Multimodal discourse analysis of popular Chinese and American livestreamers from Taobao and Amazon: Li Jiaqi and Brittany Vasseur

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Abstract: With the rapid development of the internet, livestreaming commerce has emerged as a novel business model, demonstrating remarkable phenomenon-level influence. Current literature reveals a scarcity of comparative studies on Chinese and American streamer discourse, particularly those focusing on systematic analysis at the multimodal level. This study addresses this gap in the research, providing insights into the distinctive features of streamer discourse. The study aims to conduct a comparative analysis of the verbal and non-verbal expressions of phenomenon-level streamers from a multimodal perspective. Grounded in multimodal discourse analysis theory, this research focuses on examining the thematic words and syntax of the language used by the streamers, while also considering non-verbal elements. The research methodology mainly employs text analysis to extract thematic vocabulary from livestreaming content, analyzing its frequency and function within the discourse. Through comparative analysis, the study aims to uncover the similarities and differences in discourse construction between the Chinese and American streamers. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to a deeper understanding of the emerging phenomenon of livestreaming commerce, offering theoretical support for cross-cultural communication and market practices, and providing guidance for Chinese streamers entering foreign markets.

1. Introduction

In the digital age, livestreaming has emerged as a highly influential mode of communication and marketing, experiencing rapid growth and widespread adoption globally. This medium, characterized by its real-time interactivity and intuitive nature, transcends the temporal and spatial limitations of traditional marketing models. It offers consumers a novel shopping experience while simultaneously creating extensive promotional opportunities for businesses and brands. Consequently, livestreaming not only transforms consumer habits but also reshapes the landscape of commercial marketing as it assumes an increasingly significant role in economic activities.

As globalization accelerates, marketers of Chinese products are actively seeking to expand into overseas markets to increase their international competitiveness and market share. In this context, it is essential to gain a comprehensive understanding of foreign market consumption cultures, marketing strategies, and the discourse characteristics of local streamers. However, there is a notable research gap apparent in comparative analyses of the discourse of popular livestreaming events in China and the United States in particular.

In order to address this gap, this study conducts an in-depth comparative analysis of the livestreaming discourse of two prominent streamers: Li Jiaqi, livestreaming on the Chinese online shopping platform Taobao, and Brittany Vasseur, livestreaming on Amazon in the United States. The research aims to uncover similarities and differences in vocabulary, syntactic structures, and non-verbal communication between the livestreaming discourses of the two streamers. Specifically, it will examine how the streamers utilize language to engage viewers, present products, guide purchasing behavior, and create a compelling livestreaming atmosphere. By exploring the characteristics and patterns of livestreaming discourse within distinct cultural contexts, this research will provide targeted linguistic strategies for marketing Chinese products in the American market.

By referring to the successful strategies employed by American streamers, Chinese livestreamers can enhance their linguistic expressions and discourse strategies in international livestreaming, thereby improving product attractiveness and competitiveness, promoting the marketing and sales of Chinese products abroad, and advancing the internationalization of Chinese brands. For streaming platforms and industry practitioners, the results of this study will provide critical insights that will influence the design of streamer training programmes, as well as the optimization of live content. The study can also provide students and teachers from relevant disciplines with learning materials from real e-commerce platforms, and it will provide researchers with first-hand data.

2. Literature review

This study employs a multimodal discourse analysis theoretical framework to scrutinize livestreaming sales behavior and discourse. In this section, the underpinning theories are introduced, livestream discourse analysis related to the theory revealed in the recent literature are summarized.

2.1 The theoretical framework of modal discourse analysis

Human communication has always been multifaceted, with early forms encompassing a range of expressions. Spoken language was enriched by physical gestures, and written language was adorned with images, phrases, and engravings. In the modern landscape, where communication methods are increasingly diverse, relying solely on linguistic analysis is inadequate. The importance of multimodal discourse, which involves the use of various symbolic resources such as words, images, sounds, and movements, is becoming increasingly evident. This approach engages multiple senses, including sound, sight, and touch.

In the realm of discourse analysis, multimodal discourse has emerged as a prevalent subject. Three main theoretical approaches have been developed to address this phenomenon: systemic functional multimodal discourse analysis, multimodal interaction analysis, and corpus linguistic multimodal analysis [1]. This study adopts systemic-functional multimodal discourse analysis as its theoretical framework. The framework encompasses five levels of analysis: cultural, contextual, meaning, format, and media. The focus of this research is on the media level, which pertains to the physical media through which discourse is conveyed in the material world.

Delu Zhang [2] posits that the media level constitutes the physical medium by which discourse is conveyed in the material world. Zhang categorizes the media component into linguistic and non-linguistic elements for analysis. Traditional linguistic research identifies sound and written symbols

as the primary media for meaning transmission, both of which are created using pens and other writing instruments. Language primarily conveys information through these two media. Even as information technology advances and incorporates electronic text input and computerized speech recognition, sound and written characters persist as the fundamental means of communication. Attributes such as volume, pitch, frequency, accent, tone, as well as the shape, size, and spatial arrangement of fonts, are examples of media that accompany language. These elements serve to support, complement, and reinforce the transfer of meaning. Often these media aspects are crucial to the overall expression of meaning, as they have the potential to significantly alter it.

