

**| RESEARCH ARTICLE****Constructing the International Business Image of Guangzhou: A Corpus-driven Discourse Analysis of Business News on Government Website****Fangyuan Yan***Department of Foreign Language, Jinan University, Guangzhou, China***Corresponding Author:** Fangyuan Yan, **E-mail:** 17887914457@163.com**| ABSTRACT**

In the context of globalization, cities serve as pivotal actors in international competition, where their international image and business environment play decisive roles in attracting investments, talents, and fostering economic growth. Guangzhou, as southern China's economic nucleus, strategically constructs its international business persona and disseminates business environment information through official platforms like government portals. This study conducts a comprehensive discourse analysis of business news on Guangzhou's government website, aiming to reveal linguistic characteristics, rhetorical strategies, and their impact on the city's commercial identity. Employing a corpus-driven discourse analysis framework, this research collected and analyzed English business news published on Guangzhou Municipal Government's official portal (gz.gov.cn) from August 2023 to June 2024. The theoretical framework includes LDA topic modeling, Sinclair's extended meaning unit theory, and Wodak's discourse strategies, exploring the construction mechanism and optimization pathways of Guangzhou's international business image. The research identifies four core business images: a global trade hub, an innovation-led tech hub, a highly attractive investment destination, and a dynamic and livable metropolis. It reveals the synergistic application of four key discursive strategies: nomination, predication, argumentation, and intensification/mitigation. Furthermore, specific enhancement pathways are proposed from three dimensions: linguistic optimization, government website upgrading, and cross-dimensional collaboration. This study provides a theoretical framework and practical reference for the international communication of urban business images.

**| KEYWORDS**

Guangzhou; International Business Image; Government Website; corpus-driven discourse analysis

**| ARTICLE INFORMATION****ACCEPTED:** 01 January 2026**PUBLISHED:** 28 January 2026**DOI:** 10.32996/ijllt.2026.9.2.4**1. Introduction****1.1 Research Background**

In an increasingly interconnected and competitive global landscape, cities have transcended their traditional roles as mere administrative or geographical images to emerge as dynamic players in international economic and cultural arenas. The capacity of a city to project a compelling and distinctive global image—particularly concerning its business environment—has become an indispensable asset in the fierce competition for foreign direct investment (FDI), skilled talent, and sustained economic growth (Zhang & Zhang, 2013; Mo, 2013; Jiang & Jiang, 2011).

For emerging economy cities like Guangzhou, this image-building process is not only a matter of economic survival but also a means to assert their position in global governance and value chain networks. As a venerable port city with a 2,000-year history of international trade and a contemporary status as a manufacturing and innovation hub, Guangzhou is acutely aware of the necessity to strategically cultivate and communicate its international business image. Its government, through various official

channels—including its dedicated English-language website—actively promotes the city's business environment, aiming to attract global enterprises and foster a vibrant international commercial ecosystem.

In the digital age, government websites have evolved into primary, authoritative channels for disseminating information and projecting a desired image to global audiences. Unlike social media platforms, which prioritize interactivity and viral spread, government websites offer a stable, comprehensive, and credible repository of information, making them the preferred source for international investors, enterprises, and policymakers seeking reliable data on a city's business environment (Brandão, 2023; Bangero, 2025). The language used on these platforms is not merely descriptive; it is performative, actively shaping perceptions and constructing a narrative about the city's business strengths, policy advantages, and developmental potential.

Understanding how this narrative is constructed, what linguistic features are employed, and what underlying strategies are at play is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of current communication efforts and identifying areas for improvement.

## 1.2 Corpus Linguistics Combined with Discourse Analysis

Corpus linguistics, with its empirical, data-driven approach to language study, offers powerful tools for identifying patterns, frequencies, and collocations in large text datasets that may not be apparent through manual analysis alone (Meyer, 2023; Ding, 1998). When combined with discourse analysis, which examines language in its social and communicative context to understand how meaning is constructed and how power and ideology are enacted through language use (Gee, 2013; Hu, 2005), a corpus-driven discourse analysis provides a robust methodology for investigating the subtle yet significant ways in which official discourse shapes perceptions. This integrated approach allows researchers to move beyond subjective interpretation and uncover objective linguistic patterns, while also contextualizing these patterns within broader social, political, and economic frameworks.

This study delves into the intricate process of how Guangzhou constructs its international business image through the lens of business news disseminated on its official government website.

## 1.3 Research Questions

This study aims to analyze business news on Guangzhou government websites using a corpus approach, in order to uncover their linguistic features, communication effects, and impact on the business environment. The specific research questions include:

- (1) What are the commercial images/topics of Guangzhou constructed through international business news?
- (2) What discursive strategies are conducted by the business news to construct the images of Guangzhou?
- (3) Based on the conclusions of discourse analysis from Questions 1 and 2, how can we enhance the effect of the international communication discourse of Guangzhou's business image ?

## 2. Literature Review

This literature review systematically explores the theoretical underpinnings and empirical studies relevant to this research, providing a comprehensive backdrop for understanding the construction of Guangzhou's international business image through government website news. It delves into the complexities of the international business environment, the multifaceted nature of city image construction, the strategic role of government websites in global communication, and identifies critical research gaps that this study aims to address.

### 2.1 International Business Environment and City Image in Global Communication

The international business environment is a complex, dynamic, and multifaceted construct, encompassing a myriad of political, economic, social, technological, and legal factors that profoundly influence the operations and strategies of enterprises worldwide (Karlova, 2024; Liu, 1997; Li & Di, 2025). In recent years, this environment has been reshaped by rapid technological advancements, shifting geopolitical dynamics, and increasing emphasis on sustainability and digitalization, creating both opportunities and challenges for cities seeking to attract international business (Ameyaw, 2023; Karlova, 2024). A critical dimension of this environment is the competitive landscape, which acts as a crucial catalyst for fostering innovation, efficiency, and economic growth (Asadzade, 2024). Additionally, the international business environment encompasses broader geopolitical and cross-cultural dimensions, where effective cross-cultural communication is paramount for international business success.

(Zhang, 2016; Xu & Wan, 2007). These studies collectively emphasize that a truly effective international business image must convey not only economic prowess but also cultural sensitivity, inclusivity, and a willingness to engage with global partners on equal terms.

## **2.2 The Construction of Guangzhou's Image**

The concept of city image has evolved from a mere descriptive term to a strategic asset, meticulously cultivated and leveraged by urban centers to gain a competitive edge in the global arena. City image is defined as the comprehensive impression and perception people have of a city, representing the external manifestation of its nature, functions, and civilization (Xue, 2002). This multifaceted impression is not just about aesthetics but about distilling the city's unique characteristics to shape a distinctive cultural identity, thereby counteracting urban homogenization and driving holistic development (Jiang & Jiang, 2011). A strong city image enhances a city's capacity to integrate diverse resources, fostering economic vitality and social progress (Mo, 2013), and significantly boosting urban competitiveness and cultural influence when combined with modern communication media (Zhang & Zhang, 2013).

The construction of a city's image is a complex process involving cultural, economic, governmental, media, and citizen dimensions (Xue, 2002), with media playing a particularly salient role in shaping perceptions through agenda-setting and framing processes (Ye, 2012). This influence has intensified with the advent of new media, which offers unprecedented opportunities for organic image building but also necessitates careful management by official entities (Chen, 2021). Beyond media, other elements such as place brands, IP images, linguistic soundscapes, and landmarks also contribute to city image construction (Zhang et al., 2023; Zheng et al., 2024; Manahasa, 2023).

