

Research Article

A Corpus-Driven Study on the Revolutionary Image Construction of Sun Yat-sen in English Literature from the Perspective of Attitudinal System in Appraisal Theory

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Under the background of developing the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area and with the purpose of responding to initiatives named “co-building humanities in bay area” and “supporting Zhongshan to promote Sun Yat-sen’s culture,” this research applies AntConc software to establish the English literature corpus related to Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary deeds and analyzes the affect system, judgement system, and appreciation system in the English literature with the theoretical framework of the attitudinal system in appraisal theory. The following are discovered. (1) The proportion of the affect system in the corpus is the largest, while the proportion of the appreciation system is the smallest. Three systems differ greatly in quantity. (2) Focuses described by three systems are consistent. Through specific language representations, it is believed that Sun Yat-sen has the determination to dedicate and sacrifice for the revolution. He is undoubtedly the leader and pioneer of Chinese revolution. (3) Among 1854 language representations, positive attitudinal resources account for as much as 70%, which has important enlightenment in translating Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary deeds to foreigners. Translators should reduce the usage of negative category of the attitudinal system as much as possible and adapt to the internal and ingrained cognitive model of western readers by increasing the usage of positive category of the attitudinal system. In this way, barriers from language representations and conflicts related to the deep culture will be eliminated, and ultimately Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary culture will be exchanged and promoted at home and abroad.

1. Introduction

On the basis of Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area issued by State Council of the PRC in 2019, initiatives named “co-building humanities in bay area” and “supporting Zhongshan to promote Sun Yat-sen’s culture” are demonstratively emphasized. From 2019 to 2021, the tendency for investigating Sun Yat-sen’s culture has continued to rise, which implies that much more attention has been paid to the study of Sun Yat-sen. As the great pioneer of the national democratic revolution in China, Sun Yat-sen has not only exhausted all his life and made indelible contributions for China’s independence, democracy, and prosperity but also always been a research highlight in the academic field for studying the history of China in the past century. Qiushan

pointed out that Sun Yat-sen was both a great forerunner of the democratic revolution in China and a great man in the whole world [1]. Since he spent most of his time abroad, a lot of studies about Sun Yat-sen have been kept overseas. Harold Z. Schiffrin is an outstanding representative scholar to study Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary culture. His famous book named Sun Yat-Sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution cited abundant foreign language materials and elaborated Sun Yat-sen’s political activities deeply. How did Harold Z. Schiffrin construct the revolutionary image of Sun Yat-sen through specific language representations? In order to explore this issue, this article attempts to break the previous research paradigm, takes the attitudinal system in appraisal theory as the theoretical framework, makes use of the AntConc corpus software to build the English literature corpus related to Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary deeds, analyzes

specific language representations, and ultimately explores international scholars' cognition for the revolutionary image construction of Sun Yat-sen.

2. Theoretical Framework

In 2000, James Martin published a paper called *Beyond Exchange: Appraisal Systems in English*, heralding the advent of appraisal theory. Shizhu claimed that appraisal is a kind of conscious activity with the subjective consciousness and moreover it is a conceptual activity of meaning and value related to human beings [2]. Martin and White believe that appraisal theory, as an interpersonal system, is a process of interaction among three subsystems including the affect system, judgement system, and appreciation system because it focuses on coordinating language resources and attitudinal expressions in social relations [3]. Compared with the judgement and appreciation systems in appraisal theory, Ying demonstrated that the attitudinal system is the core system of appraisal theory, emphasizing the author's or speaker's evaluation of specific values of human behaviors and physical objects [4]. The attitudinal system mainly involves the description of personal emotions in language, which is culturally oriented to a large extent and is closely connected with people's cognitive positioning.