Non-verbal media encompasses the communicator's body language and the non-verbal tools they use to convey meaning, including their immediate surroundings and equipment. The two fundamental types of non-physical media are tools and environments. The progress of modern science and technology has significantly evolved additional forms of communication. Instrumental media ranges from early audio equipment to modern network platforms and simultaneous interpretation rooms. Moreover, communicators can leverage any significant elements already present in the environment, such as living beings, objects, and symbols with symbolic value, to enhance their message.

This study conducts a comparative analysis of the livestreaming discourse between renowned livestreamers from China and America, beginning with an exploration of the media aspect within the theoretical framework of multimodal discourse analysis.

2.2 Studies related to multimodal livestreaming discourse analysis

The internet livestreaming sector, particularly when integrated with product sales, has seen a surge in popularity in recent years, involving a broad demographic from internet celebrities to rural farmers. This phenomenon, often referred to as a pandemic due to its widespread influence, has transformed the way we shop for a variety of items ranging from home furnishings to cosmetics, to international food specialties. This live-commerce industry has spawned numerous e-commerce platforms dedicated to promoting and selling product offerings locally and globally, and in turn, phenomenal livestreamers have emerged. As a result, domestic and international scholars began exploring multimodal live stream discourse.

Recently, scholars have examined livestreaming discourse from a linguistic perspective, focusing on various elements such as phonetics, vocabulary, and syntax. For example, Yichen Liu [3] analyzed the discourse of online shopping livestreams through the lens of these linguistic elements. Liu noted that the language used by internet celebrities during live sales constitutes an informal register. Engaging in livestreams and shopping is a leisure activity that people enjoy outside of work or study, which means that the expectations for hosts regarding pronunciation and word choice are relatively relaxed. As a result, Chinese hosts often speak quickly, occasionally mixing Chinese and English and displaying dialectal variations. Their vocabulary tends to be rich yet concise, clear, and accurate. Syntactically, the discourse features a variety of expressive sentence types that sometimes deviate from standard grammatical norms.

Similarly, Hongyu Zhu and Zhongman Shu [4] argue that the discourse of hosts in the live sales context is characterized by a relaxed and less-formal spoken style. To reduce social distance from their audience and achieve persuasive communicative goals, livestream hosts frequently employ exaggerated expressions, which are distinctive in terms of rhythm, vocabulary, grammar, and rhetorical devices. This combination of linguistic characteristics contributes to the unique nature of livestreaming discourse, making it both engaging and effective in reaching its audience.

From the perspective of pragmatic strategies employed, Yichen Liu [5] analyzed the spoken language of livestreaming hosts, highlighting that humor and charm can create a relaxed and lively

atmosphere for the audience, thereby strengthening the emotional connection between the host and viewers. Roger Wen [6] summarized the linguistic characteristics of livestreaming sales from the perspective of speech style, finding that highly tagged and friendly promotional language often plays a positive role in live sales. Yandi Li [7] examined the language features of prominent hosts Li Jiaqi and Weiya from three dimensions: context, purpose, and style. He argued that the hosts and the audience exist in an unequal power dynamic, where hosts deliberately create a sense of intimacy by assigning exclusive nicknames to fans and frequently using the first-person plural pronoun 'we'. Ying Wang [8] focused on the genre of livestreaming sales discourse, identifying that elements such as product names, product introductions, purchase incentives, and responses to audience questions are indispensable, playing a crucial role in stimulating enthusiasm in the consumers. Roger Wen also emphasized audience psychology, suggesting that factors such as the evolving gender perceptions among female audiences, the rise of women's economic status, and the cognitive dissonance regarding their societal roles have contributed significantly to the phenomenon of female consumerism.

In summary, the analysis of pragmatic strategies employed in livestreaming sales highlights the intricate interplay between language and audience engagement, revealing how hosts use various linguistic techniques to foster connections and drive consumer behaviour.

Other scholars have conducted multimodal discourse analysis from a non-verbal perspective, which includes non-verbal language, such as gestures, expressions, hearing, graphics and so on. Yubo Wang and Danting Pan [9] noted that livestreamers facilitate audience engagement through the use of interactive symbols, emotional personal expressions, and social discourse designs. They employ strategies such as introductions, conversation history, and body postures to elicit interaction from viewers and to increase audience participation and purchasing intent. Similarly, Huang, Blommaert, and Van Praet [10] conducted a multimodal discourse analysis of Li Jiaqi's livestreaming sales. They found that Li Jiaqi's use of symbols aimed to build trust and persuade viewers to engage in online shopping. Throughout the process, Li Jiaqi frequently employs the discourse strategy of providing honest comments and taking a stand, utilizing exclamation points, imperatives, and rhetorical devices such as metaphors and similes to enhance his message. Non-verbally, gestures, facial expressions, voice quality, and volume serve as significant tools to bolster the persuasiveness of his language.

