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Locating linguistic power relationships: A glimpse into transnational feminist dialogue through comparison of major feminist publications in the US and China (2000-2012)

Shuli Han

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Locating Linguistic Power Relationships: A Glimpse into Transnational Feminist Dialogue
through Comparison of Major Feminist Publications in the US and China (2000-2012)

by

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Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Does the use of English as a universal language in the transnational feminist dialogue empower women globally? In what way does English shape the flow of conversation by circulating some feminist knowledge while neglecting others? Through conducting content analysis research on major feminist publications in both China and the US, this thesis probes the limitations of English as “Lingua Franca” through comparing authors, topics, and the use of references in the *Collections of Women’s Studies (CWS)*, the most prestigious feminist journal in China, with *Signs*, one of the core feminist journals in the US. Through the comparison between these two journals, this thesis illustrates that English as a “Lingua Franca” of feminism fosters linguistic power relationships that result in an “international division of feminist labor,” one in which non-native English-speaking feminists are seriously constrained in having their theories travel the globe.

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Introduction

The rise of transnational feminism in a globalized society poses a serious challenge to feminists all over the world: is it possible to achieve a discourse of knowledge that is free from its imperialist, colonialist, and racist context, in which the structure of knowledge is deeply embedded? As Foucault has revealed, the discourse of knowledge is created and perpetuated by those who have the power and means of communication (Michigan State University Board of Trustees, 2003). In order to break this power structure within the discourse of knowledge, one of the urgent tasks for feminists is to deconstruct the process of knowledge-making.

To challenge power is not a matter of seeking some 'absolute truth' (which is in any case a socially produced power), but 'of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic, and cultural, within which it operates at the present time.' (Foucault, in Rabinow 1991, p. 75)

Aimed to detach the power of truth from the forms of hegemonic social institutions, feminist scholars such as Dorothy Smith and Nancy Hartsock suggest that researchers focus on the lives and experiences of those being marginalized (Sandra Harding, 2005).

There are many obstacles, however, that prevent researchers from actually getting access to, or understanding, the lives and experiences of those marginalized. In a multicultural and globalized world, the diversity of language and culture can not only constrain and dampen feminists' ambition to explore the lives and experiences of those marginalized but also force them to face the existing power structure in the production and circulation of feminist knowledge. Who has the privilege of producing knowledge? Does the circulation of Western-produced feminist knowledge silence the voice of those marginalized, instead of making them heard?

One of the lofty and ultimate goals of transnational feminists is to create knowledge that would transform society and bring about equality for all. However, how can feminist researchers deconstruct, or simply avoid, the hierarchical power relationship that is deeply embedded in the social structures of a post-modern world? As Sandra Harding has pointed out, researchers usually cannot “detect--much less correct--the assumptions and practices that shape the interests, conceptual frameworks, and research norms of social sciences,” (Harding, 2007); therefore, “value-free research is an unachievable ideal.” In other words, the process of the production of knowledge itself is actually saturated with power, a hierarchical power that benefits groups whose values occupy a dominant position compared to those dominated groups.

The concern about this “conceptual practice of power” (Sandra Harding, 2005; Dorothy Smith, 1990) in social science research raises a critical question: how do researchers or feminists avoid the danger of this conceptual practice of power, which disadvantages those economically, socially, and politically vulnerable groups? Richa Nagar and Amanda L. Swarr also warn that there is a need to critically reflect on “who is or who is not deemed to be a legitimate knowledge producer, which space, institutions, and languages get included or excluded from practices of knowledge making” (Nagar and Swarr, 2010, p. 16).

In transnational feminist dialogue, feminists cannot assume that the conditions for a so-called free, democratic dialogue are already established. There exists a preconditioned, predetermined context in which the transnational dialogue is supposed to be situated. This predetermined context is crucial because it sets out the basic rules and the initial tones of transnational feminist dialogue: whose cultural criteria and standards are being valued in the

dialogue? Whose concerns have received more attention than others? Is the transnational feminist dialogue open to all? Or, in other words, are all feminists or women equipped with the necessary means (such as opportunities, economic and technical facilities, and languages) to get access to this dialogue? If not, who is included in this dialogue, and who is not? Is there a two-way flow of communication in the dialogue? If not, whose voice can be heard, and whose voice is being silenced? Why?

In her “Can the Subaltern Speak?” Gayatri C. Spivak (1988) argues that in the transnational communication between the First and Third World, the Third World subaltern actually cannot speak because in the condition of “epistemic violence” caused by the Euro-American-centered Western epistemology. When the Western intellectuals want to “speak for” the less-powered marginalized groups, such as the Third World people, they actually “speak to” them (Spivak, 1988). The limitation of using ELF in transnational feminist dialogue actually facilitates the practice of Euro- and U.S.-centric knowledge production and distribution, endangering the health of transnational communication by amplifying the voice of the privileged while muting the voice of those less powerful.

Manisha Desai (Manisha Desai, 2007) points out that transnational feminist dialogue is actually Euro- and U.S.-centric and dominated by certain privileged elites.

Transnational feminisms have for the most part drawn on the expertise of educated, privileged women from the global North and the South who are well versed in a Euro- and U.S.-centric professional culture. (Desai, 2007)

This means that in the global gathering of transnational feminist dialogue, one is only eligible to participate if pre-requested criteria are met: first, one has to be a privileged, educated expert; second, one has to be “well versed in a Euro- and US.-centric professional culture” (Desai, 2007). Third, one has to be able to speak “the language of globalization,”

which is English, a language of political, economic, and cultural power (Anne Johnson, 2009).

The fact that English plays a crucial role in producing and transmitting feminist knowledge has not received serious attention from feminist scholarship (Mackie Vera, 2001). The domination of English in a globalized world has become such an obvious and important phenomenon that it has been taken for granted. In the majority of transnational feminist gatherings, English becomes a universal language that serves as a communication tool between feminist scholars from different countries and cultural backgrounds.

In the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995), the largest conference the United Nations had ever organized, English was used as a universal language in transnational feminist communication. Alda Facio, a feminist lawyer and writer from Costa Rica, refused to use English to give her speech, encouraging her audience to listen to her in Spanish, which was her native language and one with which she identified. Facio's rejection of using English brought her cheers and approval from some of her international audience. However, Susan C. Bayley, a feminist scholar who had witnessed Facio's refusal to use English to address to her international audience, insists that English empowers women worldwide, because English "breaks down the barriers between people," and "women from around the world needed and used English to communicate their concerns and to address world ranging issues" (Bayley, in *To Beijing and Beyond*, 1995).

Indeed, Bayley sees the power of English in shaping transnational feminist communication. However, like many scholars who advocate the use of English as a Lingua Franca, she sees only the positive aspect of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), while ignoring its negative impact.

“Language is the house of being” (Heidegger, 1947). It is through language that we create, constitute, and maintain social reality. In *Language and Symbolic Power*, Pierre Bourdier argues that language is not only a means of communication but also is a medium of power through which “individuals pursue their own interests and display their practical competence” (Bourdieu, 1991). Language not only shapes one’s particular perspective and approach to the world but also constitutes one’s social identity. In such a sense, the domination of English fosters linguistic power relationships in which the worldview and perspectives of other languages are excluded from contributing to the growth of world knowledge, and the social identities of those non-English-speaking people become fragmented and dismantled.

With the rapid expansion of globalization in the last few decades, English has become a dominant language that is being used as a “Lingua Franca,” a global language of transnational communication. A Lingua Franca is defined as “a language that is used for communication between different groups of people, each speaking a different language” (Richards and Schmidt, 2010, p. 340). It could be the native language of one of the groups, such as English, or it could be a language which is not spoken natively by any of the groups, such as Esperanto, an artificial universal language (Richards and Schmidt, 2010, p. 340).