The attitudinal system consists of three subsystems: affect system, judgement system, and appreciation system. Xinyue maintains that the affect system is related to interpreting emotional responses, as it is defined as the emotional response and emotional tendency of the author or speaker to the occurrence or state of certain behaviors, discourses, processes, or phenomena [5]. The affect system with the positive category and negative category can be realized through a variety of grammatical structures, such as grammatical metaphors, modal adjuncts, and other language forms. The affect system includes three subsets: happiness/unhappiness, security/insecurity, and satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The judgement system based on the common and normative culture is applied to judge what kind of behavior people should behave as members in the society. The judgement system can be achieved through many grammatical means, such as adjectives including "dishonest," "warm-hearted," and so on, adverbs including "unskillfully," "wisely," and so on, nouns including "a genius," "an official," and so on, and verbs including "to success," "to win," and so on. The judgement system is generally divided into two subsets which are social esteem and social sanction. Both subsets have the positive category and negative category. The appreciation system, as an aesthetic category, refers to people's evaluation of certain discourses, processes, and phenomena. The appreciation system includes reaction, composition, and valuation, which can be divided into the positive category and negative category.

At present, there are countless books and literature related to the attitudinal system in appraisal theory at home and abroad. Wahyu analyzed the attitudinal system in the presidents' inauguration speeches from the perspective of appraisal theory in order to discover differences in effects of the affect system, judgement system, and appreciation system on the communication between speakers and audiences [6]. Munday employed appraisal theory to analyze

Trump's inaugural speech in 2017 and identify the mediating effect of the translator by interpreting the affect system, judgement system, and appreciation system in the translation process [7]. Jalilifar et al. explored the appraisal language model in the brief introduction and found that people who write brief introductions tend to use the appreciation system to promote their works and products [8]. Jie applied the attitudinal system in appraisal theory to systematically interpret the construction of China's national image in *The Chinese Are Coming* [9]. Xingrui used the attitudinal system in appraisal theory to compare and analyze news discourses of the Belt and Road Initiative [10]. It is found that China has been portrayed as a hypocritical, unreliable, irresponsible, and unstable nation by *The Times* [10].

On the basis of the literature review, it is discovered that there are few studies on English discourses related to Sun Yat-sen from the perspective of the attitudinal system in appraisal theory. Furthermore, with the help of search engines at home and abroad, it is found that there is almost null literature on the revolutionary image construction of Sun Yat-sen under the theoretical framework of the attitudinal system in appraisal theory. This article attempts to explore the revolutionary image of Sun Yat-sen in English literature, which will help Chinese scholars to understand the great revolutionary pioneer more clearly. In addition, specific language representations and deep cognitive adaptation models will be provided for Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary cultural translation and publicity.

3. Research Design

3.1. Research Framework. This research explores the revolutionary image construction of Sun Yat-sen in English literature on the basis of the attitudinal system in appraisal theory. The schematic diagram of three subsystems and seven subsets of the attitudinal system is shown in Figure 1.

In Figure 1, A, B, and C are applied to reduce the repetition of three subsystems; meanwhile, A1 to C3 are employed to avoid the repetition of seven subsets. A1+/A1- mainly covers emotions related to the mood, such as "misery," "jubilant," "whimper," and so on; A2+/A2- mainly covers emotions related to happiness, such as "anxious," "jolted," "staggered," and so on; A3+/A3- mainly covers emotions related to feelings of pursuing the goal, such as "castigate," "engrossed," "chuffed," and so on. B1+ refers to things that people will admire, such as "powerful," "mature," and so on, while B1- refers to things that people should criticize, such as "weak," "insane," and so on. According to Ngo and Unsworth, criticism of B1- is not conducted from the juridical perspective. B2+ means things that people should praise, such as "just," "fair," and so on, while B2- means things that people should condemn, such as "evil," "corrupt," and so on [11]. Condemnation of B2- is conducted from the juridical perspective. C1+/C1- in appreciation system involves influence and quality. Influence refers to how things are attractive, such as "remarkable," "tedious," and so on, and quality means if the evaluator likes the evaluated object, such as "enchanting," "nasty," and so on. C2+/C2- in the appreciation system includes balance

