

# FOREIGN TRANSLATORS AS A MEANS OF ENDORISING CHINA ENGLISH USED IN CHINA'S OFFICIAL POLITICAL TEXTS

## A case of the English translation of Xi Jinping's report to the 19<sup>th</sup> CPC national congress

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**Abstract** – Xi Jinping's report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), held between 18 and 24 October, 2017, was translated into nine foreign languages, including English, with 'professional foreign translators' introduced and covered in some Chinese media reports. Yet, the focus of such media coverage was more on the translators' endorsement of Xi's thoughts and achievements than on the quality of the translations (e.g. Huang, Liu and Hao 2017). Arguably, the introduction of the foreign expert in English could be described as an unusual move since China has hailed its 'China English' as a new English variety and has it used widely in the translation of the CPC political texts. This study starts with the introduction of China English, presents the China English usage in the official English version of Xi's report, and reveals the endorsement role of the foreign language experts through a multimodal analysis of the relevant media coverage, which not only uncovers the CPC's ideology in using China English but also shows how the 'visibility' of translators may help achieve the political aim of those in power.

**Keywords:** the CPC 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress; China English; ideology in translation; foreign translator; political endorsement.

## 1. Introduction

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (hereinafter the 19th CPC National Congress), held between 18 and 24 October 2017, has seen the Chinese President Xi Jinping reaching the peak of his power and reputation, with the 'Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era' written in the CPC's history and Xi hailed as the most powerful and capable leader since Mao Zedong (Campbell 2017). To better communicate Xi's thoughts, foreign language experts were invited to help translate Xi's report to the 19th CPC National Congress into nine

foreign languages, namely English, French, Russian, Japanese, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, and Lao (Huang, Liu, and Hao 2017). The participation of these foreign language experts was described as “a historic breakthrough” (Ye 2017), with the English version of the report highly acclaimed as “powerful” (Chen 2019, p. 5). Arguably, the introduction of the foreign English expert was an unusual move since the Chinese government has made ‘China English’ used politically in a top-down manner (Jin 2002, p. 72) and hailed it as a new English variety with Chinese characteristics that can better communicate China’s image and elements to the world, help China resist Anglo-American cultural hegemony, and further win China the power of discourse against a backdrop of English used as the world’s lingua franca (Chang 2017).

To investigate whether the use of the foreign language experts might be meant to boost the status and acceptability of China English, this chapter will first introduce the features and nature of China English. Next, I will review and analyse the official English version of Xi’s report to the 19th CPC National Congress to see whether this highly-acclaimed version, the success of which has been claimed to be partly (if not largely) attributed to English language expert Holly Snape, contains China English translations. This will be followed by a multimodal analysis of China’s official media coverage of the foreign language experts involved in the translations of Xi’s report, with a special focus on the English language expert. By examining the image and role of these foreign translators hired by the Chinese government, the results of the study shall facilitate a clear understanding of the use of China English in China’s external propaganda and provide insights into how the ‘visibility’ of translators may help achieve the political aim of those in power.

## 2. The development and purposes of China English

The concept of China English was first proposed by Ge Chuangui in 1980 (Ge 1980) and then elaborated by Li (1993, p. 80) into “[a language] mainly used as an international language in China, with Chinese borrowings, nativised lexicology as well as unique syntax and discourse structure as its major features, [which] contributes much to the international communication”. In brief, China English is different from Chinese English; the former is deemed as English with Chinese social and cultural characteristics, while the latter is similar to pidgin English or known as Chinglish (Jiao 2009). In detailing the difference between Chinglish and China English, Jin (2003) points out that Chinglish is a result of negative influence of the user’s mother language (Chinese), is unstable, involves constant self-correction, and varies with individuals, while China English is relatively more stable, has rules to follow, and is learned and shared on a collective basis. Furthermore, Chinglish may be

used to express anything that is inside or outside China, while China English is meant to introduce and communicate the cultures and things with Chinese characteristics (Tu 2006, p. 84).