Guangzhou, as a historical trading hub and contemporary economic powerhouse in southern China, has long been engaged in constructing and projecting its urban image. Its identity is deeply rooted in its historical role as a pivotal center for international trade, and it continues to leverage this legacy to position itself as a global trade hub (Xu et al., 2021). The city's economic dynamism—anchored by the Canton Fair, its strategic GBA location, and advanced infrastructure—forms a cornerstone of its international appeal. Beyond trade, Guangzhou is increasingly positioning itself as a hub for technological innovation and industrial upgrading, aligning with China's national strategy to move up the global value chain (Lin et al., 2019; Xu et al., 2024). Additionally, the city actively promotes mechanisms to facilitate foreign investment, aiming to create a transparent, efficient, and welcoming business environment (Xu et al., 2024; Fu et al., 2024). Media studies of Guangzhou's image reveal mixed perceptions: English media recognizes its strength as a transportation and commercial hub but underemphasizes its technological dimensions (Ren & Luo, 2021), while Japanese media focuses on its economic image while neglecting cultural and social aspects (Zhang & Xiao, 2025). These studies underscore the need for a more balanced and targeted communication strategy for Guangzhou's international business image.

## **2.3 Government Websites as Strategic Communication Platforms**

In the contemporary digital landscape, government communication has undergone a profound transformation, with governments increasingly leveraging digital platforms—particularly official websites—as strategic tools for disseminating information and projecting desired images (Zhang, 2005). Government websites stand as authoritative and comprehensive digital platforms, offering unique advantages for international business image promotion: they are formal and authoritative, allowing for in-depth information presentation, and provide a stable, searchable repository of data (Brandão, 2023; Tian, 2004; Savoia et al., 2023). The content published on government websites—especially news reports—plays a direct role in shaping perceptions, as these reports are carefully crafted discourses designed to persuade, inform, and attract (Pan, 2025). The accessibility and multilingual nature of government websites are crucial for effective international communication, with high-quality translation and cultural adaptation bridging gaps between domestic and international audiences (Gao & Zhao, 2021).

## **2.4 Limitations of Existing Research**

Despite the extensive body of literature, several critical limitations and research gaps emerge. First, much existing research focuses on general urban identity or tourism promotion rather than targeted international business image construction (Han, 2023; Liu et al., 2022). Second, research on the business environment often employs quantitative economic models, neglecting the discursive construction of the environment through language (Lai et al., 2024; Li et al., 2023). Third, government communication research predominantly focuses on crisis communication or social media engagement, with a notable gap in analyzing business news content on official websites (Hasti & Qodir, 2024; Lerouge et al., 2023). Finally, while corpus linguistics has been applied in some city image studies, its full potential in corpus-driven discourse analysis of government business news

for international business image construction remains underrealized, with many studies lacking integration with critical discourse analysis theories (Yan, 2024; Ren & Luo, 2021). This study addresses these gaps by conducting a corpus-driven discourse analysis of business news on Guangzhou's government website, focusing specifically on the construction of the city's international business image.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Theoretical Framework: Construction of an Integrated Theoretical Framework

The complexity of constructing a city's international business image through government communication demands a multi-layered analytical approach that captures both macro-thematic trends and micro-linguistic nuances, as well as the strategic intent behind discourse. To address this complexity, this study proposes an integrated theoretical framework that synthesizes three complementary methodologies: LDA topic modeling (Blei et al., 2003), Sinclair's (1996; 2004) Extended Units of Meaning (EUM), and Wodak's (2009) Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). Each component of the framework serves a distinct yet interconnected role, forming a cohesive analytical process that answers the core research questions through a "what-how-why" logic.

First, Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) serves as the macro-level thematic identification tool. As an unsupervised machine learning model, LDA uncovers latent thematic structures in large text corpora by grouping co-occurring words into coherent topics (Blei et al., 2003; Han et al., 2021). Its probabilistic foundation allows it to capture semantic relationships between words without prior knowledge of themes, making it ideal for processing the large-scale business news corpus.

Second, Sinclair's Extended Units of Meaning (EUM) provides the micro-level semantic analysis lens. Rejecting the view of individual words as the primary unit of meaning, EUM posits that meaning emerges from recurrent multi-word patterns, encompassing five interconnected components: Node (central word), Collocations (frequent co-occurring words), Colligations (grammatical patterns), Semantic Preference (association with specific semantic sets), and Semantic Prosody (attitudinal aura) (Sinclair, 2004). This framework is particularly powerful for uncovering subtle evaluative dimensions of language, such as the positive semantic prosody of key business terms, which are critical for understanding how images are linguistically constructed.

Third, Wodak's (2009) Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) offers the critical interpretive framework for understanding strategic intent. DHA views language as social practice, emphasizing how discourse shapes and reflects power relations and ideologies. Within DHA, four core discursive strategies—nomination (naming entities), predication (attributing qualities), argumentation (legitimizing claims through topoi), and intensification/mitigation (adjusting claim strength)—are central to constructing persuasive narratives (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009). By integrating insights from LDA and EUM, DHA interprets why specific linguistic choices are made and what social, political, or economic functions they serve, answering the "why" and "to what effect" of the research.

The integration of these three methodologies follows a sequential, layered logic (Figure 3-1).

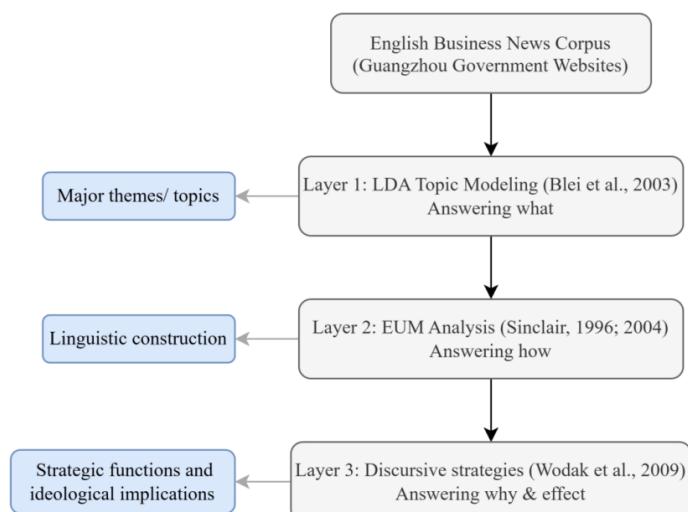


Figure 3-1: Flow Chart of the Integrated Theoretical Framework

LDA first maps the thematic landscape by identifying core topics; EUM then dissects the linguistic construction of these topics through phraseological patterns; and DHA finally interprets the strategic intent and ideological implications of these linguistic choices. This integrated framework bridges quantitative thematic mining and qualitative discourse analysis, providing a robust, empirically grounded approach to investigating Guangzhou's international business image construction.

### **3.2 Data Description**

The corpus for this study is composed of English-language business news reports collected from the Business News section of the Guangzhou Municipal Government's official portal (gz.gov.cn), covering the period from August 2023 to June 2024. This time frame was selected to capture a period of intensive high-impact business events in Guangzhou, events that collectively reflect the dynamic nature of the city's business landscape and ensure the corpus's representativeness.