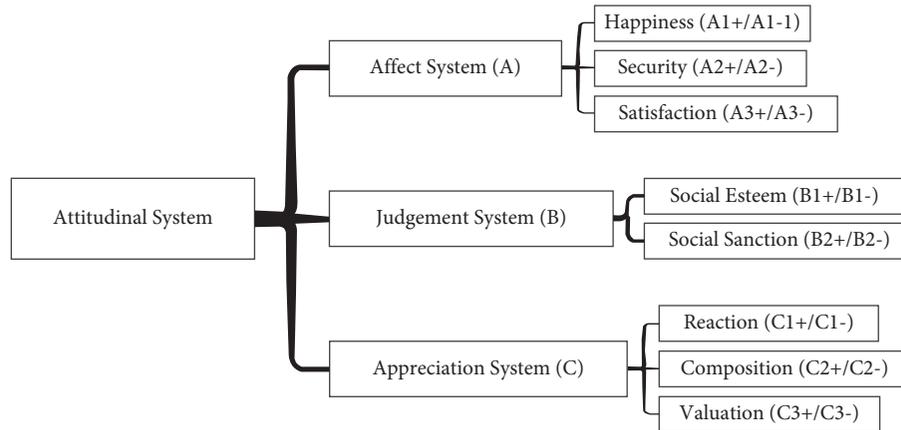


FIGURE 1: Three subsystems and seven subsets of the attitudinal system.

and complexity. Balance refers to whether the composition of things is proportional or not, such as “harmonious,” “distorted,” and so on, while complexity means whether the structure of things is concise and understandable or not, such as “precise,” “unclear,” and so on. C3+/C3- in the appreciation system consists of the importance, value, and meaning of things. C3+/C3- is not the subjective judgement from individuals, but the collective view from a group of people, such as “valuable,” “worthless,” and so on.

3.2. Research Instruments. This article makes use of Ant-Conc software to transform the book named Sun Yat-Sen and the Origins of the Chinese Revolution into the corpus. As the representative work, this treatise including 12 chapters, nearly 100,000 words, and more than 600,000 characters is written from Sun Yat-sen’s early revolutionary activities. As the book involves a large amount of precious historical materials and analyzes the trajectory of Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary deeds, it is praised by scholars at home and abroad as the “most detailed and authoritative” masterpiece about Sun Yat-sen. With the help of concordance, word list, file view, collocates, and other functions in the software, the author regards “Sun Yat-Sen” and “he/his/him” as search terms, and then relevant contexts describing Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary deeds will be retrieved. Since “Sun Yat-Sen” and “he/his/him” are direct terms to describe the great revolutionary, specific sentences are retrieved to depict the image of Sun Yat-sen. On the basis of the “Hit” column on the left side of the software, contexts related to Sun Yat-sen’s descriptions are analyzed, four parts of speech including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in KWIC are dissected, and language representations of A, B, and C in Figure 1 are ultimately marked.

3.3. Research Procedures. Procedures of data collections consist of four steps.

- (1) The first step is to mark three systems of A, B, and C and divide them into seven subsets of A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, C1, C2, and C3.

- (2) The second step is to analyze specific language representations in three systems and seven subsets for capturing Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary image with the help of concordance, word list, file view, collocates, and other functions in the AntConc software.
- (3) The third step is to compare the number of three systems distributed in 12 chapters and seven target subsets in order to explore whether Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary images are discrepant in different periods or not.
- (4) The last step is to explore the internal cognition for the revolutionary image construction of Sun Yat-sen by comparing language representations, summarize strategies for translating Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary deeds in line with foreign readers, and finally promote the exchange of Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary culture at home and abroad.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1. Revolutionary Image Construction of Sun Yat-sen in the Affect System. 861 language representations of the affect system related to the revolutionary image construction of Sun Yat-sen are marked, such as “famous,” “confident,” “success,” “dispatched,” and “commitment,” which express the emotional response and emotional tendency of the author to the occurrence or state of certain behaviors, discourses, processes, or phenomena.

In Table 1, language representations of A2 take up the largest number of the affect system, while language representations of A1 have the least number of the affect system. The usage of positive category of the affect system in the corpus which accounts for 75.21% is far more than the usage of negative category of the affect system in the corpus which merely accounts for 24.79%. Language representations including “in favor of,” “be fond of,” “embraced,” and “affection” directly express a person’s sense of happiness. All of those descriptions revolve around Sun Yat-sen, and their triggers are scenarios and themes related to the revolutionary deeds.

