Chinese MA theses: The people behind the papers

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Abstract:
There is no denying that the growth of interpreting as an industry in China has been an explosive one. The increasing need for economic and political cooperation has spurred the demand for interpreters to bridge the linguistic and cultural divides that exist between China and the West. With the creation of master's and bachelor's degrees in Interpreting and Translation all over China, students from various universities have produced a wealth of literature in Interpreting Studies. However, owing to the lack of exchange of information and cooperation on the part of universities, to date there have been only a few systematic studies of MA theses, which represent years of work by aspiring interpreters. Using the latest statistical techniques and an exhaustive corpus, this paper is an objective examination of the differences and similarities between the choices of topic and theoretical inspirations of MA students at various Chinese universities, and of how their choices of topic and advisor affect their likelihood of pursuing careers in academia. This research indicates that Chinese Interpreting Studies cannot be considered a homogenous entity, even though universities tend to be influenced in similar ways and coincide on the most important research themes. This paper discusses the increasingly non-academic career paths of MA-level interpreting students.
Keywords: scientometrics, MA theses, Chinese Interpreting Studies

1. Introduction

The Chinese interpreting industry has been booming since the turn of the Millennium. Over the past few decades China has risen to prominence as a major global power, more closely linked with the rest of the world than ever before. Increased political and economic interaction between China and the rest of the world has led to a rise in demand for interpreters to help break down the linguistic and cultural barriers that for so long hindered communication and cooperation between the two areas. As of early 2013, there were Master's programs in Translation and Interpreting at 159 Chinese universities (Chai 2012, 91), compared with one single university just 20 years before.

Whereas formalized training in interpreting is still a relatively new phenomenon in China, it has a much longer history in the West[1] and has developed into a more mature academic discipline there (Moser-Mercer 2011, 47). The first Western school for interpreter training was established in 1941 at the University of Geneva (Moser-Mercer 2005, 206), almost four decades before its Chinese counterpart. By 2013, 69 programs in the West met the AIIC's standards for interpreter training, as opposed to a single program in China (AIIC 2013). Western research into the subject has gone through several distinct phases since its inception in the 1950s and is increasingly characterized by empirical[2] research and an interdisciplinary approach. Whereas early Western interpreter training courses, like modern Chinese ones, focused heavily on practice (Moser-Mercer 2005, 211), today they commonly feature elements of research and theory in their curricula. Some training establishments produce important research in addition to training interpreters.

Despite the massive growth in translation and interpreting in China, to date few researchers have comprehensively applied scientific methods to gain a better understanding of the intricacies of the subject. The aim of this paper is to remedy that situation, to begin to identify some of the major influences and trends in interpreting in China through the lens of its MA theses, and to help scholars from all over the world better understand the Chinese interpreting landscape as distinct from its Western counterpart.

2. Description of thesis labeling

A corpus of 1,290 MA theses from mainland China and Taiwan were collected for analysis. They were obtained through the official Chinese repositories of electronic theses (CNKI, Wanfang, the National Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations in Taiwan); in addition, library visits were made when certain theses were only available for review at the universities' themselves. The content of each thesis was labeled in two complementary ways, according to its theoretical influences and its memes. A brief description of the labelling system is provided below, but for more detailed information on labelling, please see Xu (submitted).

[1] The term 'West' has been used somewhat inconsistently by different scholars. In this paper it is defined through the lens of Chinese culture and refers to all regions of Europe, America and other parts of the world outside of Asia that are dominated by populations of European descent.

[2] For the purposes of this paper, an empirical study is characterized as one based principally on data collected from observations or experiments rather than one which analyzes theories. Such data can be both qualitative and quantitative.

2.1 References to existing theories

The literature review section of each thesis was analyzed to identify the theories which served as the foundation for each student's work. A tag was generated for each one identified. That done, a coding regime was created to divide the various theoretical influences into six broad categories. Sub-categories were created whenever necessary to capture possible trends:

a. Cognition (cognitive science, psychology, neuroscience, etc.)
b. Language (linguistics, second language acquisition, etc.)
c. Communication Theory
d. Translation
e. Peoples and cultures
f. Miscellaneous (philosophy, education, etc.)

2.2 Memes

Interpreting studies is a diverse field in which various subject matters are explored by numerous scholars. As the first step towards identifying the ideas and concepts that are spread and replicated in Chinese Interpreting Studies (CIS), I read through the contents of each paper and, always taking into account the keywords used by the authors in their abstracts, generated my own large 'stock' of keywords for describing all the topics addressed. I then consolidated these to form the memes[3] of CIS using an adapted classification scheme originally developed by Gile (Gile 2000, 301):

a. Training
b. Professional
c. Language
d. Socio-cultural
e. Cognitive
f. Miscellaneous

3. Results

3.1 Research hotspots

With the introduction of the MTI in 2007, interpreter training has become increasingly popular all over China. Examining the MA thesis data to ascertain whether any 'hotspots' of research have developed over the years, I first grouped the papers by province of origin, then plotted them on a map of China via data visualization. The map was generated using a web application based on the statistical software package called 'R', using in particular its shiny, maps, maptools and sp. Using this tool I was able to create the map shown in figure 1, in which the number of theses produced per province is shown by shading [4].

[3] The term 'memes' was adopted from Chesterman (1997) in reference to ideas and concepts being replicated and passed down the generations in the manner of human genes.
[4] The application I used can be seen here: http://spark.rstudio.com/yichuanw/ChinaMap/