The corpus construction followed three rigorous steps: retrieval, filtering, and annotation. First, retrieval key words were determined based on the research focus on Guangzhou's business image dimensions. Only news reports explicitly related to Guangzhou's business, economy, trade, investment, innovation, and infrastructure were retained; irrelevant content—such as purely cultural, educational, or social news without business implications—was excluded. Third, the filtered corpus was annotated using Python-based tools, with labels including text ID, publication date, source, thematic category, and key business events mentioned. This annotation facilitated subsequent quantitative and qualitative analysis, enabling comparisons across sources, time periods, and themes.

The final corpus comprises 286 texts with a total token count of 198,763 words. In terms of source distribution, Guangzhou Daily Online (27.3%) and GD Today (22.7%) are the primary contributors, followed by CNS Guangzhou Bureau (17.1%), Guangzhou Municipal Government Official Website (13.3%), Guangdong Provincial Department of Commerce (11.2%), and Xinhua News Agency Guangzhou Branch (8.4%), ensuring representation of local mainstream and national authoritative media perspectives. Temporally, texts from November 2023 to June 2024 account for 56.6% of the corpus, reflecting increased media attention to year-end and New Year business activities, while texts from August to October 2023 constitute 43.4%. Thematic distribution aligns with Guangzhou's core business positioning: "International Trade and Exhibition" (31.1%) and "Investment Attraction" (25.2%) are the most prominent categories, followed by "Innovation Drive" (23.4%) and "Urban Vitality" (20.3%). The average text length is 695 tokens, with a range from 187 to 1,842 tokens, providing sufficient contextual information for thematic and discursive analysis.

**Table 3-1: Basic Statistical Features of the Corpus**

Feature	Category	Number/Value	Proportion
Source	Guangzhou Daily Online	78	27.3%
	GD Today	65	22.7%
	CNS Guangzhou Bureau	49	17.1%
	Guangzhou Municipal Government Official Website	38	13.3%
	Guangdong Provincial Department of Commerce	32	11.2%
	Xinhua News Agency Guangzhou Branch	24	8.4%
	August–October 2023	124	43.4%
Time Period	November 2023–June 2024	162	56.6%
Thematic Category	International Trade and Exhibition	89	31.1%
	Innovation Drive	67	23.4%
	Investment Attraction	72	25.2%
	Urban Vitality	58	20.3%
Text Length	Average token per text	695.0	-
	Minimum token per text	187	-
	Maximum token per text	1,842	-

### 3.3 Research Design

Guided by the integrated theoretical framework, the research design follows a sequential, multi-dimensional approach to systematically address the three core research questions. Each step builds on the previous one, ensuring a coherent and rigorous analytical process.

The first step involves LDA topic modeling to extract latent thematic key words and identify core thematic categories. This step maps the macro thematic landscape of the corpus, addressing the "what" of Guangzhou's business image communication and laying the foundation for subsequent detailed analyses.

The second step employs Sinclair's (1996; 2004) EUM for phraseological and micro-semantic analysis. Building on the thematic categories and representative keywords derived from LDA, EUM was applied to core keywords (e.g., "Canton Fair" for trade, "new energy" for innovation) to examine their collocations, colligations, semantic preference, and semantic prosody. This analysis uncovers how the identified themes are linguistically constructed and evaluated, answering the "how" of Guangzhou's business image discourse by revealing the subtle linguistic patterns that shape meaning.

The third step involves analyzing discursive strategies from the perspective of Wodak's (2009) DHA. Focusing on four key strategies—nomination, predication, argumentation, and intensification/mitigation—this step interprets the motivational logic behind linguistic choices and their social, political, and economic functions. Drawing on insights from LDA and EUM, the analysis examines how geopolitical, institutional, and event references (nomination), positive evaluative language (predication), logical topoi (argumentation), and intensifying devices (intensification/mitigation) synergistically construct Guangzhou's business image.

The final step integrates findings from the previous three stages to propose actionable pathways for enhancing the effectiveness of Guangzhou's international business image communication. By synthesizing thematic trends, phraseological structures, and discursive strategies, this step reveals how government communication strategically shapes a coherent, positive international business image and explores the underlying ideological orientations embedded in the discourse. This sequential design ensures that each analytical step is grounded in empirical data, with findings building incrementally to provide a comprehensive understanding of Guangzhou's international business image construction and actionable strategies for improvement.

### 4. General Topic Key Words

To identify the core thematic key words of Guangzhou's business image, the corpus was preprocessed (tokenization, stopword removal, lemmatization) and subjected to LDA topic modeling. The optimal number of topics was determined by calculating coherence scores for K values ranging from 3 to 10, with K = 4 yielding the highest coherence score (0.52), confirming the existence of four distinct thematic categories : International Trade and Exhibition, Innovation Drive, Investment Attraction, and Urban Vitality. Table 4-1 presents the top 20 representative key words for each thematic category, along with their topic weights (indicating the degree of association with the topic).

**Table 4-2: Top 20 Representative Key Words by Thematic Category**

Thematic Category	Top Key Words (Topic Weight)
International Trade and Exhibition	Colombia Fair (0.087), foreign trade (0.062), export (0.058), import (0.049), BRI (0.043), GBA (0.039), trade volume (0.037), exhibitor (0.035), buyer (0.032), cross-border (0.029), commodity (0.027), logistics (0.025), port (0.023), shipping (0.021), customs (0.019), visa-free (0.017), transit (0.015), exhibition (0.014), fair (0.013), cooperation (0.012)
Innovation Drive	new energy (0.076), intelligent (0.063), technology (0.057), AI (0.048), 5G (0.042), high-tech (0.038), innovation (0.036), digital (0.034), intelligent manufacturing (0.031), robot (0.028), driverless (0.026), semiconductor (0.024), biopharmaceutical (0.022), R&D (0.020), computing power (0.018), startup (0.016), tech enterprise (0.015), innovation center (0.014), digital economy (0.013), smart city (0.012)
Investment Attraction	investment (0.082), enterprise (0.065), foreign capital (0.059), project (0.053), business environment (0.047), attract (0.041), headquarters (0.038), industrial cluster (0.035), policy (0.032), preferential (0.029), fund (0.027), cooperation (0.025), multinational (0.023), investment promotion (0.021), industrial chain (0.019), park (0.017), zone (0.015), development (0.014), opportunity (0.013), support (0.012)
Urban Vitality	infrastructure (0.073), high-speed railway (0.061), airport (0.055), transportation (0.049), logistics (0.043), consumption (0.039), night market (0.036), business circle (0.033), retail (0.030), tourism (0.028), hotel (0.026), catering (0.024), traffic (0.022), passenger flow (0.020), urban renewal (0.018)

Thematic Category	Top Key Words (Topic Weight)
	commercial (0.016), service (0.015), convenience (0.014), livable (0.013), dynamic (0.012)

To explore the temporal dynamics of thematic key words, the corpus was divided into two periods: Period 1 (August - October 2023) and Period 2 (November 2023 - June 2024). Table 4-2 presents the top 10 key words by frequency for each thematic category across the two periods.

