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Global Perspectives on the Development of China's Language Economy

—A Review of *Language Economics Research*

Tan Jing

Abstract: *Language Economic Research* anchors its exploration in two pivotal domains: the joint development of the Belt and Road Initiative and the utilization and evolution of language resources. It delves deeply into the economic value of language as a productive factor in serving industrial development, economic and trade exchanges, and cultural dissemination, while explicating the multifaceted advantages of language economic benefits across sectors such as language content industries, language processing industries, and language competency industries. Employing a methodology that integrates factual analysis with model-based forecasting, the work analyzes the global landscape of language industries, projects future trends in their development, and examines symbiotic cases of linguistic advancement and economic system construction. Grounded in multi-industry data and informed by China's experience and outcomes in language-based poverty alleviation, it discusses the role and effectiveness of language economics in facilitating regional cooperation and economic development, including under frameworks such as the Belt and Road Initiative. By bridging China's linguistic realities with worldwide trends in language industries, the book enhances the service capacity and application contexts of the Chinese language in global exchanges. It thereby provides a solid theoretical foundation and a "Chinese approach" for optimizing regional services, promoting linguistic and cultural integration between China and Belt and Road partner countries, and fostering deeper convergence between language culture and

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international cooperation.

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Author Biography: **Tan Jing**, A teacher at Guangxi University of Finance and Economics, doctoral student at the School of Humanities, Guangzhou University. Research Focus: International Chinese Education. E-mail: 1344951516@qq.com.

标题: 面向世界的中国语言经济发展——评《语言经济研究》

摘要: 《语言经济研究》一书立足于“一带一路”共建和语言资源使用发展两大方面，深入探讨了以语言作为经济要素，在服务产业发展、经贸往来、文化传播等方面的经济价值，诠释了语言经济效益在发展语言内容产业、语言处理产业和语言能力产业等多方面的多重优势。该书采取事实分析和模型预测相结合的办法，通过对全球视野下语言产业的分析、语言产业发展趋势预测、语言发展与经济体系建设的共生案例，以多行业发展数据为依据，结合中国语言扶贫经验成效论述了语言经济在服务“一带一路”等区域性合作与经济发展中的作用成效，把中国语言发展的现实和全球视野语言产业的发展相结合，提高中文在世界交流往来的服务和应用场景。为优化区域服务、促进我国与“一带一路”沿线国家的语言文化融通、推动语言文化与国际合作的深度融合，提供了坚实的学理基础和“中国方案”。

关键词: 语言经济；语言产业；语言实践；中国语言扶贫经验

作者简介: 谭晶，广西财经学院教师，广州大学汉语国际教育领域教育博士研究生，研究方向：汉语国际教育。电邮：1344951516@qq.com。

I. Introduction

With the deepening of economic globalization and social informatization, the economic value of language—as a tool for communication, a carrier of culture, and an information resource—has become increasingly prominent. In particular, the demand for multidisciplinary language talent, the development of the language information industry, and the nurturing and integrating of an economic discourse system, all built upon the bridge of language, align with the demands of contemporary development. Li Yuming (2012) argued that language is not only a nation's “soft power” but also its “hard power”, exerting a significant influence on the advancement of both socio-cultural and economic activities.

The development of China's language economy constitutes a significant chapter in the global narrative of language economics. Particularly amid deepening economic globalization and social informatization, economic forces have further driven the dynamic evolution and advancement of language. This is primarily reflected in two aspects: first, the progress of the Belt and Road Initiative and the strengthening of regional cooperation have demonstrated the new driving force of language in serving such collaborations; second, the successful practices in China's language economic development and language-based poverty alleviation

