

## Research Article

# The Landscape of *Robinson Crusoe* in China: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Daniel Defoe's novel *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* has an everlasting impact in China since its first entrance in Cantonese in 1902. Now, it has become a Robinson Crusoe industry in the publishing sector. This paper attempts to give quantitative evidence from bibliometrics to examine its popularity in China. The data collected are based on all articles published in authoritative CSSCI journals from its inception (1999) to January 2021. We also retrieved *Robinson Crusoe* results from the National Library Reference Alliance and e-commerce China Dangdang to identify its popular Chinese versions. Five themes are concerned with this novel: comparative literature, economic analysis, translation studies, communication, and philosophical thinking. The study has articulated that *Robinson Crusoe*'s publications in China have increased significantly since the novel was designated as a topic related to China's National College Entrance Examination in 2018. Hence, rewriting *Robinson Crusoe* for teenagers has been a driver for a wide readership, which accordingly makes its translation much embraced in the Chinese world due to the recent statistics.

## 1. Introduction

The year 2019 marks the 300th anniversary of the publication of Daniel Defoe's *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (hereinafter *Robinson Crusoe*), a travelogue of seemingly real incidents about the castaway mariner Robinson Crusoe, who lived alone in an uninhabited island for 28 years [1]. Credited as "the first English novel" [2], *Robinson Crusoe* has been stirring both the literary and media world since its publication due to a variety of editions, translations, movies, and other spin-off TV series for all levels of readers in different countries. It is recorded that by the end of the 19th century, at least 700 alternative versions, translations, and imitations had appeared, including children's versions with pictures, pantomimes, and operas [3]. In 1902, French film artist and magician Georges Méliès first exploited "the medium of film as a means of personal expression" [4] to produce *Robinson Crusoe*, which brought out a revolution of adapting this

novel into screen versions. To date, there are more than 100 adapted films, including silent drama films, science fiction films, and animated cartoons since the first decade of the twentieth century [5]. Undoubtedly, either the abbreviated title of the novel "*Robinson Crusoe*" or the name of the protagonist "*Robinson Crusoe*" has now become a household word throughout the world, though Defoe's other two sequels are less known: *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719, hereinafter *Farther*) and *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe* (1720, hereinafter *Serious Reflections*). As a well-received global publication phenomenon, *Robinson Crusoe* also experienced its own story in China in the past century. Although translated into many languages, including Inuktitut, Coptic, and Maltese, Chinese readers did not know Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) and his adventurous story *Robinson Crusoe* until 1902, 171 years after his death in London in 1731. The documentary survey demonstrates that Defoe's debut in China is indebted to William C. Burns (1815–1868), a Western Christian missionary, who helped to

translate the novel *Robinson Crusoe* into Cantonese, a widely spoken dialect in South China but condensed the original title with rich connotations *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* into *Gusu Licheng*, a simple Chinese title with typical Chinese four characters, meaning “Robinson Crusoe’s experience” [6, 7]. Since then, *Robinson Crusoe* has had an everlasting impact on Chinese readers. For example, President Xi Jinping, in his 2015 diplomatic visit to the United Kingdom, mentioned *Robinson Crusoe* in his memory of the United Kingdom’s literary works [8]. In 2017, the Chinese version of *Robinson Crusoe* was listed as the Top 3 largest borrowing volumes by Hunan Library [9]. To date, a tremendous literature related to *Robinson Crusoe* in China has been made, which turns out to be a Robinson Crusoe industry. Numerous versions, whether full, abridged, or adapted, have been issued by a variety of Chinese publishing sectors, including some well-known publishing houses, such as the Commercial Press, the People’s Literature Publishing House, and the Higher Education Press. Here, in our paper, by the italicized “*Robinson Crusoe*,” we mean the novel and its derivatives or paratexts. Although the Crusoe story remains very popular in China, how this novel has been accepted lacks an empirical description. No specific data show how Chinese scholars interpreted the novel and how many Chinese versions were issued. This paper attempts to give a bibliometric review on the reception and translation of this extraordinary novel in China, identifying potential, yet convincing reasons that contribute to its popularity through the retrievable data in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. Hence, to have a thorough, yet scientific study of its acceptance in China, five aspects are examined via the bibliometric analysis: comparative literature, economic analysis, translation studies, communication, and philosophical thinking. Three contributions are made via this method: (1) the reliable statistics help identify popular versions of *Robinson Crusoe*; (2) the research gives a review of how Chinese scholars interpret *Robinson Crusoe*; and (3) the review covers a broader collection of data comparing with the existing study, which makes it more comprehensive.

## 2. Materials and Methods

In relating to *Robinson Crusoe*, journals, Master’s theses and PhD dissertations, funds, and library collections are applied to retrieve the book. The data sources come from CNKI (China Journal Full-Text Database), Wanfang Data, the National Library Reference Alliance, and Dangdang. We select those data sets because they provide users with representative periodicals, theses, and authors.

