КИТАЙСЬКА МОВА ТА ЛІТЕРАТУРА

CONTEMPORARY CHINESE-LANGUAGE DISCOURSE ON CLASSICAL CHINESE PAINTING AND CALLIGRAPHY: A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNICATION SUCCESS

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The study of the vernacular discourse of professional groups promises rich insights into terminology usage, tenor dynamics, and ideas about the field.

This research is stimulated by the inquiries of the arts and culture museums' audiences eager to discover current attitudes towards traditional Chinese arts within the Sinosphere.

It compares the Putonghua discourse of two groups of Chinese artists: established painters and calligraphers from the PRC and online content creators at various career stages. It examines their attitudes toward traditional painting and calligraphy and the language devices they use to express these attitudes, identifying both similarities and differences in ideas and speech tenor. The multimodal aspect of online publication is considered too.

The study reveals a key difference in attitudes: established artists view artistic practices as "hard work", while online creators frame them as a "source of enjoyment". Linguistically, online creators avoid archaic grammar; speak in neutral tone to appeal to broader audiences, they occasionally use archaic lexes in artistic names. Established artists frequently employ archaic vocabulary and grammar deriving from the prestige language of *wenyan*.

Yet similarities prevail over differences. Both groups take pride in their artistic heritage, viewing their art as a marker of patriotism and a device of self perfection. Rhetorically, both use metaphors from other industries and create puns. Precision in artistic terminology is highly valued by both groups and their audiences, as it signals professionalism and enhances communication. Both groups enrich their discourse by using synonyms for common hypernyms.

Using inductive methods, these findings provide qualitative characteristics of contemporary Chinese-language discourse on traditional painting and calligraphy. This discourse demonstrates richness, adaptability, effectiveness in community building, and potential for cross-cultural communication. The summary of its messages translated into Ukrainian may help the Ukrainian auditory get a deeper understanding of the artistic processes in the Sinosphere.

Key words: Chinese language, Chinese calligraphy, Chinese painting, vernacular discourse, terminology, rhetoric, multimodality.

СУЧАСНИЙ КИТАЙСЬКОМОВНИЙ ДИСКУРС ПРО КЛАСИЧНІ КИТАЙСЬКІ ЖИВОПИС І КАЛІГРАФІЮ: ЦІЛЬОВЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ КОМУНІКАТИВНОГО УСПІХУ

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Дослідження вернакулярного дискурсу професійних груп має потенціал пролити світло на особливості застосування термінології, лексичну тональність цього дискурсу та погляди фахівців на свою царину.

Поточне дослідження порівнює дискурс мовою *путунхуа* двох груп митців: визнаних живописців та каліграфів з КНР і творців онлайн-контенту на різних стадіях творчої кар'єри з різних регіонів. Вивчено їхнє ставлення до практикованих ними традиційних мистецтв, а також вжиті мовні засоби; вказано на подібності і розбіжності як у висловлених ідеях, так і стилях мовлення. Дослідження бере до уваги і мультимодальність онлайн-публікацій.

Якісний аналіз виявив ключову розбіжність у ставленні до творчого процесу: відомі митці вважають його важкою роботою, а творці онлайн-контенту визначають його як джерело задоволення. У мовному аспекті творці онлайн-контенту уникають архаїчних граматичних конструкцій і висловлюються у нейтральному тоні, прагнучи звучати зрозуміло до ширших аудиторій, проте можуть вживати архаїзми у своїх псевдонімах. На відміну від них, визнані митці часто вживають архаїзми та архаїчні граматичні конструкції мови *веньянь*.

Проте спільні риси переважають над розбіжностями. Обидві групи пишаються художньою спадщиною, розглядають свою творчість як маркер патріотизму і спосіб самовдосконалення. Щодо риторики, обидві групи використовують метафори з інших сфер діяльності та створюють каламбури. Точність професійної термінології високо ціниться обома групами та їхніми аудиторіями: вона повідомляє про професіоналізм і вдосконалює спілкування. Обидві групи збагачують мовлення синонімами для розповсюджених гіперонімів.

Індуктивний метод дозволяє зробити висновок про якісні характеристики сучасного китайськомовного дискурсу про традиційні живопис і каліграфію. Цей дискурс демонструє багатство засобів, гнучкість, ефективність для організації спільнот і потенціал для міжкультурної комунікації. Підсумок його повідомлень, перекладений українською мовою, може допомогти українській аудиторії глибше зрозуміти творчі процеси Сіносфери.

Ключові слова: китайська мова, китайська каліграфія, китайський живопис, вернакулярний дискурс, термінологія, риторика, мультимодальність.

Arts and languages: contradictions and interplay

The importance of visual arts in cross-cultural communication is a subject of many studies by authors of diverse cultural backgrounds [Al-Zadjali, 2024; Wang Y., 2024]. These publications pinpoint the artists' role in influencing the audiences and creating a "universal language" of art that facilitates mutual understanding and appreciation among cultures [Wang Y., 2024].