Since the 1980s, there has been a growing trend towards recognition of China English (e.g. Wu 2008). Although a few Chinese researchers are worried that China English, which is deviant from standard English, may hinder intercultural communication (Qiu, Ning 2002), it is widely maintained that the use of China English can enhance China's international status, promote Chinese culture to the world, strengthen Chinese national identity and solidarity, contribute to expansion of English vocabulary, and suit China's social reality (e.g. Jiao 2009; Luo 2010). Consequently, Chinese translators and interpreters are urged to deal with Chinese-English translation by using China English, which, as Chinese translation researchers argue, retains complete cultural meanings and characteristics of Chinese words (Jin 2001, p. 16; Bao 2008; Luo 2010, pp. 54-6), increases China's cultural status and influence on the international stage (Lin 1999), demonstrates the confidence of Chinese translators/interpreters in their domestic culture (Bao 2008, p. 322), and makes translation from Mandarin Chinese into English easier (Luo 2008, p. 97).

### **2.1. China English translation strategy and ideological implications**

China English translation is largely based on the 'foreignising' strategy or tendency, which leads to such commonly adopted translation approaches as transliteration, literal translation, or transliteration/ literal translation with explanation. Yet, there are no definite rules for creating China English usage at either lexical or syntactic level (Chang 2017, pp. 419-20). Some Chinese academics point out that transliteration of Chinese words and phrases, or zero translation, may be used deliberately to keep the meaning of the translation ambiguous when translators or interpreters are not authorised to interpret terms produced by Chinese leaders, such as the case of *bu zheteng* (meaning *do not get sidetracked*) in a press conference of Chinese former president Hu Jintao in 2008 (Zhu, Zhang 2011, p. 68). Zhu and Zhang make it clear that remarks or speeches of Chinese leaders are "authoritative discourse in the same category as sacred texts," and, therefore, translating such texts becomes a political act that cannot be performed without the consent of the authority (Zhu, Zhang 2011, p. 71). This explicitly indicates that the ideology of the authority matters most in deciding what translation strategy should be adopted in China English contexts.

Meanwhile, those China English expressions that are not transliterated or literally translated from Chinese but produced according to English grammatical rules may be created with deliberation and carry significant

cultural and political implications. One typical case is the translation guidelines involving the One China principle towards Taiwan. Specifically, in cross-strait context, China must be referred to as ‘the mainland’ as opposed to Taiwan regarded as an ‘island,’ thus making it clear that there is only one China (He, Li 2011, pp. 8-9; see also the discussion of Example 3 for more translation guidelines regarding the One China principle). The semantic nuances, which might seem trivial to people outside China, are actually viewed by China as a means to safeguard its national interest and image and to better achieve the goals of propaganda (e.g. Chen 2013).

## **2.2. China English in China’s external propaganda practices**

As China English concurrently fits the official stress on ‘Chineseness’ of China’s foreign propaganda since 1980, it is heavily used in external propaganda under the political patronage of the Chinese government (Chen, Li 2013). Some Chinese researchers even suggest that the enhancement and widespread of Chinese culture through China English is not only the “subjective appeal” of Chinese people but also the “objective demand” and “inevitable trend” in inter-ethnic cultural exchange at the global level (Chen, Li 2013, p. 110). Yet, a few Chinese academics still hold negative views about the use of China English in external propaganda. Zhang and Meng (2007, pp. 135-6) maintain that some, if not many, political and cultural terms with Chinese characteristics are “mechanically” translated into English by following the original form of the Chinese source text, which may cause misunderstanding among non-Chinese people, and that Chinese translators should free themselves from the form of the source text and seek to get the original meaning across. To avoid confusing foreign audiences, Hong and Wang (2011, p. 124) consider that translators and interpreters must know the target audience of China’s publicity campaign and bear in mind the difference between Chinese and the Others. Some other academics adopt a moderate yet pro-CPC thinking, saying that while using Anglo-American English in Chinese official propaganda may appeal to Western audiences, safeguarding Chinese national interest and image remains the top priority, and that preserving Chinese characteristics and values in the propaganda translation can better achieve the propaganda goals (e.g. Chen 2013).