Hao Cheng [11] believes that livestreamers themselves are valuable symbols in the social process, and their language expressions, body potential, pictures and words in the broadcast room are all symbols that represent specific meanings and can convey certain information, which are an important link in emotional transmission during live broadcast interaction. Similarly, Li Zefang [12] notes that livestreamers often develop distinctive verbal language patterns and personalized styles. These salespeople, along with their followers, engage in a multimodal discourse communication scenario, utilizing expressions, gestures, physical objects, and other paralinguistic and nonverbal communication modalities during verbal interactions.

Cui Faqiang [13] suggests that enhancing the interaction impact and optimizing the livestreamer's image can effectively entice consumers to participate more actively in livestreaming and increase their consumption. Using live events on the Jitterbug platform as a case study, this research explicitly examined the characteristics of livestreamer images and engagement techniques, offering practical recommendations to improve product promotion capabilities. In a recent study, Shi Ling [14] investigated multimodal discourse in food livestreaming sales videos. Using software to code video data according to verbal and non-verbal modalities, the research covered verbal modalities, kinetic modalities (including facial expressions and gestures), visual modalities (such as physical products, videos, special effects, and promotional boards), and other modalities (auditory, gustatory, olfactory, and tactile modalities). These modalities provide symbolic resources by

stimulating the corresponding sensory nerves.

In summary, existing studies reveal the richness and complexity of multimodal discourse in livestreaming e-commerce, emphasizing the importance of language, non-verbal symbols, and interactive strategies in attracting viewers and facilitating sales. Researchers generally focus on how hosts enhance audience engagement and trust through personalized expression and effective interaction. Additionally, despite the abundance of research on the characteristics of livestreaming discourse on Chinese livestreamers, few studies have been carried out that compare the discourse of Chinese and American livestreamers. This study aims to fill this gap by comparing the language and non-verbal discourse of hosts engaged in livestreaming in China and America, providing valuable insights to support the expansion of the Chinese live sales industry in American market.

3. Research methodology

This study examines the livestreaming discourses of Li Jiaqi and Brittany. Li Jiaqi is highly influential in the domestic livestreaming e-commerce field. His livestreaming style is lively and highly infectious, and he is known for promoting cosmetics and personal care products. He has more followers than other cosmetics live streamers. Amazon livestreaming host Brittany, on the other hand, reflects the characteristics of an international platform and focuses on the sale of electronic products and daily necessities. The livestreaming discourses of each cover a wealth of content and can provide diverse corpora for the study.

This study chose to focus on two livestreaming sessions of one hour each. One was conducted by Brittany on Christmas Eve, and the other was conducted by Li Jiaqi during the 'Double 11' period. Double 11 takes place on 11 November every year and it has been the largest online shopping festival in China, and possibly globally. Both livestreaming sessions were held during Chinese and American festivals, and in terms of time, they were not far apart. The study aims to exam the discourse of each in order to reveal the similarities and differences between these two livestreaming sessions. Table 1 provides specific information on the texts selected for study.

Table 1: Source of corpus.

Research object	Live date	Livestreaming duration	Number of text words
Jiaqi Li	2022-11-04	1 hour	17140
Brittany Vasseur	2022-12-10	1 hour	10863

In order to study livestreaming discourses from a linguistic perspective, this study adopted text analysis method. By extracting thematic words, the discourse characteristics of the hosts were determined. The researcher first recorded the videos of the two livestreaming sessions, then converted the videos into texts, and, finally, used AntConc text analysis software to analyze and search for high-frequency thematic words.

Specifically, the researchers integrated frequently occurring and semantically related vocabulary into thematic keywords, thereby constructing a thematic system for livestream discourse. The selection process for high-frequency thematic keywords followed a systematic and rigorous methodology, aimed at uncovering the key semantic information within live broadcast texts to accurately grasp the core content and characteristics of the discourse.

The researchers studied the livestream texts of Li Jiaqi and Brittany repeatedly to form an overall perception and preliminary understanding of the content, while utilizing AntConc, to assist in searching for high-frequency words. AntConc can generate precise frequency statistics on the vocabulary within the texts, enabling quick and accurate identification of frequently occurring words by setting reasonable parameters. For instance, in processing a large amount of livestream text data, it can swiftly identify high-frequency terms such as *girls*, *pretty girls*, and *products* from

Li Jiaqi's livestream, and, in the same way, *product*, *phone charger*, and *discount* from Brittany's livestream.

Subsequently, words with similar meanings or words closely semantically related were grouped into one category. Taking the words related to products as an example, in Li Jiaqi's livestream, *shampoo*, *body wash*, *body milk,* and *hair conditioner* all belong to the category of personal care products and are therefore classified under that theme; *phone charger* and *phone case*, mentioned by Brittany, can be classified as 'electronic peripheral products'. As for words describing product discounts, Li Jiaqi's terms *coupon*, *full reduction*, *red envelope,* and *deposit* have similar meanings to *deal*, *discount,* and *code* found in Brittany' choice of words, which can come under the theme of 'price discount category'.

Once the preliminary classification had been completed, the livestreamers' texts were read again repeatedly in order to carefully check whether any omission or inappropriate classification had occurred, and to ensure that all similar thematic words were accurately classified into one category. This process requires the researcher to have a deep understanding of the text content and to be able to accurately judge the semantic relationship between words. For example, for some words with multiple meanings or semantic changes in a specific context, analysis in combination with the context is needed in order to determine the most appropriate topic classification.