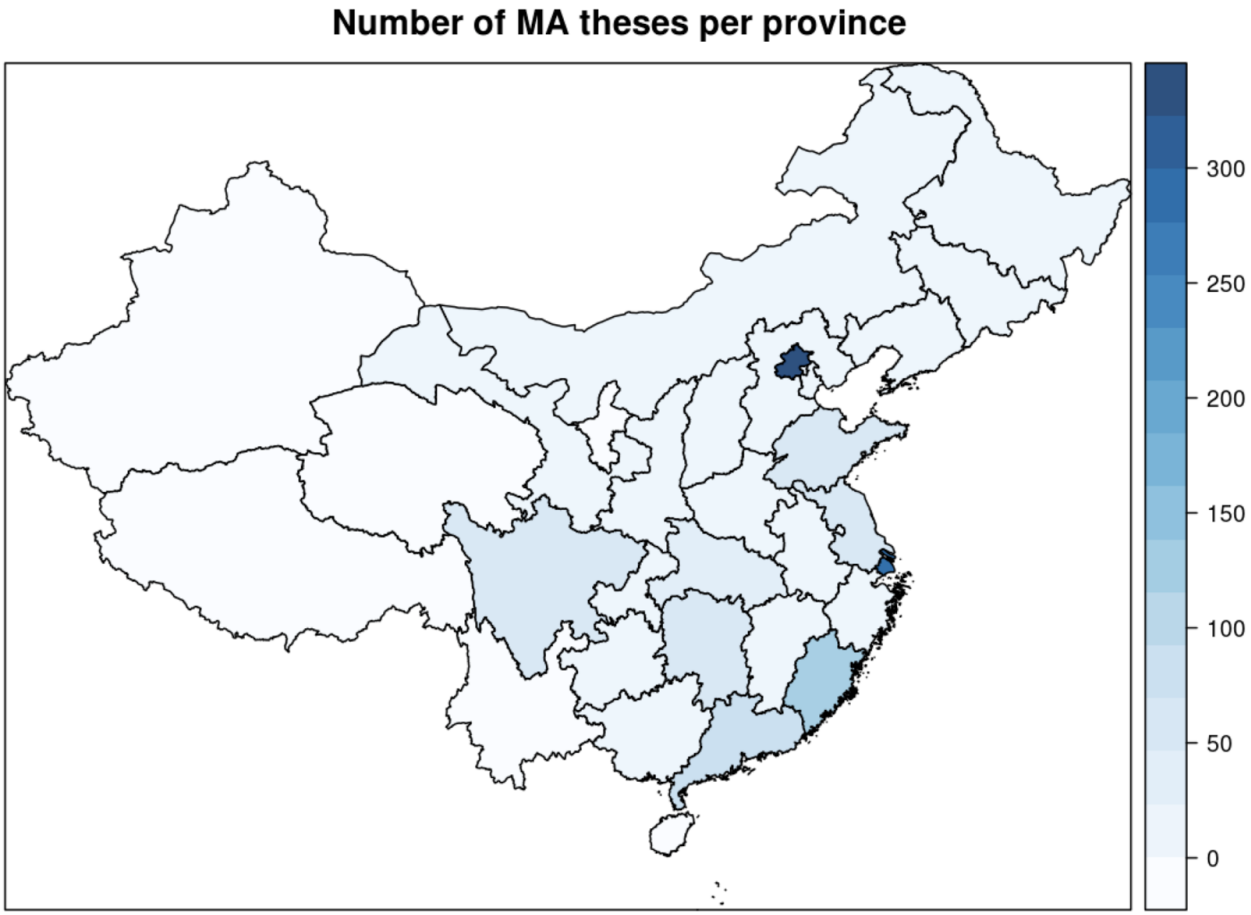

Figure 1: Distribution of MA theses across China

My research revealed that most of the theses were produced in localities in central and southeastern China and in the capital: Beijing (323 theses), Shanghai (283), Fujian (120), Guangdong (74) and Taiwan (69). These places have a high concentration of universities with established interpreter training programs (BFSU and UIBE in Beijing, and SISU in Shanghai, for example), hence the high numbers of theses produced there. In addition, they have all enjoyed close economic ties with the rest of the world, and their geographically strategic positions have made it easy for them to attract large numbers of students. At the other end of the scale, northern China is much less well-represented – Liaoning (16), Jilin (14), Shaanxi (12) and Inner Mongolia (1) – despite there being no shortage of first-tier universities in those areas: the universities of Jilin, Liaoning and Xi'an Jiaotong are considered among the best in China. Given the boom in popularity of interpreter education all over China, these areas might be expected to have huge potential for growth in producing MA theses in future.

3.2 Most active universities

While there are many universities represented in my data, most of the theses issue from only a few. Just five account for 62% of the total:

a. SISU - 23%
b. BFSU - 18%
c. XU (Xiamen University) - 11%

d. GUFS (Guangdong University of Foreign Studies) - 7%
e. OUC (Ocean University of China) - 3%.

By comparison, the next five universities – Central South University, Sichuan International Studies University, Suzhou University, National Taiwan Normal University, and Guangxi University – together account for only 10% of the total[5]. In the rest of this paper I concentrate on these top five and ten for my analysis of universities.

3.2.1 Theoretical influences on various universities. I was curious to know whether the distinct intellectual traditions and influential personalities of the various Chinese universities surveyed might result in their producing research influenced by different fields. To test this I compared the theoretical influences on the five universities producing the most MA theses. The following chart shows the proportions of theoretical influences on each top-level category at each of the five:

[5] It should be noted here that the large contribution of theses from the top five universities is a result of large enrollment of students - all their MA students are required to complete a thesis upon graduation.