**Table 4-3: Comparative Analysis of Period-Specific Key Words**

Thematic Category	Period 1 (Aug - Oct 2023): Top 10 Key Words (Frequency)	Period 2 (Nov 2023 - Jun 2024): Top 10 Key Words (Frequency)
International Trade and Exhibition	Guangzhou International Trade and Exhibition (187), foreign trade (156), export (142), BRI (118), GBA (109), exhibitor (97), buyer (89), trade volume (83), import (78), cross-border (72)	Guangzhou International Trade and Exhibition (213), foreign trade (178), export (165), BRI (132), GBA (124), visa-free (105), customs (98), transit (92), buyer (87), exhibition (81)
Innovation Drive	Guangzhou Innovation Drive (135), technology (121), intelligent (113), AI (98), high-tech (89), digital (83), innovation (77), intelligent manufacturing (71), R&D (65), semiconductor (61)	Guangzhou Innovation Drive (168), intelligent (147), AI (123), technology (119), digital (108), high-tech (96), driverless (89), biopharmaceutical (83), computing power (78), innovation center (72)
Investment Attraction	Guangzhou Investment Attraction (148), enterprise (132), foreign capital (117), project (105), business environment (98), attract (87), policy (81), cooperation (76), multinational (71), industrial cluster (68)	Guangzhou Investment Attraction (182), enterprise (156), foreign capital (134), project (121), business environment (113), headquarters (97), preferential (92), investment promotion (88), industrial chain (83), fund (79)
Urban Vitality	Guangzhou Urban Vitality (127), high-speed railway (115), transportation (103), airport (98), logistics (91), consumption (85), traffic (79), passenger flow (73), commercial (68), service (65)	Guangzhou Urban Vitality (153), high-speed railway (138), consumption (112), night market (107), business circle (96), tourism (91), hotel (85), urban renewal (81), catering (77), livable (72)

The comparative analysis reveals two key trends: First, the frequency of core key words increased in Period 2 across all thematic categories, reflecting heightened media attention to Guangzhou's business activities. For example, "Guangzhou International Trade and Exhibition" increased from 187 to 213 occurrences, "Guangzhou Innovation Drive" from 135 to 168, and "Guangzhou Investment Attraction" from 148 to 182. Second, new prominent keywords emerged in Period 2, such as "visa-free" and "customs" in International Trade and Exhibition (linked to the 144-hour visa-free transit policy for the Canton Fair), "driverless" and "computing power" in Innovation Drive (reflecting the launch of driverless taxis and intelligent computing centers), "headquarters" and "investment promotion" in Investment Attraction (related to the GBA Global Investment Promotion Conference), and "night market" and "urban renewal" in Urban Vitality (reflecting the upgrading of commercial districts and urban infrastructure). These changes indicate that Guangzhou's business image is dynamically evolving, with new dimensions emerging in response to key events and policies.

## 5. Theme 1: International Trade and Exhibition

### 5.1 Thematic Analysis

The core keywords defining the International Trade and Exhibition theme, identified through LDA topic modeling, include Canton Fair (topic weight 0.087), foreign trade (0.062), export (0.058), import (0.049), BRI (0.043), GBA (0.039), trade volume (0.037), exhibitor (0.035), buyer (0.032), and visa-free (0.017). Temporal analysis reveals that keyword frequency increased in the later period (November 2023–June 2024), with emerging terms like "visa-free" and "customs" closely linked to policy initiatives supporting major trade events such as the Canton Fair.

The co-occurrence network of key words for International Trade and Exhibition (Table 4-1) has "Canton Fair" as the core node (degree centrality = 0.87), connected to other key nodes such as "foreign trade" (degree centrality = 0.76), "export" (0.72), "BRI" (0.68), and "GBA" (0.65). The network density is 0.32, indicating close connections between keywords. Table 5-1 presents the top 15 keyword co-occurrence pairs for this topic, along with their frequencies.

**Table 5-1: Top 15 Keyword Co-occurrence Pairs (International Trade and Exhibition)**

Co-occurrence Pair	Frequency
Canberra Fair/exhibitor	128
Canberra Fair/buyer	116
foreign trade/BRI	98
export/GBA	92
Canberra Fair/trade volume	87
foreign trade/export	83
BRI/cross-border	79
GBA/transit	76
Canberra Fair/visa-free	73
export/commodity	69
foreign trade/import	67
BRI/logistics	65
GBA/customs	62
exhibitor/commodity	59
buyer/cooperation	57

High-frequency co-occurrence pairs include "Canberra Fair/exhibitor" (128 occurrences), "Canberra Fair/buyer" (116 occurrences), "foreign trade/BRI" (98 occurrences), "export/GBA" (92 occurrences), and "Canberra Fair/visa-free" (73 occurrences), collectively constructing Guangzhou as a "global trade hub with open and convenient policies", as the following extract indicates.

*The 134th Canberra Fair attracted over 100,000 buyers from 215 countries and regions, with export turnover reaching 22.3 billion USD (GD Today, 2023-11-04).*

This extract highlights the fair's role as a global connector, while the co-occurrence of "Canberra Fair/visa-free" underscores policy support for cross-border trade. Additionally, "foreign trade/BRI" and "export/GBA" reflect Guangzhou's integration into national strategies, as the following extract indicates.

*Guangdong's trade with BRI countries reached 3.04 trillion RMB in 2023 (Guangdong Customs, 2024-01-16).*

## 5.2 Discursive Analysis

Discursively, nomination strategies position Guangzhou within broader geopolitical and institutional frameworks: "GBA" (873 total occurrences, 36.5% in this theme) and "BRI" (546 total occurrences, 52.9% in this theme) anchor the city in regional and global trade networks, while institutional references such as "Canberra Fair" (297 occurrences, 283 in this theme), "Guangzhou Customs" (165 occurrences, 132 in this theme), and "Guangzhou Port Group" (196 occurrences, 153 in this theme) enhance authority and concretize trade infrastructure. Event and project references, including the "134th Canberra Fair" (289 occurrences) and "144-hour Visa-free Transit Policy" (98 occurrences), frame Guangzhou as action-oriented and open, as the following extract indicates.

*This policy facilitated customs clearance for over 17,000 foreign travelers at Baiyun Airport in one month, supporting the Canberra Fair and cross-border trade (Guangzhou General Station of Exit and Entry Frontier Inspection, 2024-01-03).*

Predication strategies rely heavily on positive evaluative language, such as "vibrant" (87 occurrences), "open" (76), "convenient" (69), and "efficient" (63), with predicative noun phrases like "global trade hub" (68 occurrences) defining the city's core role, as the following extract indicates.

*Guangzhou has evolved into a global trade hub, with the Canberra Fair as its core platform (Xinhua News Agency, 2023-10-30).*

Negative predication are rare (2.3% of total) and used contrastively, as the following extract indicates.

While global economic uncertainty posed challenges, Guangzhou's foreign trade volume still reached a record high of 8.3 trillion RMB in 2023 (Guangdong Customs, 2024-01-16).

Argumentation strategies draw on the *topos of numbers*, with data such as "3.04 trillion RMB BRI trade volume" and "22.3 billion USD Canton Fair export turnover" enhancing credibility; the *topos of usefulness*, emphasizing "facilitates cross-border trade" (89 occurrences) through visa-free policies and efficient customs clearance; and the *topos of justice*, highlighting "mutually beneficial cooperation" (36 occurrences) for global partners.