There are two different views about using English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). One popular view believes that ELF is somehow a natural trend that comes automatically, or inevitably, as a result of globalization and global communication (Crystal, D. 2007). This perspective emphasizes the benefits of ELF as a crucial means in global communication. However, some scholars question this view by pointing out that the hidden hierarchical power relationship in ELF actually creates the exclusion of others (Phillipson, R. 1992).

This argument focuses on the disadvantage of ELF because it may marginalize the majority of non-English speakers. Similarly, the use of English as a universal language in the transnational feminist dialogue may result in the exclusion of non-English-speaking feminists or scholars.

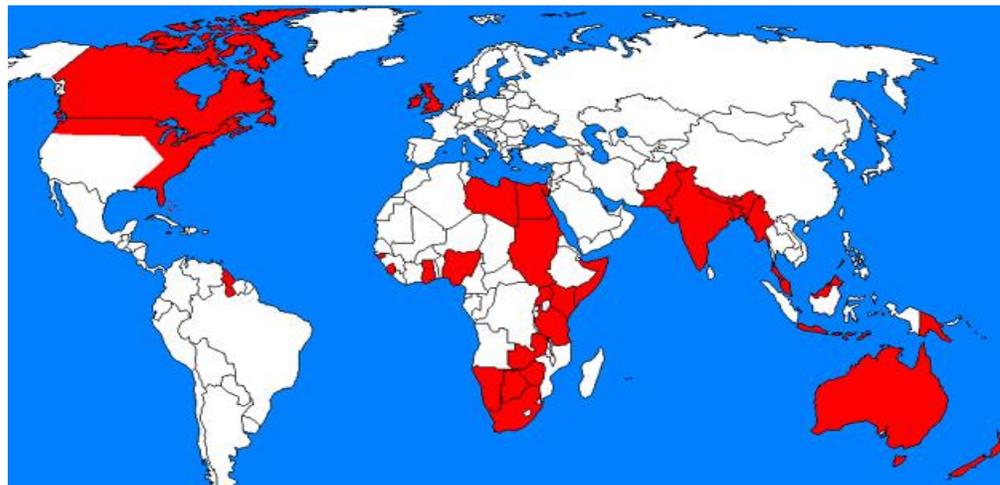
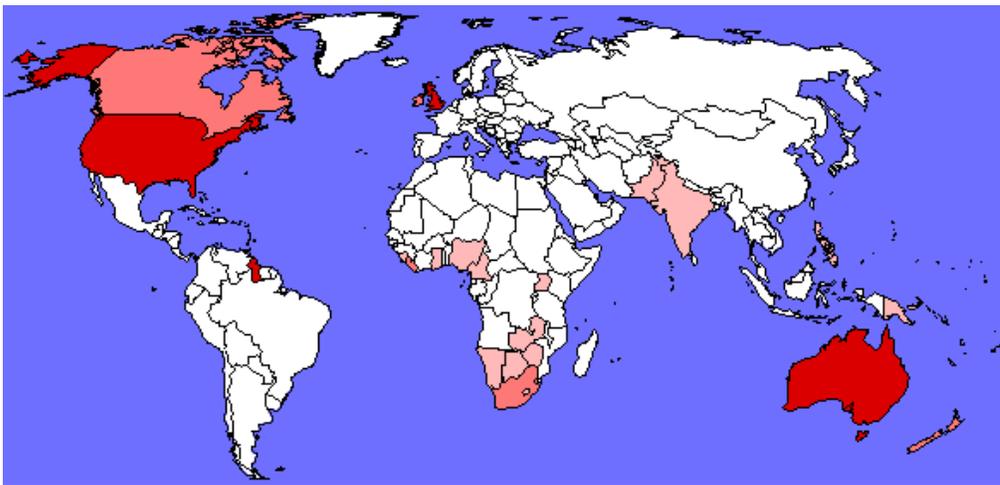
A quick glance at the facts about world languages will reveal that English is far from a language that is spoken by the majority of people in the world. The assumption that the spread of English is an automatic process in globalization not only ignores the history of imperialism but also neglects the hidden power relationships between English and other languages.

In fact, the domination of English is far from an automatic, natural result of globalization; it is actually a result of hierarchical power relations that open up opportunities for the privileged, while closing the gate for those marginalized. A quick glance at history will reveal that the spread of English is far from a “natural” result of globalization. We cannot deny the truth that, to some extent, English is actually a legacy of imperialism. It is the result of the military triumph of the British Empire (Crystal, 1999). A comparison between the “English-speaking countries” and the British Empire illustrates the overlap between the two (Table 1).

Table 1

Comparison between the English-speaking Countries and the British Empire

-  Countries where English is the first and only language of most people
-  Countries where besides English as a native language there is at least one other significant native tongue
-  Countries where English is not *native*, but only *official*
-  The British Empire



Top: The English-speaking Countries

Bottom: The English Empire

*Note: Map by László Zentai and Antal Guszlev, 1997
(source:<http://lazarus.elte.hu/~guszlev/gb/english.htm>)

The linguistic hierarchy created by imperialism did not simply disappear because of the end of the colonial period. On the contrary, it is still deeply embedded in the hierarchical cultural structure created by Euro-American-centric cultural hegemony. Once playing a crucial role in spreading and maintaining the imperial power of Great Britain, English continues to benefit core English-speaking countries (in which English is the mother tongue) through the hegemony of cultural imperialism, in which the domination of English plays a significant role in creating and maintaining international norms.

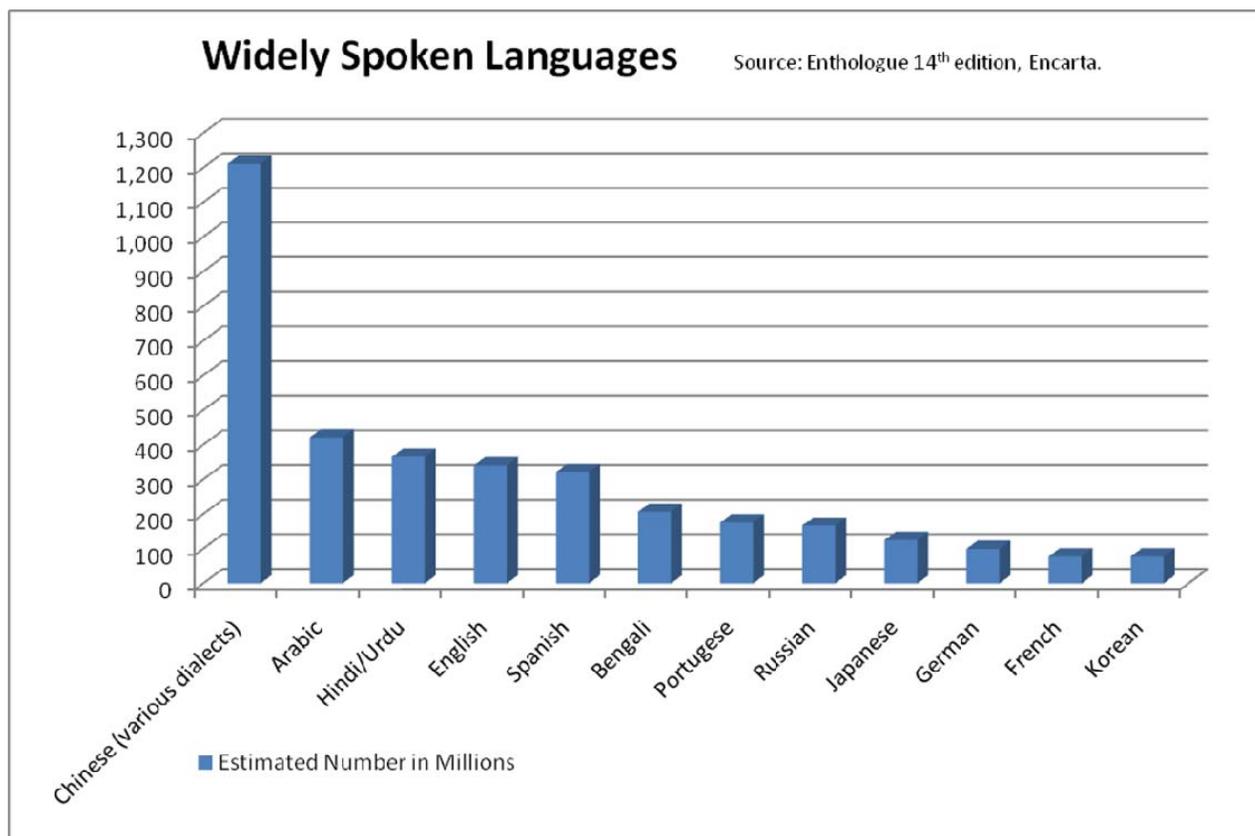
It is true that English has been “chosen” by many countries as a critical language that functions as an international link, but this is not merely a result of “free” choice out of linguistic considerations. Instead, it is the result of the economic, political, and cultural triumph of English-speaking countries such as US and Britain; it is the concrete reflection of the hegemony of Euro- and US-centric Western culture. It reinforces the cultural hegemony of the Euro- and US-Centric Western culture by creating and maintaining the linguistic power relationship between English and other languages.