Simultaneously, other studies reveal inconsistency between the theory and practices of verbal cross-cultural communication showing multiple issues in fundamental human interactions. They suggest implementing educational programs would improve the use of language in navigating cultural differences [Smith, 2024].

Comparing findings in these two fields, one may ponder a grotesque question: if artistic expression is more powerful than speech, should we delegate the communicators' roles to artists instead of implementing pragmatic competence training for multicultural environments?

The answer to these questions is obvious: cross-cultural communication cannot be left to imaginary powers of aesthetics. While artistic practices certainly influence the general public's worldview, it is worth noting that one should take a broader view of the roles of languages and artistic creations and their interplay. Only the combination of the two may ameliorate the current state of affairs in cross-cultural communication.

It is also obvious that the ability to appreciate art does not make cross-cultural communication seamless in all stances. Yet it is still true to state that learning about the art of other cultures is one of the prerequisites to better cross-cultural communication at least in the sphere of humanities.

Art historians, art museum curators, and facilitators should work together to be the most reliable sources of information on world cultures. Being aware of the humble scope of their influence, yet minding the high responsibility of their roles [Whitehead, 2012], these professionals can guide audiences in the right direction. Thus, the observations, reflections, and intense work of the museum facilitators aimed at finding the best practices for informing the patrons on arts of diverse cultures can contribute to an overall improvement in cross-cultural communication.

As it was already mentioned, understanding their responsibility facilitators should be cautious and ethical in planning any statement on the art of other cultures. It is important to analyze the pre-existing critical discourse on a certain culture's art form both from inside the culture that created it and by art historians from other cultures. This analysis may reveal not only the best practices, but false or obsolete statements, messiness in terminology, and other undesirable phenomena. The process of re-evaluating the ideas on art is endless, yet necessary. The most sophisticated ideas eventually come to the vocabulary which does not solely denote artistic mediums, genres, and styles but may also (either voluntarily or involuntarily) help to extol or criticize works of art, define the elitist and vulgar, build hierarchies of mediums and subjects.

It is also worth keeping in mind that the museum patrons have already been exposed to certain vocabularies that instilled in them some ideas about the arts of other cultures. Engaging in conversations with the museum patrons the museum facilitators may hear a variety of statements and questions varying in tone from exaltation to scepticism, based either on the patrons' previously perceived conceptions or on immediate impressions from the museum visit. Yet these comments are always valuable as they prove the importance of the facilitators' work and give momentum to further research and conclusions.

For example, learning about the impressively long history of classical Chinese painting and calligraphy the museum patrons often ask about the current perception of the traditional artistic principles and practices among the contemporary Chinese. Dialogues with the museum patrons and specialists in the Chinese language and culture and analysis of discourse on classical Chinese art in the Ukrainian media [Logvyn, 2023] encouraged the author of the present paper to seek new ways to contribute to the improvement of cross-cultural communication in humanities. This is how the idea of a thesaurus was born, namely a Chinese-Ukrainian thesaurus on traditional arts of China. The thesaurus is planned to become a practical tool for translators, art historians, museum workers, journalists, professors, and students in humanities.

The lexicographical task narrows down the presentation of all the findings to the form of a dictionary which is an endeavour per se. Many observations made in the process of compiling the dictionary are left on the margins of the lexicographical work. Yet these findings enrich the author's understanding of the current artistic processes in China and Chinese-speaking communities around the world. It can also provide more insights for scholars studying the wider subject of identity, self-representation, and even marketing strategies. The same findings will also help in selecting representation methods and apt narratives on classical Chinese art for the museum projects. These future narratives will surely be edited according to the current international community standards style-wise and adapted to the needs and level of knowledge of the museum patrons.

On the history of discourse on art in China

China has an outstandingly long history of critical writing on art. As Susan Bush and Hsio-yen Shih admitted more than four decades ago, the classical art term base, from the time of its emerging, was similar to one of poetics and music, and all of the above were grounded in the ideas of natural philosophy [Bush, Shih, 2012, *6*]. The same authors note that "the meanings of terms have evolved over a thousand years of use". By commenting on the texts of predecessors, the authors of critical discourse have been constantly actualizing the said terms for centuries. All authors of treatises on visual arts were practisers of painting and calligraphy themselves as their elitist environment expected of them.

The development of printing, circulation of manuals on painting, and overall democratization of the artistic process made elitist art more accessible to the general public in the late Ming period. This influenced the quality of critical writings, even stirring discussion among elites claiming that painting stagnated when turning popular [Park 2011]. In the same period, the elites started carving seals themselves thus transferring their calligraphy creations onto a different medium than silk and paper without the mediation of craftsmen [Bai, Finlay, 1993]. The continuation of this practice will be reflected in this article later on.

