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Empowering Chinese-Style Modernization: The Strategic Value and Practical Paths of Language Services

—A Review of the *China Language Service Development Report (2024)*

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Abstract: The *China Language Service Development Report (2024)* presents the development trend of China's language service system through a systematic structure and abundant empirical materials. It focuses on discussing the functions of language services in regional coordination, industrial upgrading, national governance, cultural communication, and their correlation with Chinese-style modernization. At the macro level, the Report constructs an analytical framework of "Four Major Relationships"; at the micro level, it proposes several paths for integrating language services into the modernization process through surveys on grassroots communities, industry scenarios, and special groups. Based on sorting out the main contents of the Report, this paper evaluates its theoretical contributions, methodological characteristics, and governance implications from the perspectives of strategic value and practical paths, while pointing out its room for expansion in theoretical deepening, international comparison, and data acquisition. This book review aims to demonstrate the Report's role in promoting the research on the modernization of China's language services and provide a foundation for further discussions on constructing a language service theoretical

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system with Chinese characteristics.

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标题: 赋能中国式现代化：语言服务的战略价值与实践路径——评《中国语言服务发展报告（2024）》

摘要: 《中国语言服务发展报告（2024）》（以下简称《报告》）以系统性的结构与大量实证材料呈现了我国语言服务体系的发展态势，重点论述了语言服务在区域协同、产业升级、国家治理、文化传播等方面的功能及其与中国式现代化之间的关联关系。《报告》在宏观层面构建了“四大关系”分析框架，在微观层面通过针对基层社区、行业场景与特殊群体的调查提出了语言服务嵌入现代化进程的若干路径。本文在梳理《报告》主要内容的基础上，从战略价值与实践路径两方面对其理论贡献、方法特色及治理启示进行评述，同时指出其在理论深化、国际比较及数据获取等方面仍有拓展空间。该书评旨在展示《报告》对我国语言服务现代化研究的推动作用，并为构建中国特色语言服务理论体系提供进一步讨论的基础。

关键词: 语言服务；中国式现代化；国家语言能力；语言治理；皮书研究

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1. Introduction

With the in-depth advancement of Chinese-style modernization, “language”, as a basic resource connecting national governance, economic construction, cultural inheritance, and social life, has become increasingly prominent in its strategic position. However, for a long time, the general public and even some academic studies have mainly understood “language services” as narrow-sense activities such as translation and interpretation, making it difficult to fully recognize the functional structure of language services in the national development system. As Li Yuming (2016) proposed, generalized language services should cover a comprehensive service system including language knowledge, language technology, and their derived capabilities. Their role goes far beyond specific industry applications and is closely related to national cultural security, social governance capacity, and the international communication pattern.

Against this background, *China Language Service Development Report (2024)* (hereinafter referred to as the “Report”) edited by Professor Qu Shaobin, provides an analytical framework oriented to national needs and based on empirical investigations. It systematically demonstrates the mechanism of language services in the process of Chinese-style modernization from macro strategies to grassroots practices. The

Report not only summarizes the current situation but also raises problems and attempts to put forward operable governance suggestions. It is one of the most structurally complete and solidly investigated systematic achievements in the field of language services in recent years.

On the basis of comprehensively sorting out the main contents of the Report, this paper will start from the “Four Major Relationships” framework proposed by it and relevant chapters, focusing on discussing the strategic value and practical paths of language services in Chinese-style modernization.

2. Content Framework: Constructing the Overall Structure of Integrating Language Services into Chinese-Style Modernization

The “Four Major Relationships” framework proposed in the preface of the Report (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p. 002-006) constitutes the theoretical cornerstone of the entire book and stands as one of its most original contributions. Guided by the strategic needs of Chinese-style modernization, this framework closely links the development path of language services with regional coordination, industrial upgrading, the development of language undertakings, and the construction of disciplinary systems, forming an integrated analytical system of “national development goals—language service functions—governance pathss”. In contrast to previous studies that mostly focused on descriptions of the language service industry or technical applications, the Report achieves a more macro and systematic theoretical advancement through the “Four Major Relationships”, providing a structured academic tool for understanding the role of language services in the national modernization process. This research approach echoes the theory of “national language capacity building in the new era” proposed by Guo Xi (2020), as both emphasize that language capacity building must maintain a high degree of alignment with the strategic needs of national development. However, the framework has not fully elaborated on the international comparative perspective, and there is still room for further deepening its discussion on the extension of language resource governance in the digital age.

2.1 Empowering Regional Coordination: Demonstrating the Balanced Logic of Modernization Development

Chinese-style modernization emphasizes coordinated regional development and common prosperity. The comparative research on core economic regions such as the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, the Yangtze River Delta, and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area in the Report (see Part 2, 5, and 7) clearly reveals how language services, as a key fulcrum in the regional coordination mechanism, realize the smooth flow of cross-regional resource factors through standardization, institutionalization, and professionalization. The Report not only pays attention to the coordination effect among developed regions but also extends field investigations to ethnic minority areas and resettlement communities, presenting a modernization pattern of “strong regional linkage” and “weak regional compensation” in terms of spatial scale.