Intensification strategies use adverbs like "significantly" (97 occurrences) and "remarkably" (78), superlatives such as "leading" (65), and repetition of core achievements to amplify impact, while mitigation strategies are minimal.

## **6. Theme 2: Innovation Drive**

### **6.1 Thematic Analysis**

The Innovation Drive theme is characterized by core keywords including new energy (0.076), intelligent (0.063), AI (0.048), 5G (0.042), high-tech (0.038), innovation (0.036), digital (0.034), intelligent manufacturing (0.031), driverless (0.026), and computing power (0.018). Temporal trends show rising frequency of "driverless" and "computing power" in the later period, reflecting emerging technological advancements and pilot projects.

The co-occurrence network for Innovation Drive (Table 4-1) has "new energy" (degree centrality = 0.82) and "intelligent" (0.79) as dual core nodes, connected to "AI" (0.75), "technology" (0.71), and "digital" (0.68). The network density is 0.29, indicating a focused and interconnected thematic structure. Table 5-2 presents the top 15 keyword co-occurrence pairs for this topic, along with their frequencies.

**Table 5-2: Top 15 Keyword Co-occurrence Pairs (Innovation Drive)**

Co-occurrence Pair	Frequency
new energy/intelligent manufacturing	103
intelligent/AI	97
technology/innovation	91
new energy/vehicle	86
AI/digital	82
high-tech/enterprise	78
digital/computing power	75
intelligent/driverless	71
R&D/biopharmaceutical	68
innovation/tech enterprise	65
new energy/semiconductor	62
AI/innovation center	59
digital/smart city	57
high-tech/R&D	54
driverless/intelligent	51

Key co-occurrence pairs include "new energy/intelligent manufacturing" (103 occurrences), "intelligent/AI" (97 occurrences), "AI/digital" (82 occurrences), "intelligent/driverless" (71 occurrences), and "R&D/biopharmaceutical" (68 occurrences), collectively constructing Guangzhou as an "innovation-led tech hub", as the following extract indicates.

*Guangzhou's production of new energy vehicles exceeded 650,000 units in 2023, with intelligent manufacturing accounting for 40% of the production process (Xinhua News Agency, 2024-01-17).*

While the co-occurrence of "intelligent/AI" and "AI/digital" highlights the city's focus on artificial intelligence and digital infrastructure, such as the launch of the GBA's first large-model intelligent computing center in Haizhu District. The emergence

of "intelligent/driverless" corresponds to the commercial operation of fully driverless taxis in Nansha. "R&D/biopharmaceutical" reflects the development of emerging industries, as the following extract indicates.

*Guangzhou's biopharmaceutical industry has attracted over 20 billion RMB in investment, with 15 new R&D centers established in 2023* (Guangdong Provincial Department of Commerce, 2024-01-22).

## 6.2 Discursive Analysis

In terms of discursive strategies, nomination strategies link innovation to regional development through geopolitical references like "GBA" (23.0% of its total occurrences) and "South China" (23.5%), positioning Guangzhou as a tech leader in the region. Institutional and organizational references, such as "High-tech enterprises" (243 occurrences, 169 in this theme), "GAC Group" (152 occurrences, 98 in this theme), and "tech enterprise" (0.015 topic weight) concretize industrial strength, as the following extract indicates.

*GAC Group has new energy vehicle production exceeding 650,000 units in 2023, with exports to 59 countries and regions* (Guangzhou Daily Online, 2024-02-04).

Event and project references, including the "China Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fair (CIEF 2023)" (109 occurrences) and "Fully Driverless Taxi Pilot (Nansha)" (93 occurrences), showcase practical innovation outcomes.

Predication strategies employ positive evaluative adjectives such as "innovative" (93 occurrences), "cutting-edge" (61), "tech-driven" (49), and "sustainable" (43), with theme-specific terms emphasizing technological advancement, as the following extract indicates.

*Guangzhou's intelligent manufacturing industry has adopted cutting-edge technologies such as AI and 5G, improving production efficiency by 40%* (Guangdong Provincial Department of Industry and Information Technology, 2023-11-08).

Predicative noun phrases like "innovation-led tech hub" (59 occurrences) define the city's focus, while predicates such as "enhances technological innovation" (68 occurrences) link infrastructure to industry growth. Negative predictions are minimal, used to contrast challenges with breakthroughs.

Argumentation strategies draw on the *topos of numbers*, with key data including "650,000+ new energy vehicles produced in 2023", "120 billion RMB R&D investment in high-tech industries" (Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Science and Technology, 2024-01-04), and "13,000 high-tech enterprises (up 15% year-on-year)" (Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2024-01-17); the *topos of usefulness*, highlighting benefits like "provides computing power for 100+ tech enterprises" (China Telecom Guangzhou, 2023-12-18); and the *topos of justice*, emphasizing "startup support" and "talent-friendly policies" (Huangpu District Government, 2023-11-16).

Intensification strategies use adverbs like "significantly" (97 occurrences) to describe tech growth and superlatives such as "leading" (65) and "pioneering" (36) to reinforce leadership, while mitigation strategies are rare, as the following extract indicates.

*The new energy storage industry has potential for growth, though large-scale development requires time* (Guangzhou Baiyun District Government, 2023-12-15).

## 7. Theme 3: Investment Attraction

### 7.1 Thematic Analysis

The co-occurrence network for Investment Attraction (Table 4-1) has "investment" (degree centrality = 0.85) as the core node, connected to "enterprise" (0.78), "foreign capital" (0.74), and "project" (0.70). The network density is 0.31, with strong connections between policy-related key words (e.g., "business environment", "preferential") and industrial key words (e.g., "industrial chain", "headquarters"). Table 5-3 presents the top 15 keyword co-occurrence pairs for this topic, along with their frequencies.

**Table 5-3: Top 15 Keyword Co-occurrence Pairs (Investment Attraction)**

Co-occurrence Pair	Frequency
investment/enterprise	132
foreign capital/project	118
business environment/attract	105
investment/foreign capital	99
enterprise/industrial cluster	93
policy/preferential	89
investment/headquarters	86
foreign capital/multinational	82
project/industrial chain	79
business environment/policy	76
investment/investment promotion	73
enterprise/cooperation	71
preferential/fund	68
industrial cluster/zone	65
foreign capital/support	62

Key co-occurrence pairs include “investment/enterprise” (132 occurrences), “foreign capital/project” (118 occurrences), “business environment/attract” (105 occurrences), “investment/headquarters” (86 occurrences), and “project/industrial chain” (79 occurrences), shaping Guangzhou’s image as a “highly attractive investment destination”, as the following extract indicates.

*Guangzhou registered over 6,600 new foreign-funded enterprises in 2023, a year-on-year increase of 90%, with actual use of foreign capital in high-tech industries growing by 11.9% (Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2024-01-29).*

The co-occurrence of “business environment/attract” emphasizes the role of a high-quality business environment, with the corpus noting measures such as “broadening market access for service industries” and “providing tax incentives for multinational headquarters” (Guangzhou Municipal Government, 2024-01-05).

The emergence of “investment/headquarters” indicates a focus on regional headquarters, with examples including Umicore’s South China headquarters and BASF’s regional headquarters (GD Today, 2023-11-17), while “project/industrial chain” reflects the development of integrated industrial clusters in Huangpu and Nansha districts.