One cannot deny that the use of English in global feminist communication does open opportunities for many to be able to communicate in transnational feminism: however, more important, it also closes the door to those who do not speak English or do not use English as their primary or daily language. The use of English as a universal language not only leads to the rejection and exclusion of the others but also facilitates, reinforces, and creates hierarchical relationships between Anglo-centered Western cultures and those cultures excluded.

One cannot ignore the fact that in this multicultural and multi-linguistic world, the majority of people do not speak English. In fact, the opinion that English should, or will,

become a universal global language ignores the diversity of world languages and the fact that English is far from a language spoken by the majority of people in the world (Table 2).

Table 2
The Diversity of Languages in the World



Note. *More than 7,000 languages spoken
*52% have less than 10,000 speakers;
* 50-90% will become extinct during the 21st Century
* Source: Grimes 2005; <http://www.sil.org/ethnologue/>

In fact, due to the growing mobility in a globalized world, the world is becoming more and more multilingual and multicultural, rather than monolingual. Taking the US as an example, according to statistics issued by US Census Bureau in 2000, the numbers of people in the US who speak other languages than English at home had doubled in a few years. As a result, the “English Only” practice in the US has been criticized by many American scholars because of the growth of multilingual and multicultural communities in the US.

Nevertheless, the opinion that English should serve as a universal language in transnational communication still enjoys popularity among some scholars.

One possible reason for the popularity of this viewpoint may contribute to the exaggeration of the numbers of the English-speaking population. According to a Harris poll, on average, adult Americans believe that over half (52%) of the world's population speaks English. However, the real statistics show that only close to 20% of world's population use English as a second or official language. In the core English-speaking nations, or inner circle English-speaking countries (David Crystal, 2003), where English is the first language (US, Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand), about 320-380 millions of people are native speakers of English, constituting only 5% of the world population.

In the outer English-speaking circle (Crystal, 2003), the majority of these countries adopted English as a second or official language as a result of colonial occupation. However, even in those countries where English is the second language, or official languages, the majority of people still speak their mother languages in daily life. Taking Hong Kong, a former British colony for one hundred years, as an example, although English is an official language in Hong Kong, it is only used in official and other limited occasions, and Cantonese (a Chinese dialect) is the language that is used by 98% of Hong Kong people in their daily life (David, 2003).

Due to these facts, one can conclude that the domination of English in transnational feminist communication, while possibly benefiting some English-speaking elite groups, risks excluding and marginalizing the experience of those non-English-speaking majority. In this regard, English can only serve as a tool for communication among the English-speaking international elite, whose accounts would be recognized as the only valid

representation of those who have been silenced. Therefore, the domination of English actually creates hierarchical power that allows the English-speaking international elite to be the legitimized representation of the majority of non-English-speaking population.

As a consequence, the practice of using of English as a universal language in transnational feminist communication, though opening up opportunity for some elites, would actually close the gates of communication with knowledge produced in other languages. It is through language that we create, constitute, and maintain social reality. Language not only carries different worldviews and perspectives for people to understand this world, it also serves as the repository of human civilizations.

As Hungarian linguist Milica Knorr has noted:

I am increasingly coming to the conviction that the international language English not only opens gates but closes them too. It closes the gate of information flow in all cases where what does get translated into English is partial, inadequate, uninformed, etc. And there are an embarrassingly large number of such cases even within such a field as sociolinguistics. (Phillipson, 1999)

The use of English as a universal language in the transnational feminist dialogue would close the gates of communication to different cultural perspectives that cannot be found in English, damaging the epistemic pursuit of knowledge by canonizing English feminist knowledge, or that knowledge which has been selectively translated into English, and, at the same time, eliminating the feminist knowledge recorded in other languages during the long history of human civilization. Retrospection on history of human civilization will show that an English-only communication in transnational feminist dialogue would cause an epistemic disaster that buries the voices of the others. This epistemic violence, or linguistic violence, in turn, would reinforce the hegemony of Anglo-centered Western culture globally.

The domination of English in transnational feminist dialogue also allows the native English-speaking elite to have more advantage in the scholarly transnational feminist dialogue. Scholars whose native language is English may have a better chance of getting their opinions heard and getting their research and articles published or circulated in the transnational feminist communication. In comparison, scholars who use English only as their second or third language, as a communication tool, may get less chance to voice their concerns.

Additionally, this linguistic power relationship caused by the use of English as a Lingua Franca not only silences the voice of marginalized feminists and women but is also pernicious to transnational feminist communication by blocking the alternative way out of the dialogue. The “triumph” of English in globalization has caused a “linguistic complacency” (Phillipson, 1992, 2003) among many native English-speaking feminists, who are unwilling to learn or use another language when they communicate with other non-English-speaking feminists, but assume that others are obligated to learn English in order to communicate with them. This condescending attitude is also evidenced by British and American tourists who travel the world, assuming that everyone speaks English, and “that is somehow the fault of the local people if they do not” (Crystal, 1997, 2003, p. 17). Similarly, when some English-speaking scholars advocate that English should be a universal language in transnational feminist dialogue, they actually claim that the English-speaking elite have the privilege of being ignorant to other languages, while the non-English-speaking scholars have the obligation to learn English to be able to communicate with them.

To conclude, the use of ELF in transnational feminist dialogue is likely to silence and marginalize the majority and, as a consequence, result in the one-way flow of

communication from the privileged to the marginalized. This distorted one-way flow of communication turns the transnational feminist dialogue into merely an exportation of English feminist theories and literature to the marginalized, less-privileged groups. It harms the healthy two-way flow of communication by not only stymying the voices and concerns of those marginalized but also by refusing the constructive feedback that the transnational feminist dialogue aims to seek.

The use of ELF in transnational feminist dialogue may cause a one-way flow of communication in the scholarly transnational feminist dialogue, which would further reinforce the linguistic power relationship between the English-speaking elite and those non-English-speaking scholars, or scholars whose native language is not English. As a result, this linguistic power relationship may eventually lead to inequality in the production and circulation of feminist knowledge.

In his “Whose Knowledge Matters,” Hans Weiler argues that there are hierarchies in the production of knowledge, and those hierarchies reflect the very structure of “authority and power, and thus the essence of politics” (Hans, 2009).