CNKI, launched by Tsinghua University in 1999, is the largest Chinese journals database, which provides all MA theses, doctoral dissertations, newspapers, and journal articles. In this respect, CNKI stands for the Chinese scholars’ research about *Robinson Crusoe*, from which their perspectives of the novel can be examined. “The National Library Reference Alliance” is the largest digital resource platform that offers an online reference service and documents remote transmission service for its users.

While Dangdang is one of China’s top booksellers, we can still find ordinary readers of the book. Beyond the data from Mainland China, papers from Hongkong, Macau in HKMO, and the HKU Scholars Hub are retrieved as well. Moreover, for the data in Taiwan, the National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan and the Taiwan Academic Literature Database are selected. On the whole, the selected data in this paper possess the credibility of *Robinson Crusoe* studies in China.

To date, with “Robinson Crusoe,” both italicized and nonitalicized, as the keyword on January 23, 2021, the results in CNKI demonstrate that there are a total of 779 journal papers, 107 theses (3 PhDs, 104 MAs), 15 conference papers, and 33 newspapers reviews, among which 88 articles are issued in authoritative CSSCI journals. Since CSSCI (Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index) is a database representing an indicator of evaluating a Chinese scholar’s published journals and promotion, an analysis of articles on “*Robinson Crusoe*” from the CSSCI journals will help researchers get the current, yet full picture of the topic. Here, we use the Chinese characters “*Robinson Crusoe*” as a keyword to indicate two forms in English: both the novel *Robinson Crusoe* and the protagonist Robinson Crusoe, for there is no distinction between the writing forms of the italicized and the nonitalicized in Chinese. To make the search results more inclusive, the following search items are used:

Topic = “*Robinson Crusoe*”

Language: English and Chinese

Indexes = CSSCI Timespan = All year

Search results: 107 records date last updated: January 23, 2021

To make the results more accurate, those authors who just mention “*Robinson Crusoe*” without any analysis of the book are removed. Then 88 results are selected through manual work. Each record from CSSCI contains the title, author, keywords, institution, journal, and publication year. On the other hand, retrievable MA theses and PhD dissertations can also be found through CNKI and Wanfang Data. Then 103 MA theses and 3 PhD dissertations are identified. The library collection, especially Duxiu (Knowledge Search Database) and the National Library can trace Chinese versions of *Robinson Crusoe* with a higher number, thus identifying which one is popular.

“The National Library Reference Alliance” provides users with the largest number of Chinese books, making it the right place to figure out the number of Chinese versions of *Robinson Crusoe*. The search results can be conducted as follows:

Title = “*Robinson Crusoe*” with different forms due to homophones

Language = Chinese

Timespan = All year

Match = exact matching

In China, “Robinson” is rendered as different Chinese written characters for its similar pronunciation “bin” and “son,” while “Crusoe” is translated as different titles, indicating a travelogue without any destination. In other words, they form different types of translation versions. The results will be shown in different ways with the combination of translation retrieved from the National Library Reference Alliance.

Major booksellers in China can also prove the popularity of the novel. E-commerce China Dangdang Inc., known as Dangdang, one of China’s top booksellers, contains ordinary readers’ comments of *Robinson Crusoe*, through which the bestsellers can be found based on its sales rankings of Dangdang till January 26, 2021.

With results retrieved from CNKI, CSSCI, HKMO, the HKU Scholars Hub, National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan, and Taiwan Academic Literature Database, we removed duplicates of the data. Based on the texts from CSSCI, the first part of this article uses CiteSpace (version 5.7R3) developed by Chen Chaomei and his team to analyze the authors, journal sources, keywords, and institutions of the text. Given that CiteSpace cannot produce an English version of maps when the source text is Chinese, 365 Excel is applied to make “*Robinson Crusoe*” data tables. The data are then conducted with the VOSviewer software tool (version 1.6.15) developed by Eck and Waltman of the University of Leiden of the Netherland. VOSviewer has the function of removing the synonyms of *Robinson Crusoe*. For Dangdang, it provides users with its own sales rankings based on buyers’ comments. Then those data are conducted through 365 Excel of Microsoft.

### 3. Results and Discussion

**3.1. Translation Versions.** The translation versions of *Robinson Crusoe* with different Chinese written characters (namely, homophones) can be identified through the search results of the National Library Reference Alliance. It is noted that there are many translation versions ranging from the full, abridged, adapted, bilingual to the illustrated children’s version. Interestingly, the popular Chinese translation title indicates that the eponymous hero’s “drifting” story appears to be much more received than his “adventurous” story, which might be caused by Chinese readers’ longing for mysterious sea story. From the data observed, the former includes seven versions with homophones, which tops the rankings with 1598 results, whereas the latter with 12 results. The statistics demonstrate that there are altogether 50 versions published alone in 2018 with the translation title containing the reliant, resourceful man’s “drifting” story (see Figure 1).