## 7.2 Discursive Analysis

Discursively, nomination strategies position Guangzhou within regional economic integration through geopolitical references like “GBA” (26.0% of its total occurrences) and “Pearl River Delta” (27.5%). Institutional and organizational references, such as “Guangzhou Municipal Government” (428 occurrences, 187 in this theme), “multinational enterprises” (268 occurrences, 156 in this theme), and “Guangdong Provincial Department of Commerce” (315 occurrences, 108 in this theme), enhance policy credibility.

Event and project references, including the “GBA Global Investment Promotion Conference (2023)” (176 occurrences) and “Sino-Singapore Guangzhou Knowledge City” (82 occurrences), highlight proactive investment promotion and industrial park development, with the conference attracting “859 cooperation projects with a total investment of over 2.24 trillion RMB” (Guangdong Department of Commerce, 2023-11-09).

Predication strategies use positive evaluative adjectives such as “favorable” (91 occurrences), “attractive” (85), “stable” (68), and “supportive” (53) to describe the business environment and policies, with theme-specific terms aligning with investment priorities, as the following extract indicates.

*Guangzhou offers favorable tax policies and preferential land use for high-tech enterprises, attracting over 6,600 new foreign-funded enterprises in 2023 (Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2024-01-29).*

Predicative noun phrases like "investment destination" (73 occurrences) frame the city's appeal, while predicates such as "attract foreign capital" (83 occurrences) and "promote industrial cluster development" (93 occurrences) emphasize outcomes. Negative predications are rare and contrastive, as the following extract indicates.

*Despite global investment volatility, foreign capital in high-tech industries grew by 11.9%* (Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2024-01-29).

Argumentation strategies draw on the *topos* of numbers, with quantifiable data including "2.24 trillion RMB total investment from the GBA promotion conference", "6,600 new foreign-funded enterprises (up 90% year-on-year)", and "five 100-billion-yuan industrial clusters" (Guangzhou Development District Government, 2024-01-22); the *topos* of usefulness, highlighting benefits like "reduces production costs" (76 occurrences) through preferential policies and "expands market access" (65 occurrences) via GBA integration; and the *topos* of justice, emphasizing "equal market access" (58 occurrences) for foreign-funded enterprises and "inclusive growth" (47 occurrences) for small and micro enterprises, with over "180,000 small and micro entities benefiting from inclusive credit loans" (Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, 2023-12-22).

Intensification strategies use adverbs like "exceptionally" (53 occurrences) and superlatives such as "top" (in "top investment destination") to reinforce appeal, while mitigation strategies are minimal, as the following extract indicates.

*Some policy effects may take time to manifest, but long-term investment potential remains strong* (Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Commerce, 2024-01-18).

## 8. Theme 4: Urban Vitality

### 8.1 Thematic Analysis

The co-occurrence network for Urban Vitality (Table 4-1) has "infrastructure" (degree centrality = 0.81) and "high-speed railway" (0.77) as core nodes, connected to "consumption" (0.73), "transportation" (0.70), and "night market" (0.66). The network density is 0.28, with distinct sub-clusters for transportation infrastructure and commercial consumption. Table 5-4 presents the top 15 keyword co-occurrence pairs for this topic, along with their frequencies.

**Table 5-4: Top 15 Keyword Co-occurrence Pairs (Urban Vitality)**

Co-occurrence Pair	Frequency
infrastructure/high-speed railway	124
transportation/airport	112
consumption/business circle	108
high-speed railway/passenger flow	97
infrastructure/logistics	93
consumption/night market	89
tourism/hotel	85
urban renewal/commercial	81
transportation/traffic	78
consumption/catering	76
high-speed railway/transit	73
airport/cargo throughput	71
night market/livable	69
business circle/retail	67
urban renewal/service	64

Key co-occurrence pairs include "infrastructure/high-speed railway" (124 occurrences), "transportation/airport" (112 occurrences), "consumption/business circle" (108 occurrences), "consumption/night market" (89 occurrences), and "night market/livable" (69 occurrences). The transportation infrastructure sub-cluster highlights Guangzhou's role as a regional hub, as the following extract indicates.

*The opening of the Guangzhou-Shanwei High-speed Railway facilitate the travel of residents along the route and promote coordinated socio-economic development between Shantou and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* (China Railway Guangzhou Group, 2023-12-26).

*Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport handles 63.1735 million passengers in 2023, ranking first among domestic airports for four consecutive years* (Guangzhou Customs, 2024-01-11).

The commercial consumption sub-cluster showcases a vibrant ecosystem, including the upgrading of Baoye Lu night market, as the following extract indicates.

*It integrates modern fusion dining, refined fast-casual brands, and trendy retail spaces, becoming a new culinary and cultural landmark* (GD Today, 2024-02-01).

The co-occurrence of "night market/livable" links commercial vitality to quality of life, as the following extract indicates.

*Such spaces cater to both local residents and tourists, enhancing Guangzhou's appeal as a livable city* (Haizhu District Government, 2024-01-28).

While "tourism/hotel" (85 occurrences) reflects the recovery of tourism supported by policies like the China-Thailand mutual visa exemption, leading to "a surge in Thai tourists visiting Guangzhou, with bookings increasing by over 6 times year-on-year" (Ctrip Group, 2024-01-31). Notably, the interaction between sub-clusters—e.g., "high-speed railway/passenger flow" (97 occurrences), "infrastructure/logistics" (93 occurrences)—underscores synergy between transportation and consumption, as the following extract indicates.

*The completion of the Nansha-Zhongshan Expressway will cut travel time from Nansha to Shenzhen to within 20 minutes, boosting commercial exchanges and consumption between the two cities* (Guangdong Department of Transportation, 2023-11-22).

## **8.2 Discursive Analysis**

Discursive strategies for this theme employ nomination strategies that link urban development to regional connectivity through geopolitical references like "Guangzhou" (18.7% of its total occurrences) and "GBA" (14.4%). Institutional and organizational references, such as "China Railway Guangzhou Group" (178 occurrences, 136 in this theme), "China Southern Airlines" (147 occurrences, 103 in this theme), and local district governments (e.g., Haizhu District Government), concretize infrastructure and commercial projects.

Event and project references, including the "Guangzhou-Shanwei High-speed Railway" (143 occurrences), "Guangzhou Baiyun Railway Station" (118 occurrences), and "Baoye Lu night market upgrade" (86 occurrences), highlight tangible urban improvements, as the following extract indicates.

*The railway station integrates 21 passenger platforms and seven transportation modes, becoming a comprehensive hub* (China Railway Guangzhou Group, 2023-12-26).

Predication strategies rely on positive evaluative adjectives such as "dynamic" (89 occurrences), "livable" (82), "convenient" (77), and "bustling" (43) to describe urban life and infrastructure, with cross-thematic terms like "efficient" (63 occurrences) reinforcing consistency across dimensions, as the following extract indicates.

*Guangzhou Customs provides 24-hour efficient clearance services for fresh and urgent goods* (Guangzhou Customs, 2024-01-11).

Predicative noun phrases like "modern metropolis" (65 occurrences) emphasize comprehensive development, while predicates such as "enhances connectivity" (76 occurrences) and "improves quality of life" (59 occurrences) link infrastructure to resident well-being.

Negative predication are rare and contrastive, as the following extract indicates.