People positioned in less powerful national locations may look up to nationals deriving from a country perceived as a cultural and political paragon. Marginalized individuals and nations tend to be conversant with the cultures of both the dominant and subordinate social groups, and their voice may be silenced when confronted with the judgmental gaze of the dominant social groups. (Jasann, 2007)

The hierarchical relationships existing in the production of knowledge risk reducing the diversity of human knowledge and its potential to a hegemonic system in which Euro-American-centric knowledge produced in English becomes a paragon, the only authentic model that is supposed to be worshiped and followed by the production of knowledge in other languages. Under this linguistic power relationship between English and other languages, the dissemination and “export” of Anglo-centric knowledge produced in English

to the rest of the world helps to create and maintain an authentic Anglo-centric Western “modern” civilization, setting up models and norms for the other less-developed cultures to “follow.” In order to “keep up with” the international norms and standards created by Euro-American centric knowledge produced in English, the other non-English-speaking periphery countries have to adopt English in order to be included in the process of this hierarchical globalization.

This is exactly the case in countries such as China, which is so desperate to escape from isolation after the “Cold War,” so eager to participate in globalization and to be accepted as a “normal” member of the international community. Soon after China opened its door to the rest of the world in 1979, when Deng Xiaoping announced the Opening Door Policy, English became an important language that serves as an “international link” between China and the world.

The beginning of the transnational feminist dialogue between US and China was remarked by the traveling of Western theories produced in English to China in 1980s (Min Dongchao, 2005). Ideas and knowledge of feminism and Women’s studies travel from “here” (the West) to “there” (China), but scant or limited feminist knowledge produced in Chinese can travel to US and enter into the mainstream dialogue of transnational feminism.

When Chinese scholars welcome the traveling of theories and knowledge produced in English to China, few of them question this one-way “journey” of Western knowledge. Like their predecessor in the May Fourth Movement, many Chinese scholars heartily embraced the import of “Western” feminist knowledge to China (Min, 2005). The development of contemporary Chinese feminism and the establishment of Women’s Studies in China is highly reliant on this one-way importation of Western feminist theories produced

in English. In this so-called transnational feminist dialogue, Chinese scholars occupy a position as “receivers,” while the Western feminists are the givers, who “awaken” China again as they did before (Min Dongchao, 2005).

This hierarchical one-way flow of English feminist knowledge to China denies and precludes the possibility that the transnational feminist dialogue may benefit from feminist knowledge produced in Chinese. The ignorance of local knowledge and experience in English-led transnational feminist dialogue thus reinforces the opinion that feminism is a “Western” phenomenon of Western origins. More important, this domination of Western feminist knowledge produced in English may cause the explicit exporting and transplanting of Western feminist knowledge in English through selective translation into China, which would “push aside” the local feminist theories and practices. For example, Li Xiaojiang argues that the Western-led Chinese women’s studies actually caused Chinese women’s “second marginalization” (*erdu bianyuan hua*) in globalization (Li, 2005). It also risks further marginalizing the local voice that addresses specific local issues and which cannot be found in English feminist knowledge.

If this is true, the transnational feminist dialogue regarding the use of ELF is far from a democratic, open-minded communication it claims to be; on the contrary, it is a hegemonic discourse that marginalizes and excludes the majority of women and feminists, a dialogue that fosters international elitism and encourages the hierarchical relationship between the local and the global, since the use of EFL in the transnational feminist dialogue becomes the very institution that creates the hierarchy.

This thesis is a tentative step to locate the possible linguistic power relationships in transnational feminist dialogue through a comparison between major feminist publications

in the US and China. The major method used in this research is content analysis that is based on the theoretical analysis.

Theoretical Framework

The questioning of the use English as a Lingua Franca first emerged in the discipline of linguistic studies. Pierre Bourdieu's *Language and Symbolic Power* is one of the earliest and most influential literatures that challenges the traditional wisdom that takes language as merely a neutral tool of communication. He argues that language is a discourse of power that creates and maintains power relationships, which are based on economic and capital determined "linguistic market" and "linguistic habitus" (Bourdieu, 1991). According to Pierre, similar to race, class, and gender, language serves as an institution of power that benefits some whereas disadvantaging others. This concept provides a new approach for the deconstruction of institutional power discourse in social science, linguistics, literature and cultural studies, and feminist studies. Bourdieu's analysis, however, is mainly based on an abstract theoretical approach, drawing from sources such as Marxism, Semiotics, and Foucault's discourse of power. His challenge to the power of language is, to some extent, theoretical and ideological.

In his book *Linguistic imperialism* (Robert Phillipson, 1992), Robert Phillipson states critically that English is being used politically and historically as a means of promoting imperial power of British and American Empires. He argues that there is an "empire of English language," which still rules the world that was once ruled by Britannia. According to Phillipson, the core English-speaking countries who are native speakers of English (UK, US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) are the dominant group and have more power over those other periphery English-speaking countries. According to Phillipson, there are two types of periphery English-speaking countries: countries which require English as an international link (such as Scandinavia, Japan) and countries on which English was imposed

in colonial times, and where the language has been successfully transplanted and still serves a range of international purposes (for examples, India, Nigeria). These countries are English-peripheral in the sense that they generally follow the linguistic norms of the core English-speaking countries (Phillipson, 1992).

Phillipson points out that the theory of Galtung's imperialism (Galtung's six mutually interlocking types of imperialism: economic, political, military, communicative, cultural, and social) operates with a division of the world into a dominant Center (the powerful western countries and interests), the dominated Peripheries (the underdeveloped countries)

According to Phillipson's definition, English linguistic imperialism rests on the fact that the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and the other languages. Here "structural" refers broadly to material properties (such as institutions, and financial allocations) and *cultural* to immaterial or ideological properties (such as attitudes, and pedagogic principles) (Phillipson, 1992).

Phillipson argues that, English linguistic imperialism is one subtype of "linguicism," a system that "involves representation of the dominant language, to which desirable characteristics are attributed, for purpose of inclusion, and the opposite for dominated languages, for purpose of exclusion." Just like racism, sexism, and classism, linguicism operates as a system that allows a certain group to dominate over others. According to Phillipson, linguicism "refers exclusively to ideologies and structures where language is the means for effecting or maintaining an unequal allocation of power and resources."

In his most recent book on the same issue, *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*, Phillipson further argues that there is a “linguistic neo-liberal empire” in which the promotion of English has been used, along with the free market economy system, as a political, economic, and ideological tool to maintain the domination of the neo-liberal empire. As a result, the domination of English would result in “a one-way flow of expert knowledge from dominant to subaltern cultures” (Cameron 2002, p. 70).

Linguistic neoimperialism entails the maintenance of inequalities between speakers of English and other languages, within a framework of exploitative dominance. As in the earlier linguistic imperialism, this is achieved through penetration, fragmentation, marginalization, and supremacist ideologies in discourse (Phillipson, 2009, p. 137).

Phillipson’s criticism on linguistic imperialism reveals that the power of English is not an abstract, or theoretical discourse, but a real “linguistic regime” that is deeply rooted in the imperial history of the West. English language spread mainly through military power in the colonial period; while in the post-colonial period, English language, in a more significant sense, has been chosen as a political tool to maintain and continue the waning imperial power. The fact that English also an everyday language used by common people tends to obscure the truth that it also can be an institution of imperial power.

Adrain Blackledge warns that “monolingual ideologies” would lead to the exclusion of minority groups, thus harming the social justice:

When the dominant, majority group in a society, nation, nation-state or community considers that the ideal model of society is monolingual, monoethnic, monoreligious and monoideological (Blommaert andVerschueren, 1998a), we immediately encounter questions such as ‘who is in?’ and ‘who is out?’ A dominant ideology of monolingualism in multilingual societies raises questions of social justice, as such an ideology potentially excludes and discriminates against those who are either unable or unwilling to fit the monolith standard.

Balackledge’s theory also works to the transnational dialogue in a globalized society. This “global injustice” has also been challenged by scholars from different disciplines, such

as literature, cultural studies, translation studies, education, science, sociology, and feminist studies.

For example, Paul Jay notices the danger of the domination of English literature in a multilingual, multicultural and globalized world; she argues that the practice of “exporting” English literature as “Western commodity” to other cultures “homogenizes” the literatures in the other cultures and locations, and therefore threatens “to create a Western critical context” for local literatures studies.