Especially in the case of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, the Report’s analysis of cross-regional elderly care service language standards shows that language services have become an important part of institutional interconnection. Overall, the Report balances macro policies and micro

samples in regional language service research and has high methodological integrity, but there is still room for further expansion in the international comparison of cross-regional language resource sharing mechanisms.

2.2 Empowering Field Penetration: The Key Mechanism Supporting High-Quality Development

Part 3, 4, and 6 of the Report conduct investigations around key fields such as education, government affairs, cultural tourism, medical care, and exhibitions, demonstrating the extensive penetration of language services as an embedded production factor in modernization drive. For example, in the field of education, the Report reveals the new trend of integration of language and professional skills through sorting out the “Chinese + Vocational Skills” resource system; in the field of government affairs, its evaluation of the standardization of local government language services highlights the institutional demand for language governance; in cultural tourism and medical scenarios, language services are directly related to service experience and public safety.

From a theoretical perspective, the discussion on the cross-field penetration of language services in the Report is mutually confirmed with the four-capacity framework of “language resource capacity, language technology capacity, language governance capacity, and language data capacity” proposed by Qu Shaobin and Wang Hailan (2023). It shows that language services in the modernization process must rely on a comprehensive capacity system rather than a single technology. However, the Report focuses more on description when analyzing the differentiated needs of different fields. In the future, it is necessary to further strengthen the discussion on cross-field comparison and governance mechanism integration.

2.3 Empowering Undertaking Foundation: Constructing the Language Infrastructure for Modern Governance

The special article and appendix in Part 1 of the Report elevate the cause of language and characters to the height of “national strategic infrastructure”, which is the most strategically forward-looking part of the whole book. From the construction of the National Emergency Language Service Corps, the operation mechanism of the National Language Resource Service Platform, to the improvement of the Catalogue of China’s Digital Language Resource Services, the Report proposes that language resources, language technology, and language governance together form the “soft infrastructure” of modern governance. This proposition has important expansion significance in domestic language policy research. The Catalogue of China’s Digital Language Resource Services in the appendix deserves special attention. Based on a systematic survey of over a thousand domestic institutions, this Catalogue innovatively classifies more than 300 types of digital language resources into ten categories, including “Services for Discourse Resources with Chinese Characteristics”. The editor-in-chief vividly refers to it as a “strategic base” for building a powerful country in language services—a metaphor that accurately reflects its academic value and represents a concrete manifestation of the fundamental theory of the “language resource perspective” advocated by the language life school (Su Xinchun, 2025).

In particular, the discussion on the emergency language service system echoes Wang Hailan’s (2025) SWOT analysis of the emergency language service in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area, highlighting the strategic importance of language in public safety governance in the digital age. It should be

pointed out that the discussion on the construction path of “soft infrastructure” in the Report is mainly based on case presentation. In the future, it is necessary to further deepen its theoretical foundation, especially the mechanism research on how language infrastructure is embedded in the national governance system.

2.4 Empowering Discipline Innovation: Providing Theoretical and Methodological Support for Chinese-Style Modernization

By systematically sorting out the language service practices in different fields, the Report demonstrates the possible paths for the disciplinary and systematic construction of language services. As a knowledge production practice based on national needs, the Report adheres to “problem-driven” as the core methodology and conducts research around major issues such as rural revitalization, digital governance, elderly care services, and international communication, providing important case materials for building a language service discipline system with Chinese characteristics.

This research paradigm is highly consistent with the concept of “serving national development with language” long advocated by Li Yuming. However, from the perspective of disciplinary development, the Report is currently more of a compilation of cross-field research, and its disciplinary structure, core concepts, theoretical system, etc., still need to be further clarified. Future research can systematically construct the disciplinary framework of language services on the basis of integrating cross-field experience and strengthen dialogue with international language service research.

3. The Strategic Value of Language Services in Empowering Chinese-Style Modernization

3.1 Connecting National Strategies: Enhancing the Coordination of Regional and International Governance

Through the comparative study of elderly care language services in three core economic zones, namely the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, the Yangtze River Delta, and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.26-42), the Report shows how language services play a role in institutional connection in regional governance. Taking the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area as an example, the three places have jointly formulated and issued a number of elderly care service standards, forming a unified norm for cross-regional language services, and providing institutional support for people’s livelihood needs such as “Hong Kong and Macao residents moving north for elderly care”. This observation echoes Wang Hailan’s (2025) analysis of the “cross-regional and cross-institutional coordination path” of the Greater Bay Area’s emergency language service system, indicating that language services in regional governance not only meet the needs of information communication but also have the function of promoting standard mutual recognition and institutional integration.