While the formation of China English is regarded as a significant breakthrough in Chinese-English translation practice in that China English can help Chinese people better introduce everything with Chinese characteristics and meet the need of the Others to know China (Jin 2001, p. 13), the main source of China English terms is the English texts released by China’s official media (Jin 2002, p. 72). Tang (2013) analyses the English versions of the reports on the work of the Chinese government, which are official annual reviews of the Chinese public sector’s results, and finds China

English heavily used to create English equivalents of words and phrases with Chinese characteristics, particularly in terms of China's national policy, principles, and propaganda slogans. This indicates the ever-growing number of culture-loaded phrases, neologisms (for policies), and shortened form phrases in China English. Judging from the English documents released by Chinese official translation agencies and institutions, such as the Central Compilation & Translation Bureau (CCTB), Translators Association of China (TAC), China International Publishing Group (CIPG), and China Academy of Translation (CATL), as well as Chinese official media agencies, such as Xinhua News Agency and Beijing Review, China English remains the CPC's linguistic instrument in promoting China and its ideology (e.g. Xu 2003; Bai, Cao 2018; Qiu 2018).

Also noteworthy is that China English is conducive to unifying Chinese social ideology and maintaining China's territorial integrity (Jin 2001, p. 14), which is why the English texts released by Chinese authorities also target the general public in China in the name of promoting English learning and translation (Hung 2002, p. 331). In Jiang and Xu's study that reveals China's ideological and political education curriculum since the mid-twentieth century and the present paradoxes of civic and political education in China's higher education institutions (2014), Chinese university students are nowadays said to be mostly resistant or reluctant to learn in ideological and political classes. This might mislead outsiders to expect poorer results of the Chinese government's ideological and political indoctrination in the twenty-first century. In fact, nowadays Chinese people may unknowingly develop and reinforce their identity towards the CPC and the CPC's policy by learning the China English slogans and texts released by Chinese authorities since China English terms and sentences included in such English texts have been widely made the materials for English language teaching and examinations at each level (e.g. Mu 2018) and for the China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters (CATTI) (e.g. CIPG Training Center 2019).

### **3. China English translations in the official English version of Xi Jinping's report to the 19th CPC National Congress**

Although many Chinese researchers attribute the success of the English version of Xi's report to the 19th CPC National Congress to the involvement of the foreign English language expert (e.g. Huang 2018), according to some Chinese translators and officials who participated in the translation in question, the translation team was mainly composed of Chinese translators

recruited from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the International Liaison Department of the Central Committee of the CPC, Xinhua News Agency, the China International Publishing Group (CIPG), China Radio International (CRI) and some universities noted for foreign language and media communication expertise (Li T. 2018, p. 9). Also, CPC document translators must be linguistically competent and politically sensitive enough to increase international expressions of China's intentions, facilitate the international communication of China's political discourse, and use political expressions with Chinese characteristics that are unique to China instead of catering to foreign readers (Jia 2015, p. 93; Li T. 2018, p. 14). As pointed out by one Chinese translator and reviewer from China's Central Compilation & Translation Bureau, the chief organisation in charge of the translation of the 19th CPC National Congress documents, the foreign language experts were invited only to "polish" the translations of Xi's report, and their involvement was considered to achieve good results in terms of "polishing the translations, improving the translations of the important concepts, and increasing the influence on the translation target readers" (Li T. 2018, p. 10). It is further specified that having these foreign language experts give interviews to Chinese and foreign press media not only facilitated "the international communication of the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress" but also helped "tell China's stories in a vivid way and spread China's philosophy" (Li T. 2018, p. 10). Such insider information about the role of the foreign language experts is contradictory to what has been displayed in the video clips and news reports on these foreign language experts, in which these experts were indicated to be the chief translators of the report (see also the following section). Some Chinese academics even speak highly of the foreign language experts, for they have "provided standard and authentic foreign language versions of the 19th CPC National Congress report" (Li N. 2018, p. 44). Yet, a cross-referencing of the official English version of Xi's report and a book entitled *Keywords to Understand China (Vol. 1)*, which, published in 2016, was the result of joint efforts of China International Publishing Group and China Academy of Translation under the patronage of the Chinese government, shows that 28 out of the 90 keywords collected in the book were used without changes or with very slight changes in the official English version of Xi's report (CIPG, CATL 2016). These keywords are culture-loaded phrases or sentences, such as "It takes good blacksmith to make good steel" (CIPG, CATL 2016, pp. 46-7), or neologisms for policies, such as "1992 Consensus" (CIPG, CATL 2016, pp. 102-3). This is not unusual in China as when it comes to political expressions produced by previous CPC leaders or on previous occasions, CPC document translators are urged to inherit the translation legacy (Li T. 2018, p. 14), which means that the way in which some political expressions were translated may mostly remain in later