Just as in globalization per se homogenization is tied to the export and rapid proliferation of Western commodities, the kind of homogenization that may become associated with the globalization of literary studies is linked to the export of Western critical categories, terms, theories, and practices, all of which threaten to create a Western critical context for this local literatures studies (Paul Jay, 2001).

All of the scholars mentioned above agree that the domination of English and knowledge produced in English has already set up the very condition for any transnational dialogue: in order to participate in transnational dialogue, the developing world has to, or has to choose to learn and become well versed in knowledge produced in English, applying Western criteria and “Western derived epistemologies” (JosAnn Cutajar, 2004).

Margaret Abraham and Bandana Purkayastha raise the similar question regarding the languages of research from the perspective of equality and social justice:

Action-oriented research and feminist research has long indicated the contradictions faced in the production, construction, and use of knowledge (Alexander and Mohanty, 1997; Ong, 1996; Oyewumi, 1997). Whose knowledge counts? How are different types of knowledge represented? Whose knowledge is institutionalized in ways that lead to the present inequalities? Is the language of research adequate for reflecting the nature of social realities? (Abraham and Purkayastha, 2012).

Scholars such as Abu-Lughod (2000), Ampofo et al. (2004), Blay (1985), Patel (2009) believe that a division exists between knowledge in English and other languages, while “English is repeatedly read and cited,” the social realities become limited within the

knowledge produced in English and “come to be defined in term of the imagination of this language’s imagination” (Abraham and Purkayastha, 2012). As a result of this division, non-English scholarship from the Africa, East and South Asia, and Latin America “rarely appears to contribute to the theories developed in the North” (Abraham and Purkayastha, 2012).

Abraham and Purkayastha also argue that if these knowledge hierarchies are not addressed, “the experiences of the marginalized could continue to remain invisible” (Abraham and Purkayastha, 2012).

Although the domination of English and the knowledge produced in English has been questioned by scholars from different disciplines, it has not yet received serious scrutiny in the field of women’s and gender studies. The feminist endeavor of decolonizing the production of feminist knowledge has been mainly focused on the hegemony of knowledge in the academic ivory tower and the global north (Alexander, 1997; Mohanty, 2003, 2006, Trotz, 2007). Feminist studies in language and gender usually highlight the structure of language itself that privileged men. For example, when Audre Lorde said that Language is a site of struggle in which differences are excluded unconsciously, she mainly concerns about the power relationships existed *within* the English language structure (Olson, 1998). Few studies, however, pay enough attention to the role of language in the context of transnational feminist communication, or focus on how English privileged Anglo-centric Western feminists.

Nevertheless, some feminist scholars have begun to question the domination of English and defend their right to use their own languages in expressing their own theories and experiences. Lugones and Spelman argue there is an asymmetrical relationship in the

dialogue between white/Anglo women and women of color. This unequal dialogue is caused by the structural, political, social and economic inequalities and is deeply rooted in the systematic pattern of power and authority inherent in cultural imperialism. This asymmetrical relationship, while allowing a certain group of women's voices to be heard, silences the majority of the others and makes them unable to articulate their experiences. In this asymmetrical dialogue, the use of language is a critical factor because the ability to use English empowers White/Anglo women to articulate their theories, but silences the voices of the other non-English-speaking women.

We and you do not talk the same language. When we talk to you we use your language: the language of your experience and of your theories. We try to use it to communicate our world of experience. But since your language and your theories are inadequate in expressing our experiences, we only succeed in communicating our experience of exclusion. We cannot talk to you in our language because you do not understand it. So the brute fact that we understand your language and that the place where most theorizing about women is taking place is your place, both combine to require that we either use your language and distort our experience not just in the speaking of it, but in the living of it, or that we remain silent. Complaining about exclusion is a way of remaining silent (Lugones and Spelman, 1989, p. 575).

Francine Descarries, a Canada based feminist whose native language is French, argues that there existed a selective representation of English-speaking feminists and the neglect of knowledge from French feminism. She questions the very "hegemony of English" in feminist studies:

Apart from my frustration with what English-speaking feminists have done with French feminism, I raise this question because I strongly believe that one neglected problem that is seriously threatening the epistemological and strategic development of feminist studies and networking is both the hierarchical relationship and the cleavage that exist among different national feminisms in the construction of theoretical frameworks and practices (Descarries, 2003).

Descarries, in her "Can the privileged situation of the English language in the academy be overcome? ou La langue n'est pas neutre," raises a blunt question: are there

ways to overcome, or at least reduce the intellectual and cultural “imperialism” of the privileged linguistic situation of the English language in the academia world? Descarries also expresses her surprise that such a critical question has been ignored in transnational feminist conferences: “Strangely enough, no matter how many international meetings I attend or papers I read, I have seldom seen the question of the development of knowledge or communication discussed in this light.”

Descarries also noticed the absence of bibliographical references to materials produced or translated in other languages other than English:

Not only are books or papers published in English more widely read and quoted than others, as well as too rapidly identifies as the feminist productions, but the absence of interaction with the rest of the world is a clear obstacle to the production of better scientific knowledge as well as an obstacle for feminists, let alone societies, to understand each other. This is to me a very serious problem (Descarries, 2005).

If the use of English as a universal language in transnational feminist dialogue has silenced the voices from the other Western languages such as Spanish and French, as Lugones and Descarries have argued, then how does it affect the flow of conversation between English and the other non-Western languages such as Chinese?

Chinese scholars Wang Yanyan, and Wang Guanglin, point out that the hegemony of English which is based on Western centrism has been “overwhelming our society and individuals” in China, causing the silence of Chinese scholars in the so called dialogue. (Wang Yanyan and Wang Guanglin, 2010). Bao Ciaolan and Xu Wu also express their concern about the linguistic power relationship between English and other “native” languages by warning that it may “amplify” the already privileged, and continue to mute the “muted” in the era of “globalizing feminism,”

The ‘native’ may uphold the universality of Western experience with all sincerity, and the ‘foreign/diasporic’, saturated with the fear of the potentially unequal

relationship proffered by their discursively defined location of power, may also zealously endorse nativism. Further complicating the situation is that in this era of ‘globalising feminism’, language and discourses developed at one location could be employed to an entirely different effect at another location. It should, therefore, come as no surprise if the already privileged claims to have been ‘muted’, and the muted continues to be muted in the discourse of ‘speaking for the silenced’ (Bao Xiaolan and Xu, 2001, p. 91).

Bao and Xu also warn that this “potentially unequal relationship” may cause the resistance among the local or native feminism. Without considering the hidden power relationship behind the language and discourse, the “native” country is very likely to “uphold” the Western experience as a universal standard, risking yielding its discursive right to the authority of the Western feminist knowledge. The diaspora Chinese scholars, however, saturated with the fear of “the potentially unequal relationship,” may insist on the autonomy of their native country. As a result, they might zealously turn to “nativism” as a means of resistance.

How to locate the hidden power relationship behind language and discourse in the transnational feminist dialogue? How does the use of English as a Lingua Franca further legitimize this potentially unequal relationship, making feminist knowledge produced in English from the core English-speaking countries the universal standards for the other countries? The silence on this problem in transnational feminist dialogue endangers the production and circulation of non-English language knowledge in transnational feminist dialogue, becoming the very obstacle of the production of feminist knowledge itself: how can we only limit feminist knowledge in an English dominated environment where the majority of knowledge being produced in other languages is excluded?

Ironically, the transnational feminism claims to seek the equality for all and vows to examine aspects of the intersectionality that creates hierarchical relationships, be it gender,

class, racial, or location. The critical question is: how can it ignore the pre-existing condition created by the linguistic power of English and Western knowledge produced in English? In what way can we locate, examine, and measure these unequal linguistic power relationships?