fully illustrate the positive interaction between language and economic development. Against this backdrop, the new work *Language Economic Research* by Liang Haoguang, Jiao Siying, and others, grounded in detailed data and practical cases of language serving regional economic development, provides a systematic summary and deepening of current research in language economics. First, it integrates language theory with developments in various disciplines, expanding the research scope of language economics and closely linking it with key contemporary topics such as the Belt and Road Initiative, global governance, and national discourse power. Second, through a comprehensive analysis of the language industry's development, it further outlines a future blueprint for multiple language-related sectors, revealing several emerging industrial directions in light of regional economic trends. Third, it explores case studies alongside empirical development. By focusing on the development of China's language industry and the outcomes of poverty alleviation efforts, it highlights the mutual reinforcement between language and economic growth, arguing for the practical logic of their relationship based on the effectiveness of Chinese language services. Fourth, it offers theoretical support for language planning and economic globalization governance, further contributing to global language practices and economic development, and provides a theoretical basis for enhancing China's discourse power in international and regional economics. The presentation of these research contents and achievements not only enriches the scope of language studies but also offers new insights for regional cooperation, language industry development, and brand building.

II. Content Overview

The book is divided into six chapters. It discusses the coupling relationship between language and the economy from six perspectives: theoretical foundations, analysis of the language industry, trends in language industry development, language and economic development, language and the construction of international economic discourse power, and language strategic planning and economic globalization governance. Building on the support of economic and linguistic theories as well as industrial development insights, and integrating the context of Belt and Road construction, the study constructs a value system for the language economy, language industry development, and language planning. This is achieved by following two main threads: China's language resources and the development of its language industry. Furthermore, by incorporating the practical experiences and exploratory achievements of China's language industry, the work aims to better grasp the trends in the development of the language economy both domestically and internationally. It represents an active exploration that deeply integrates classical theory with China's development practices.

Chapter One: Theoretical Foundations of the Language Economy. This chapter establishes the theoretical groundwork of the book. Beginning with the economic phenomena and attributes of language, it traces the genesis and evolution of the language economy. By referencing Rubinstein's explanation of the two questions revealing the hidden connection between language and the economy, it addresses their intrinsic attributes. The chapter proposes three fundamental attributes underpinning the emergence of language economics: the economic resource attribute of language, the institutional attribute of language, and

the public good attribute of language. It outlines the developmental trajectory of the concepts and phenomena within language economics, thereby laying a solid foundation for the book's overall discussion on language services in regional economic development. Centered on the concept of language economics, it posits that language economics is not only a new growth driver for economic and social development but also a core pillar supporting the Belt and Road Initiative, facilitating cultural dissemination, and enhancing participation in global governance. This enriches the disciplinary framework of language economics while further expanding the research scope of language application, establishing the theoretical underpinnings for subsequent practical discussions.

Chapter Two: Analysis of the Language Industry from a Global Perspective. This chapter analyzes the development of the language industry from a globalized viewpoint. The authors posit that the language industry is the product of integrating the theory and practice of the language economy, serving as both the starting point and ultimate goal of language economics research, as well as its primary subject of study. Accordingly, the authors outline the developmental trajectory of the language industry by clarifying its concept, discussing its industrial forms and classifications, and examining its types of services and technologies. Using the global language industry as the entry point, the chapter explores its general landscape and current status from an economic perspective, and further forecasts its future development trends. By employing the PEST macro-environmental analysis framework (P- Politics, E- Economics, S- Society, T- Technology) from industrial economics as a key analytical tool, the chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the opportunities and challenges the language industry is likely to face in the future.

Chapter Three: Trends in Language Industry Development. This chapter explores the direction of China's language industry development from a globalized perspective on the language industry. It primarily focuses on language market analysis, systematically examining the development trends of three key language industry sectors—the language translation market, the artificial intelligence market, and the language training market—based on the foundational aspects and regional distribution of the language industry. By concentrating on the specific distributions in regions such as the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the Beijing Winter Olympics host region, and Guangxi, the chapter analyzes the developmental advantages and stages of the language industry in these areas. Synthesizing these analyses, it proposes six characteristic types of language industry structures and clearly indicates that the future cultivation of language professionals will trend toward interdisciplinary talent development models such as “language + technology,” “language + law,” and “language + management.” Furthermore, it reveals that the diversified development of the language industry is a key factor in aligning the supply of language talent with market demands. By examining the alignment between language and market development, the chapter uncovers the underlying economic principles involved.