**3.2. Active Authors and Institutions.** Table 1 exhibits CSSCI authors’ demonstration, without considering results from Macau, Hongkong, and Taiwan. The top-ranked item by citation counts is Ren Haiyan, with citation counts of four. The second one is Luo Fukai, with citation counts of three. The third is Hui Haifeng, with citation counts of three. The

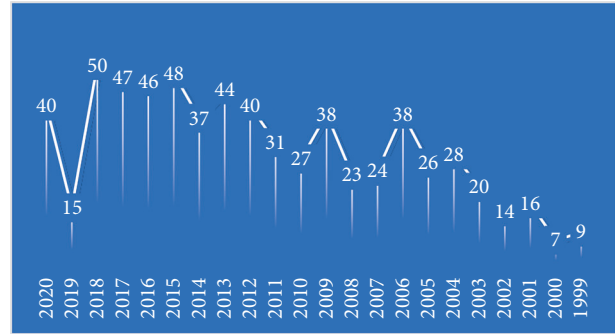


FIGURE 1: Publications of *Robinson Crusoe* with the title indicating the hero’s drifting story.

TABLE 1: Active authors of *Robinson Crusoe*.

Freq	Degree	Sigma	Author	Year
4	0	1	Ren Haiyan	2009
3	1	1	Luo Fukai	2009
3	1	1	Hui Haifeng	2011
2	1	1	Niu Hongying	2007
2	0	1	Song Xiaochuan	2003
2	0	1	Wang Xiaoxiong	2017
2	0	1	Li Jin	2009
2	0	1	Zeng Yan	2017
2	2	1	Yang Yang	2018
2	0	1	Xu Weizi	2019
2	1	1	Shen Fuying	2011

rest ranks the fourth with citation counts of two. From the table, we can see that Ren Haiyan is the biggest provider relating to *Robinson Crusoe* in those papers. What merits attention is that her 2009 doctoral dissertation “A Modern Myth and Its Revisions: A Study of Robinson Crusoe, Friday and Foe” was later published by Peter Lang in 2014 entitled *Différance in Signifying Robinson Crusoe: Defoe, Tournier, Coetzee and Deconstructive Re-visions of a Myth*. In her book, Ren argues that deconstructive rewritings belong to the category of revisions by engaging *Robinson Crusoe* in tandem with two of its revisions, Michel Tournier’s *Friday* and J. M. Coetzee’s *Foe*, from the perspective of the Enlightenment ideology. At present, Ren is also doing some research on “*Robinson Crusoe* and Its Rewriting” supported by the Social Science Fund Project of Huan Province.

Like Dr. Ren, Cui Wendong from the City University of Hong Kong has contributed four periodical papers, two MA theses, and one doctoral dissertation related to *Robinson Crusoe*. Unlike Ren’s study of comparing *Robinson Crusoe* with *Friday* and *Foe*, Dr. Cui examines *Robinson Crusoe* by placing it at the background of the Late Qing Dynasty (1840–1912) and combining it with these two works within the framework of Chinese literature. Thus, Cui collected earlier Chinese translation versions of *Robinson Crusoe*, identifying the translators’ ethical selections. At the same time, Hui attempts to explore *Robinson Crusoe* from the perspective of children’s literature and has already issued three English articles [10–12] and three Chinese ones [13–15]. He deals with how Robison Crusoe changes its

image in China to gain its popularity in the Chinese textbook, contending that the Chinese edition aims more at how the Crusoe story should be understood primarily as a material for drawing traditional moral lessons.

If we classify the aforementioned three young scholars as the paradigm of literary studies, Luo Fukai examines the economic activities that Robinson Crusoe represents. According to Luo [16], Robinson Crusoe is an ideal economic model that signifies how an individual works in an uninhabited island. Thus, Luo uses “*Robinson Crusoe*” as a figure to discuss the accumulation of wealth through collaboration, factors of production, financial capital, and value. In this sense, Robinson Crusoe has nothing to do with literary studies but as an economic analysis tool.

**3.3. Publication Source.** The novel’s publication source can be summarized in two ways: periodicals and publishing houses. As indicated in Table 2, Hunan Normal University tops the publications, reflecting that the university has outreached others in CSSCI papers in *Robinson Crusoe* research.

Table 2 shows the top 9 institutions based on publications. Hunan Normal University is the largest Robinson Crusoe provider with six papers listed on the CSSCI journals.

Table 3 is the top 10 cited articles based on CNKI. It displays that those three articles examined from economic perspectives are second to the other seven articles in literary studies.

Table 4 demonstrates four PhD dissertations related to Robinson Crusoe from Mainland China, Hongkong, and Taiwan. In terms of language, Ren Haiyan’s dissertation is written in English, while Cui Wendong and Yang Zonghua in Chinese, and Zheng Li in French. Ren’s and Yang’s studies focus on the comparative literature of Robinson Crusoe. In comparison, Cui and Zheng concentrate on the translation of the novel.