In the external field, Part 7 of the Report conducts a comprehensive investigation on the language policies, education systems, and market language needs of countries along the “Belt and Road” such as Thailand and Vietnam (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.346-378), and points out that enterprises and institutions must understand the language environment of the target countries to carry out effective international cooperation. This makes language services present a function similar to a “strategic information interface”, providing

knowledge preparation for enterprises' overseas layout, cultural communication, and cross-regional governance. However, from the perspective of book review, the international comparison part of the Report still focuses on description. If we can strengthen the comparison of language governance models in different countries in the future, it will further enhance its international policy reference value.

3.2 Consolidating Grassroots Governance: Enhancing the Inclusiveness of Modernization Development

Through long-term follow-up surveys on resettlement communities in Liangshan, Sichuan, and Kashgar, Xinjiang (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.206-221), the Report reveals a significant correlation between language ability and economic income. Among them, the survey data of Tilesuzak Village in Kashgar shows that among villagers with "average or below" national common language ability, more than 78% have an annual income of less than 10,000 yuan, while this proportion drops to about 50% among groups with "proficient" level (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.218). This set of data provides important evidence for understanding the "language capital—economic capital" conversion mechanism and also confirms the key role of language ability in promoting social mobility and expanding the opportunity structure from the perspective of developmental linguistics.

It is worth noting that the Report does not elaborate on the sample size, sampling method, etc., when presenting the data, so its representativeness needs further explanation. Nevertheless, this empirical result still provides strong support for the policy of "promoting Putonghua to assist rural revitalization", which is consistent with Li Yuming's (2016) view that "national language ability is an important part of national development capacity".

In terms of services for the elderly group, the Report systematically evaluates the age-appropriate language services of more than 1,200 government websites (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.148-155), pointing out that although most websites have completed basic adaptation, there are still insufficient experiences in aspects such as voice broadcasting and natural tone. This evaluation reflects the Report's attention to the quality of grassroots governance and provides an empirical basis for the transformation of public language services in the digital age from "meeting minimum standards" to "improving user experience".

3.3 Strengthening Cultural Soft Power: Promoting the Modern Transformation of Cultural Communication Methods

Through the analysis of multilingual services of mini-programs in national first-class museums (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.262-272) and the new communication form of calligraphy teaching on short video platforms (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.273-282), the Report reveals the innovative role of language services in cultural communication in the digital age. Compared with the traditional text translation model, these practices show the ability of reorganizing and retransmitting cultural resources driven by technology through intelligent push, multilingual voice explanation, immersive interactive experience, etc.

In addition, the Report's sorting out of "Chinese + Vocational Skills" teaching resources (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.93-102) shows that international Chinese education is shifting towards the cultivation of compound skilled talents. This trend helps to enhance the practical value and professional orientation of Chinese

learning. It marks that international Chinese education is moving from traditional language and cultural teaching to a model that deeply integrates language learning with professional skills such as e-commerce and high-speed rail technology. This not only greatly enhances the practical value and international attractiveness of Chinese but also means that language services are jumping from simple cultural output to a higher level of serving the global industrial chain and cultivating forces that “understand China, be friendly to China, and use China”. This fully shows that language services are the core means to build a modern civilization of the Chinese nation and enhance the country’s cultural appeal.

3.4 Supporting Industrial Upgrading: Constructing the Language Foundation for Innovation-Driven Development

The special survey on the language service needs of the automobile industry in the Report (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.327-334) reveals the functional transformation of language services in the layout of the global industrial chain. With the international expansion of China’s new energy automobile industry, enterprises’ demand for language service positions presents a compound trend, among which more than 57% of the positions involve multiple functions such as translation, technical support, project management, and market communication. This indicates that language services have extended from traditional text processing work to links such as technical understanding, cross-cultural communication, and international compliance consulting.

More importantly, through “The Development of Language Intelligence and Its Application in Assisting Intelligent Education” (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.16-22) and “Catalogue of China’s Digital Language Resource Services” (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.381-392), the Report emphasizes the basic role of language data and language intelligence in national scientific and technological competition. This is consistent with the four-capacity system of “language resources, language technology, language governance, and language data capacity” proposed by Qu Shaobin and Wang Hailan (2023), indicating that the construction of high-quality corpora, large model training, and digital language resource governance have become key infrastructure in the era of artificial intelligence.

Nevertheless, the Report still has certain limitations in the coverage of language services in the industrial chain, such as insufficient attention to highly internationalized industries such as pharmaceuticals and engineering consulting. If more industrial dimensions can be expanded in the future, it will help build a more comprehensive industrial language ecology map.