Chapter Four: Language and Economic Development. This chapter constitutes the core of the book. By examining the relationship between the development of the language economy and that of the language industry, it divides the language industry into multiple sectors. Starting from fields such as the language translation industry and the language and character information processing industry, it discusses the

relationship between language development and economic development, affirming the crucial role of language in promoting national economic growth and the construction of economic systems. From the perspective of China's language economy development, it reveals the role of language in driving economic development by presenting data including the output value of language services, comparative data on China's outward investment over the years, changes in market share proportions, import and export trade values, and the outcomes of China's language-based poverty alleviation. Simultaneously, with a particular focus on extending from China's poverty alleviation experience and achievements, and based on China's realities, the chapter puts forward the core viewpoint that the language economy is an important component of the national economy. It highlights that the synergistic development mechanism of language, the language industry, and the language economy forms a key part of enhancing the international competitiveness of a modern economic system. Furthermore, it serves as a vital cornerstone for ensuring that the fruits of development are shared more fully and equitably among all citizens.

Chapter Five: Language and the Construction of International Economic Discourse Power. This chapter highlights that the economic value of a language in international interactions depends not only on the size of its speaker population but also on the economic strength, cultural appeal, and institutional influence it carries. It examines how the value of language within economic discourse is realized, thereby contributing to the study of constructing China's international economic discourse system. By reviewing the historical development of international economic discourse power and comparing the pathways and linguistic characteristics through which the world's major powers have acquired such power, it identifies key influencing factors, including comprehensive national strength, discourse quality, international communication capacity, national image, international economic relations, and global economic governance. Integrating the dual attributes of the economic efficacy and political efficacy of language, the chapter analyzes the current state of China's international economic discourse power. It proposes a multi-dimensional framework for constructing this discourse power from a language perspective, focusing on discourse content, discourse platforms, discourse agents, and discourse objects, thereby expanding new spaces for international discourse.

Chapter Six: Language Strategic Planning and Economic Globalization Governance. This chapter, from the perspective of global economic integration development, integrates language practice, language resources, and language planning into the entire process of economic globalization governance. It evaluates the cost-benefit and resource allocation efficiency of various language policies from an economic standpoint. By analyzing the three developmental stages of international language planning and drawing on extensive empirical discussions, it illustrates the evolution of language planning and policy evaluation systems. Utilizing the practical paradigms of effective language policy implementation and the management and development of language resources in countries such as Tajikistan and Singapore, the chapter proposes new directions for language planning and global economic governance. It discusses the spillover effects of international language economy development in the digital age. Consequently, it summarizes and presents three possibilities for China to leverage global language policies to create new opportunities for future Belt

and Road economic development: disseminating cultural values, defining development issues, and formulating language planning, thereby providing substantial material for deep reflection.

III. Academic Contributions

Language Economic Research takes the development of China's language economy as a case study, systematically discussing the relationship between language and economic development at the theoretical, methodological, and practical levels. Through theoretical research and empirical discussion, it proposes a model for the integrated development of language and the economy. From an interdisciplinary research perspective, the book explores future development directions, offering significant reference value for China's deeper participation in global governance and for sharing the achievements of its language economy.

1. It examines the value system of the language economy through an interdisciplinary integration.

Research on the language economy has seldom been explored within domestic academic circles, particularly studies investigating its trans-epochal economic value, which embodies the theoretical accumulation over its developmental trajectory. Integrating the theoretical foundations and practical scopes of multiple disciplines such as linguistics, industrial economics, and cultural communication, this work anchors itself firmly around two central themes: the Belt and Road Initiative and language resources. It constructs a comprehensive value system encompassing the language economy, relevant policies, and strategic planning. By examining the economic phenomena of language, it pioneers and articulates the novel concept of the "language economy", meticulously tracing its evolution from the nascent stages of "language economics" research through to the era of economic globalization. Through a multidisciplinary and cross-temporal narrative, the book establishes systematic connections between perspectives on language resource development, language industry growth, and the integration of language within economic system construction. It highlights the economic outcomes of serving the Belt and Road Initiative's development, thereby demonstrating the contemporary relevance and inherently multidisciplinary nature of the "language economy".