Another interesting phenomenon is: almost all the scholars who challenge the domination of Western knowledge, such as Chandra Mohanty, Richa Nagar, are English-educated elite. On the one hand, they are partly empowered by their mastery of the language of English. Compared to the other non-English-speaking feminist scholars, they have greater privileges to raise their voices and have them be heard. They are, however, still to some extent “inferior” to the native English-speaking scholars in producing “authentic” feminist knowledge in English simply due to their language and cultural background. More important, it is the same empowerment that resulted in the exclusion of knowledge produced in their native languages or “dialects.” The glimmering illusion that Western colonization had “saved” the colonized by empowering them with English and Western knowledge obscures the very fact that Western knowledge and its vehicle, English, marginalizes the voice of local people by its domination in knowledge production.

As a field that emphasizes interdisciplinary approaches, women’s studies are supposed to break the boundaries of disciplines, to take on the context of social inequality that creates linguistic power relationships. However, although the linguistic power relationship between English and other languages has been explored and discussed in other disciplines such as linguistics, cultural studies, and education, there is little detailed examination and very few case studies in the field of women’s and gender studies upon the use of ELF in transnational feminist dialogue.

Based on this theoretical framework, the major purpose of this case study is to locate possible linguistic power relationships through examining the impact of the use of ELF on the scholarly transnational feminist dialogue between the US and China. By scrutinizing the major feminist publications in the US and China, this study tries to reveal the hidden power relationship that affects the healthy communication of transnational feminist dialog. The following section of this thesis will mainly focus on the major research questions and the methodologies that will be applied in this study.

Research Questions and Methodology

By focusing on the primary research questions and methodology of the thesis, this section tries to establish a link between the concrete research questions and the methods. In the beginning of this section, three primary research questions have been identified. In order to answer these initial questions, major theoretical model has been applied to narrow the general questions into specific ones that can be investigated by applying quantitative and qualitative methods.

Research Questions

The primary research questions of this research are:

- 1 Is there a one directional or multidirectional dialogue between English and Chinese feminist publications?
- 2 Does the use of ELF create a linguistic power relationship between English feminist knowledge and that produced in Chinese?
- 3 Does the use of English as a Lingua Franca in transnational feminist dialogue foster a hierarchical division of feminist labor between English-speaking elites and non-English-speaking scholars?

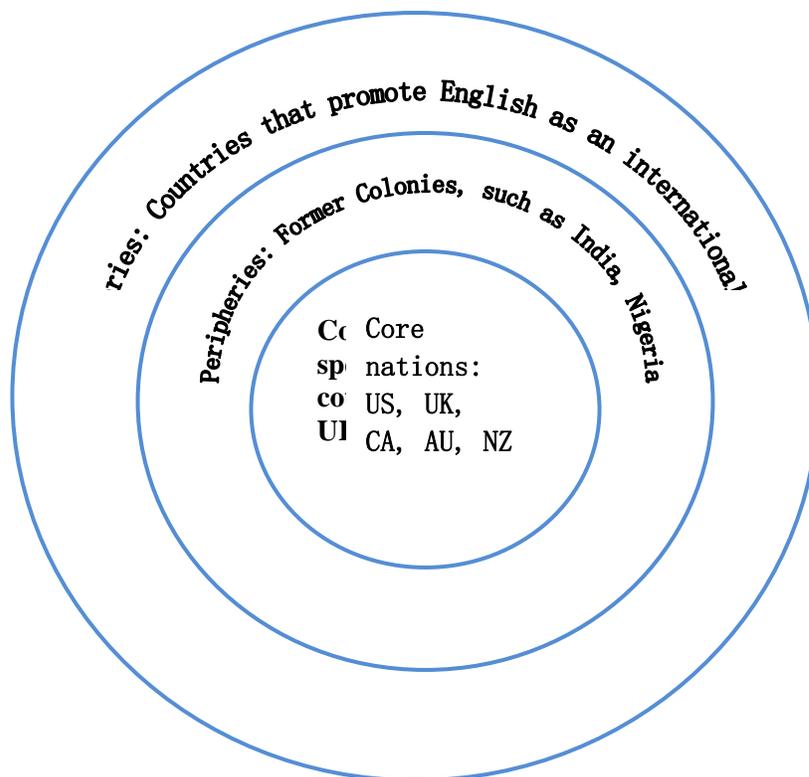
This research is a theory-guided case study that combines mixed methods such as content analysis from sociology, and other methods such as theoretical analysis and comparative studies. On the one hand, this thesis aims to use theoretical analysis as a directional guide in examining facts and statistics in social studies; on the other, this study tries to employ the results of social studies to support the theoretical applications.

The theoretical proposition of this thesis, as has been discussed in the introduction, is that the domination of English language actually causes unequal, or hierarchical linguistic

power relationships in scholarly transnational feminist communications. If this hypothesis is true, this unequal power relationship should be reflected by a possible one-way communication, or a very limited two-way communication between feminist knowledge produced in English and those produced in other languages.

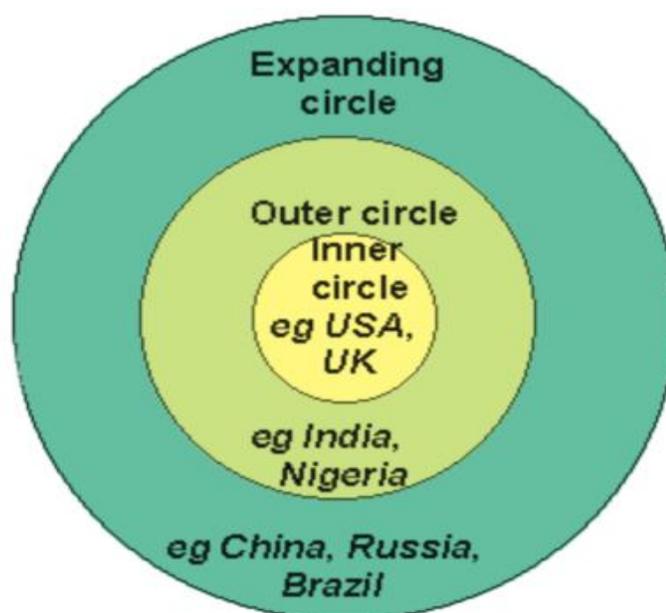
In order to investigate the circulation of feminist knowledge produced in English and those in other languages, I will try to apply Phillipson’s concepts of “core English-speaking countries” and “periphery English-speaking countries” to investigate the use of English in transnational feminist dialogue between the US and China (Phillipson, 1992). Like Immanuel Wallerstein, who divides the world into core/ periphery according to the capitalist world economy system (Wallerstein, 2011), Phillipson differentiates the world into core/periphery based on the world system of English language speaking.

Table 3
The English-Speaking “Empire” (from Phillipson’s Imperialism)



Phillipson’s model of “English-speaking Empire” is similar to Braj Kachru’s theory of “the ‘three circles’ of English” (Table 4). However, instead of accepting the domination of English as a practical need, or a “natural” result of globalization, as David Crystal did in his *English as a Global Language*, he challenges the use of English as a universal global language by pointing out the hierarchical power between the “inner circle” and the “peripheral circle” (including both outer and expanding circles).

Table 4
Kachru’s Three “Circles” of English



As that has been emphasized in Phillipson’s model, this research will focus on the possible hierarchical relationship between the core English-speaking countries and those in the peripheries.

In order to locate the possible hierarchical relationship between knowledge produced in English and that produced in other languages, this research will apply Phillipson’s model as a theoretical framework. Is there a so-called “English-speaking Empire” being reflected

in the transnational feminist dialogue? If so, how is this hierarchical relationship reflected in the transnational feminist dialogue? Does the use of English as a Lingua Franca cause a one-way communication, or a limited two-way communication in transnational feminist dialogue between US and China?

Two major methods will be used in this research: descriptive content analysis and comparative Analysis.