translations. In the following are three other much-discussed China English translation examples found in the official English version of Xi's report that may give us a clearer picture of the ideological nature and function of China English.

- Example 1

三严三实 (Xi 2017a, p. 7)

(Literally: *three strictness and three earnestness*)

the Three Stricts and Three Earnests (Xi 2017b, p. 6)

According to footnote 2 in the English full text of Xi's report (2017b, p. 6), the full meaning of the "Three Stricts and Three Earnests" is "to be strict with oneself in practicing self-cultivation, using power, and exercising self-discipline; and to be earnest in one's thinking, work, and behavior." This political slogan was first proposed by Xi Jinping in 2014 and previously translated into the "Three Guidelines for Ethical Behavior and the Three Basic Rules of Conduct" (CIPG, CATL 2016, p. 48-51) or "the Three Stricts and Three Honests" (China.org.cn 2015). Clearly, in the official English version of Xi's report, the term was literally translated by using China English. Some Chinese researchers maintain that it is tedious and discouraging readers from seeing the point of this political idea if its meaning is fully rendered into English, and that the refined China English term can better attract attention of readers, who later can understand the term by referring to an explanatory note (Fang 2019, p. 120). It is ungrammatical in English to use the adjectives in a plural form, which, however, is typical of China English usage. One previous similarly structured term "Three Represents" (the title of former Chinese President Jiang Zemin's political theory) was hailed as a "reasonable innovation" by the Chinese translators of the CPC documents and said to have been accepted by the international community (Xu 2003, p. 2).

- Example 2

照镜子、正衣冠、洗洗澡、治治病 (Xi 2017a, p. 7)

(Literally: *looking in the mirror, straightening clothes and hats, taking a bath, and treating illnesses*)

...examining ourselves in the mirror, tidying our attire, taking a bath, and treating our ailments (Xi 2017b, p. 6)

The parallel-structured metaphorical terms were first proposed by Xi Jinping in 2013 as the code of conduct for the CPC members, demanding them to follow the CPC constitution and requirements, to meet people's expectations, to reflect on and correct one's own misconduct, and to help cleanse the CPC of misconduct and corruption (Xu, Zhou 2013). Since then, the terms have been literally translated into "Watch from the mirror, groom oneself, take a bath and seek remedies" (China Daily 2013) or something similar. Some Chinese researchers maintain that these China English terms, produced through literal translation, are considered to "retain the form, content, and figure of speech of the Chinese language", which helps communicate the Chinese culture to the world and allows foreigners to "have a deep understanding of the guidelines and policies that are with Chinese characteristics" (Jiang, Gong 2019, p. 60). However, intriguingly, in some online articles that highlight must-learn English expressions from the 19th CPC National Congress report, this example is found to be translated into "look into the mirror, straighten the attire, take a bath and seek remedies" (China Daily 2017), which is different from that in the official English version of the report. Another more intriguing phenomenon is that some English expressions that are regarded as excellent translations by Chinese researchers are not from the report in question but were produced beforehand, such as "双一流 double first-class initiative" (e.g. Ye, Zhang 2018, p. 33). Here it seems that spreading the ideology matters more than learning English or studying translation, which echoes my discussion about the ideological nature and function of China English in the previous sections.