Still, until the 20th century treatises on painting and calligraphy in China were mostly written either in the archaic prestige language of *wenyan* 文言 or using a hybrid of both vernacular and "high" variants of the Chinese language called *banwen banbai* 半文半白.

After a turbulent era of transitioning to the vernacular language *baihua* in literature [Xu, 2009], a modernist approach to painting [Cahill, 2005], a period of copying the Soviet "socialist realism" and experimentations of with newest approaches and mediums [Sullivan, 1999], the classical Chinese arts (also called traditional arts) of painting and calligraphy are still thriving as well as critical discourse on them, especially in the Chinese language.

In the 21st century, it is hard to estimate the number of people currently practicing one or both of these arts. Nevertheless, one may boldly state after Prof. Guo Jiulin that "now is the new Golden age of Chinese calligraphy" [Guo, 2018]. Taking into account the PRC state agenda, it might be perceived as a message too full of pathos; however, the state support in the PRC creates a very favourable environment for practicing traditional arts. All formats, from concise manuals on painting and calligraphy techniques to monographs like The Art of Calligraphy edited by Wang Dongling [Wang D., 2001] are published in abundance. Across the Taiwan

Strait, there is also demand and proposal for literature targeted both at practitioners and aspiring connoisseurs of Chinese calligraphy. For example, the witty and approachable style of How to Understand Calligraphy by Hou Jiliang is a big step in making the subject clear and enjoyable [Hou, 2021].

Interest in traditional arts is never exhausted in Chinese-speaking communities and among people studying the Chinese language and culture worldwide. Many courses on the Chinese language as the second language at formal institutions incorporate calligraphy training [Li, 2021]. Online publications of various mediums also help in discovering and practicing the said arts.

This brings us to the special trait of the current Chinese-language discourse on classical Chinese arts. It uses new mediums of communication such as video content on user-generated content sharing platforms.

Thus, the current vernacular Chinese discourse on the classical Chinese arts in various mediums is an interesting object of study from a social linguistics point of view: the consistency of terminology, the registers of narration, the rhetorical devices, and the modal affordances of the new mediums with the potential to create an atmosphere of trust and inclusion in various communities both in real life and online.

Sources of data, objects, methods, and goals

The above-mentioned circumstances and specifics of professional quarters involved make it true to state that this case study is practice-led research.

The objects of study are the archaic artistic vocabulary along with the rhetoric devices and usage of prestige language. The descriptive method is applied to collect linguistic evidence pinpointing the abovementioned terminology, rhetoric devices, and elements of prestige language in the artists' communication. All this evidence will define the most prominent features of the contemporary vernacular discourse on traditional painting and calligraphy. This task may become a goal per se, with the words and idioms entering the future thesaurus. However, the main goal of the study is to prove the efficiency of this register which is both technical and archaic in actualizing knowledge of traditional arts in the current communicational settings. For this reason, the dialogic nature of the discourse is highlighted and analyzed to find the traits of efficiency in communication. The results will allow inductive conclusions on the quality and efficiency of the said vocabulary and rhetoric.

Primary sources are given priority: these are texts of various lengths, unique titles of videos, video narration scripts as well as online conversations. The materials for analysis are obtained from official publications along with multimodal publications on platforms for user-generated content sharing. The common trait of these materials is the nature of their authorship, namely the vernacular texts created within the artistic communities practicing Chinese painting and calligraphy, the latter including the art of seal carving.

There is a potential to reveal interesting dynamics in communication by comparing the discourse on art by two major categories of creators: the well-established artists residing in the PRC and the online content creators from various regions and at different stages of their artistic and teaching careers.

Within both groups, there are also elements worth juxtaposing. In the group of renowned artists from the PRC, one may either introduce another person's

accomplishments or reveal insights into personal artistic endeavours. These discourses may vary in general subjects, social tone (register), and vocabulary. In the case of online content creators, the means of representing classical arts can be compared to the feedback given by the online audience. The inner dynamics of these situational groups differ significantly. However, by pinpointing differences and similarities in discourse produced by these two groups, one may discover the vocabulary and rhetoric devices that promise to bring the most success in communication on the subject of classical Chinese arts.

Last but not least, all the findings will be translated and implemented in texts and speeches when introducing the Ukrainian audience to the current artistic practices in China and Chinese-speaking communities around the world, thus answering the question about the trends in development and perception of the classical arts in the contemporary Sinosphere.