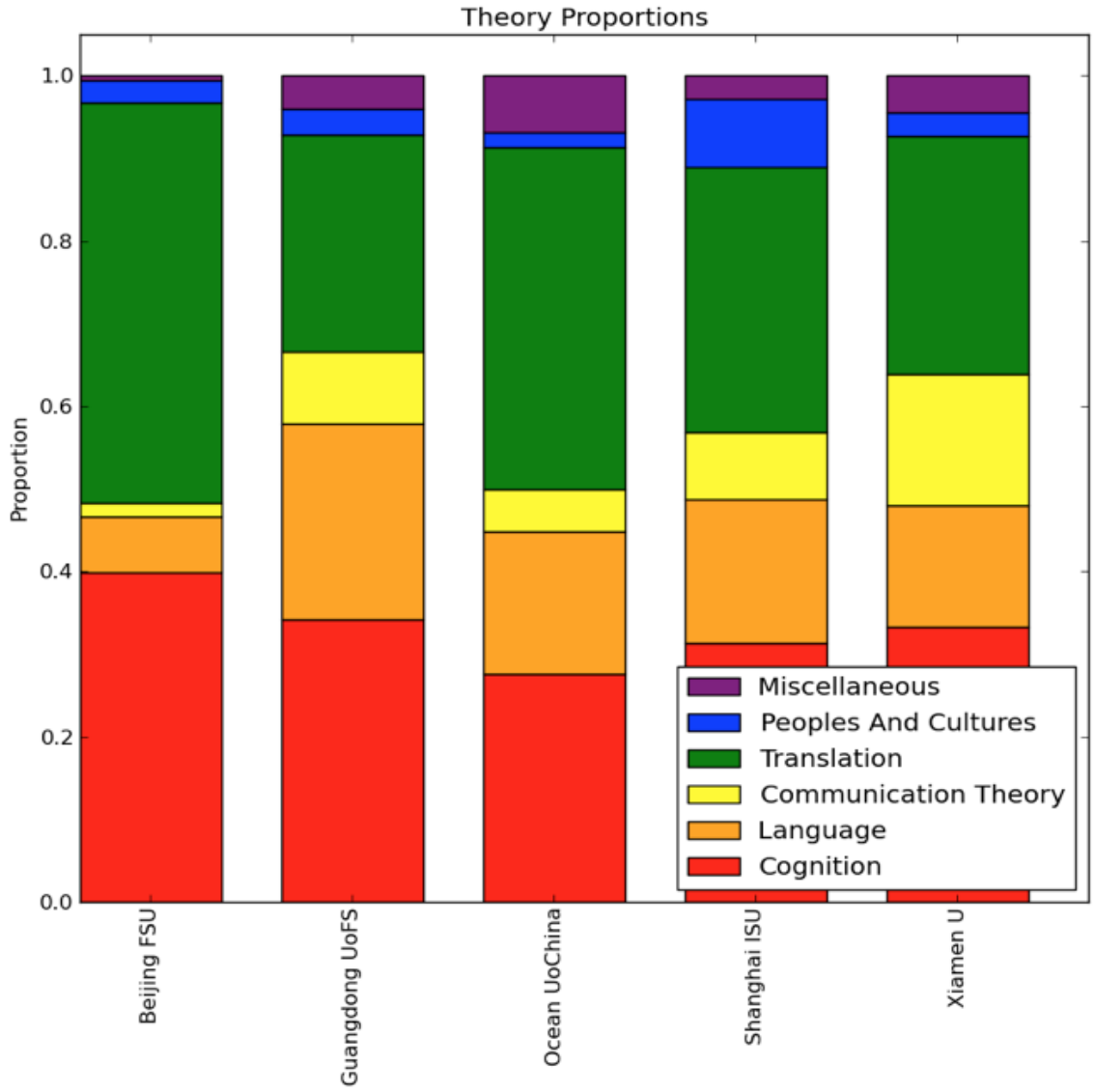

Figure 2: Proportion of theoretical influences coming from each category at the five most prolific universities in CIS

A few interesting facts become apparent when examining these figures. Firstly, BFSU has a stronger theoretical influence from Translation than any of the other top five (48% compared with GUFS's 26%, OUC's 41%, SISU's 32% and XU's 29%), probably because of its long-running academic history of translation studies, which began in 1941 in response to China's need for professional translators.

It is plain to see that influences from Cognition-related disciplines outweigh those from Language-related ones across the board, and Cognition even has the lion's share of all influences at GUFS, outweighing those from Translation Studies. Below is a list of the frequency of theoretical influences at GUFS that are marked with cognition:

Theoretical influences	Representative citations	Frequency
Effort Models	Gile 1995	20
Schema Theory	DiMaggio 1997	10
Information Processing	Miller 1956	4
Cognition	Sternberg 1996	2
Cognitive Psychology	Sternberg 1996	2
Cognitive Pragmatics	Bara 2010	1
Probability-Predict Model	Chernov 2004	1
ACT Model	Lebiere and Anderson 1993	1
Neurocognitive Linguistics	Lamb 1999	1
Speech Processing	Benesty, Sondhi and Huang 2008	1
Word Association Model	Potter, So, Von Eckardt and Feldman 1984	1

Table 1: Frequency of theoretical influences at GUFS

Gile's Effort Models tops the chart, twice as frequently mentioned as the second place Schema Theory. As a matter of fact, his model is the most frequently referenced theoretical influence of all at GUFS. The table below shows the frequencies of the top-ranking theoretical influences from the 73 theses there. The popularity of his model certainly contributed to putting cognition at the front and center of research influences at GUFS.

Theoretical influences	Representative citations	Theoretical categories	Frequency
Effort Models	Gile 1995	Cognition (cognitive science); translation	20
Schema Theory	DiMaggio 1997	Cognition (cognitive science)	10
Relevance Theory	Sperber and Wilson 1986	Communication theory	7
Pragmatics	Mey 1993	Language (linguistics)	6
Interpretive Theory of Translation	Seleskovitch 1978	Translation	6
Discourse Analysis	Gee 1999	Language (linguistics)	5
Adaptation Theory	Hutcheon 2006	Language (linguistics)	5
Information Processing	Miller 1956	Cognition (cognitive science)	4
Cooperative Principle	Grice 1975	Communication theory	3
Skopos Theory	Reiss and Vermeer 2014	Translation	3

Table 2: Frequencies of research influences at GUFS

It is worth noting that OUC and XU have a higher than typical proportion of influences from the Miscellaneous category. A plausible cause for this situation may be that of the top five, only these two offer a wide spectrum of academic disciplines, whereas the other three are essentially liberal arts colleges with a strong focus on language and literature. XU also has a huge input from Communication Theory relative to the other universities – roughly twice as much as GUFS, the next biggest. This finding might be linked to XU's tradition as a center for communication studies: it started undergraduate education in the subject in the early 1920s, and to this day enjoys a stellar reputation for training experts in this area.

I conducted the same procedure with the memes for the most active Chinese universities, obtaining the following proportions:

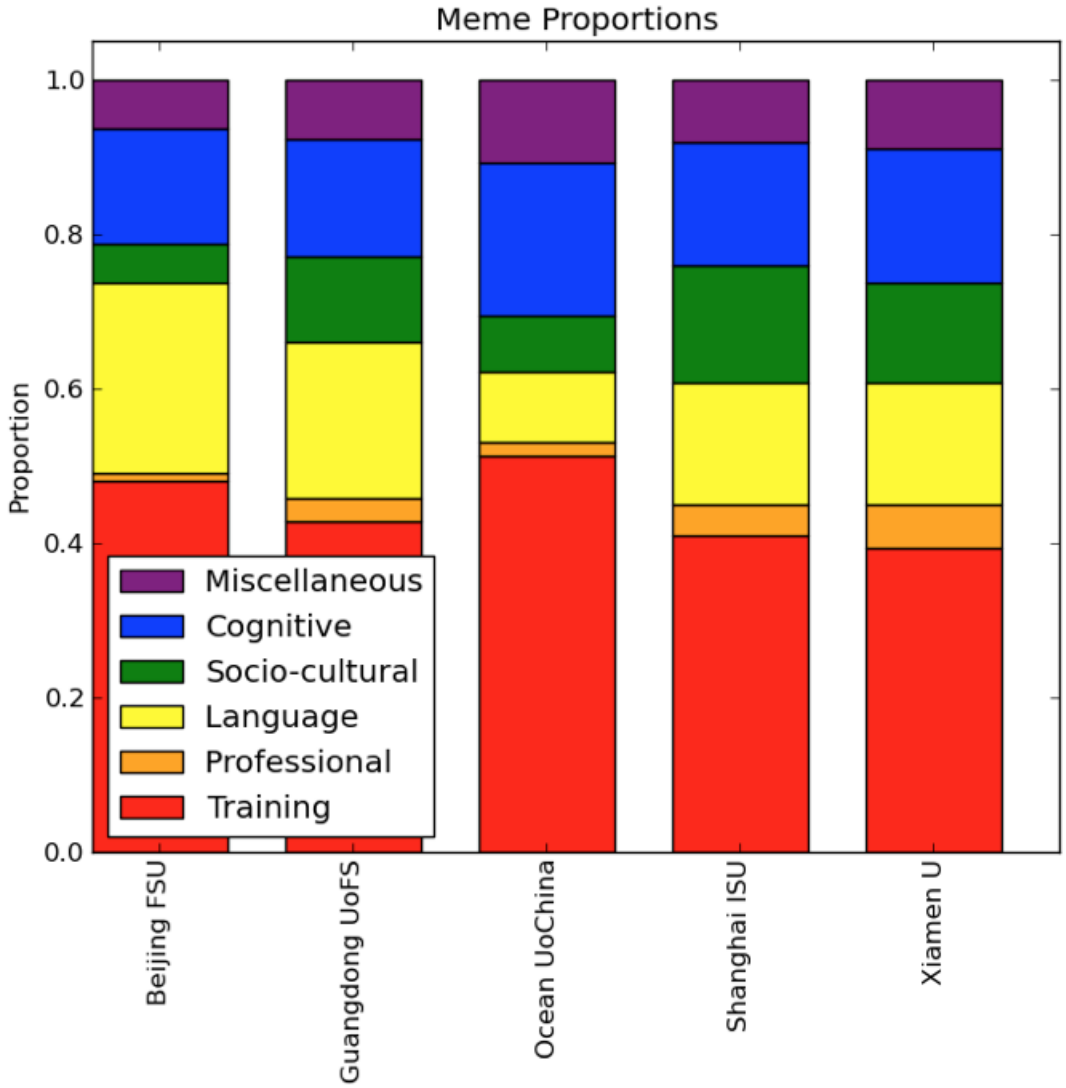

Figure 3: Proportion of memes coming from each category

I observed that the universities generally coincide on the main themes in CIS: none stands out as focusing more on one particular area. This may shed some light on which meme category most captures students' attention: as they go through training to become professional interpreters, issues arising from the practical exercises they perform naturally pique their interest. Furthermore, given that instruction based on anecdotal experience is used in numerous training programs, many aspiring interpreters are inspired to investigate the legitimacy of their trainers' teaching methods by way of research projects. In contrast, professional issues receive scant attention across the top five universities, perhaps because it may be difficult for students, with their inexperience of real-world interpreting, to relate to topics in this category such as market conditions, business management and customer loyalty. On top of that, ideas within this category

are difficult to turn into viable research projects when one only has recourse to the university's internal resources. A case in point is a study by Chen (2009), who set out to investigate the rising demand for court interpreters brought on by China's economic liberalization. She tried to contact various courts in Beijing by phone and with in-person visits, but none of her requests for information were met. In the end she had to go through influential acquaintances to make her data collection possible.

3.2.2 Particular topics studied by universities. To get a finer-grained picture of what the universities focus on, I also looked at the distribution of keywords across the five most prolific universities. Since each had different numbers of theses published, for each university and keyword I computed the percentage of theses from that university with that keyword. The table below presents a subset of these keywords:

	BFSU	GUFS	OUC	SISU	XU
Interpreting Strategies	35.3%	27.4%	25.7%	30.0%	25.8%
Interpreting Quality	25.9%	12.3%	14.3%	8.7%	15.8%
Listening Comprehension	4.5%	2.7%	14.3%	6.5%	5.8%
Cultural Differences	1.0%	1.4%	0.0%	7.6%	3.3%
Internship	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	1.7%
Interpreting Performance	11.9%	9.6%	11.4%	1.9%	0.0%
Preparation	2.5%	6.8%	0.0%	2.7%	10.8%
Training	0.0%	8.2%	14.3%	4.2%	5.8%
Accuracy	11.9%	5.5%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%
Curriculum Design	0.0%	2.7%	2.9%	4.9%	3.3%
Omissions	6.0%	5.5%	0.0%	0.4%	0.8%
Press Conferences	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	2.7%	1.7%
Problem Triggers	11.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	1.7%

Table 3: Proportion of theses with select keywords

Some items in this table deserve our attention. For example, Problem Triggers appears in a massive 11.4% of MA theses from BFSU, but hardly at all for the other universities. Gile's Effort Models have been a particular favorite subject of BFSU students, and as an essential component of his theory, Problem Triggers[6] have been used by many to explain the challenges and problems they encounter in interpreting.

Also worth noting is the emphasis BFSU places on accuracy when it comes to comparing various modes of interpreting, e.g. consecutive vs. simultaneous, SI with text vs. SI without, and short consecutive vs. long consecutive. Accuracy in its own right was studied by 11.9% of BFSU

[6] Problem Triggers is a concept created to explain factors that may cause an interpreter's lapse in attention; they often happen when demand on his mental resources exceeds his capacity.

students, but received scant attention from those at the other top four universities. A potential explanation for this is that Gile's 2001 paper (Consecutive vs. simultaneous: Which is more accurate?) has sparked much discussion among BFSU's CIS community. This explanation is convincing given that various students (Bai 2003; Jiang 2005) replicated Gile's experiment and research methodology with Chinese-to-English participants. In addition, Bai's 2003 thesis comparing the accuracy of CI vs. SI and Sang's 2003 thesis comparing differences in accuracy caused by directionality were both advised by Gile's former MA student, Andrew Dawrant. These two theses were the vanguard for a series of other comparative studies on accuracy.