- Example 3

解决台湾问题、实现祖国完全统一，是全体中华儿女共同愿望...必须继续坚持 "和平统一、一国两制" 方针... 承认 "九二共识" 的历史事实，认同两岸同属一个中国，两岸双方就能开展对话，协商解决两岸同胞关心的问题，台湾任何政党和团体同大陆交往也不会存在障碍。(Xi 2017a, p. 55; my underlined emphasis)

(Literally: Solving the Taiwan issue/question and realising the motherland's complete unification is the shared wish of all Chinese people... [We] must continue to insist on the policy of 'peaceful unification, one country two systems,' ... Recognising the historical fact of the '1992 Consensus,' recognising the two sides across the [Taiwan] Strait belong to one China, and then both sides across the [Taiwan] Strait can enter into dialogue and negotiate over solving the problems that concern the people of both sides. There will be no obstacles to the



exchanges between any political party or group of Taiwan and [China's] mainland.)

Resolving the Taiwan question to realize China's complete reunification is the shared aspiration of all Chinese people... We must uphold the principles of "peaceful reunification" and "one country, two systems," ...Recognize the historical fact of the 1992 Consensus and that the two sides both belong to one China, and then our two sides can conduct dialogue to address through discussion the concerns of the people of both sides, and no political party or group in Taiwan will have any difficulty conducting exchanges with the mainland. (Xi 2017b, pp. 50-1; my underlined emphasis)

As indicated by the terms underlined above, the translations involving the One China principle towards Taiwan are exactly following the guidelines for China's translators. '台湾问题' must be rendered into the 'Taiwan question' as the word 'issue' implies the controversy over the One China principle (Guo 2002, p. 60). Also, China seeks 'reunification' instead of 'unification' with Taiwan as China maintains that Taiwan has long been part of China and that Taiwan is now a renegade province of China (Hong and Wang 2011, p. 123). The fact that the phrase 'one country' (a bigger unit) precedes 'two systems' (smaller units) goes against English grammatical rules, but this is meant to highlight 'one country' as the focus of the political term (Du 1997, p. 55). China must be referred to as 'the mainland' as opposed to Taiwan regarded as an 'island' in cross-strait context, thus reinforcing the subordinate status of Taiwan to China (He, Li 2011, pp. 8-9). Last but not least, as if all the China English terms regarding the One China principle shown in this example were not enough for China to assert its 'right' to Taiwan, the first person plural possessive pronoun 'our' was added to the term 'two sides.' As the One China principle towards Taiwan has been constantly stated and repeated by China's leaders, Example 3 may be described as nothing but a translation formula, which further indicates that the foreign English language expert invited to join the English translation project of Xi's report might play no part here at all. Then, why have the terms such as 'one country, two systems,' 'reunification,' and the 'Taiwan question' still been specified and discussed as model translations from the English version of Xi's report in many journal or online articles (e.g. He 2018, p. 99)? Again, it is very likely that the policy and ideology of the Chinese government are being spread and reinforced through discussion of these 'model' translations.

#### **4. The image of the foreign language experts involved in the translations of Xi's report to the 19th CPC National Congress, with a focus on the British translator**

Following Xi Jinping's oral report to the 19th CPC National Congress, on the same day, Xinhua News Agency, China's largest and most influential state-run press agency, released news coverage introducing nine foreign language experts who participated in the translation of Xi's report to the 19th CPC National Congress. The coverage included a video clip, individual photos of the nine experts, and their views on Xi's report (Huang, Liu, Hao 2017). A few more similar news reports on these foreign translators then appeared on some of China's other official press outlets, such as China Central Television (CCTV), China Global Television Network (CGTN), and New China TV (the official YouTube Channel of Xinhua News Agency). To investigate how China's state-run media built up the image of the foreign translators, a multimodal analysis is used to examine the video clips and the individual photos of foreign English language expert Holly Snape. This subject is chosen because the English version of Xi's report is the most widely discussed and promoted in China, the British translator enjoyed more media coverage than her other foreign counterparts, and this chapter focuses on China English translations instead of the translations in other foreign languages.