Table 5 shows that 103 MA theses related to *Robinson Crusoe* in Mainland China are higher than that of Hongkong, Taiwan, and Macau until February 6, 2021.

Table 6 displays the data from Dangdang about *Robinson Crusoe*, up to February 18, 2021. It shows the Commercial Press provides two popular versions, especially the version from Wen Zhong with great impact on readers. Those best-selling books are important indicators of the increasing readership. What they share is that they are all rewriting for Chinese children at the age of 10 with a guided reading from renowned Chinese teachers. For example, Wen Zhong’s and Liu Rongyue’s editions make the book easier, for the target readers are Year 6 students in China. Predictably, the number of comments will continue to grow dramatically in the near future.

**3.4. Co-Occurrence Keywords and Burst Keywords Analysis.** Co-occurrence keywords in CiteSpace can be used for identifying research topics. The network is divided into 12 co-citation clusters, which are labelled by index terms from their own citers. The largest four clusters are summarized,

TABLE 2: Top 9 institutions based on publications.

Rank	Institution	Publications
1	Hunan Normal University	6
2	Peking University	2
3	Wuhan University	2
4	Nankai University	2
5	Nanjing University	2
6	Shandong University	2
7	Huazhong University of Science and Technology	2
8	Hezhou University	2
9	Chinese Marine University	2

with “Friday,” “colonialism,” “subjectivity,” and “social ecology” as keywords.

Table 7 demonstrates the largest four clusters. The first largest cluster (#0) has 32 members and a silhouette value of 0.879. The most active citer is Sun Tingting, whose article “A Study of the Relationship among Robinson, Friday and Island in Tournier’s Fiction” was issued in the journal of *Foreign Literature* in 2010.

The second-largest cluster (#1) has 23 members and a silhouette value of 0.968. The most active citer to the cluster is Shen Fuying, who published her article “On the Metamorphosis of the Images of ‘the Other’ in British Novels” in *Foreign Literature* in 2015. Niu Hongying and Xue Fengyan are also labelled as the most active citers, who co-authored “Robinson Crusoe and the State of Nature Theories in the West” in the *Journal of Northeast Normal University* (Philosophy and Social Sciences) in 2010.

The third-largest cluster (#2) has 20 members and a silhouette value of 0.938. The most active citer to the cluster is Bai Chunsu, whose article “Destruction and Reconstruction: On the Changes of Philosophical Connotations in Desert Island Fictions,” appeared in the *Journal of East China Normal University* (Humanities and Social Sciences) in 2015; and Ren Haiyan’s article “Foe’s Rewriting of the Robinson Crusoe Myth,” was issued in *Foreign Literature* in 2009.

The fourth largest cluster (#3) has 18 members and a silhouette value of 0.986. The most active citer to the cluster is Luo Yalin, who published her article “The Complex Genealogy of the ‘New Man’ and the Shaping of Continuity: On Lu Yao’s ‘Reform’ Writing,” in *Literary and Artistic Theory and Criticism* in 2017.

By comparison, the burst of keywords in the CiteSpace are applied to make sure burst keywords. Chen Chaomei contends that the citation burst is not only an indicator of a most active area of the research, but also a detection of a burst event, which can last for many years as well as a single year [17]. In some sense, CiteSpace supports the citation bursts. From Figure 2, we can identify the keywords are “orientalism,” “colonialism,” “anthropocentrism,” “rewrite,” “Robinson,” “Defoe,” “modernity,” “desire,” and “colonial narrative.” These keywords articulate how colonialism and ecocriticism influence each other, and modernity is one of the keywords of colonialism.

TABLE 3: The Top 10 cited articles.

Author	Title	Source	Year
Luo Fukai	Enterprise's essential factor capital research	<i>The Theory and Practice of Finance and Economics</i>	2009
Zhang Deming	Narrative, modern subject and empire politics: reinterpretation of the adventure of Robinson Crusoe	<i>Foreign Literature</i>	2007
Ren Haiyan	Foe's rewriting of the Robinson Crusoe myth	<i>Foreign Literature</i>	2009
Niu Hongying	Robinson Crusoe and utopian thought of the West	<i>Foreign Literature Studies</i>	2007
Liu Ge	Defoe and Swift's "Barbarians"	<i>Foreign Literature Review</i>	2007
Zhang Yong	Colonial canon and rewriting of the canon: an analysis of postcolonial rewriting of Robinson in J. M. Coetzee's Foe	<i>Foreign Literature</i>	2011
Zhao Yina	The epitome of colonization: a post-colonial reading of Robinson Crusoe	<i>Foreign Literature</i>	2004
Song Xiaochuan	A disequilibrium economic dynamic Model	<i>Economic Research Journal</i>	2003
Wang Wenhua	On the image of Robinson from the perspective of modernity	<i>Foreign Literature Studies</i>	2004
Liu Lian	The existence of "the others" and the trouble in Search for "root," reading of "Vendredi" and "Robinson Crusoe"	<i>Comparative Literature in China</i>	2003
Hui Haifeng, Shen Dan	Individualism, religion and marginalization of family a reinterpretation of Robinson Crusoe	<i>Foreign Language and Literature</i>	2011
Wang Jinchao, Fan Jinxue	Economic explanation of participants' decision-making behavior in repeated games	<i>Seeker</i>	2005

TABLE 4: Ph.D. Dissertations related to *Robinson Crusoe*.

