and cultural identity are intertwined.[7] Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area needs to provide high-quality language services to meet the needs of language consumption in this process, so as to achieve cultural value dissemination and increase cultural identity.

In addition, to participate in the Belt and Road initiatives, create a globally competitive business environment and to enhance the level of market integration, Xi Jinping specifically pointed out that Macao and Portuguese-speaking countries play a key role of the China-Portugal Cooperation. The participation of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in all aspects of the construction of the Belt and Road initiatives will inevitably involve language consumption problems.

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, as an important participant in the construction of the Belt and Road initiatives, has different levels of language consumption needs. So it is important to provide corresponding language products (services) for their needs, and analyzes the supply subjects and supply countermeasures.

1.3 Analysis of consumer objects in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

The consumption of language products can be called "typical" language consumption (Li Yan,2017). while those completely do not use language products for consumption purposes called "concomitant" language consumption.

1.3.1 "Typical" language consumption in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

The "typical" language consumption is mainly based on the needs of different language conversions. Different consumer subjects have different requirements for language products. From a personal point of view, participation in the Belt and Road initiatives requires an international perspective and corresponding language skills, which results in consumption of the language training industry. Language training institutions, language publishing institutions, etc. are required to provide language teaching services as well as language teaching materials. At the same time, the overall demand for language consumption will also spawn a group of professional faculty members who provide language skills to meet the overall language consumption needs. From a business perspective, in the global market environment, especially in

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[7] Maffi, L. (2001). *On biocultural diversity:linking language, knowledge andthe environment.*Washington, Dc: smithsonian Institute Press.

the process of moving towards the world-class Bay Area, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area needs to open up the international market, absorb international capital, and accept international experience. All these lead to an increasing requirement of online translation software, speech recognition and professional language talents for consumption. governments at all levels of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has to confront language and cultural collisions when they negotiate with the Belt and Road countries. That is why professional High-end language talent and a highly accurate translation software system are need.

1.3.2 "Concomitant" language consumption in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

"concomitant" language consumption exists in most of the consumption scenes that do not take language as the core element, such as the vast number of catering, hotels, shopping malls, financial institutions which often provide this kind of language services. It shows that the quality of language services affects consumer confidence and consumer desire and also influence the international assessment of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. For example, the degree of "desirable Tour" has a direct impact on the economic benefits of the region. First of all, from the point of view of the translation of tourist attractions, there are many cities with abundant tourism resources in the Great Bay Area such as Zhuhai, a city with rich historical and cultural resources, and Guangzhou, a provincial capital city. It is necessary to do a good job in the translation of attractions and cultural communication work for internationalizing. This kind of translation work belongs to the "concomitant" language consumption because the tourists mainly consume the local historical and cultural resources and the natural scenery but language is only an important factor to assist the tourism. Secondly, from the perspective of tour guides, they need to use their own language to show tourists around the scenic spots. The guides make an introduction of scenic history and culture and natural characteristics of resources through their language skills. It is apparently that language is an accompany factor instead of a dominate factor consumed by the tourists. Furthermore, from the point of view of higher cultural communication, Greater Bay Area is going to carry out its own cultural dissemination in the major mainstream media and various channels as well as the introduction and guidelines of professional tourist attractions so that visitors use these introductions to choose their own tourist routes and tourism planning and so forth.

1.4 Analysis of language consumption countermeasures in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

1.4.1 Introducing industrial policy and make language planning well

Linguistic diversity can add to the dynamism of income generation in the local economy. With German, French, Italian and Roman mountain languages, Switzerland generates nearly 50 billion Swiss francs a year for itself, accounting for about the entire gross domestic product (GDP) of the 10%.[8] According to the China Translation

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[8] Li,Yuming. (2012). The economic attributes of understanding language. *Applied linguistics,* (03): 4.

Association "2018 China Language service Industry Development Report", it shows that in recent years, China's language services industries have entered a prosperous period of development with an explosive growth. By the end of June 2018, the number of enterprises with language services in China had increased to 320,874 and this data had increased significantly compared to 2016.[9] However, the output of the language industry in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is relatively low. The government of the Great Bay Area should introduce relevant language industry policies to ensure the healthy development of the language industry. For example, the government can scientifically and rationally allocate resources in industrial tax concessions, financial support, management, personnel training, technical support and so on, and make language planning from a long-term perspective, strengthening the popularity of English, Cantonese and some language in the Belt and Road countries according to the specific needs of the Great Bay Area.