Content Analysis

Three major aspects will be examined in chosen major feminist publications in US and China:

- 1) The tables of content of the major feminist publications in US and China:
 - a. How do the *topics* and the *subject matters* of articles in Chinese feminist journals reflect the domination of English in the dialogue?
 - b. Does the introduction and discussion of feminist knowledge produced in the core English-speaking countries such as US and UK occupy a crucial position in the Chinese feminist journals? More specifically, how often do the feminist *terms* and *concepts* produced in English, such as “feminism,” “gender,” “empowerment,” appear in the Chinese feminist journals?
 - c. Does the Western feminist knowledge produced in English exert a great impact on the discourse, or the development of Chinese feminism? If so, how?
 - d. On the other hand, can the same pattern of communication be detected in the major feminist publication in US? Can Chinese feminist terms and concepts

have the opportunity to travel to US? How often do the Chinese theories and practice appear in major US feminist publication?

2) The authors of the articles published in the major feminist publications in US and

China:

- a. Who has the privilege to publish (authors)?
- b. What are the nationalities of the authors?

3) The citations of English and Chinese languages in major feminist publications in US and China :

- a. What languages are cited?
- b. What countries are the journal citations from?

Comparative Analysis

- Do Chinese scholars have a voice in major feminist publications in US?
- Are Chinese articles being cited in major feminist publications in US?
- How prominent are English feminist publications in the major feminist publications in China?
- Is there a resistance to this “linguistic violence” in China’s feminist movement (*nuxing yundong*) as shown in major Chinese feminist publications?

Samples: *Signs* and *Collections of Women’s Studies*

In this research, two major feminist publications from the US and China have been chosen as samples for analysis and comparison: *Signs* in the US and *Collections of Women’s Studies (CWS)* in China. In order to maximize the reliability of the research, several criteria have been set up to examine the possible samples:

1). Representativeness: the journals chosen should be among the core feminist journals in the US and China. They are supposed to reflect the general trends of feminist scholarship in the US or China.

2). Diversity: the journals should include feminist issues or subject matters from different disciplines, instead of concentrating on feminist perspective in a single discipline.

3). Openness: although the journals are supposed to be mostly focused on the domestic feminist issues in the US and China, in order to be able to represent the feminist scholarship in their “home” countries, they should also be open to the transnational feminist dialogue by adopting a global perspective and dedicating certain space to the feminist issues from other countries.

4). Comparability: the journals should share some similarities, as well as some differences to make them comparable.

In order to choose the most appropriate sample journals, several of the most important feminist journal publications in the US have been compared according to the criteria listed above. After excluding the journals that focus on specific disciplines (such as cultural studies, history, psychology, sexuality, etc.), and the journals that have an “international” focus (such as *Women's Studies International Forum*), *Signs*, a feminist journal that “examines theories and methodologies from a variety of disciplines and provides important links between feminist theory and the realities of women's lives,” has been chosen as a the sample journal in the US. The majority of *Signs*' content is dedicated to the US feminist issues; however, it opens a space for transnational feminist dialogue and includes feminist subject matters and issues from a variety of global locations; it also features feminist topics from different disciplines.

Given that in China women's studies is still a comparatively new discipline that is in the process of development, the sample journal in the field would be *Collections of Women's Studies (CWS)*, probably the most prominent feminist journal in contemporary China. It is one of a few core feminist journals in modern China. First published in 1992, *CWS* is a leading feminist journal published in communist China (1949-now).

Both *Signs* and *CWS* meet the four criteria listed above. Although both journals have a major focus in their domestic countries, but open a considerable space for transnational feminist issues from other countries and regions. Both of them include feminist topics from a variety of disciplines.

Ideally, I would have liked to research those journals beginning in 1994, just before the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women in China, a moment of intensified transnational dialogue. However, given time constraints and the exploratory nature of the paper, I limited my sample to twelve years (2000-2012) of *Signs* and the *Collection of Women's Studies (funu yanjiu luncong)*.

This research contains two parts: first, content analysis on the tables of content and second, content analysis on the citations. The first part of this research will begin with the investigation of the tables of content of 12 years' of *Signs* and *CWS* (2000-2012). Data will be analyzed and compared to identify the possible hierarchical power relationship existing in the production of feminist knowledge in both journals.

Since it needs more time and effort to investigate all the twelve years' citations in *Signs* and *CWS*, the second part of this research will further scrutinize only 5 years of references and quotations in *Signs* and *CWS* (2006-2010). The major aim of the second part is to answer the question of what kind of feminist knowledge is being cited most frequently,

thus having more authoritativeness than the other feminist knowledge. One of the critical questions is: does a certain kind of feminist knowledge have more power in traveling and circulating globally than other kinds?

Content Analysis Part I: Table of Contents in *Signs* and *CWS*

Signs

To investigate the possible hierarchical power relationships reflected in the production of knowledge, this section starts with the examination of the feminist issues and subject matters of the articles in *Signs*. The general research questions in this section are: how many articles or entries in *Signs* are focused on feminist issues in the core English-speaking countries? How many are dealing with feminist issues in the other periphery English-speaking countries, including former colonies and other countries and regions where English is not a primary or official language? Is there a hierarchical power structure of knowledge production in the *Signs* which allows certain privileged groups to have more representative power than others? The purpose of the investigation is to see whether there existed hierarchical relationship between feminist issues from core English-speaking countries and those from the periphery English-speaking countries.

Forty eight issues of *Signs* in 12 years (2000-2012) have been examined to answer the following specific research questions:

1. Does feminist knowledge produced in core English-speaking countries and extend English-speaking countries (i.e., former colonies) have a predominate percentage in *Signs*? How many articles concentrate on feminist subject matters from core English-speaking countries?
2. Among all the other periphery English-speaking countries that have English as official or working language, or simply an international-link language, who has more opportunity to get more domestic and international exposure?

3. As regarding feminist issues in certain periphery English-speaking countries, do authors from the core English-speaking countries more privileged in publishing articles than authors from periphery English-speaking country? Do international English elites, or authors who have an English education background, have more privilege in expressing their voices? Taking China as an example, how many articles addressing Chinese feminist issues are written by scholars from core English-speaking countries? How many of them are written by diaspora Chinese scholars in the core English-speaking countries, or authors who have an English education background? How many of them are authored by Chinese scholars in China?

4. Are the majority of articles focused on feminist issues in Europe and North America? Or, is there a Euro- and U.S.-centric knowledge production reflected in the knowledge structure of *Signs*?

The results of the investigation on the first question can be seen in Table 5 and Table 6:

Table 5
Feminist Topics from the Core English-Speaking Countries in Signs

Subject matters with the concentration on core English-speaking countries	
US	>500 (out of 900) ≈56%
UK	42
Canada	20
Australia	19
New Zealand	2
Total	> 583 (out of >900) ≈65%

Note. * Each issue typically includes 6-8 research papers, 5-10 book reviews, 4-6 conference papers or roundtable reports. Therefore, total numbers of items in 48 issues (including research papers, book reviews, conference papers and roundtable reports): ≈900 (some book reviews introduce more than one book).

* Since some articles are theories that have a global focus originated in US, the actual number of feminist issues from the U.S. is for sure bigger than 500, so here uses >500 to indicate it.

Table 5 shows that, among more than 900 entries in *Signs*, about 56% of them focus on the subject matter of the U.S. feminism; 66% of them deal with subject matters from the core English-speaking countries.

Table 6
Feminist Subject Matters on Former Western-colonies That Still Adopt English as Their Official or Working Language

India	42
Philippine	13
South Africa	6
Nigeria	6
Sierra Leone	3
Pakistan	3
Tanzania	2
Kenya	1
Singapore	1
Hong Kong	1
Cameroon	1
Zimbabwe	1
Total	80 (out of 900) ≈9%

Table 6 shows that feminist issues in former British colonies such as India, the Philippines, South Africa, and Nigeria, have more chance to get international exposure than many other non-English-speaking countries in Asia and Africa (those from Europe will be discussed separately).