Officially-recognized practitioners of traditional painting and calligraphy

Official publications like catalogues of exhibitions provide a lot of material to analyze. Take as an example a catalogue of the Fifth Lanting Chinese Calligraphy Award 第五届中国书法兰亭奖 that took place more than a decade ago in the PRC. Most artists featured in this publication [Zhongguo Shufajia Xiehui, 2015] continue their artistic endeavours nowadays and appear in the Chinese media quite often. The catalogue features not only 12 prize-acceptance speeches 获奖感言 but also 12 introductory articles 颁奖词 for each creator written by their fellow artistic community members.

The implicit and explicit messages of these texts are considered first. In the introductory texts, four of the 12 prize winners are complimented for both sticking to tradition and being original and innovative at the same time. Almost every introductory article mentions the hard work and enthusiasm of the nominee using words like "enthusiasm and persistency" 勤奋执著, "hardships of a creative process" 筚路蓝缕.

Two creators are prised for being modest; in both cases using an idiom (成语 *chengyu*) for a virtue that doesn't manifest itself loudly but gets recognition, literary "Peach and plum trees do not have to talk, yet the world beats a path to them" 桃李不言，下自成蹊. This *chengyu* appears in literature as early as the Western Han period, Records of the Grand Historian by Sima Qian 西汉·司马迁《史记·李将军列传》.

Another interesting example of a rhetorical device is a *chengyu* 砥砺德行 suggesting high aspirations and rigorous self-perfection, coined by famous philosopher and educator Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 (1868–1940). It is applied to Mr. Li Gangtian 李刚田, the seal carver. Within the context of Mr. Li's artistic medium and his characteristics of a "role model in the contemporary calligraphy circles in both artistic performance and ethics" 当代书坛德艺双馨的楷模, this *chenyu* becomes a metaphoric pun implying that the high virtues of Mr. Li are literary "chiselled out" by his diligent work with a carving tool. The same is true for another seal carver Mr. Han Tianheng 韩天衡 who gets the characteristic of somebody who "worked hard with a carving tool, [his] iron pen moving in all directions" 刻苦磨砺，铁笔纵横. A more precise translation of these expressions would create an interesting task for a language and culture specialist.

Unfortunately, there is also a sample of a new linguistic reality highlighting the gender inequalities that linger for millennia: 周慧珺 Zhou Huijun, the female

calligrapher, is addressed by an honorific for males 先生. This attitude was already criticized within the Sinosphere [Di, 2013], so it is not the sample to be followed in the museum work while introducing Ukrainian audiences to the contemporary Chinese discourse on traditional arts.

The discourse of renowned contemporary creators demonstrates panoply of personal inclinations to either quoting ancient classics or speaking out original thoughts. The idea of "hard work" reverberates in their speeches through idioms like "road full of hardships" – 趟苦旅 and 艰苦跋涉: "the arts and literature are called arduous since old times" 文艺之道古来向称难矣; "practice calligraphy vigorously" 临池 (the latter will be elaborated later on).

Below are a few representative examples of individual ideas declared and rhetorical devices used by artists in their prize-acceptance speeches.

The speech of Mr. Han Tianheng 韩天衡 is very aphoristic and based on archaic grammar. A pun he creates balances between a chiasmus and antanaclasis (depending on verbal or textual mode) and sounds like a tongue twister: "A prize is a credit given and turns you into a warrior" "奖"者，"将"也，是将你－军. The repetition of 奖 and 将 is based both on phonetics and similarities in radicals in characters; – 军 is a metaphor for loyal service to the matter of arts. Mr. Han also describes a critical approach to his work as "land cultivation" 耕耘.

There is a metaphor for the diligent practice of calligraphy in the speech by Mr. Zhang Kuiguang 张旭光. Saying 临池 (literary "facing a pond") he implies that the audience is too familiar with the story of Zhang Zhi of Eastern Han 东汉张芝 who was practicing calligraphy so intensely that he made the water turn black by washing brushes in a pond.

Mr. Liu Yiwen刘－闻 states that "entering old and emerging new one may achieve harmony in the essence of the work and find the right language, as we strive for it for ages" 作书入古出新，言气质、言神韵，进言境界，是为吾辈－生之求. This is a century-late dialogue with Wang Guowei 王国维 (1877–1927) following his ideas and vocabulary on culture.

Mr. Xu Benyi 徐本 – goes beyond this and finds a way to have an imaginary dialogue with the genius of calligraphy Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303–361) by reciting his poetry and showing gratitude to Wang Xizhi personally along with the contemporary institution of Lanting Chinese Calligraphy Award.

Meanwhile, Dr. Xu Liming 徐利明 shows that he is well-versed in world art history by saying: "The prize is transitional, [but] the matter is eternal" 获奖是暂时的，事业是永远的. This matter, as easy to guess, is a matter of art. This sentence is a paraphrase of the Latin "Ars longa, vita brevis est".

Still, Mr. Xiong Boqi 熊伯齐 describes painting and calligraphy as a "matter of social and national importance" 社会之事、民族之事.