*Despite past traffic congestion, new high-speed railways improved accessibility* (China Railway Guangzhou Group, 2023-12-26).

Argumentation strategies draw on the *topos of numbers*, with key data including "63.17 million passengers handled by Baiyun Airport", "1.1 trillion yuan retail sales (three consecutive years above 1 trillion)" (Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics, 2024-01-29), and "6x year-on-year growth in Thai tourists"; the *topos of usefulness*, highlighting benefits like "improves transportation efficiency" (73 occurrences) via high-speed railways, "boosts consumption" (89 occurrences) through night markets, and "enhances livability" (69 occurrences) via urban renewal; and the *topos of justice*, emphasizing "integrated transportation for all groups" and "commercial spaces catering to residents and tourists" (Haizhu District Government, 2024-01-28).

Intensification strategies use adverbs like "greatly" (73 occurrences) to describe infrastructure impacts and superlatives such as "most" (in "most convenient transportation hub") and "thriving" (48 occurrences) to reinforce urban vitality, while mitigation strategies are minimal, as the following extract indicates.

*Urban renewal is ongoing, with partial projects to be completed in the short term* (Guangzhou Municipal Government, 2024-02-01).

## 9. Pathways to Enhance Guangzhou's Business Image via Government Websites

Enhancing Guangzhou's international business image through government websites relies on three integrated pathways rooted in corpus-derived insights.

Linguistic optimization prioritizes refining high-impact collocations (e.g., "Canton Fair/visa-free transit/customs clearance") and replacing vague intensifiers with data-driven expressions to boost credibility. It also involves enriching communication with enterprise stories to humanize data and adapting discursive strategies to cultural preferences—direct, data-focused narratives for Western audiences and collaboration-centered narratives for Asian audiences—while standardizing multilingual translations of core terms (e.g., "GBA," "BRI").

Website enhancement entails restructuring content into four user-centric modules aligned with the city's core images, each integrating "Core Data Dashboard/Policy Highlights/Case Studies" for intuitive access. Technical adjustments such as compressed media, overseas CDN services, and accessibility features (text-to-speech, adjustable fonts) improve user experience, while interactive upgrades like a 24-hour inquiry platform and success stories submission channel foster engagement.

Cross-dimensional collaboration involves establishing a joint working group to synchronize data and policies across departments, ensuring consistent messaging, and customizing content for target groups—trade-logistics synergy for BRI partners, headquarters incentives for multinationals, and startup support for young talents.

## 10. Conclusion

This study identifies four core business images of Guangzhou—global trade hub, innovation-led tech hub, highly attractive investment destination, dynamic livable metropolis. The integrated theoretical framework (LDA, EUM, DHA) bridges quantitative and qualitative analysis, enriching urban business image research and providing a replicable paradigm for Chinese local government communication. Practically, the findings guide content creation, linguistic optimization, and website upgrading for Guangzhou, with implications for other GBA economic hubs.

Limitations include a focused corpus (government website news, August 2023–June 2024) and lack of audience reception data and cross-city comparisons. Future research should expand the corpus to include social and international media, integrate audience surveys, conduct cross-city analyses, and explore emerging technologies (e.g., large language models) for innovative communication.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Publisher's Note:** All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

## References

- [1] Ameyaw, A.-K. (2023). Spanning the boundaries: International business theories in a complex global environment. *Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. Management*, 22(3), 422-444.
- [2] Asadzade, Z. (2024). THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPETITION IN THE FORMATION OF a FAVORABLE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT. *International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Economy*, 2(46).
- [3] Bangero, A. (2025). Government websites as strategic communication tools: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Digital Government*, 12(1), 45-62.
- [4] BasuThakur, P., & De, S. (2023). Government communication strategy and its reflection on media construction of pandemic: A structured analysis of COVID-19 in india. *Review of Communication*, 23(3), 276-292.
- [5] Blei, D. M., Ng, A. Y., & Jordan, M. I. (2003). Latent dirichlet allocation. *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, 3, 993-1022.
- [6] Brandão, D. de M. (2023). Communication processes in the communication office government speech formats: A discursive analysis of the news published on the rn government portal. *Journal of Latin American Communication Research*, 11(2), 23-46.
- [7] Chen, J. (2021). Research on the construction and communication of urban image. *China Radio & TV Academic Journal*, 5, 127-129.
- [8] Cheng, W. (2006). Describing the extended meanings of lexical cohesion in a corpus of SARS spoken discourse. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 11(3), 325-344.
- [9] Dau, L. A., Moore, E. M., & Newburry, W. (2023). Building international business and societal resilience in an uncertain global environment. *AIB Insights*, 23(3).
- [10] Gao, M. L., & Zhao, H. Y. (2021). Translation methods and skills in the international business environment: A review of Business English Translation Course. *Chinese Journal of Tropical Crops*, 3, 960.
- [11] Gee, J. P. (2013). *The routledge handbook of discourse analysis*. Routledge.
- [12] Hansson, S. (2024). Coercive impoliteness and blame avoidance in government communication. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 58, 100770.
- [13] Hayek, L. (2024). Media framing of government crisis communication during covid-19. *Media and Communication*, 12.
- [14] He, W. L., Xie, H. L., & Feng, G. H. (2018). A review of latent Dirichlet allocation model research. *Journal of Information Resources Management*, 1, 55-64.
- [15] Hou, Z. (2021). Alibaba's media empire dream? A discursive analysis of legitimacy strategies over cross-border media acquisition. *Critical Arts*, 35(1), 49-64.
- [16] Jiang, K., & Jiang, G. Z. (2011). The value and significance of constructing urban image. *Literary Contentions*, 8, 21-22.
- [17] Karlova, O. A. (2024). The impact of global transformations of the business environment on the development of enterprises. *Business Inform*, 6(557), 21-27.
- [18] Kazakova, L., & Moysuk, Y. (2023). COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS. *Herald UNU. International Economic Relations And World Economy*, 49.
- [19] Larsen, M. M., Birkinshaw, J., Zhou, Y. M., & Benito, G. R. G. (2023). Complexity and multinationals. *Global Strategy Journal*, 13(3), 535-551.
- [20] Lerouge, R., Lema, M. D., & Arnaboldi, M. (2023). The role played by government communication on the level of public fear in social media: An investigation into the covid-19 crisis in italy. *Government Information Quarterly*, 40(2), 101798.
- [21] Li, J. S., & Di, H. M. (2025). The impact of the international business environment on the strategic decisions of multinational enterprises. *China Business*, 9, 158-160.
- [22] Liu, E. Z. (1997). Ten factors influencing the contemporary international business environment. *Foreign Economics & Management*, 10, 25-28+20.
- [23] Liu, X. Y., & Cui, Y. H. (2021). Multiple paths and future directions of government communication research. *Journal of Renmin University of China*, 5, 107-116.
- [24] Liu, Y. F. (2023). A re-examination of extended meaning units. *Journal of Foreign Languages (Journal of Shanghai International Studies University)*, 4, 17-26.
- [25] Lu, L., Xu, J., & Wei, J. (2023). Understanding the effects of the textual complexity on government communication: Insights from china's online public service platform. *Telematics and Informatics*, 83, 102028.
- [26] Meyer, C. F. (2023). *English corpus linguistics*. Cambridge University Press.
- [27] Mo, Z. Y. (2013). A study on the communication power of Chinese urban image [PhD Thesis]. Wuhan University.
- [28] Negro, I. (2024). The linguistic construction of political identity: The case of catalonia. *Círculo de Lingüística Aplicada a La Comunicación*, 99, 223-232.
- [29] Pan, J. (2025). A comparative study of CSR image construction of guangzhou-based enterprises during the public health crisis-a case study of the official website news reports of GAC group and GPH group. *Modern Linguistics*, 13(09), 437-447.
- [30] Reisigl, M., & Wodak, R. (2009). *Discourse and discrimination: Rhetorics of racism and antisemitism*. Routledge.