Author	Institution	Title	Year	Supervisor
Ren Haiyan	Nanjing University	A modern myth and its revisions: a study of Robinson Crusoe, Friday and Foe	2009	Wang Shouren
Cui Wendong	The Chinese University of Hongkong	A study of translated biographies of heroes in late Qing Dynasty	2015	Chen Pingyuan
Yang Zonghua	Taiwan Normal University	An ecological Turn in the contemporary Robinsonade: Haushofer, Tournier, Ballard, Martel	2018	Chen Chunyan, Zeng Sixu
Zheng Li	Shanghai International Studies University	Traductions, adaptations et reecritures approches du traitement et de la diffusion de Robinson Crusoe en occident et dans le monde chinois	2018	Qian Peixin

TABLE 5: MA theses related to *Robinson Crusoe*.

Place	Number
Mainland China	103
Hongkong	2
Taiwan	7
Macau	0

A degree is an algorithm in the CiteSpace that is used to identify major keywords. Table 8 illustrates that the top-ranked item by degree is "Robinson," with degree of 41. Others are shown clearly on the table.

Table 9 identifies the centrality. Centrality metrics provide a computational method for finding pivotal points between different specialties or tipping points in an evolving network [18].

Table 10 suggests that the top-ranked item by citation counts is "Robinson," with citation counts of 26. Readers may easily discern that the second one is "*Robinson Crusoe*" with citation counts of 16, whereas the 9th is the same "*Robinson Crusoe*" with citation counts of 3. This phenomenon is caused by two different Chinese written characters with the same pronunciation "piao," in which the former one is visualized as "water," while the latter is visually connected with "the wind." It indicates that most translators

prefer to the character with the meaning of "drifting or flowing in the water" because the Crusoe story happens at sea. "Foe" and "Defoe" are marked with the same citation counts of six, while "Tournier," "colonialism," "modernity," and "rewriting," are with the same citation counts of four. The 10th is "subjectivity," with citation counts of three.

## 4. Discussion

**4.1. Popular Translations and Published Source.** From the aforementioned statistics, we can safely infer that the popular translations of *Robinson Crusoe* can be attributed to three reasons. First, *Robinson Crusoe* is an exciting adventurous book that fits both the old and the young. To the Chinese mind, it has become one of the representative literary works of English literature. Second, the copyright of *Robinson Crusoe* has been due for many years. It is part of the novel's essential component for China's popularity. To make profits, publishers will do what they can to survey which version fits the market. Thus, Chinese publishers can make full use of the book's intellectual property. Third, the research shows that the top three versions target teenagers who are required to read the novel designated by the education administrators. The reception and translation of *Robinson Crusoe* are highly relevant to China's College Entrance Examination after the year 2000; hence, rewriting for the

TABLE 6: Bestseller of *Robinson Crusoe* in Dangdang.

Complier/translator	Publisher	Comments	Year
Wen Zhong	The Commercial Press	232,400	2012
Wang Jinhua	Zhejiang Gongshang University press	105,051	2017
Lu Jin	The Commercial Press	99,334	2017
Liu Rongyue	Jiangsu Literature and Art Publishing House	91,992	2017
Zuo Ruke	The Yilin Press	70,518	2010
Wen Zhong	The Commercial Press	51,271	2017

TABLE 7: Summary of the largest four clusters.

Cluster ID	Size	Silhouette	Average (year)	Keywords
#0	32	0.879	2010	Friday
#1	23	0.968	2014	Colonialism
#2	20	0.938	2012	Subjectivity
#3	18	0.986	2012	Social ecology

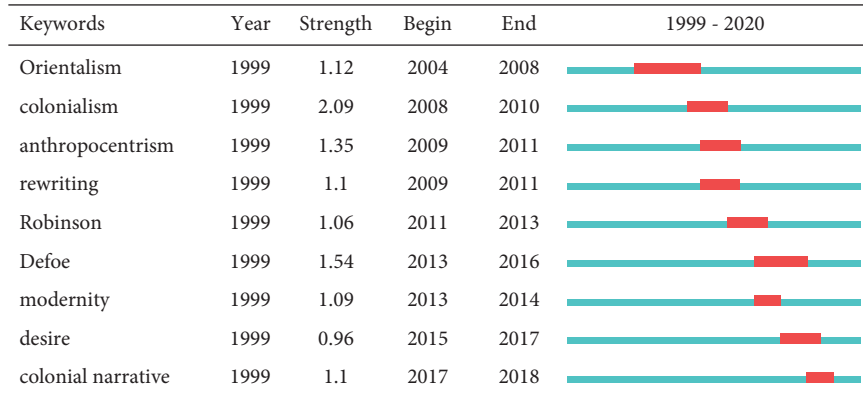


FIGURE 2: Top 9 keywords with the strongest citation bursts. Notes: the keywords with the most robust citation bursts (the bars mean some keywords cited).