Findings for officially-recognized practitioners of traditional arts

All of the above allows for the conclusion that the speeches of renowned contemporary artists are thoughtfully edited to demonstrate etiquette, knowledge of classics, and patriotism. It is also desirable to share philosophical reflections on the nature of art or even start an imaginary conversation with the geniuses of the past.

Unrelated to the main ideas in the speech, five of 12 artists use archaic vocabulary and grammar patterns. These are markers of sophisticated personal style helping to comply with the very atmosphere of this extraordinary event.

As with any group of texts targeted at an audience of professionals, these speeches contain related terminology: "seal carver" 篆刻家, "artistic style", 艺术风貌, "calligraphy circles" 书坛. However, when everyone is "on the same page" it is desirable to stand out by using rare synonyms for usual terms. For this reason, the 书法 for "calligraphy" is often substituted by 翰墨.

It is worth noting that both the prize-acceptance speeches and introductory articles emphasize diligence and effort. One's artistic endeavours and loyal attitude are often metaphorically compared to other professions like being a soldier or cultivating a field. Both the ideas and the language devices to convey them are out-of-ordinary.

Comparison of the tone and individual style of introductory articles and the prize-acceptance speeches often demonstrates sophisticated interplay even in contrasting ideas (for example, if an artist is lauded for their achievements, they have to demonstrate humility in their acceptance speech) and individual traits of discourse. The omnipresence of this elevated register proves the communicational success of the said tools: professional terminology of archaic origin and intentional usage of archaic lexes and grammar.

At the same time, within this communicative situation, all participants were facing the audience well-trained in their native culture that has the elitist origin. Thus, the whole communication got traits of phatic communion with the goal to sustain the professional community.

Now it is intriguing to consider the communicative devices used by another creative group and try to define their communicative success. This group addresses a vast audience of unknown cultural backgrounds.

Creators (authors) sharing their art on user-generated content sharing platforms

Authors posting videos of creating classical Chinese paintings and calligraphy often show the process of trial and error. They face a potentially uncountable number of audiences that are not necessarily as welcoming as a finite elitist group in real life. Unlike an award gala where the register of interactions is predefined as "pure positivity" towards selected artworks and creators, the videos online are open to criticism. Every publication online renders a certain vulnerability of its creators.

Yet the creators of online content still possess more devices to counter the potentially adverse influence. These are not the Internet or national networks with the ability to create exclusive groups. Contrary to restrictive methods, this is the creative potential, namely the multimodal aspect of any video that includes aural and spoken elements, texts, pictorial elements (the emerging artwork along with emojis, GIFs, inserts), filmed movements of a calligrapher, and their body language. Orchestrated to create various interplays among the modes, these short videos are sophisticated creations per se.

This part of the current research aims to provide a qualitative analysis of the vocabulary and prevailing tenor of the discourse of a group of creators of traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy who disseminate their creations on online platforms. It also aims to give insights into their self-representation and attitudes toward art, classics, and modernity and to prove the communicative success of using traditional art terminology in conversations with online audiences.

For this case study, 10 unique YouTube channels and 10 unique Bilibili (both international and Chinese editions) accounts were randomly chosen. The full lists

of them are added in the Appendices section. It is worth noting that some creators prefer to post their videos on all available platforms. These repetitions are not counted as unique accounts. Although creators are inconsistent in revealing their details (education, age, gender, citizenship), there are still common criteria for choosing the sources. All creators have been posting regularly for the last three years and have over one thousand subscribers each. The lengths of videos vary a lot. One video may be just one minute while another video on the same channel may be about 40 minutes.

A note on the artistic names and nicknames of creators: here the English transcriptions or translations of the names are proposed before the original names in either Traditional or Simplified Chinese characters.

The linguistic evidence was collected from both aural and textual modes of the videos. The textual mode includes titles of channels, artistic names of their creator(s), mottos and texts of self-representation in the "About" section, titles of recent videos, and captions in the videos and comments of the online audience. The aural mode includes narration and music.

Although the scenarios used by the online creators are outside of the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that creators of videos on the classical Chinese arts often pinpoint important stages of the creative process the same way the other creators' comment on the stages of their projects in crafts or fashion. This way these videos might be considered tutorials. However, this practice is not a regulation to comply with but a handy framework to use or abandon at will. For example, a calligrapher may comment on the meaning of a famous quote he copies rather than on the movements of his brush or stages of completing his creation. Some painting and calligraphy teachers may film separate videos to share their thoughts on the importance of calligraphy, aesthetics, and similar subjects often organizing topics in a "question and answer" format. There are no demonstrations of any creative process in such videos. Some creators may also share their experimentations with other mediums on the same channel. These are out of scope of this research too.