TABLE 1: Distribution of language presentations in the affect system.

Affect system	A	A1 (A1/A)	A2 (A2/A)	A3 (A3/A)
Chapter1	29	7 (24.1%)	13 (44.8%)	9 (31.1%)
Chapter 2	45	12 (26.7%)	15 (33.3%)	18 (40%)
Chapter 3	23	7 (30.4%)	8 (34.8%)	8 (34.8%)
Chapter 4	126	45 (35.7%)	47 (37.3%)	34 (27%)
Chapter 5	149	42 (28.2%)	58 (38.9%)	49 (32.9%)
Chapter 6	92	31 (33.7%)	39 (42.4%)	22 (23.9%)
Chapter 7	116	20 (17.2%)	63 (54.3%)	33 (28.5%)
Chapter 8	115	15 (13%)	43 (37.4%)	57 (49.6%)
Chapter 9	16	4 (25%)	7 (43.8%)	5 (31.2%)
Chapter 10	34	7 (20.6%)	11 (32.4%)	16 (47%)
Chapter 11	73	19 (26%)	31 (42.5%)	23 (31.5%)
Chapter 12	38	12 (31.6%)	16 (42.1%)	10 (26.3%)
Chapter 1–12	861	221 (25.7%)	351 (40.8%)	289 (33.5%)

Eg1. The evidence further suggests that before making a decision in favor of revolution, Sun made a final attempt to ally himself with the gentry reformists (Chapter II: Sun Yat-sen’s Early Influences).

“In favor of” followed by “revolution” in example 1 is used to show Sun Yat-sen’s enthusiasm and support for the revolution. This direct expression of happiness leaves readers with the impression of Sun Yat-sen’s enterprising spirit in revolutionary deeds. When Sun Yat-sen was still only a low-ranking medical student, his early attempts for the revolution did not receive any response, but his awakened interest in the revolution for the whole China has not diminished at all. Furthermore, he believed that China definitely needed to conduct the revolution.

Eg2. The Chinese people, Sun believed, were bound to rise sooner or later, but he was trying to pacify them and provide leadership (Chapter VII: Li Hung-chang, Sir Henry Blake, and Ho Kai).

“Assert,” “declare,” “trustworthy,” and “believe” are typical language representations of A2 in the affect system. In example 2, Schiffrin applies A2 to enable overseas readers to understand Sun Yat-sen’s willingness to seek like-minded people for conducting the revolution with a positive attitude and his efforts to awaken the faith of Chinese people for continuing revolutionary activities.

4.2. *Revolutionary Image Construction of Sun Yat-sen in the Judgement System.* 555 language representations of the judgement system related to the revolutionary image construction of Sun Yat-sen are marked, such as “powerful,” “predictable,” “normal,” “blunt,” and “ethical,” which indicate the judgement of human behaviors according to the common and normative culture.

In Table 2, language representations of B1 take up the largest number of the judgement system, while language representations of B2 have the least number of the judgement system. The usage of positive category of the judgement system in the corpus which accounts for 78.56% is far more than the usage of negative category of the judgement system in the corpus which only accounts for 21.44%.

TABLE 2: Distribution of language presentations in the judgement system.

Judgement system	B	B1 (B1/B)	B2 (B2/B)
Chapter 1	22	16 (72.7%)	6 (27.3%)
Chapter 2	45	17 (37.8%)	28 (62.2%)
Chapter 3	16	7 (43.8%)	9 (56.2%)
Chapter 4	85	57 (67.1%)	28 (32.9%)
Chapter 5	74	60 (81.1%)	14 (18.9%)
Chapter 6	60	32 (53.3%)	28 (46.7%)
Chapter 7	58	25 (43.1%)	33 (56.9%)
Chapter 8	55	26 (47.2%)	29 (52.8%)
Chapter 9	16	5 (31.3%)	11 (68.7%)
Chapter 10	28	17 (60.7%)	11 (39.3%)
Chapter 11	63	40 (63.5%)	23 (36.5%)
Chapter 12	33	18 (55.5%)	15 (44.5%)
Chapter 1–12	555	320 (57.7%)	235 (42.3%)

Eg3. Actually, Sun’s political personality had matured considerably since 1896 (Chapter I: Introduction).