TABLE 8: Top 10 keywords by degree.

degree	References
41	Robinson
35	Robinson Crusoe
16	Defoe
13	Foe
12	Subjectivity
11	Tournier
11	Modernity
11	Rewriting
9	Colonialism
9	Ecocriticism

TABLE 9: Top 10 keywords by the centrality.

Centrality	References
0.44	Robinson
0.32	Robinson Crusoe
0.10	Defoe
0.08	Foe
0.06	Modernity
0.06	Anthropocentrism
0.05	Subjectivity
0.05	Rewriting
0.04	Colonialism
0.04	Subject

young generation has been a driver for the increasing readership. The statistics indicate that *Robinson Crusoe* sells well when it is made available for the youngsters as Supplementary Material for textbooks, with the cooperation among translators, publishers, literary experts, and patrons. The protagonist Robinson is remoulded as an icon for self-reliance and confidence to overcome difficulties. This situation is coupled with labour which officially becomes the course for the primary and secondary school students

required by the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China. This suggests that the educational function has been a primary factor for Chinese readers, which turns out to be an essential source of popularity. During this process, translators exercise their power over the original work to make the novel suit their target readers. In this respect, the popularity of *Robinson Crusoe* is the result of the joint efforts made by translators, publishers, advertisers, and patrons.

TABLE 10: Top 10 keywords by citation counts.

Citation counts	References
26	Robinson
16	Robinson Crusoe <sup>1</sup>
6	Foe
6	Defoe
4	Tournier
4	Colonialism
4	Modernity
4	Rewriting
3	Robinson crusoe <sup>2</sup>
3	Subjectivity

The most popular translation version is done by the Commercial Press due to its reputation, a time-honoured brand in China. Historically, the press published several versions of *Robinson Crusoe* during the Republic of China (1912–1948). As one of the top publishing houses, this can be evidenced by its everlasting impact on translation versions, particularly those translated by Xu Xiacun, Gao Xisheng, Li Lei, and Wang Wenhua. To some extent, the publication of *Robinson Crusoe* in China reflects a short history of the Commercial Press. For example, Xu Xiacun's version of *Robinson Crusoe* was published by the Commercial Press in 1930. In the preface, Xu gave a detailed explanation of Defoe, stating that his translation was based on William Peterfield Trent's research. Unlike previous versions, Xu made it very clear in the preface that he spent a year translating this novel and tried to keep the style of the original work. He also pointed out that most translators were based on the excerpts instead of the full version of the novel. Their texts, to some extent, were paraphrased [19]. In 1959, Xu Xiacun's version of *Robinson Crusoe* was reprinted by the People's Literature Press (PRC), partly because Xu's translation is faithful to the original work and has been considered one of the most successful versions. Now, 23 versions can be retrieved in Duxiu, one of which was published in the name of Fang Yuan rather than Xu Xiacun, though it was translated by Xu Xiacun himself. According to Xu, daughter of Mr. Xu Xiachun, her father was classed as the rightist against the revolutionary government. In order to avoid censorship and publish *Robinson Crusoe*, the publisher had to change Xu Xiacun's name into Fang Yuan, a penname selected by Xu Xiacun [20]. In these special days, to use a pseudonym is to prevent political persecution.

Table 11 shows the top 10 major journals and their impact factors. It articulates that *Foreign Literature Studies* ranks first in *Robinson Crusoe* with 11 articles and then *Foreign Literature* with 8. In other words, *Robinson Crusoe* in China is studied from the literary analysis, but literary periodicals have less influence than sociological periodicals and periodicals on humanities and social sciences run by universities.

**4.2. Analysis and Characteristics of the Papers.** The interpretation of *Robinson Crusoe* can be classified as five topics in China. The first is to interpret it from the perspective of comparative literature, especially comparing Robinson

Crusoe with Foe and Friday, represented by Gu et al. They argue that Robinson Crusoe is a typical person of enlightenment and a rational economic man who signifies the earlier colonial conquer of the Great Britain [21–27]. *Foe* and *Friday* are important rewritings aiming at destructing the image of colonialism and puritanism, thus the universality, inevitability, and permanency of language colonization are clearly revealed [28].