4. Practical Paths: Implementation Plans for Language Services to Empower Chinese-Style Modernization

On the basis of explaining the strategic value of language services, the Report further puts forward practical paths oriented to common prosperity, social inclusion, and public welfare, reflecting a complete logical chain from strategic analysis to policy suggestions. These paths take the coordination of capacity building, application scenarios, and governance mechanisms as the main line, demonstrating the mechanism of language services in solving practical grassroots problems. Although the Report provides a large number of

operable suggestions for practice, there is still room for further refinement in the differentiated governance strategies between different regions and groups.

4.1 Promoting Common Prosperity: Realizing a “Capacity-Based” Income Increase Path Through Language Improvement

Through empirical investigations on resettlement communities in Liangshan, Sichuan, and Kashgar, Xinjiang, the Report reveals the “capacity-based” mechanism of language services in promoting common prosperity. Firstly, strengthening human capital by improving national common language ability, thereby affecting employment opportunities and income levels. This mechanism has been clearly presented in the aforementioned surveys (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.206-221). This conclusion not only has important policy significance but also is consistent with the theoretical judgment that “language capital can be converted into economic capital”, providing experience support for the long-term promotion of common language education in underdeveloped areas.

Secondly, the Report’s analysis of language services in rural e-commerce live broadcasts (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p. 236-242) points out that strategies such as “focus repetition”, “scene construction” and “empathy narrative” used by anchors in the process of live streaming have significant communication effects. This study reflects the coupling relationship between language ability and digital economic opportunities, confirming the practical value of language services in rural revitalization. However, from a methodological perspective, the selection and representativeness of live broadcast discourse samples still need further discussion. In addition, the Report’s discussion on “whether language ability improvement has long-term economic effects” needs more follow-up research support. Overall, this part provides a relatively convincing empirical basis for the “language—ability—income” chain.

4.2 Bridging Social Divides: Promoting the Inclusive Improvement of Public Services

The Report systematically analyzes the role of language services in promoting social inclusion around three dimensions: digital divide, age-appropriateness, and barrier-free services. The survey on the age-appropriateness of provincial government mini-programs and government portals (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.148-164) shows that although most platforms have completed basic adaptation, there are still certain deficiencies in experiential details such as the naturalness of voice broadcasting and interactive design (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.153-154). This finding suggests that public digital services need to transform from “technical compliance” to “experience-friendly”, reflecting the key role of language services in improving the accessibility of digital public products.

In terms of barrier-free services, the surveys on barrier-free reading services and museum sign language interpretation (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.269-290) reveal the use barriers of cultural services among special groups and provide corresponding optimization suggestions. This part is consistent with Wang Hailan’s (2025) requirement for “refinement and systematization” of emergency language service governance, reflecting that language service governance is moving towards the direction of multi-group coverage and precise supply.

It should be pointed out that the target groups in the current barrier-free research of the Report are

mainly the elderly and the hearing-impaired, with limited attention to other vulnerable groups such as the visually impaired and people with language disorders. If more extensive group types can be included in the future, it will help build a more inclusive language service system.

4.3 Optimizing Public Welfare: Promoting the Refinement and Modernization of Urban Governance

In the field of public safety, the Report's survey on emergency language services in urban public spaces (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.228-235) points out that emergency signs have problems such as unreasonable location, insufficient visibility at night, and inaccurate information. These findings reveal the importance of language elements in the urban emergency management system, which is consistent with Wang Hailan's (2025) view that "emergency language services need to be incorporated into the urban comprehensive governance system". The suggestions put forward in the Report, such as "scientific site selection" and "optimizing the night recognition system", have clear operability, but their implementation costs and cross-departmental coordination mechanisms still need further demonstration in future governance plans.

In terms of foreign-related public services, both the survey on medical treatment of foreigners in Guangzhou (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.291-298) and the survey on language services at the Canton Fair (Qu Shaobin, 2024, p.316-326) reflect the deficiencies of internationalized cities in links such as small language translation, mobile payment guidance, and multilingual service processes. These problems indicate that language services are not only related to the service quality of the city but also have a key impact on the level of opening up to the outside world. Overall, the Report puts forward a relatively clear governance direction in the part of public welfare, but the analysis of differentiated needs between different cities can be further refined. This is precisely the key to improving the level of social language life, for the quality of language services—including those in emergency situations and those provided to special groups—determines the level of a society's language life (Li Yuming, 2025).

5. Conclusion

China Language Service Development Report (2024) provides an important reference for understanding the role of language services in Chinese-style modernization with its systematic structure, sufficient materials, and distinct problem awareness. With the development of digital technology and the changes in the global governance pattern, language services will play a more important role in fields such as education, industry, urban governance, and international communication. It is expected that future research will make new breakthroughs in theoretical deepening, institutional design, and cross-regional cooperation, so that language services can be better integrated into the governance system of Chinese-style modernization and make greater contributions to promoting national development and improving social welfare.

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