A multimodal analysis is a social semiotic approach that focuses on how visual signs are used in combination and discovers the covert or overt visual statements. A tool kit was first developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) to break down and analyse visual compositions such as photographs, advertisements, schoolbooks and so on, thus arriving at the (re)construction of the meaning of the components, arrangements, and qualities of these visual signs and uncovering more subtle or complex implications. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) point out that human communication is seldom achieved by a single mode of communication; instead, more than one mode of communication, such as visual signs, sound, and language, may be used simultaneously to put together a jigsaw puzzle of meanings. The units of multimodal analysis go beyond oral and written language and further include acoustic and visual signs, thus broadening the examination or detection of how the world is ideologically structured and likely achieving a well-rounded and educated inference about manipulated statements.



Figure 1

A screengrab of the photo of British translator Holly Snape released by Xinhua News Agency (Huang, Liu, Hao 2017).

As shown in Figure 1, Snape, also known as a *represented participant* in multimodal analysis, does not directly face or look at viewers (or *interactive participants* as opposed to *represented participants*) (Kress, van Leeuwen 2006, p. 114). Instead, she is looking at one absent interviewer, which puts the interactive participants in a position of observation. This means no direct contact is established between the two kinds of participants (Kress, van Leeuwen 2006, p. 117), with the represented participant offered to the interactive participants as an “item of information” or a “specimen in a display case” (Kress, van Leeuwen 2006, p. 119). Meanwhile, the fact that the represented participant is smiling demands the interactive participants to establish an imaginary relation of social affinity or to “form a pseudo-social bond” with the former (Kress, van Leeuwen 2006, p. 118). As Snape is cut off at approximately the waist, the size of frame is the medium close shot with far personal distance (Kress, van Leeuwen 2006, pp. 124-125). Furthermore, Snape is presented from an oblique but horizontal angle, which indicates she is not part of the interactive participants’ world yet she is not powerful or threatening; the detachment simply makes her “a phenomenon to be observed” (Kress, van Leeuwen 2006, p. 138). In terms of Snape’s appearance, her blonde hair, white skin, and slim figure make her fit the stereotype of a beautiful female native speaker of English in Chinese society, and her side swept hairstyle reinforces her feminine, elegant image. The Chinese caption below the photo reads “This is English language expert Holly Snape giving an interview in Beijing (photographed 14 October). Photographed by Xinhua News Agency reporter Jin Lianguai,” which only highlights the interviewee as an expert. Above the photo, Snape is quoted as saying “Even as a foreigner, I also can feel the determination behind the

report and the important thinking it contains,” which has nothing to do with her translation task but is very similar to what her other foreign counterparts are quoted as saying. For instance, the Spanish language expert Josep-Oriol Fortuny Carreras is quoted as saying “The report conveys very clear philosophy. This is a long-term planning. It shows both the CPC and Xi Jinping know very clearly what China needs and how the goals should be achieved.” In fact, the news article mainly shows that these foreign language experts are full of praise and admiration for Xi Jinping and his report (Huang, Liu, Hao 2017).



Figure 2

A screengrab of British translator Holly Snape being interviewed in the video clip on the nine foreign language experts released by Xinhua News Agency (Huang, Liu, Hao 2017).

Figure 2 is a screengrab of Snape being interviewed in the video clip embedded in the same news report discussed above. She is depicted as an ‘expert’ as the set-up for her is the ‘breast pocket shot,’ with her name, country of origin, and job title superimposed on the screen; here the distance between the represented participant and the interactive participants signifies “respect for an authority” on English translation (Kress, van Leeuwen 2006, p. 126). In this three-minute-twenty-second-long clip, Snape appears for only about six seconds, and she says in a low and soft voice, with her head nodding and hands moving, “People who understand China in Britain will kind of understand the report and its content. In a very tiny way, I’m doing my best to do that.” Her vivid and earnest looks should win trust and affinity from the interactive participants. Here in the clip she talks about her expectations of this translation task and does not mention anything about the translation process, while the other foreign experts express their recognition of the CPC and the report and even anticipate China’s success in making itself and the Chinese nation great in the near future.