Another trait of the videos is the musical "backdrop". Eight of 10 YouTube authors and seven of 10 Bilibili authors supplement their videos with music, mostly classical Chinese and sometimes popular Chinese tunes (five of eight on YouTube and six of seven on YouTube). Many prefer playing music to create a certain atmosphere and subtitle the videos with apt note-like comments. Consistent narration is less popular. However, short texts and spoken remarks have powerful messages.

In contrast to well-established artists from the PRC who emphasize hard work, many online creators state or suggest that creating art is easy and enjoyable. The creator Teacher Yang Instructing on Chinese Painting 教国画的杨老师 is a good example of consistency in creating an inclusive environment throughout her publications. Her channel description in the "About" section is short, "Elitist calligraphy and painting Teacher Yang teaches painting from the beginning. Painting is not as difficult as you think. School: Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts. Occupation: School of Arts Management and Art Education" 青轩书画杨老师零基础学画画，画画没你想的那么难。学校：广州美术学院。职业：艺术管理与教育学院。 It is noticeable that encouraging phrases are used at the beginning of the introduction, before informing the audience of the creator's affiliation. Being consistent in creating an atmosphere of encouragement suggested in the "About" section,

many of the videos on a channel have reassuring phrases in their titles, for example, "Chinese painting tutorial. How to draw pine trees: from the trunk to the branches, and finally to the pine needles. The steps are clear" 国画教程，松树画法，从树干，到树枝，最后勾松针，步骤清晰明了. For teaching purposes, special subtitles are added in the videos to highlight the names of art supplies, brush strokes, and creative process steps.

Another creator invented different tactics to make classical art approachable. Li Qingyi 李青仪 is very loyal to the traditional Chinese art styles and techniques in her creations but often adds an unexpected absurdist twist to a composition, like a contemporary Western cartoon character present in a classical scene of the Chinese literati gathering. Sometimes the musical backdrop of energizing melody with disharmonious noises has comic effects too. Language-wise, the artist incorporates captions with precise terms for the creative process stages (putting a seal print 钤印), art supplies (cinnabar paste 朱砂), and artwork elements (a seal with an image instead of an inscription 肖形印). Other captions contain puns such as 骑元气. This phrase could have two translations: "to feel the eternal energy" and "to flex the spirit of the Yuan dynasty paintings". The author's painting of a dragon follows the manner of 陳容 Chen Rong, a Yuan-dynasty painter. Thus, both translations are valid. Using classical art terminology and intellectual puns Li Qingyi educates and entertains her audience.

To attract more followers, the content creators posting videos on YouTube add hashtags and keywords in multiple languages to their "About" sections and video titles. Sometimes up to four languages (Chinese, English, Korean, and Hindi) are used in one title. This is the case on a channel Academy of Modern Chinese Painting 现代中国画研究院. Thanks to algorithms of social media these videos often get viewed by the other cultures' representatives and receive their appraisals. The same creator claims to revolutionize the traditional art. In the "About" section he writes "A reformer of Chinese painting, a member of the Chinese Modern Chinese Painting Research Society" 中国绘画的改革家，中华现代国画研究学会暨.

Still, there is room and occasion to demonstrate patriotism. The creator Mohe Calligraphy 墨河书法 on the Bilibili platform has a motto "Write Chinese characters well, be a good Chinese" 写好中国字，做好中国人. The motto is the only available information about the creator. The creator's name is a pun suggesting that 墨河 is either the name of a river or a metaphorical enormous flow of ink. (One may even compare it to the proverbial pond turning black from the brushes washed in it, 临池).

Others are more subtle and didactic at the same time. The creator The Fourth Year of Guo State 虢國四歲 has a motto "Learn and create to cultivate your body and mind. Conceive the truth to roam freely" 读书写字修身炼心，明悟真理四方游行.

In the Internet realm, it is also desirable to show enthusiasm but sometimes enthusiasm is conveyed using vulgarisms. The creator Pin Hong Shu Yuan 品虹书苑 titles their short video "Eagerly Painted the Peach Blossom Spring" 手痒写的桃花源记 where 手痒 for "eagerly" literary means "to have itching hands".

For some, being approachable may equal a lower register of communication. The artist Xuan Minhua 轩敏华 on channel Ink Dot Classroom 墨点课堂 in a video on copying a classical sample (the full title is "The Mustard Seed Garden. Plum, Orchid, Bamboo, and Chrysanthemum. Xuan Minhua teaches you painting techniques based on a collection of traditional Chinese paintings"

【芥子园】梅兰竹菊轩敏华教你绘画技巧国画之典藏 uses colloquial expressions in his narration on the tools chosen: "What is this kind of brush used for?" 这支笔, 它的用途是干嘛用的?