The second is to interpret the novel from the perspective of Chinese translation, represented by Song Lihua, Cui Wendong, and Li Jin. They contend that the translation of *Robinson Crusoe* in China experienced the ethical dilemma between the Western value and the traditional Chinese value, especially the longstanding dominant Confucianism which gives priority to family members. Therefore, the Chinese translators in the Late Qing revised the original value to cater to the traditional piety value. For example, Lin Shu (1852–1924), one of the prominent translators of *Robinson Crusoe*, who applied traditional Chinese ethical codes to reinterpret his ideas, was criticized by vernacular literature advocates such as Qian Xuantong and Liu Ban-nong. In Cui's opinion, Lin Shu realized that Robinson was a pioneer of colonialism, inspiring Westerners to take risks to colonize and invade China, but it was a shame that 400 million Chinese could not resist [29]. While translating this novel, Lin wanted to use Robinson to criticize the idea of royalty represented by Confucianism.

The third is from the perspective of communication, which focuses on the Chinese image in Defoe's *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. Recent years have witnessed the tremendous growth of how the image of China is acculturated in other nations, which can be identified through the keywords "the image of China" in the National Social Science Fund Project (NSCFP) database, and then 40 funded projects from 2014 to 2019 were found. As one of the most important indicators for the academic promotion for Chinese scholars, particularly on Mainland China, NSCFP provides opportunities to find what other cultures think of the nation in literary works. In this sense, theories of orientalism and colonialism are much applied in literary analysis. As Zhang and Yang argue, the book is full of discrimination, prejudice, and arrogance against China. To their mind, the superiority of Eurocentrism makes Defoe despise China's spiritual and material wealth; his orientalist perspective makes him gaze at the East with his contemptuous eyes, constructs the image of China at will, thus coveting to dominate China; and the colonialist's vision drives him to seek theoretical grounds for colonizing China in spiritual and material terms [30].

The fourth is beyond the novel's literary studies. Robinson Crusoe becomes a figure for economic discussion. In this circumstance, Robinson Crusoe provides scholars with a perfect model to deal with how wealth accumulation happens. Luo Fukai contends that production factors in the modern economy include not only human resources, financial resources, material, and equipment resources, but also technology, information, and knowledge, which can be analyzed through Robinson Crusoe (3). Robinson Crusoe economy is of great value in the study of the history of



TABLE 11: Top 10 major journals and impact factor.

Rank	Publications	Journals	Impact factor (2020)
1	11	<i>Foreign Literature Studies</i>	0.576
2	8	<i>Foreign Literature</i>	0.498
3	3	<i>Foreign Literature Review</i>	0.527
4	3	<i>Seeker</i>	1.407
5	2	<i>Literary Review</i>	1.407
6	2	<i>Comparative Literature in China</i>	0.4
7	2	<i>Humanities &amp; Social Sciences Journal of Hainan University</i>	0.851
8	2	<i>Journal of Henan University (Social Science)</i>	1.481
9	2	<i>Journal of Social Science of Hunan Normal University</i>	1.389
10	2	<i>Chinese Journal of Sociology</i>	4.484

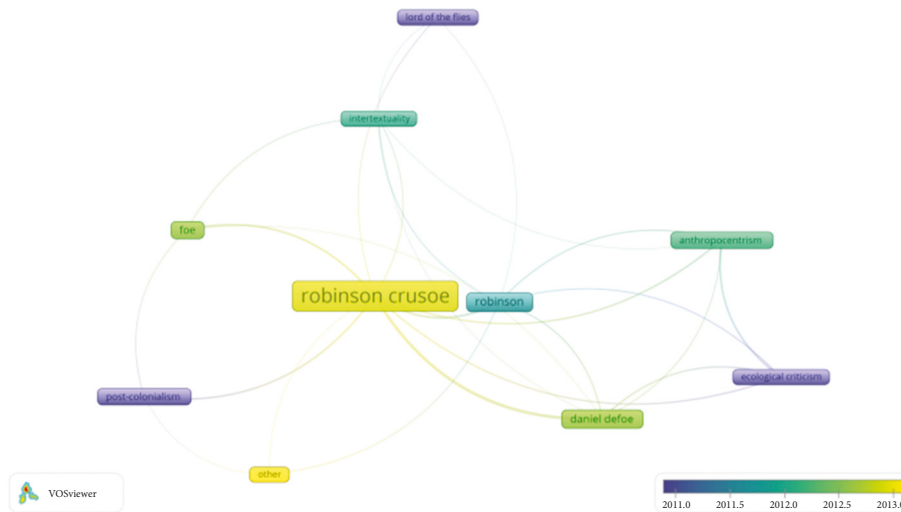


FIGURE 3: Evolution of the network of keywords based on co-occurrence.

economic thought, because it is closely related to the development of Western economics, especially in the evolution from political economy to economics, both illustrative and defensive.

The fifth is from the perspective of the philosophical interpretation of the novel. Wang and Ren contend that the foundation of the 18th British realistic literature is based on Locke’s philosophy [31]. Through the construction of the self and the destruction of the authority, Crusoe disobeys his father and leaves home for the sea, which echoes Locke’s idea of the patriarch and self-decision. Niu and Xue maintain that Defoe was much influenced by the state of nature theories advocated by well-known philosophers Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), but Defoe’s depiction in his novel *Robinson Crusoe* makes both the author and the protagonist shift from a Hobbesian anti-utopia natural man to a Rousseau’s utopia natural man. Defoe’s contradictory ideas presented in his novel, to some extent, build an intellectual bridge from Hobbes to Rousseau, though Rousseau intentionally misread the novel [32]. Fan and Wei take Robinson Crusoe as an example to describe the individualist MaGinn and collectivist Bloor’s view of whether an isolated Robinson can follow the rules based on Wittgenstein’s theory of the rule of following [33].