In terms of syntax, the analysis was carried out based on the characteristics of the main sentence patterns, and most of the sentence patterns observed were imperative sentences. The characteristics of these imperative sentences in the two livestreams were also singled out, and a detailed comparison and analysis was performed to discover the various characteristics in sentence patterns.

The analysis of the non-linguistic characteristics of the livestreaming was mainly based on the live-streaming video images, including the following three aspects: the live-streaming background, the live-streaming props, and the livestreaming format – all of which could be directly analyzed from the characteristics of the images.

The researchers sought to address this overarching question: What are the similarities and differences between the two livestreamers in terms of language and non-language?

4. Findings

4.1 Analysis of livestream from the language perspective

This section examines the livestreaming performances of two streamers from the perspective of the language used by each.

4.1.1 Use of high-frequency thematic words

In the process of livestreaming sales, the high-frequency thematic phrases employed by livestreamers significantly reflect their discourse strategies and stylistic characteristics. Analyzing the ranking of these high-frequency words and specific examples from the livestreams of Li Jiaqi and Brittany provide insights into the similarities and differences in their discourse. The following discussion will detail the similarities and differences in the use of high-frequency thematic words. The ranking of the first 11 high-frequency words is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Ranking of streamers' high-frequency words.

Ranking of high-frequency words in Li's livestream	Frequency	Ranking of high-frequency words in Brittany's livestream	Frequency
Live related (eg: live, studio, live, etc.)	44	Products and commodities (eg: product, item, phone charger, phone case, fragrance oil, and other specific product names, etc.)	38
Products and commodities (eg: product, single product, brand + specific product name, such as shampoo, shower gel, etc.)	41	Offers and discounts (eg: discount, deal, 25% off, 15% off, code, exclusive discount code, etc.）	18
Audience address (girls, beautiful girls, all girls)	39	Product description (cute, pretty, amazing, favorite, best)	16
Discount-related (coupons, red envelopes, full reduction, hand price, deposit)	32	Product function (charge, cord, attachment, power, protect)	12
Shopping operations (add purchase, purchase, link, shopping cart)	26	Color and appearance (color, pink, blue, black, white, aesthetic, look)	12
Product attributes (hair, skin, taste, ingredients, essence, scalp barrier)	19	Live broadcast related (eg: live, livestream, deal stream)	10
Price related (eg: price, how much)	12	Shopping operations (click the link, add to cart, checkout, claim it)	10
Time related words (tonight, tomorrow, 8 o'clock, 3 o'clock, Singles' Day)	11	Gifts (gift, last minute gift ideas, stocking stuffer, Christmas gift)	10
Product package (set, combination)	9	Time-related words (now, tonight, week, Christmas, crunch time)	10
Product capacity (ml, g, bottles, cans, pieces)	9	Personal experience and feelings (I love, I like, I think, in my opinion)	10
Product effect (easy to use, very easy to use, effect)	8	Audience interaction (let me know, comment, tune in)	7

The researchers first analyzed the similarities between the two livestreamers from the following three aspects: 1) both emphasize the transmission of basic elements of livestreaming and the delivery of product information, 2) both focus primarily on pricing and shopping guidance, 3) both pay attention to interaction and connection with the audience.

4.1.1.1 Transmission of basic elements of livestreaming and product information

Both livestreamers attach importance to the conveyance of the basic elements of live streaming. In the ranking of high-frequency thematic words, Li Jiaqi used words such as *livestreaming*, *livestreaming room*, and *start the livestream* a total of 44 times, while Brittany used *livestreaming*, *livestream*, and *deal stream* a total of 10 times, as shown in Table 2. These words clearly define the livestreaming nature of the activity, enabling the audience to quickly understand that they are participating in a real-time online shopping event. For example, at the beginning of the livestream, Li Jiaqi repeatedly emphasized 'Our live stream is starting now', and Brittany would also say 'This is a very special livestream'. Both aimed to attract the audience's attention to the livestreaming process, get them into the context of livestream shopping, and highlight the importance of the livestreaming platform as a channel for product promotion and sales.

Among these livestreaming keywords, the transmission of product information is also important. Li Jiaqi mentioned *product*, *single item*, and various specific product names (such as *shampoo*, *body*

wash, etc.) a total of 41 times, while Brittany mentioned *product*, *item*, and specific product names (such as *phone charger*, *phone case*, etc.) a total of 38 times. This indicates that both livestreamers are well aware that products are the core content of their livestreaming; they provide detailed information about the products to help viewers understand the features and functions of the items for sale, thus meeting the audience's need for product information and facilitating their purchasing decisions. For example, when introducing a particular shampoo, Li Jiaqi elaborates on its ingredients and benefits, while Brittany emphasizes the charging functionality and compatible devices when showcasing a phone charger.