Other important examples of differences between the universities include:

a. SISU students are more interested in Cultural Differences than the others. That university has a strong foreign literature department so it is reasonable to suppose that students may be particularly sensitized to the need for cultural awareness.
b. OUC has higher rates of Listening Comprehension and Training. As the only university in the top five which does not have a long-standing tradition of interpreter training, its students may have realized the importance of structured training in producing top-notch interpreters. In addition, students get fewer hours of English instruction at OUC, so they may be especially interested in supplementing that with a research focus on listening comprehension.

3.3 Analysis of advisors

3.3.1 Theses per advisor. The table below shows those advisors who have supervised at least 10 MA theses. My findings reveal that six of the top ten advisors, at the time of their advising, were serving or had previously served as dean or associate dean of their universities' schools of translation and interpreting or foreign languages; two were working actively as interpreters; and nine had an educational background in linguistics.

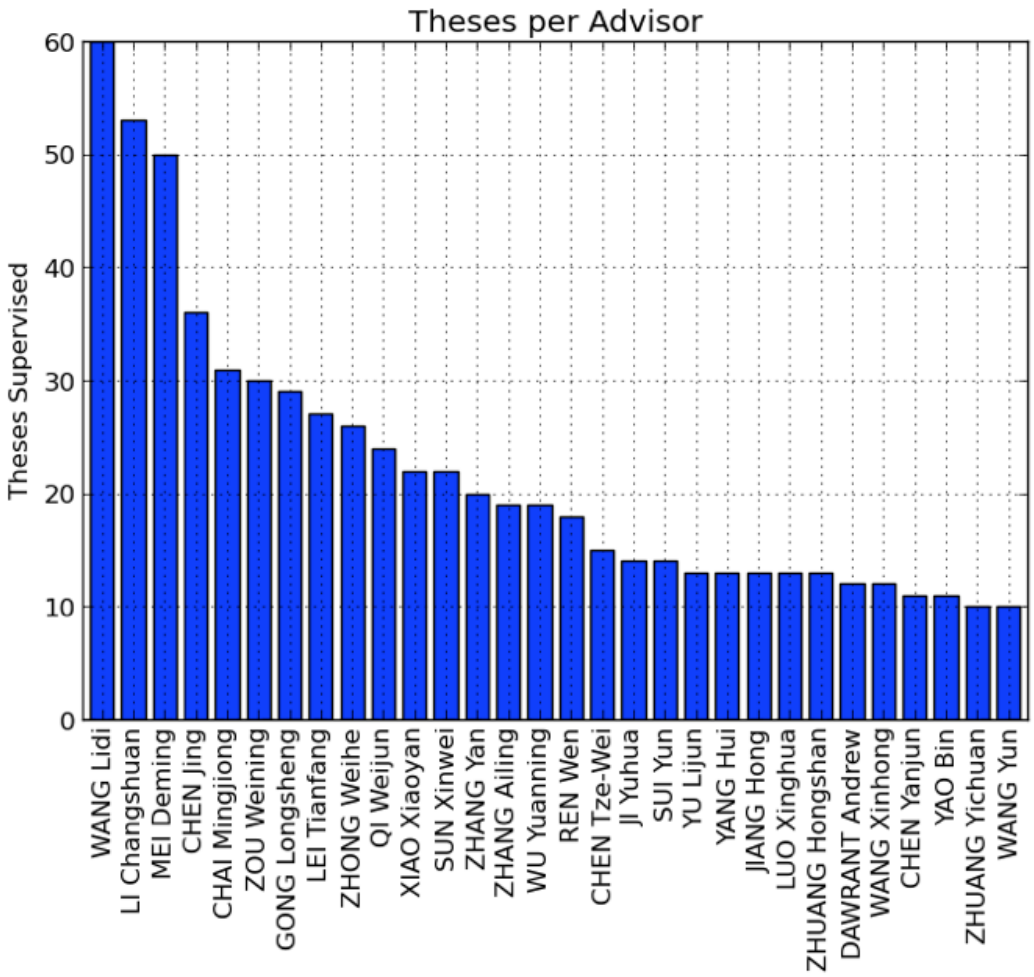

Figure 4: Theses supervised by the most prolific advisors

3.3.2 Co-advisorship. The number of theses supervised by individuals, especially ones with extensive administrative duties, was intriguing: one may wonder how they find time enough away from their other duties to provide effective supervision to students' theses. A partial answer to this puzzle lies in the fact that some typically co-supervise. Below is a list of all those who have co-supervised at least five times, with the number of times they have done so:

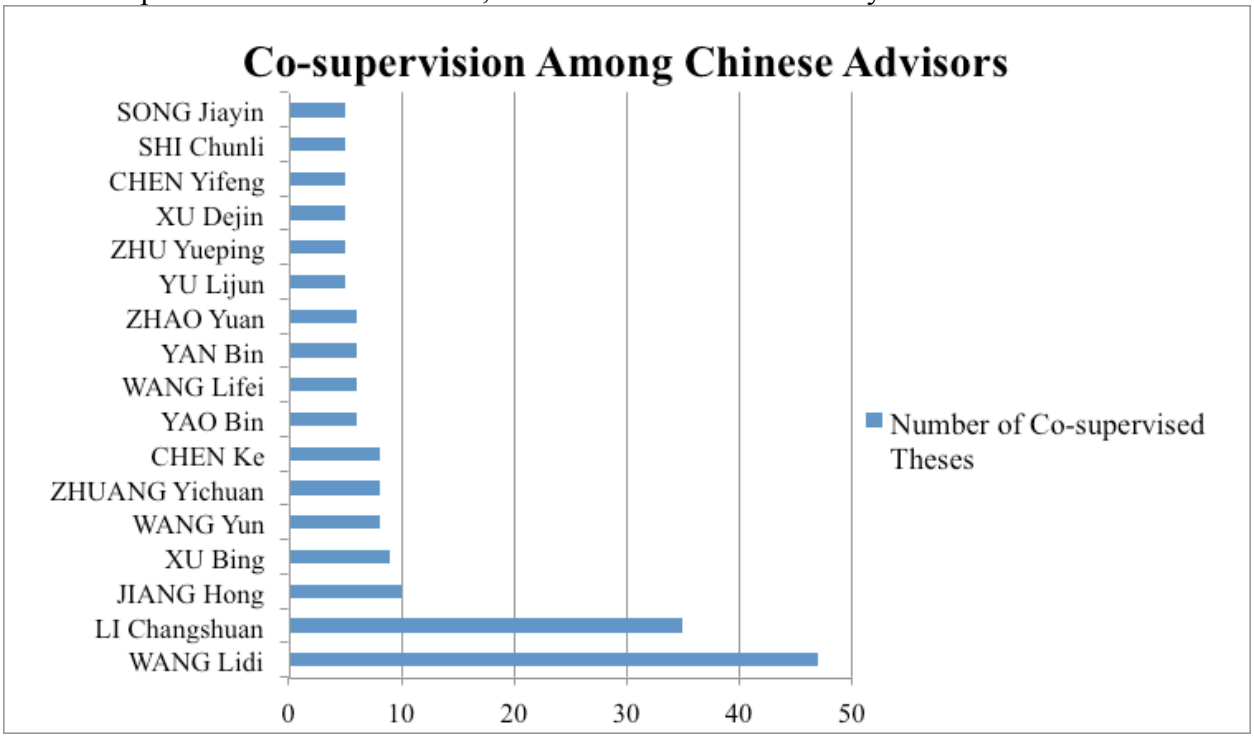

Figure 5: Number of Chinese advisors who have co-supervised at least five times

While this table may shed some light on how Wang Lidi and Li Changshuan have each managed to supervise over 50 theses, it does not explain how the other top three advisors, who are absent from it, dealt with such large numbers of advisees without the assistance of co-advisors.

I also plotted the six most prolific advisors' contributions over time to find out their average number of advisees per year.

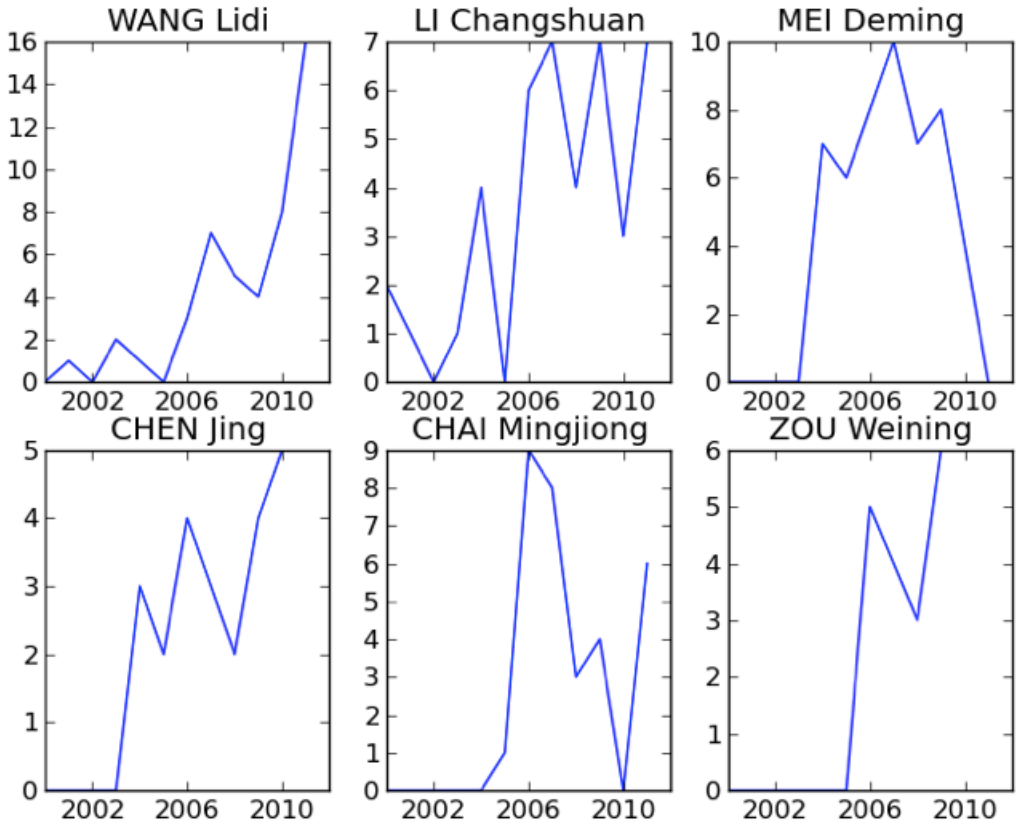

Figure 6: Number of theses advised over time by the top six prolific supervisors in China

Across advisors, the average number of students per year was seven. This indicates that the significant numbers of theses they supervised were completed within a short timespan (seven years, on average), rather than being the result of very long-term supervision. An interesting piece of data worth noting is that Mei Deming had the highest ever number of advisees in his career while serving as the dean of SISU's College of English from 2004 to 2009, and the decline in their total coincided with his departure from the post in 2009, although he continues to advise MA and PhD students there. This leaves one to wonder whether in China students typically seek out high-status supervisors.

To answer this question, I examined the number of theses supervised by all the advisors at the top universities in China. The chart below shows the top universities in China and their numbers of advisors advising between 1 and 3 students, between 4 and 10, between 11 and 20, and 21 or more:

	1-3	4-10	11-20	21+
SISU	15	4	4	5
BFSU	29	16	2	2
XU	5	1	2	3
GUFS	19	4	0	1
OUC	4	0	0	1

Table 4: Number of theses supervised by advisors at the top universities in China

I observed that nearly all the MA students from OUC were advised by Zou Weining, although the university has four other faculty members who have advised students on interpreting. Zou serves as the chief interpreter for the Translation Division at the International Office of his university and is a professor in the English department; based on a review of all the biographies of him and his colleagues at the University, it seems that he has extensive interpreting experience (he has been chief interpreter for the International Affairs Office of OUC since 2001), though he is not the highest-ranking professor among the five.

However, one should note that at the other top universities, the load appears to be different: there are typically one or two advisors who take on a lot of students (e.g. Mei Deming and Li Changshuan), a handful with an average of ten students (such as Jiang Hong, Yao Bin and Ji Yuhua), and then numerous others with just one or a small handful of advisees. One exception to this is SISU, where roughly a third of advisors take on ten or more students. It is generally the case in China that only faculty members at or above the grade of associate professorship are permitted to supervise the theses of graduate students[7]. Deciding who advises who is a mutual selection process: students can indicate their preference for certain professors (up to three in the case of SISU), but professors can select the students they would like to work with from the pool of candidates, although no research proposal is required to establish their academic relationship.