Based on the distribution of the periodicals, the statistics show that the research of the novel mainly focuses on literary

studies (66), translation studies (5), philosophical studies (7), and economic studies (8). Most of these periodicals are from the literary circle. They interpret the novel from the perspectives of modernity, colonialism, orientalism, post-colonialism, ecocriticism, and anthropocentrism. The translation studies focus on the rewriting of earlier Chinese translation versions. In comparison, the philosophical studies and economic studies concentrate on how Robinson Crusoe becomes a right or suitable person for philosophical and economic discussions.

4.3. *Analysis of Keywords.* For the keywords of *Robinson Crusoe*, different algorithms result in different answers. Whether from sigma or degree or centrality, all of them share such keywords as “modernity,” “Foe,” “rewriting,” and “colonialism,” indicating that the novel is often interpreted from the perspective of literature.

Figure 3 reveals the evolution of each keyword cluster according to 103 MA theses. The graphic makes a clear map of the important keywords over time that they appear. The colour indicates the terms they have arisen from the papers. It shows that all these terms arose before 2013, in which they form three clusters. Cluster 1 includes “Foe,” “Other,” “postcolonialism,” and “Robinson Crusoe;” Cluster 2 has “anthropocentrism,” “Daniel Defoe;” and Cluster 3 “intertextuality,” “Lord of the



Flies,” and “Robinson.” From the co-occurrence of these keywords, we can discern that the comparative studies of the novel are the mainstream of MA theses in China. It is observed that those theses share the same keywords with periodicals listed within CSSCI journals. As a matter of fact, some periodical papers are based on MA theses, which are showcased by Cui Wendong with two MA degrees in English whose work is related to *Robinson Crusoe*.

## 5. Conclusions

This article offers a visual and systematic bibliometric review of how the study of *Robinson Crusoe* in China is progressed in academia. There are four doctoral dissertations and 112 MA theses gathered from Mainland China, Hongkong, Macao, and Taiwan. The research analyzed 88 CSSCI papers on *Robinson Crusoe* from CNKI during the period 1999 to 2021. The number of publications in *Robinson Crusoe* has dramatically increased since 2009. According to the statistics, scholars in China research *Robinson Crusoe* mainly from the perspectives of colonialism, Orientalism, and ecocriticism.

Compared with other novel rewritings, including *Foe* and *Friday*, the early Chinese translation of *Robinson Crusoe* has attracted some researchers who specialize in Chinese literature. They tend to analyze the novel with the then literary norms and prefer to rewrite the original story to make the translation suitable for the traditional codes of Confucianism. This situation was much improved with the coming of Xu Xiaocun’s version published by the Commercial Press in 1930, marking a classical translation due to its loyalty to the original works. The statistics indicate that among a variety of *Robinson Crusoe* versions, the Chinese title with homophones related to the hero’s “drifting” story is the most popular translation versions. It is recorded that since the year 2000, at least 15 versions are published each year with the title name related to Robinson’s “drifting” story. On the other hand, its popularity is highly relevant to the children’s extracurricular readings in the compulsory education period, which requires *Robinson Crusoe* to be an essential book for educational purposes. In this connection, publishers introduce educators, translators, and editors to work together to make *Robinson Crusoe* a booming industry. Among the bestsellers of *Robinson Crusoe* in Dangdang, the top 3 versions are all designated for kids with more than 100,000 comments. The biggest supplier is the Commercial Press with two versions, in which Wen Zhong’s edition reached 228,303 comments by January 26, 2021. This popularity demonstrates the increasing readership of children during the 9-year compulsory education. By analyzing 103 MA theses, the study states that “Foe,” “Other,” “postcolonialism,” “Robinson Crusoe,” “anthropocentrism,” “Daniel Defoe,” “intertextuality,” “Lord of the Flies,” and “Robinson” are co-occurrence keywords. In terms of active authors, Ren Haiyan from Hunan Normal University and Cui Wendong from the City University of Hong Kong are the top two providers, both of whom are based on their previous studies to pursue their master’s and doctoral degrees.

Of course, this study has its own limitations, which can be served for further research. One of the limitations is that the master’s and doctoral theses cannot be updated timely. On one hand, it is hard for one to find research articles related to *Robinson Crusoe* before 1999. Some translation versions of the book in the Late Qing Dynasty and the Republic of China are difficult to be identified. On the other hand, some articles are not listed in the CSSCI journals, which may make some papers omitted in this analysis.

## Data Availability

The data used to support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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