2. Contribution of the Language Economy to Social Development Analyzed from Multiple Perspectives.

Rooted in an interdisciplinary perspective, this book begins with the integration of language and the economy, exploring the subject through the lens of cultural communication. By analyzing the multiple industrial sectors encompassed by the language economy, it proposes that translating theory into practice requires aligning with advancements across different fields and responding to the demands of the times. Significantly, the work engages with both traditional language translation and the development of the modern artificial intelligence industry. Proceeding from the needs of the contemporary language industry, it charts new directions for the evolution of technology-intensive sectors and AI-powered language services. Oriented toward meeting the demands of regional development within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, it affirms the developmental outcomes of the language economy while further demonstrating viable models and forms for language resources and industries within this new paradigm. By advancing the

cause of the language economy in serving societal development from multiple angles, the book serves as an essential reference for guiding the application of theory to practice.

3. Based in China, Drawing on Multiple Sources to Propose Practical Pathways for the Development of the Chinese Language.

The most distinctive feature of this book is its grounding in the actual development of China's language industry and its integration with the current state of China's language and economic development. It proposes recommendations for the integrated development of language and the economy based on both theoretical foundations and practical exploration. This not only demonstrates that the development of China's language economy serves as a model for high-quality support of the Belt and Road Initiative's development but also provides valuable insights for the global development of the language economy. This series of achievements offers a powerful paradigm for how the language economy can serve both Chinese and global regional development. On one hand, by examining various aspects such as industrial development, language translation, language teaching, and intelligent text information processing, it illustrates the economic value of the Chinese language and the construction of China's discourse system. It puts forward many targeted "practical pathways" and "strategic routes", particularly highlighting the effectiveness of the language economy in conjunction with China's poverty alleviation achievements. This provides solid theoretical and practical guidance for both national and local governments in formulating relevant industrial policies and cultural strategies. On the other hand, by addressing the language planning needs of the Belt and Road Initiative's joint development, it effectively outlines language strategies, deepens international Chinese language education, and proposes new ideas from a strategic height and with a view to future development directions.

4. With an international outlook, deepening the practice of international economic discourse power across multiple domains.

This work, grounded in the practical context of China while observing the evolving landscape of the global language economy, integrates new trends in the development of language and economic cooperation, thereby achieving an innovation in research paradigm through its discourse. Whereas most existing studies are confined to the disciplinary boundaries of a single field or analyses pertaining to specific industries, this book transcends this traditional path. Departing from multiple dimensions—including the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, the global governance system, the building of national discourse power, and the development of cross-cultural exchange—it systematically integrates extensive empirical materials and case studies. It not only provides a robust argument for the driving role of language services as critical infrastructure in international economic development but also accomplishes a "dimensional elevation" in its examination of language economy research at the macro-strategic level. This perspective elevates language from an instrumental element to a strategic resource, pointing the way toward a concrete, systematic deepening of international economic discourse power across multiple fields of practice.

IV. Conclusion

Language Economic Research is a work that closely connects language with economic development. Centered on China's practical experience and its service to the regional development of the Belt and Road Initiative, it not only systematically integrates and expands the research paradigm of the language economy but also provides rich case studies from a multidisciplinary perspective. The work repeatedly emphasizes the perspective of "China's language economy" development, using the "Chinese approach" as an example to highlight the effectiveness of language economy development. This discourse not only reflects a strong awareness of local issues but also lays a foundational and leading groundwork for constructing China's autonomous knowledge system and the diversified application of language. Furthermore, by integrating the needs of regional development and international Chinese language education in serving regional cooperation, it offers an excellent model for consideration and serves as a practical developmental paradigm for the global language economy.

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ORCID

Tan Jing ^{ID} <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-4494-3093>

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