1.4.2 Understanding the economic attributes of language and attaching importance to the study of language economics

First, language proficiency is an important human capital in the resources of the labour force.[10] Second, language activities permeate the entire economic activity. Thirdly, knowledge about language has become an important economic component (Li Yuming, 2012). In the process of industrial transformation, language ability also occupies a more and more large proportion in the composition of various human capital. In addition, the Greater Bay Area will face the exchange of cultural information across regions and countries when achieving a modern industry with international competitiveness and moving towards internationalization at the same time. Therefore, it is necessary to fully understand the economic attributes of language and attach importance to the economic study of language. We should strengthen the close cooperation among universities, institutions and enterprises, and apply the study of language economy to the demand of industry. On the other hand, the industry should also provide a certain application platform and financial support for the study of language economy fully combined with theory and practice.

1.4.3 Applying cutting-edge technology and combined with professional human resource

In recent years, artificial intelligence, block-chain, big data, mobile internet and cloud computing technology have emerged and been successfully applied to major consumer scenarios. These technologies can also be used to promote the development of language technology to make machine translation more accurate and efficient, improve the degree of translation automation and allow professionals to engage in more personalized language services. Governments, enterprises and colleges and universities should intensify their efforts to study how the combination of human beings and technology can make better services in the field of language consumption.

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[9] "The report shows that China's language services industry entered a prosperous period of development": http://www.sohu.com/a/285256429_100092936

[10] Chiswick, B.C., & Miller, P. W. (2001). A model of Destination-language acquisition:application to male immigrants in Canada. *Demography, 38, 391–409*

1.4.4   Providing one-stop services to meet individual demand

As the Belt and Road" initiatives continue to advance, there has been a surge in demand for language services for large-scale projects in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. And the demand for fragmented and even language services have risen as a result of the rapid development of Internet technology and cross-border e-commerce. Moreover, the demand scenario of language services is more diversified with the degree of opening up to the outside. Based on the above three points, the "one-stop" language service need to be taken seriously. According to the Blue Book of Chinese language service industry in 2018, the main subjects of language consumption, such as government departments and enterprises, are no longer only satisfied with simple interpretation or translation services, but also hope that the supply of language services can be personalized, customized all-round language solutions. Therefore, the major translation enterprises, translation agencies and other language service providers need to adjust their own business strategies to meet the overall market demand.

Conclusions

According to the goals abstracted from the Outline Development Plan for Guangdong-Hongkong-Macao Greater Bay Area, this study finds that there are many genres subjects of language consumption in GBA and each of them has different types of demands. The relationship among subjects of language consumption, demands of language consumption and objects of language consumption is showed as following:

goals	Subjects of language consumption	demands of the language consumption	objects of language consumption(language products and services)	supplier
Developing an International Innovation and Technology Hub	government and influential non-official organizations, research institutions, enterprises, universities	"language conversion" demand generated by communication, language translation, technical conversion	translation, language training	Translation institutions, business, individual
Expediting Infrastructural Connectivity	companies associate with transportation and communications	Language translation in professional technology	translation, language training	Translation institutions, business, individual
Building a Globally Competitive Modern Industrial System	government,enterprises, institutions and enterprises associate with currency, finance, investment and financing, and bonds	"language conversion" demand generated by communication and business negotiation	translation	Translation institutions, business, individual, translation technology research and development (machine translation, online translation, etc.)

Figure 1 Relationship between different factors

goals	Subjects of language consumption	demands of the language consumption	objects of language consumption(language products and services)	supplier
Developing a Quality Living Circle for Living, Working and Travelling	Civil society and individuals	cross-cultural communication	language training and related language publishing, language services in the travel industry, language arts	Translation institutions, business, individual, language publishing institutions; cultural tourism management departments; travel agencies, etc.
Participating in the Belt and Road Initiatives	government and influential non-official organizations,civil society and individuals	"language conversion" demand generated by creating a global business environment, enhancing market integration and expanding opening up	translation	Translation institutions, business, individual, translation technology research and development (machine translation, online translation, etc.)

Figure 2 Relationship between different factors

Language consumption has both economic attributes and linguistic attributes. From the perspective of economics, we should pay attention to consumers' consumption motivation, consumption demand, consumption feedback, etc.. From the perspective of linguistics, we should pay attention to language acquisition, language use, language products and services and so on. Under the strategy of the Belt the Road, Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area will necessarily involve multiple languages. And the demand for language consumption can be an important factor in the economic development and cultural dissemination of the region.

This paper contributes to the field of language economics studies and the field of language services of GBA. The significance of language consumption studies in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is to put forward the corresponding countermeasures for the providers of language services by grasping the economic attributes and linguistic attributes of language consumption. Moreover, the studies of language consumption is also a respond to the goals of "Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong- Macao Greater Bay Area".

Finally, there are some limitations in the present study. Firstly, as this study was part of a large study on the language consumption, only some general issues are conducted. In addition, it lacks a quantitative research about the specific language consumption

market profile in GBA including the the consumer behaviors, consumer preference and consumer psychology and so forth. It would be interesting in future language consumption studies with some statistical analysis using linguistic corpora or investigations.

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