4.1.1.2 Prices and shopping guidance

Both livestreamers emphasized concepts related to prices. Li Jiaqi used words such as *price* and *how much* 12 times in the chosen script, and at the same time he used words related to price discounts such as *coupon*, *red envelope*, *full reduction*, *final price*, and *deposit* a total of 32 times to highlight the price advantages. Brittany used price comparison words such as *price*, *expensive*, *affordable*, *bang for your buck* 6 times, as well as words related to offers and discounts such as *discount*, *deal*, *25% off*, and *code* 18 times. Both streamers are aware of the crucial role that price plays in the audience's purchasing decisions. They made sure the audience clearly understood the price of the products and the available offers in various ways, thus stimulating the audience's purchasing desires. For example, Li Jiaqi would say, 'The price is really cost-effective after using the coupon', and Brittany would also emphasize, 'Enter the code for 25% off', making the audience realize that they can save costs when shopping in the livestream.

At the same time, both livestreamers paid special attention to guiding the shopping operation process. Li Jiaqi used shopping operation words such as *add to cart*, *purchase*, *link*, and *shopping cart* 26 times, while Brittany used shopping operation words such as *click the link*, *add to cart, checkout,* and *claim it* 10 times. They are both committed to providing clear shopping operation guidance for the audience to facilitate completion of the purchasing process. For instance, Li Jiaqi would remind the audience by saying, 'Hurry up and add to cart', and the Brittany would also explain in detail by saying, 'Add the item to your cart and checkout', which improves the convenience of purchasing, reduces the difficulties for the audience in the shopping process, and helps to increase the product sales conversion rate.

4.1.1.3 Interaction and connection with the audience

The third type of high-frequency words relates to interaction. In particular, Li Jiaqi would shorten the psychological distance between himself and the customers by changing the way he addressed the audience. Li Jiaqi frequently used audience appellations such as *girls*, *beauties*, *all the girls* 39 times. Although Brittany did not use such affectionate appellations, she established connections with the audience by using audience interaction words such as *let me know* and *comments* seven times. Li Jiaqi's affectionate appellations created an intimate atmosphere, making the audience feel that the livestreamer was communicating with them individually, generating a sense of closeness and belonging. Brittany, on the other hand, made the audience feel that they were part of the livestream by encouraging them to leave comments and so on, which improved the audience's sense of participation and improved the retention rate. For example, Li Jiaqi would say, 'Beauties, this product is really suitable for you', and Brittany would say, 'Let me know what you think about this product'.

Both livestreamers used interaction guidance to enhance the audience's sense of participation. Li Jiaqi encouraged the audience to participate in the interaction by using interaction guidance words such as *share the livestreaming room*, *follow*, *comment*, and *lucky draw* eight times. Brittany also

used words such as *tune in* to show understanding of the audience's viewing situation as she actively interacted with them. Both streamers worked to strengthen communication and connection with the audience through interaction. They could adjust the livestreaming content and recommendation strategies according to the audience's feedback, and the audience could also integrate more fully into the livestreaming atmosphere. For example, Li Jiaqi would say 'Share the livestreaming room and let more beauties come to snap up good items together', and Brittany would pay attention to where the audience can 'tune in' and adjust the interaction methods according to the sources of the audience.

The two livestreamers also show some differences in the use of high-frequency thematic words. The researchers analyzed the differences in the use of high-frequency thematic words from three aspects: 1) differences in product presentation methods, 2) differences in the application of time and scene concepts, 3) differences in the emphasis on brand and personal experience.

Differences in product presentation methods manifest in the tendency to use emotional and objective descriptions when presenting products. Li Jiaqi is more inclined to emotional expression in product description. He used words that emphasize product effects, such as *useful*, *extremely useful, effect*, and *efficacy* a total of eight times. He also uses words expressing preference and praise, such as *favorite*, *best*, and, for example, 'This is one of my favorite products and the effect is excellent'. Through subjective evaluation and infectious words, he stimulates the audience's curiosity and interest, making the audience more emotionally receptive to product recommendations. In contrast, Brittany uses more objective descriptive words. For example, in the 'product description' of *phone charger*, the functional features (charge, cord, attachment, power, protect) are mentioned. Accurately elaborating on the actual functions and features of the product helps the audience judge rationally whether the product meets their own needs. For example, 'This phone charger can charge your phone directly and has various cord attachments'.

The second significant difference between the streamers' delivery is the emphasis on the particular product attributes and introducing accessories. In terms of product attributes, Li Jiaqi mentions words related to beauty and personal care products, such as *hair*, *skin*, *scent*, *ingredient*, and *essence* 19 times, emphasizing the care effect of the product on areas of the body. Brittany pays more attention to words related to product accessories, such as *strap*, *charm*, *compartment*, and *shelf*, which are mentioned six times. For example, when introducing a phone case, she emphasizes its customizable *strap* and additional *compartment* functions. Showing the additional functions and features of the product attracts the audience and increases the added value and degree of personalization of the product.

The third significant difference lies in the varying sense of urgency created around time points. Li Jiaqi uses temporal keywords such as *tonight*, *tomorrow*, *8 o'clock*, and *Double Eleven* a total of 11 times. For instance, he says, 'Make sure to pay the deposit at 8 o'clock tonight, don't miss out, beauties!' This creates a strong sense of urgency, prompting viewers to complete their shopping within a specific time frame while also helping them to plan their shopping more effectively. Although Brittany also mentions temporal and timing words such as *now*, *tonight*, *week*, *Christmas*, and *crunch time* 10 times, her language is more focused on emphasizing the timeliness and holiday relevance of the products. For example, 'We are exactly one week away from Christmas; it's a good time to buy gifts.' The sense of urgency here is relatively weaker and is more geared towards guiding viewers to consider purchasing products as gifts within a festive atmosphere.