[7] Certain universities do make exceptions to this rule: at GUFS, for instance, graduate students have been advised by assistant professors Zhang Cheng (working alone), and Wang Dan and Zhang Linhua (working in partnership with more senior colleagues).

3.3.3 Empirical theses supervised by advisors. Empirical studies are essential for the healthy development of research in interpreting, given that they can help generate data needed to further develop and test theories in the field (Gile 2013, 16). It is worth mentioning that the advisors with the largest number of advisees seem to have a direct influence on whether or not students carry out empirical research. Among advisors with 20 or more students, for example, the correlation between the number of students supervised and the proportion of their theses that are empirical is quite large, at 0.53. To focus on a single advisor, Wang Lidi easily 'tops the pops' with a total of 60 theses supervised, of which 88% are empirical; in second place, a hefty 89% of Li Changshuan's total of 53 fall into the empirical category. By contrast, the percentage for the third most popular supervisor (Mei Deming) bucks the trend at a low 28%.

Wang and Li work at BFSU's Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation (GSTI) where they are involved in the actual training of interpreters, whereas Mei works at SISU's College of English, which does not offer any interpreter training. It may be much easier for Wang and Li to assist their students in conducting empirical research (hunting down the experimental subjects, accessing the right information, etc.) given the vast network of interpreters and wealth of resources readily available in their department. Gagnon's observation (1982) that conceptual researchers have certain advantages over their empirical colleagues in not having to confront problems such as these is, in fact, a double-edged sword: by the opposite token, students who know from the start that they will face serious problems if they opt for empirical subjects are far more likely to shrug and 'make do' with pursuing conceptual studies.

Name of the Advisor	Empirical Proportion	Students
WANG Lidi	88%	60
LI Changshuan	89%	53
MEI Deming	28%	50
CHEN Jing	39%	36
CHAI Mingjiong	32%	31
ZOU Weining	20%	30
GONG Longsheng	24%	29
LEI Tianfang	30%	27
ZHONG Weihe	65%	26
QI Weijun	17%	24
XIAO Xiaoyan	77%	22
SUN Xinwei	32%	22
ZHANG Yan	25%	20

Table 5: Proportion of MA theses supervised by each advisor that are empirical

3.4 Analysis of students

New graduates who take up careers in academia represent the future of the field. At the time of writing, a large number of teachers and academics in the field of CIS do not have PhDs. For example, 12 of the 20 most prolific MA advisors do not have doctorates. A terminal degree is not a prerequisite for supervision and research in the field, and practical experience is valued even in academia in Interpreting Studies.

To find out what types of student enter the ranks of academics after earning their MAs, an initial manual search was performed on the Internet whereby students were profiled to determine first how many became academics after graduating: it was found that 20.1% did so.

I was interested in ascertaining whether students from certain universities or with certain advisors were more or less likely to enter the academic sphere; whether they have become more or less likely to do so as time has gone on; whether empirical papers are more likely to be the

precursors to academic careers; and which memes and theoretical influences make a student more or less likely to take up an academic life. To account for variation in whether students became academics, I ran a logistic regression model, with predictors as to whether or not the thesis was empirical, who the student's advisor was and what university he or she was studying at, and the memes and keywords used in the thesis; I also included publication year as a control. The response variable I used was whether the student entered the world of academia, and the covariates were some of the explanatory variables above. To obtain a close-to-zero intercept, I coded the publication year as the number of years after 2000, with a corresponding negative number for theses published in the 1990s.

The first model I fit used as covariates only the publication year and whether or not the student paper was empirical. This basic model had the following coefficients:

	Coef	**Std err**	***t***	***P* > |*t*|**
Intercept	-0.8293	0.197	-4.212	0.000
Publication Year	-0.0912	0.022	-4.221	0.000
Empirical	0.3887	0.144	2.692	0.007

Table 6: Logistic regression modeling whether a student pursued an academic career

This basic logistic regression shows that the more recently students published their MA theses, the less likely they are to have become academics, and those that published empirical papers are more likely to have done so. In particular, the model indicates that for every decade that passes in my dataset, the odds of a student becoming an academic decrease by 60% (= 1 - exp(10 * -0.0912)). Similarly, the odds are 48% higher for students who published empirical theses than for those who did not. This latter result is significant in that it not only identifies a feature of student papers that has strong predictive power of their future career paths, but suggests that empirical researchers share features which make them more likely to secure academic positions.

Some of this publication year effect may result from the fact that graduates are not obliged to take up academic careers immediately after earning their MAs: those who graduated several years ago may be more likely to have become academics simply because they have had more time and opportunity to do so. However, in Asia students who want to pursue such a career typically commit to doing so fairly early – in fact almost immediately after graduating from their MA programs; it is indeed rare for someone to work for a few years and subsequently become a researcher. I do not believe, therefore, that this possibility is likely to have substantially confounded my analysis. I think a more likely explanation is that as CIS has expanded, competition has increased for a limited number of teaching jobs, making students less likely to embark on academic careers.

It is also natural to wonder whether MA students advised by one or another advisor are more or less likely to become academics. To test this, dummy variables were added for each of the 10

most prolific advisors, resulting in the following regression. (Note that for this regression, I removed Empirical? as a covariate since, as we saw previously, there is wide variation in the proportions of these advisors' students who publish empirical papers, which seems to indicate that they have some influence over the decision. However, even when I included the Empirical? Covariate again, none of the results below changed. For similar reasons I did not include Empirical? as a covariate in the later regressions either).

	coef	**std err**	***t***	$P > \|t\|$
Intercept	-0.6659	0.196	-3.402	0.001
Publication Year	-0.0814	0.022	-3.761	0.000
WANG Lidi	-0.4386	0.391	-1.122	0.262
LI Changshuan	-0.1032	0.365	-0.283	0.777
MEI Deming	0.1746	0.335	0.521	0.603
CHEN Jing	-0.4521	0.491	-0.921	0.357
CHAI Mingjiong	0.0602	0.439	0.137	0.891
ZOU Weining	-0.0156	0.465	-0.033	0.973
GONG Longsheng	-∞	N/A	N/A	N/A
LEI Tianfang	-0.0907	0.476	-0.191	0.849
ZHONG Weihe	0.6245	0.422	1.478	0.139
QI Weijun	-0.2553	0.555	-0.460	0.645

Table 7: Logistic regression modeling whether a student pursued an academic career, per advisor

The coefficient for Gong Longsheng is so negative because the logistic regression model is saturated: none of his 29 MA students in my data-set has gone on to become an academic[8]. None of the other prolific advisors, however, has had students who are in statistical terms significantly more or less likely to pursue academic careers than those with non-prolific advisors, when adjusting for the time-variation effect.