There is commercial slang used metaphorically. The creators of a Bilibili channel Superdream 超能梦境 write in the title of their video, "If you master these techniques, the planes of the Chinese landscapes will become an easy task for you, no kidding" 学会这些技法，画国画山水的远景就简单了，纯干货. Translated above as "no kidding" 纯干货 literary means "dry goods". This initially narrow commercial term became an advertisement "buzzword" acquiring a broader semantics from "high quality, no fake goods" to "something trustworthy". The same creators have video tutorials targeted at children, for example, a video with a title "National painting for children, a lesson on campsis flowers. Easy to learn. Come on, children, let's try it!" 儿童国画教程凌霄花，简单好学，小朋友快来试一试吧.

The names of the creators deserve a separate remark. Many lexes and idioms used for artistic names have archaic implications: "study" 斋, "noble person" 君, "heir" 公子、"facing a pond" 临池. They define creators as people belonging to the tradition.

The number and content of comments for each video are quite unpredictable. The demographics and professional background of the audience is even more obscure than in cases of many online content creators. However, it would be reasonable to assume that the authors of comments are people interested in learning about and practicing Chinese painting and calligraphy.

Many creators on Bilibili publish recordings of their live streams that incorporate live feedback from their audience. Other feedback can be seen as regular comments under the videos. Many comments are multimodal. Emojis are inserted at different parts of texts to convey prosody. This way they may be considered the novel phatic communion devices. Here, some samples may suggest ideas and registers of interaction common for conversations among creators and their audience.

The abovementioned video on landscapes by Superdream 超能梦境 gets questions on materials and techniques subtleties. The user 星河皓月逍遥游 asks, "Teacher, what kind of paper do you use? What kind of paint is used?" 老师你用的纸是什么纸呀？颜料是用的什么颜料啊？

Surprisingly, euphemisms for obscene language appear in comments on Bilibili, even as a device of approval. The very presence of a vulgar register contradicts the idea that the platform users practice self-censorship and the comments undergo strict moderation.

While sometimes vulgar register may be used to show excitement, not all comments of a regular social tone mean appraisal. The user with a nickname 绵羊舌头长 criticises the pace of brushwork and resulting readability of a New Year couplet (对联), the recent creation by the above-mentioned 墨河书法 titled "That's the New Year couplet common people enjoy. It suits any household, and its content is very lofty" 这才是老百姓喜欢的对联，家家户户都合适，内容非常高大上. In their words, "[You] write faster and faster. What is the reason for such a rush? Take a look at what is written in the second half of a couplet starting from the character An to the character Xiang. Especially if you look at it from a distance you will notice immediately that the structure is wrong" 越写越快，急什么都不知道，你看看下联从安字开始到祥字，写的什么，特别是离远看，一眼赶，间架结构都不对了. Meanwhile, the person with a nickname 博士哥哥郭伟华 approves the "based folk calligraphist" 功底深厚的民间书法家.

Findings for the authors sharing their art on user-generated content sharing platforms and their audience

"Folk" or "elitist", the creators often use the term 国画 *guohua* for their painting. It emphasizes the national character of this artistic tradition rather than its archaic nature. For practicing calligraphy, 练字 and 写字 are often used. The term 翰墨 for calligraphy was spotted only in the videos commemorating renowned calligraphers (and on channels that are outside of the chosen sources). This proves that the desirable social tone may dictate the use of terminology. However, except for the above-mentioned differences, most terms in the professional vocabulary have very narrow semantics and no synonyms so their usage does not depend of the social situation. The people using them are in a very good command of this terminology.

Other modes of videos crate a well-balanced interplay with the texts and narrations to highlight the messages.

Another important part of the material collected is the audience's interaction with the creators. Although conversations online have a sporadic nature, it seems to be a great communicative success when the audience use the same professional vocabulary as the creators whose work and narration they comment on.

The rhetorical devices used by creators and their audience exhibit the democratization of discourse. On the part of creators, these are puns and promises of "life hacks". New metaphorical language develops merging with commercial slang. The archaic grammar is almost non-existent, and *chenyu* are rarely spotted. Other modes of videos crate a well-balanced interplay with the texts and narrations to highlight the messages. "Playful" elements like comic melodies or GIFs create a relaxed atmosphere; they are traits of democratization too.

On the part of the audience, the sign of democratization is criticism. Along with democratization, there is a lowering of the discourse register because of the obscene language presence.

Overall, the online communities of traditional painting and calligraphy practitioners are striving and are very efficient in communication.

Comparison of findings for the two groups

In contemporary communication on the subjects of classical Chinese painting and calligraphy, a variety of attitudes and the language devices is discovered.

The specifics of audiences and modes of communication available to the two studied groups define the language devices they use. However, there are not only external stimuli that influence individual discourses, but the ideas born within for the two groups.

The starkest difference in attitudes towards classical Chinese painting and calligraphy within the studied groups is the perception of these artistic practices as "hard work" (well-established creators) and a "source of enjoyment" (online content creators).