Additionally, there are differences in how extensively the two livestreamers expand on the usage scenarios of the products. Li Jiaqi rarely mentions specific usage scenarios, while Brittany employs scene-related vocabulary like *travel*, *home*, *party*, and *everyday use* a total of six times. For example, when introducing a phone charger, Brittany discusses its convenience in various scenarios (such as traveling and everyday use), linking the product to common situations. This helps viewers to better

visualize how the product fits into their own lives, increasing their sense of identification with the product and their desire to purchase. The audience is encouraged to believe that the product can seamlessly integrate into their daily lives and provide convenience, as exemplified by the statement 'This phone charger is very convenient for you to use when you are traveling'.

The two livestreamers differ in the ways in which they utilize brand influence. Li Jiaqi mentions *brand plus specific brand names (Procter & Gamble, L'Oréal, etc.)* seven times, in doing so attracting viewers by emphasizing well-known brands. This enhances the credibility of the products by capitalizing on the brands' recognition and influence, helping viewers quickly identify and position the products, thereby improving their purchasing decision efficiency. For example, Li Jiaqi states, 'This product is from L'Oréal, so the quality is guaranteed'. In contrast, Brittany also uses brand-related terms such as *brand* and *Chanel-inspired* (four times) but focuses primarily on describing the style of the products or making comparisons, such as in mentioning that a phone case has a *Chanel-inspired* design. There is relatively less emphasis on the direct influence of the brand itself to drive sales.

Additionally, there are differences in the depth of personal experience shared by the two hosts. Li Jiaqi rarely expresses his personal experiences and feelings about the products directly, while Brittany uses personal experience language, such as *I love, I like, I think,* and *in my opinion* a total of 10 times. In a further example she states, 'In my opinion, this fragrance oil smells amazing.' By sharing personal preferences and opinions, Brittany increases the credibility and relatability of product recommendations, bridging the gap with the audience and making them more inclined to believe in the advantages of the products, thus enhancing their interest and willingness to purchase.

In summary, the analysis outlines the similarities and differences between Li Jiaqi and Brittany in their livestreaming discourse. Both share a focus on key elements such as product, price, and interaction to create a discourse system aimed at attracting viewers to make purchases. However, the differences lie in Li Jiaqi's more emotionally charged discourse, which emphasizes creating atmosphere and emotional resonance, using his enthusiastic style and personal experiences to engage viewers. In contrast, Brittany tends to adopt a more rational and objective approach, guiding viewers to purchase through detailed product information and rule explanations.

These differences reflect varying livestreaming positioning and audience needs, providing diverse discourse strategy references for practitioners in the livestreaming industry. These findings assist in selecting suitable livestreaming discourse methods under different market conditions and product types, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of live commerce. Moreover, the findings offer rich data for language researchers, promoting in-depth studies of the characteristics and patterns of livestreaming discourse and advancing the development of research in live streaming language.

4.1.2 Use of imperative sentences

From a syntactic perspective, the differences and similarities between the delivery of the two livestreamers can be analyzed through their use of imperative sentences.

Both livestreamers use imperative sentences extensively to guide viewers in making purchases, such as giving information about clicking links, adding items to the shopping cart, and paying deposits. In Li Jiaqi's livestream, imperative sentences are frequently used, totaling 40 instances, with phrases such as *Add to cart*, *Click the link*, and *Pay the deposit*. The host will often use straightforward directives to guide viewers through the shopping process and enhance purchasing efficiency by saying, '321, let's click the link to add to the cart', 'Click the follow button above', 'Please share the livestream to help us out', or 'Let's start with a giveaway for everyone'. These imperative sentences are primarily used to encourage viewers to follow the livestream, share the stream, participate in giveaways, and facilitate interactions between the host and assistants, such as

preparing links and adding items to the cart.

In contrast, Brittany used a total of 20 imperative sentences, focusing on guiding viewers to obtain discounts, follow the host, comment in the chat, add products to their carts, and check out, while also asking viewers for relevant information. For instance, Brittany said *click the link*, *add to cart*, and *check out,* providing the audience with detailed information about the purchasing process. Brittany might say 'If you are new to the deal streams, all you need to do is click the link to claim it', directly guiding viewers to take action. The host also invites viewer feedback with statements such as 'Let me know in the comments here', encouraging viewers to share their thoughts, opinions, or feedback, thereby enhancing real-time interaction during the livestream. Brittany directs viewers to follow the host with 'Don't forget to also follow me here on Amazon', and guides them to obtain product-related information (indirectly related to purchasing) with phrases such as 'Text them and ask them their shoe size', as well as 'Get it now so you can get it in time for Christmas', emphasizing the timeliness of the purchase process to encourage viewers to place orders quickly.