The third model I fit was designed to ascertain whether students from particular universities were more or less likely to enter the world of academia. Fitting another logistic regression on Publication Year and dummies for the ten schools which put out the most MA students produced the following results:

[8] A possible explanation for Gong's outlier status is that he used to be an associate dean at SISU's School of Business and Management, although he served as an external advisor to his graduate students from the English department. In contrast, the other members of the top ten prolific advisor group all hold leadership positions in their universities' interpreting or foreign language departments, which are the most likely recruiters of graduates.

	coef	std err	t	$P > \|t\|$
Intercept	-0.4178	0.232	-1.800	0.072
Publication Year	-0.0844	0.024	-3.554	0.000
Shanghai International Studies University	-0.3674	0.202	-1.823	0.068
Beijing Foreign Studies University	-0.6838	0.246	-2.785	0.005
Xiamen University	-0.3859	-0.266	-1.451	0.147
University of International Business and...	-1.6441	0.479	-3.430	0.001
Guangdong University of Foreign Studies	0.4550	0.275	1.652	0.099
Ocean University of China	-0.4338	0.466	-0.930	0.352
Central South University	0.2598	0.435	0.596	0.551
Sichuan International Studies University	0.2035	0.457	0.445	0.656
Suzhou University	-0.0719	0.520	-0.138	0.890
National Taiwan Normal University	-0.7966	0.635	-1.254	0.210

Table 8: Logistic regression modeling whether a student pursued an academic career, per university

This regression shows that BFSU and UIBE students are significantly less likely to become academics than those from schools outside the top ten, even when adjusting for the publication year effect. Both of these effects are large, and statistically significant at below the 0.005 level, though for UIBE the effect is dramatic: a student graduating from there has 81% lower odds of pursuing a career in academia than a comparable student graduating from one of the schools outside the top 10. At BFSU, the student would have 50% lower odds.

This may be because BFSU and UIBE are top-tier universities for interpreter training and are strategically located in Beijing, China's largest market for international conferences. Naturally their graduates are highly sought after in the private market and have a higher chance of establishing themselves in conference interpreting circles. Research and teaching may not offer enough pay incentives to induce them to pursue academic careers (Pearl 1995, 181). Even if remuneration is not their primary concern, many BFSU graduates go on to have successful careers as interpreters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or other central government agencies.

I also suspected that the content of a student's MA thesis might have a bearing on whether or not he followed an academic career path. To explore this possibility, I fit three more models using the Publication Year combined with dummies for the Memes, Theoretical Influences, and certain keywords as covariates. None of the coefficients for the Theoretical Influences model was statistically significant except for the Publication Year variable, so I omit that model here. However, both meme and topic keywords explained some variance in the data. The first of these

is as follows:

	coef	std err	t	$P > \|t\|$
Intercept	-0.4595	0.234	-1.961	0.050
Publication Year	-0.0840	0.022	-3.823	0.000
MEME Training	-0.0507	0.069	-0.735	0.462
MEME Professional	-0.4574	0.224	-2.043	0.041
MEME Language	-0.0507	0.082	-0.618	0.537
MEME Socio-cultural	0.0906	0.098	0.924	0.356
MEME Cognitive	-0.0223	0.080	-0.280	0.780
MEME Miscellaneous	-0.3861	0.146	-2.649	0.008

Table 9: Logistic regression modeling whether a student pursued an academic career, per meme

This regression shows that students who write MA theses with the Professional or Miscellaneous memes are in statistical terms significantly less likely to take up academic careers. The first of these makes great sense: it is entirely reasonable to suppose that students concerned with the more business-oriented facets of interpreting would tend to work in industry rather than academia. As for the latter, it is not unreasonable to hypothesize that students focusing on themes in the Miscellaneous category, hampered by a lack of both literature on their specialized – or even rarefied – subjects and a shortage of PhD advisors willing to take them on, face an uphill battle when it comes to continuing the same niche research after graduation.

The logistic regression for the document keywords was as follows:

	coef	std err	t	$P > \|t\|$
Intercept	-0.8333	0.210	-3.976	0.000
Publication Year	-0.0834	0.022	-3.744	0.000
Interpreting Strategies	-0.0302	0.164	-0.184	0.854
Interpreting Quality	0.0055	0.239	0.023	0.982
Interpreter Training	0.2761	0.209	1.320	0.187
Interpreting Techniques	-0.1383	0.254	-0.544	0.586
Assessment	0.3832	0.265	1.448	0.148
Note-Taking	0.3748	0.281	1.335	0.182
Anticipation	0.9107	0.324	2.807	0.005
Cultural Differences	0.3011	0.329	0.916	0.360
Deverbalization	0.0145	0.402	0.036	0.971

Table 10: Logistic regression modeling whether a student pursued an academic career, per keyword

The most noteworthy finding from this analysis is that the Anticipation[9] keyword is strongly associated with students pursuing academic careers. Indeed, the model indicates that, historically speaking, students who have written on this subject have been approximately 148% more likely to do so, a value that is statistically significant even with the Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons (adjusted significance level = 0.005). In fact, this finding is arguably of greater interest than the others in this section because it is the only statistically significant finding I made that associates a feature of the students with them being *more* rather than *less* likely to take up academic careers.

4. Conclusion

The research conducted in this paper presents a picture of a field that has rapidly expanded over the past two decades. During this period, MA-level research in CIS has changed in some ways, most notably in that students have become less likely to pursue careers in academia. However, the field has remained consistent in other ways: there has, for example, been general convergence on the most important themes across universities.

The research also demonstrates that MA-level research in CIS cannot be considered a homogenous entity: although different universities tend to be influenced in roughly the same ways, and their students to coincide on the most important themes, they differ substantially when

[9] Anticipation is a strategy that allows simultaneous interpreters to predict how the discourse of a speaker will develop.

it comes to the most popular aspects of CIS, with different focuses, ideas, and models popular in different locations. The career paths taken by students are also substantially different from place to place: some universities' students are far less likely than others' to pursue academic careers after graduation. With the diverging career paths of students and the multiple approaches to research reflected in their theses, we look forward to an exciting future for the discipline.

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