In the pure linguistic sphere, the archaic grammar as a trait of high tenor is not detected in narrations by the online content creators. They adhere to the neutral tone to be easier understood by wider audiences. (This observation brings us back to the factor of external influence).

Yet the similarities outnumber the differences. Both groups are proud of the artistic tradition they belong to. Renowned and aspiring creators believe in the reformation and re-actualisation of the tradition. For them, practicing classical Chinese painting

and calligraphy equals being a decent representative of their nation. The online content creators just utilize regular grammar to convey this meaning while the well-establish artists seek more sophisticated forms of discourse.

Imaginary dialogues with the great talents of the past and puns involving knowledge on the art history mark the discourse of older and younger, female and male artists. These rhetorical devices are just scarcer among the online creators, but still present.

Metaphors of other professions and activities appear in the discourse by both groups. The only distinction among these metaphors is the sphere of human activity they derive from: army or agriculture for the first group and the commercial sphere for the second group.

Both the creators and their audience demonstrate a profound knowledge of traditional art terms. The audiences view precision in the terminology used by artists as one of the proofs of the artists' professionalism and trustworthiness. For the audience, correct terminology usage is the device to get inclusion in the professional quarters.

Another similarity in the groups of well-established artists and online content creators is an inclination towards utilizing synonyms for frequently used hypernymy.

Conclusions and research perspectives. The need for the promotion of traditional Chinese arts constantly actualizes the professional vocabulary and stimulates the artists' eloquence.

Although spread unevenly among the two studied groups and reflecting the individual communicative styles of the artists, a wide variety of terminology, archaic traits in lexes and grammar, sophisticated idioms, and rhetorical devices are discovered. All this linguistic richness allows for making inductive conclusions on the quality of the contemporary Chinese-language discourse on traditional painting, calligraphy, and seal carving.

The audiences' feedback has traits of both the vulgar tenor and high tenor. However, it reveals the audiences' desire to learn and be involved in the artistic process. Embracing changes and even lowering the tenor to vulgarity in some instances, this multidirectional discourse still demonstrated the diversity and richness of devices. The qualitative analysis of the said discourse shows its high effectiveness, adaptability, and potential for community building and cross-cultural communication.

The present paper has its limitations. The first limitation is an intentionally narrow scope of material. The second one is the reluctance to propose a strict framework for qualitative study. The reason for these limitations is the incessantly evolving nature of the artistic discourse challenging researchers to propose various visions of it and the methods applied to it. It is desirable for the researchers to stay current of developing of the artistic discourse in the Sinosphere to detect more trends and inclinations both is the realm of ideas and the linguistic devices that help conveying them.

Still, the findings may be useful for broader group of scholars, namely those studying identity, self-representation, and even marketing strategies.

After summarizing the findings and adding more lemmas into the future thesaurus, it is interesting to get back to the popularization tasks in the museum practice (exhibitions, lectures) and suggest the Ukrainian translations for the illustrations of the artists' discourse provided above. To do so, much work should be done

in the theoretical field first. The chosen strategy will help to explore the hidden potential of the Ukrainian language too.

Overall, the current Chinese-language discourse on the classical Chinese painting and calligraphy has a great potential for cross-cultural communication given that translators are well-versed in the subtleties of arts and languages of both cultures.

Appendices

List of YouTube channels:
教国画的杨老师 https://www.youtube.com/@guohuayang
高稀堂 https://www.youtube.com/@GaoXiTang
臨池書院 https://www.youtube.com/@linchishuyuan
篆刻君 https://www.youtube.com/@%E7%AF%86%E5%88%BB%E5%90%9B
跟又画学国画 https://www.youtube.com/@vx-youhua235
國畫技法 How to paint https://www.youtube.com/@%E5%9C%8B%E7%95%B5%E6%8A%80%E6%B3%95howtopaint
昌林画国画 https://www.youtube.com/@changlinguohua
现代中国画研究院 https://www.youtube.com/@%E7%8E%B0%E4%BB%A3%E4%B8%AD%E5%9B%BD%E7%94%BB%E7%A0%94%E7%A9%B6%E9%99%A2
李青仪 https://www.youtube.com/@fryadothman5428
道不远人 https://www.youtube.com/@%E9%81%93%E4%B8%8D%E9%81%A0%E4%BA%BA

List of Bilibili channels:
品虹书苑 https://space.bilibili.com/27594859
印觉公子篆刻课堂 https://space.bilibili.com/503700382
风雪斋主人 https://space.bilibili.com/339898412
喵喵的快乐分享 https://space.bilibili.com/20345338
超能梦境 https://space.bilibili.com/1918480369
尚劲学书 https://space.bilibili.com/3546667242490104
九九高效练字 https://space.bilibili.com/350181658
国画思考 https://space.bilibili.com/482507214
九初三季 https://space.bilibili.com/94629839
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