Another video clip posted by New China TV, the official YouTube Channel of Xinhua News Agency, is entitled “Meet 1st foreign readers of China's Party Congress report” (New China TV 2017), with English subtitles, and the subtitles shown on the first two frames are “The 19th CPC National Congress report has been translated into 10 languages” and “This is what 8 language experts had to say about it.” This time, Snape appears longer, for approximately 17 seconds. As indicated by the screengrab of the clip (see Figure 3), this video clip is likely to have been shot on the same day as the previous video clip as Snape's appearance and attire remain the same. She says in the clip, “To me that says that China is really kind of trying hard to communicate with the rest of the world. I am really glad I can do some part to try to help that.” Apart from her recognition of China, her words here seem to be paraphrasing what she says in the previous video clip.



Figure 3  
A screengrab of British translator Holly Snape being interviewed  
in the video clip posted by New China TV (2017).

Still another two-minute-thirty-two-second-long video clip about these foreign language experts released by China Global Television Network (CGTN) focuses mainly on Holly Snape, interlaced with a few voiceless frames of the other foreign language experts (CGTN 2017). As suggested by the title of the video clip shown in Figure 4, “Discovering Chinese culture through political translations and family life,” Snape first talks in Mandarin Chinese about her life experience as a foreign woman marrying into a Chinese family. This part lasts for about 30 seconds, followed by two other parts regarding her positive impression and opinion about Xi's report and China's future success. Then, the last part is about the translation difficulties she has encountered, which is to convey in English the rich language, strong ideas, tempo, rhythm and feelings of the report. In this video clip, she still does not look directly at the interactive participants, but she tilts more to the front and smiles or grins more often. This enables her to establish a relation

of more social affinity with the interactive participants but remain a detached language expert. Also, the first part about her family life in China reinforces her image as a China hand, which further enhances the credibility of her identification with and recognition of the CPC and the report.



Figure 4

A screengrab of British translator Holly Snape being interviewed in the video clip posted by CGTN (2017).

As shown by the multimodal analysis results, the focus of the media coverage of the foreign language experts has been more on the translators' endorsement of Xi's thoughts and achievements than on the translation quality or strategy (e.g. Huang, Liu, Hao 2017).

## 5. Conclusion

Around a decade ago, China scholar David Shambaugh doubted whether the CPC could continue to control Chinese society through “a mish-mash of slogans that few understand or believe” (Shambaugh 2008, p. 58) and suggested that China's external propaganda work, which “remains clumsy, rhetorical, propagandistic, and relatively unsophisticated,” should “hinder its soft power” (Shambaugh 2013, p. 268). Now, as indicated by the analysis results of this study, the CPC and the use of China English in its external propaganda have been progressing and keeping up with the time. The involvement of the foreign language experts in the translations of Xi Jinping's report to the 19th CPC National Congress and the media coverage of these experts have made the foreign language versions of Xi's report an unprecedented success as a political document. Better yet, what these foreign language experts have endorsed is not only the CPC's policy and ideology but also the legitimacy and appropriateness of China English as a variety of English. Perhaps before long, the ideological implications behind the CPC's

promotion of China English may go further towards what South Korean researcher Kyoo-Seob Lim has suggested in his study of the CPC's ideology with Chinese characteristics:

The Communist Party of China sinicises both 'traditional culture' and 'Western values' so that, on the one hand, it can insist on demonstrating Chinese characteristics in its own way, while, on the other hand, it can actively participate in the development of globalisation and further deconstruct the West-centred globalisation. Through this process of sinicisation and participation in globalisation, the Communist Party of China is telling Chinese people: globalisation is not exclusive to the West and Chinese people are entitled to participate; globalisation is no longer the West's globalisation and should be China's globalisation. (2004, p. v; my translation)

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