The difference between the two hosts lies in the fact that the imperative sentences in the Amazon livestream (Brittany) place greater emphasis on rational guidance, highlighting the accuracy and standardization of the purchasing process. For example, when introducing the use of discount codes, the host elaborates, 'As long as you press "like", there should be a link that says "click here to redeem codes"', guiding viewers step by step to ensure they successfully receive the discount. In contrast, Li Jiaqi's livestream uses imperative sentences that not only guide purchases but also focus more on emotional engagement. Phrases such as 'Ladies, buy it!' and 'All girls, go for it!' employ strong emotional appeals to stimulate the viewers' desire to purchase, prompting them to make impulsive buying decisions.

4.2 Analysis of livestream from the non-language perspective

This section examines the non-verbal aspects of the livestreaming performances of two streamers through three key dimensions: live background, use of props, and the form of the livestream.

4.2.1 Live background

The setting in which a livestream takes place can significantly influence the viewer's experience. Factors such as the cleanliness, organization, and thematic relevance of the background can either enhance or detract from the message being conveyed. For instance, a well-lit and visually appealing background can make the stream more engaging, while a cluttered or distracting background might lead to a loss of viewer interest. Due to the fact that livestreaming is shown as video, the visual background is equally crucial to the process. This section carefully compares and contrasts features of the two livestreams.

The PowerPoint slide image in Figure 1 features Li Jiaqi during a livestream, adorned with product-specific details and pricing. As Li Jiaqi speaks, the background slide dynamically updates to align with the content of his discourse. The physical products on the table are arranged in a manner that is visually coherent with the image, and the presentation of product offers bundles all the included gifts together, creating a formal and mini product launch-like display. This set-up allows consumers to intuitively grasp the value proposition as they watch, simplifying the purchasing decision and potentially increasing sales. Moreover, the entire background is a festive bright red that is generally accepted by Chinese culture.

Figure 1: Li Jiaqi during a livestream (source: live video screenshot from Taobao).

In contrast, Brittany's livestreaming backdrop is more like a home, evoking a warm and comforting atmosphere (see Figure 2). The products showcased during the livestream are presented as if they were casually picked up from around the house, giving customers a sense of intimacy and ownership, as if they have already made the purchase. This approach effectively bridges the gap between the viewer and the product, making customers more inclined to engage and purchase.

Figure 2: Brittany Vasseur during a livestream (source: live video screenshot from Amazon).

In summary, the two livestreams feature distinctly different backdrops: the Chinese livestream exudes a more business-like, professional and festive aura, while the US livestream creates a more relaxed and intimate ambiance. Despite their stylistic differences, both background designs are tailored to enhance the consumer shopping experience and, ultimately, to drive sales.

4.2.2 Use of props

Props play a crucial role in livestreaming as they can help to illustrate points, add entertainment value. The choice and use of props can range from simple items that reinforce the product being sold to more elaborate set-ups that create a specific atmosphere or narrative. Effective use of props can make a livestream more dynamic and memorable.

In Li Jiaqi's livestreams, props are strategically employed to capture the audience's attention and pique their interest. One of the most iconic moments for the Chinese livestreamer is known as the 'Li Jiaqi knocking gong'. During a live session, Li Jiaqi will dramatically present a pair of gongs and strike them at midnight. This act, especially during lengthy night broadcasts when the audience's purchasing enthusiasm might wane, provides a powerful visual and auditory stimulus, immediately reeling viewers back into the live event. The sound of the gong is now so synonymous

with Li Jiaqi's live room that it is clear the strategic use of props during livestreams can significantly enhance sales.

The incorporation of props in livestreaming is a common practice in many domestic broadcasts within China. During the New Year's holiday, for instance, hosts often don holiday attire and offer blessings to customers while playing festive 'shopping carnival' jingles, all aimed at boosting sales. This approach is deeply rooted in cultural traditions. Moreover, when introducing products, various props are crafted to complement them, such as displaying real seaweed when showcasing seaweed masks, which can greatly increase interest and provide a very vivid impression to the audience during a livestream.

In contrast, Brittany's live studio employs fewer auxiliary props, focusing more on the genuine introduction of tangible products that she uses personally, adding an air of authenticity to her presentations.

To summarize, in Li Jiaqi's livestreaming, these props can indeed leave a lasting impression on customers and stimulate sales. In Brittany's livestreaming, the emphasis appears to be on the authenticity of the products and the personal touch of the streamer.

4.2.3 Live format

The format of the livestream itself is another important non-verbal aspect. This includes the structure of the stream, the pacing, and the interaction with the audience. A well-structured livestream with a clear beginning, middle, and end can keep viewers engaged and feeling informed. The pacing must be balanced to maintain interest without overwhelming the audience, and interactive elements can help to create a more personal and engaging experience.

Li Jiaqi's live studio predominantly employs a group participation model. The livestreaming takes place in a professional studio setting, where there is typically a main livestreamer, a co-host, and several assistants who help with handling and displaying items. Each team member has a defined role, whether that be stocking the shelves, responding to customer inquiries, or other tasks. The team has meticulously practised and planned each link in advance. Through dialogue, the main livestreamer and co-host present products to each other, with a well-rehearsed and skilled approach. Li Jiaqi's live room introduces products at a rapid pace, as lingering too long on one item would mean less time for the many products to come. Over 70 different products can be featured in a single livestream, averaging one per minute, creating a strong commercial atmosphere.