[31] Ren, C. W., & Luo, J. W. (2021). A corpus-based study on the image of Guangzhou in English media. *Frontiers of Corpus Research*, 0, 124-134.

[32] Savoia, E., Piltch-Loeb, R., Stanton, E. H., & Koh, H. K. (2023). Learning from COVID-19: Government leaders' perspectives to improve emergency risk communication. *Globalization and Health*, 19(1).

[33] Sinclair, J. M. (2004). Trust the text: Language, corpus and discourse. Routledge.

[34] Tian, J. (2004). An analysis of the concept of government communication. *Study & Exploration*, 2, 35-36.

[35] Wodak, R. (2009). The discursive construction of national identity (2nd ed.). Edinburgh University Press.

[36] Xu, L. Q., & Wan, T. (2007). Multicultural values in the international business environment. *Jiangxi Social Sciences*, 6, 207-210.

[37] Xu, X., Wu, F. X., & Wang, B. (2021). Government big data empowering urban innovation: Theoretical mechanism and empirical evidence. *Economic Theory and Business Management*, 12, 42-56.

[38] Xue, M. Z. (2002). On the image construction and communication design of modern cities. *Journal of Shanghai University (Social Sciences Edition)*, 4, 106-112.

[39] Yan, J. (2024). The construction of harbin's image in chinese and western media: A corpus-based critical discourse analysis. *Journal of Education and Culture Studies*, 8(2), p65.

[40] Yang, M., & Wang, M. (2019). An exploration of the philosophical and sociological ideas in Ruth Wodak's discourse-historical approach. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 3, 347-356+479.

[41] Yavetz, G., & Aharony, N. (2023). Information under lockdown: A content analysis of government communication strategies on facebook during the COVID-19 outbreak. *Heliyon*, 9(4), e15562.

[42] Ye, X. B. (2012). A study on mass media and urban image communication [PhD Thesis]. Wuhan University.

[43] Zhang, H. J., & Zhang, Y. (2013). A theoretical analysis from urban image construction to regional image communication. *Press Circles*, 21, 20-23.

[44] Zhang, X. Y. (2016). On cross-cultural communication strategies in the context of international economy, trade and business. *Journal of Hubei University of Economics (Humanities and Social Sciences Edition)*, 5, 59-60.

[45] Zhang, X. J., & Xiao, J. L. (2025). A study on the construction of Guangzhou's international urban image in reports related to Guangzhou in mainstream Japanese newspapers. *Media Forum*, 12, 32-38.

## APPENDIX

**Table 4: Frequency and Distribution of Geopolitical References**

Geopolitical Reference	Total Frequency	Thematic Category Distribution (Frequency/Proportion)			
		International Trade and Exhibition	Innovation Drive	Investment Attraction	Urban Vitality
Guangzhou	1,286	412 (32.1%)	305 (23.7%)	328 (25.5%)	241 (18.7%)
GBA	873	319 (36.5%)	201 (23.0%)	227 (26.0%)	126 (14.4%)
BRI	546	289 (52.9%)	87 (15.9%)	113 (20.7%)	57 (10.5%)
South China	324	98 (30.2%)	76 (23.5%)	89 (27.5%)	61 (18.8%)
Pearl River Delta	287	83 (28.9%)	65 (22.6%)	79 (27.5%)	60 (20.9%)

**Table 5: Top 10 Institutional/Organizational References (Frequency)**

Reference	Frequency	Thematic Category Focus (Top 2)
Guangzhou Municipal Government	428	Investment Attraction (187), Urban Vitality (124)
Guangdong Provincial Department of Commerce	315	International Trade and Exhibition (142), Investment Attraction (108)
Canton Fair (China Import and Export Fair)	297	International Trade and Exhibition (283), Investment Attraction (14)
Multinational enterprises	268	Investment Attraction (156), Innovation Drive (87)
High-tech enterprises	243	Innovation Drive (169), Investment Attraction (62)
Guangzhou Port Group	196	International Trade and Exhibition (153), Urban Vitality (31)
China Railway Guangzhou Group	178	Urban Vitality (136), International Trade and Exhibition (29)
Guangzhou Customs	165	International Trade and Exhibition (132), Urban Vitality (21)
GAC Group (Guangzhou Automobile Group)	152	Innovation Drive (98), International Trade and Exhibition (41)
China Southern Airlines	147	Urban Vitality (103), International Trade and Exhibition (34)

**Table 6: Top 10 Event/Project References (Frequency)**

Reference	Frequency	Thematic Category Focus (Top 2)
134th Canton Fair	289	International Trade and Exhibition (276), Investment Attraction (13)
GBA Global Investment Promotion Conference (2023)	176	Investment Attraction (159), International Trade and Exhibition (17)
Guangzhou-Shanwei High-speed Railway	143	Urban Vitality (128), International Trade and Exhibition (15)
Nansha International Port and Shipping Center	127	International Trade and Exhibition (89), Investment Attraction (38)
Guangzhou Baiyun Railway Station	118	Urban Vitality (105), International Trade and Exhibition (13)
China Innovation and Entrepreneurship Fair (CIEF 2023)	109	Innovation Drive (92), Investment Attraction (17)
144-hour Visa-free Transit Policy	98	International Trade and Exhibition (87), Urban Vitality (11)
Fully Driverless Taxi Pilot (Nansha)	93	Innovation Drive (76), Urban Vitality (17)
Huangsha Aquatic Products Market Upgrade	86	Urban Vitality (73), Investment Attraction (13)
Sino-Singapore Guangzhou Knowledge City	82	Innovation Drive (57), Investment Attraction (25)

**Table 7: Top 15 Positive Predicative Expressions by Thematic Category**

Thematic Category	Predicative Expressions (Frequency)
International Trade and Exhibition	vibrant (87), open (76), convenient (69), efficient (63), large-scale (58), cross-border (52), high-volume (49), global (47), accessible (43), smooth (39), mutually beneficial (36), dynamic (33), inclusive (31), well-connected (29), prosperous (27)
Innovation Drive	innovative (93), intelligent (86), high-tech (78), advanced (72), digital (67), cutting-edge (61), efficient (58), smart (53), tech-driven (49), innovative (47), sustainable (43), green (39), pioneering (36), transformative (33), future-oriented (31)
Investment Attraction	favorable (91), attractive (85), high-quality (79), preferential (73), stable (68), promising (62), robust (57), supportive (53), inclusive (49), prosperous (46), dynamic (43), well-developed (39), competitive (36), reliable (33), lucrative (31)
Urban Vitality	dynamic (89), livable (82), convenient (77), modern (73), vibrant (68), efficient (63), well-equipped (59), accessible (55), comfortable (51), thriving (48), bustling (43), green (39), integrated (36), renewed (33), user-friendly (31)