“Loyalty,” “loyal,” “mature,” “heroic,” and “reliable” are typical representations of B1 in the judgement system. In example 3, Schiffrin makes use of “mature” to convey that in terms of the political vision and commitment, Sun Yat-sen exceeded other supporters for the revolution in the same period. He has been seeking opportunities for the revolution and firmly believed that the establishment of a powerful China will benefit the whole world. Language representations including “loyalty,” “mature,” and “heroic” are all positive social esteem. These descriptions demonstrate the maturity of Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary mindset, the loyalty of Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary followers, and the heroic image of Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary leader.

Eg4. It seems hardly credible that any Chinese nationalist movement, not to mention one connected with the name of Sun Yat-sen, could invite even greater foreign interference, as for example, in the proposition concerning the Maritime Customs (Chapter IV: The Canton Plot of 1895).

“Fair,” “ethical,” “moral,” “truthful,” and “credible” are typical language representations of B2 in the judgement system. In example 4, Schiffrin employs “hardly credible” to express his positive affirmation and recognition for the nationalist revolution led by Sun Yat-sen. Sun Yat-sen started his revolutionary career because of the Canton Plot of 1895. Not only that, Qing government intended to hunt Sun Yat-sen down at all costs, which exactly placed Sun Yat-sen to a prominent position as a national revolutionary.

4.3. *Revolutionary Image Construction of Sun Yat-sen in the Appreciation System.* 438 language representations of the appreciation system related to the revolutionary image construction of Sun Yat-sen are marked, such as “lively,” “enchanting,” “clear,” “valuable,” and “worthless,” which explain people’s evaluation of certain discourses, processes, and phenomena.

In Table 3, language representations of C1 take up the largest number of the appreciation system, while language representations of C2 have the least number of the

appreciation system. The usage of positive category of the appreciation system in the corpus which accounts for 75% is far more than the usage of negative category of the appreciation system in the corpus which merely accounts for 25%.

Eg5. Sun Yat-sen is not unlikely to become a prominent character in history, for it may be safely said that he is a remarkable man, with most enlightened views on the undoubtedly miserable state of China's millions (Chapter V: Kidnapped in London).

"Remarkable" and "enchanting" are typical language representations of C1 in the appreciation system. In example 5, Schiffrin makes use of "remarkable" to describe Sun Yat-sen as an extraordinary person, who has the great wisdom to reconcile various parties and powers. Because of his full understanding of the revolutionary situations and his desperate courage, Sun Yat-sen's enterprising spirit for the revolution will inevitably have a huge impact in China. More and more Chinese people are inspired by Sun Yat-sen to conduct the revolution for the whole country without fear of sacrifice.

Eg6. Yet the picture becomes distorted by overemphasis of his backroom enthusiasm for radical anti-dynasticism (Chapter II: Sun Yat-sen's Early Influences).

"Clear," "unclear," and "distorted" are typical language representations of C2 in the appreciation system. Although Sun Yat-sen has repeatedly emphasized his opposition to the governance of Qing Dynasty, he is by no means a ghostly rebel. Therefore, in example 6, Schiffrin uses "distorted" to express his negative attitude towards the rebel identity of Sun Yat-sen and his positive attitude towards the revolutionary identity of Sun Yat-sen. The usage of the negative category of attitudinal system "distorted" in example 6 is the double negative language phenomenon which has the effect of more affirmation.

4.4. Comparison in Revolutionary Image Construction of Sun Yat-sen. On the basis of the corpus, four parts of speech of KWIC in the corpus are analyzed, and language representations of the three systems and seven subsets in the attitudinal system are marked. In the corpus of nearly 100,000 words, the author has retrieved a total of 5,631 KWIC, in which 1854 language representations are labeled. Among them, the number of language representations associated with the affect system is the largest, the number of language representations associated with the judgement system is the second, and the number of language representations associated with the appreciation system is the least. Their proportions are 46.4%, 29.9%, and 23.7%, respectively.