Brittany's livestreaming format is more akin to sharing positive experiences. She links the product, introduces it, and discusses customer feedback. The livestream is conducted in a living room setting, which is somewhat relaxed and impromptu, possibly contributing to the use of a slower pace of speech. She provides a detailed description of the product's physical appearance and quality during the introduction and discusses her personal experience with the product, including safety considerations. This allows customers to contemplate their own use of the product while watching post-purchase. She also pauses the livestream periodically to interact with viewers and thoughtfully answer their questions, making the overall pace of the livestream more leisurely.

In conclusion, Brittany's livestreaming approach emphasizes individual presentation, while Li Jiaqi's format relies heavily on teamwork and collaboration. This might reflect the contrasting lifestyles of the two countries; Americans emphasize individual characteristics and independence whereas Chinese culture often favours group work and collaborative discussions.

5. Discussion

The study summarized livestreams of two prominent livestreamers, one from China and the other from the US, taking place in November and December 2022. Both verbal and non-verbal aspects of

the livestreams were analyzed in the study.

Through an in-depth analysis of verbal aspects, specifically the high-frequency keywords in their livestreaming, some similarities and differences in their live broadcast discourses emerged. Regarding the similarities, both prioritized the conveyance of livestream essentials and product details. They employed a series of relevant terms to draw audiences into the shopping atmosphere and elaborate on product traits to meet information demands and prompt purchase decisions. Regarding price and shopping guidance, it was clear that they both grasp the significance of price in purchase decisions. They accentuated price perks, deployed diverse price-related vocabulary and phrases as well as discount strategies, and streamlined the shopping process to boost sales conversion. In audience interaction, both took proactive steps. Li Jiaqi used endearing terms to foster an intimate rapport, while Brittany prompted viewers to leave comments and the like, enhancing participation and retention. Both also adapted their content and strategies based on audience feedback.

Concerning the differences in terms of high-frequency words, in product presentation Li Jiaqi opted for emotional articulation, using words that stress product efficacy and express fondness to create an emotional link with the audience. Brittany, in contrast, leaned towards objective depictions of product functions and extras, such as accessories, to aid rational judgement and augment added value. Time and scene utilization showed Li Jiaqi as adept at creating a time crunch for immediate purchases. Brittany stressed product timeliness and festival relevance, guiding gift purchases during festivals and placing more emphasis on expanding usage scenarios. Brand and personal experience emphasis showed Li Jiaqi relying on renowned brands to draw crowds. Brittany focused more on product styles and she relied on sharing personal insights to enhance product credibility and likeability.

The similarities and differences in the language can also be reflected in the imperative sentences frequently used by the two livestreamers. Li Jiaqi's livestream emphasized emotional appeal, using strong calls and a casual tone to encourage viewers to make purchases, aiming to stimulate their desire to buy. In contrast, the Amazon host's imperative sentences were more rational, emphasizing the accuracy and standardization of the purchasing process to ensure that viewers could clearly understand the steps involved. Overall, Li Jiaqi enhanced the purchasing impulse through emotional drivers, while Brittany ensured a smooth purchasing experience through rational guidance.

Non-verbal differences were revealed through the live broadcast's' format, use of background and props. Brittany generated a more casual and intimate atmosphere, whereas Li Jiaqi conveyed a more professional and businesslike attitude. In Brittany's livestream the focus seemed to be on the genuineness of the merchandise and the streamer's individual touch. Li Jiaqi's format and structure mostly depended on cooperation and teamwork, whereas Brittany's livestreaming strategy was an individual presentation.

Although this study has obtained some valuable conclusions through the analysis of the streaming discourses of Li Jiaqi and Brittany, it inevitably has limitations. Firstly, given the study only focuses on the streaming content of two livestreamers, it cannot fully present the diversity and complexity of the discourses in the entire livestreaming e-commerce industry. Secondly, although the research methods can explore the vocabulary and syntactic features of the discourses, they are unable to exhaust the deeper implied meanings, cultural background connotations, and the subtle dynamics in real-time interactions.

Nevertheless, the analysis of the two phenomenal livestreamers in this study has significance. It clearly reveals the differences and commonalities of the featured Chinese and American livestreamers in key aspects such as livestreaming styles, target audience positioning, and marketing strategies. It offers a template of discourse strategies for practitioners in the livestreaming e-commerce industry, in order to support an in-depth understanding of the internal logical framework

of the discourses in livestreaming e-commerce. At the same time, the conclusions reveal an effective path for Chinese livestreamers who wish to learn to promote and sell products in English, thus facilitating the innovative development and international integration of the livestreaming e-commerce industry in the context of cross-cultural communication.

Given the stated limitations, future research could be carried out in the following directions. Firstly, the research sample should be expanded to cover more types of livestreamers, different product categories, and multiple livestreaming platforms, in order to allow large-scale corpus collection and analysis in order to build a more representative and universal livestreaming e-commerce discourse model. Secondly, a variety of research methods should be used. At the same time, cross-cultural comparative research should be considered in order to deeply explore the commonalities and differences of livestreaming discourses in relation to different cultural backgrounds and the impact of cultural factors on consumers' acceptance.

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