With the aid of language representations related to the affect system, the emotional response and emotional tendency to happy/unhappiness, security/insecurity, and satisfaction/dissatisfaction are depicted when Schiffrin described Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary behaviors, processes, and deeds. The positive category of the affect system in 861 language representations accounts for 75.21%. With the aid of language representations related to the judgement system,

TABLE 3: Distribution of language presentations in the appreciation system.

Appreciation system	C	C1 (C1/C)	C2 (C2/C)	C3 (C3/C)
Chapter 1	29	7 (24.1%)	13 (44.8%)	9 (31.1%)
Chapter 2	45	12 (26.7%)	15 (33.3%)	18 (40%)
Chapter 3	23	7 (30.4%)	8 (34.8%)	8 (34.8%)
Chapter 4	126	45 (35.7%)	47 (37.3%)	34 (27%)
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Chapter 11	73	19 (26%)	31 (42.5%)	23 (31.5%)
Chapter 12	38	12 (31.6%)	16 (42.1%)	10 (26.3%)
Chapter 1-12	861	221 (25.7%)	351 (40.8%)	289 (33.5%)

Sun Yat-sen's attempts, efforts, struggles, dedication, and sacrifices for the revolution are judged by Schiffrin and readers based on the common and normative culture. The positive category of the judgement system in 555 language representations takes up 78.56%. With the aid of language representations related to the appreciation system, Schiffrin successfully examines the reaction, composition, and valuation of Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary process. The positive category of the appreciation system in 438 language representations occupies 75%.

According to Tables 1-3, three systems differ greatly in quantity. These specific forms of language representation describe Sun Yat-sen's urgent desire to awaken the whole nation, his sincere and persistent attitude towards the revolution, and his self-confidence and determination to the revolution.

5. Conclusions

Due to limited time and energy, mere attitudinal system in appraisal theory is included in the research. Based on the analysis of three systems and seven subsets in the attitudinal system, it is discovered that although there are abundant language representations related to the affect system, judgement system, and appreciation system in this book, they are unevenly distributed. The largest proportion is the number of language representations related to the affect system and the smallest proportion is the number of language representations related to the appreciation system. Among language representations of A, A2 with a total number of 351 takes up the largest proportion; among language representations of B, B1 with a total number of 320 accounts for the largest proportion; among language representations of C, C1 with a total number of 178 occupies the largest proportion. Three major systems used by Schiffrin differ greatly in quantity, but the focus and core of those language representations are consistent. Readers are convinced of Sun Yat-sen's determination to dedicate and sacrifice for the revolution because he is undoubtedly the leader and the pioneer of the whole nation.

Schiffirin makes use of the affect system from Sun Yat-sen himself, judgement system from others, and appreciation system from Sun Yat-sen and others to outline Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary activities and revolutionary undertakings in multiple dimensions. Language representations related to the affect system such as "in favor of," "embraced," "trustworthy," "asserted," "claim," and "anxious" directly present Sun Yat-sen's enthusiasm and support for the revolution. Language representations related to the judgement system such as "loyalty," "mature," "heroic," "fair," "truthful," and "credible" indirectly demonstrate the maturity of Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary mindset and Sun Yat-sen's urgent desire to awaken the nation. Language representations related to the appreciation system such as "remarkable," "enchanting," "clear," "distorted," "genuine," and "worthy" regard Sun Yat-sen as an extraordinary person because of his full understanding of the revolutionary situation and his desperate courage.

The description of 100,000 words, the retrieval of 5631 KWIC, the language representations of 1854, and more than 70% of positive category in three systems enable readers to realize the lofty and profound image of Sun Yat-sen as the revolutionary leader and pioneer. The usage of positive category in three systems provides an implication for contemporary scholars when they translate Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary deeds into English. It is better for translators to conform to demands of western readers for the positive category in the attitudinal system. In other words, translators can choose four parts of speech including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs which are embedded with the positive energy. Through minimizing the usage of negative category in the attitudinal system, the deep cognitive model of western readers will be adapted to. In this way, barriers from language representations and conflicts related to the deep culture will be eliminated, and ultimately Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary culture will be exchanged and promoted at home and abroad.

Data Availability

No data were used to support this study.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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