Table 7

A Comparison of Feminist Topics from the Former Colonies and Other Countries in Asia and Africa in Signs

	Asia		Percentage	Africa		Percentage
Former Colonies in which English is official or working language	India	42 (39%)	58%	South Africa	6 (23%)	77%
	Philippine	13 (12%)		Nigeria	6 (23%)	
	Pakistan	3 (2%)		Sierra Leone	3 (11%)	
	Singapore	1 (0.9%)		Tanzania	2 (7%)	
	Hong Kong	1 (0.9%)		Zimbabwe	1 (3%)	
	East Timor	1 (0.9%)		Cameroon	1 (3%)	
	Sub-total	61 (58%)			Sub-total	
Other countries in which English is the second or third language, or non-English-speaking countries	China	21 (19%)	42%	Somali	1 (3%)	23%
	Japan	12 (11%)		Moroccan	2 (7%)	
	Korea	3 (2.8%)		Togo and Benin	1(3%)	
	Indonesia	4 (3.7%)		Chad	1 (3%)	
	Vietnam	3 (2.8%)		P.R. Congo	1 (3%)	
	Taiwan	2 (1.8%)		Sub-total: 6	6 (23%)	
	Thailand	1 (0.9%)				
Sub-total	46(42%)					
Total	107		100%	Total	26	100%

In Table 7, a comparison of feminist topics from the former colonies and other countries in Asia and Africa reveals that feminist issues from former colonies that have English as official language have more chances to get published in *Signs*. The majority of feminist issues from Asia and Africa in *Signs* are from countries where English is the

official language: in Asia, 58% of them are from former colonies; in Africa, 76% of them are from former colonies. Taking India and China as examples, feminist subject matters from India (42) are two times more than that from China (21). The results may seem obvious since *Signs* is an English journal. However, the real question is: should feminist voice from those English-speaking countries represent the other countries in the transnational feminist dialogue? Should we take it for granted that some countries have more representational power than others simply because they have been benefited from the use of EFL?

As it revealed in Table 7, even though a product of colonization, the predominant use of English in certain countries, such as India, South Africa, etc., also privileges the discourse from those countries. However, this relative privilege, although benefiting former colonized English-speaking countries on the one hand, on the other, it further perpetuates the linguistic norms once imposed forcefully on them. Eventually, this relative privilege might in turn reinforce the unequal linguistic power relationship in transnational feminist dialogue.

In order to answer the third question, issues on Chinese feminism in *Signs* have been examined as a case study to investigate who have more opportunity to get publish when addressing feminist issues in a certain country like China, do Chinese scholars from China have the chance to express their theories and experience? If so, to what extent? (See Table 8.).

Table 8
Total Articles that Address on Chinese Feminist Issues in Signs

Total articles that address Chinese feminist issues in <i>Signs</i> : 22 (including book reviews)			
Author's nationality and background	Numbers of authors	Percentage	English Education background and Percentage
U.S. scholars	9	46%	Yes
Canadian scholars	2		Yes
Diaspora Chinese scholars in US	8		Yes
Diaspora Chinese scholars in Europe	1	38%	Yes
Chinese scholar from Hong Kong (former British colony)	1		Yes
Chinese Scholar(s) with Western Background	1	8%	Yes
Chinese scholars without Western background	2	8%	No
Total numbers of scholars	24 (2 articles have more than one author)		

Note. *Percentage of authors from core English-speaking nations (including Western scholars and Diaspora Chinese scholars): 79%

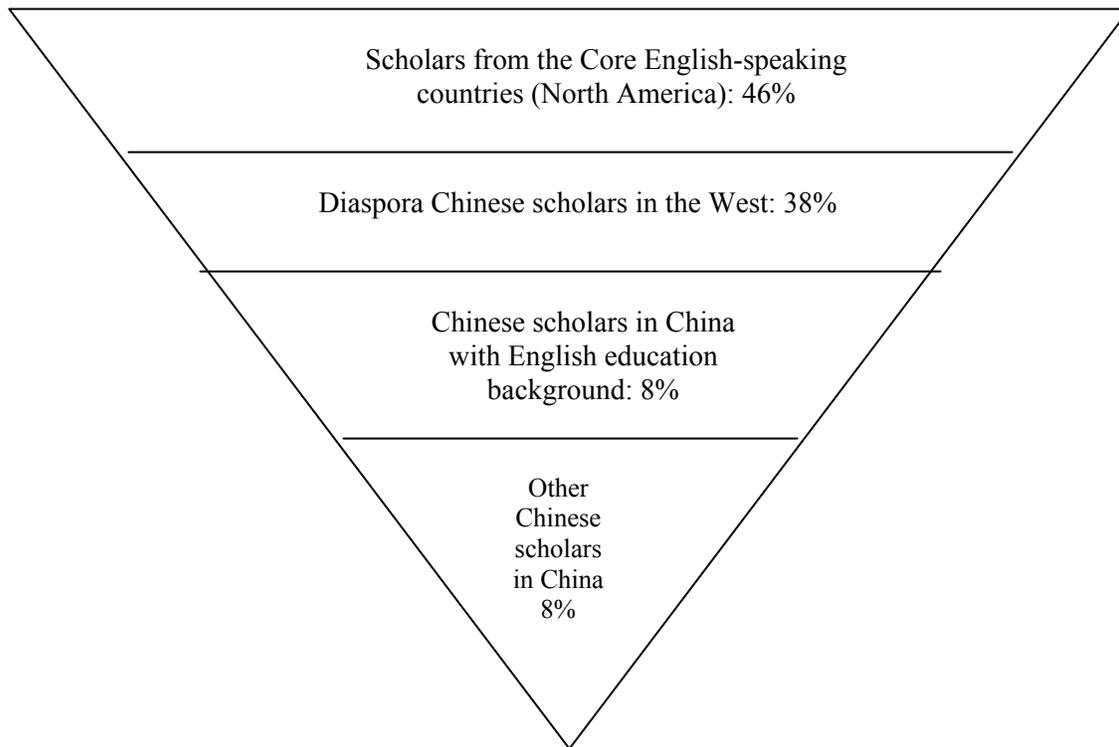
Table 8 shows that scholars from the core English-speaking countries and scholars who have an English Education background have a greater frequency to get published on Chinese feminist issues: 79% of authors who wrote articles on Chinese feminist issues are from core English-speaking countries, while 92% of scholars have an English education background. Obviously, the use of English as a Lingua Franca in transnational feminist dialogue provides more representational power to feminist scholars from the core English-speaking countries and to international English elites.

The crucial question is: should scholars from the core English-speaking countries and those English-speaking international elites be the legitimate representatives of Chinese feminism in the transnational feminist dialogue? If not, how can the transnational feminist

dialogue be an efficient one when the opinions of English speaking elites are amplified and highlighted, while the majority of non-English-speaking scholars are excluded from the conversation? In this case, the ability to use English does provide a stage, a platform on which some Chinese scholars, that are well versed in English and Western culture, to participate in the transnational feminist dialogue. However, on the other hand, it actually decreases the opportunities of the majority of non-English-speaking Chinese scholars to present their opinions and voice their concerns on Chinese feminism.

Nevertheless, it is not say that non-English-speaking Chinese scholars have more authenticity in representing Chinese feminism than international English-speaking élite. Instead, this study concerns more about the unequal power relationships and the exclusion created by the use of ELF in transnational feminist dialogue. The use of English as a universal language in feminist dialogue also creates a hierarchical power relationship between authors from different backgrounds. Scholars who have more opportunity to express their opinions in transnational feminist dialogue are more likely to be the legitimized representatives of feminist scholarship in certain regions and areas; scholars who have few or no chance to voice their concerns might be marginalized and have less power and influence in transnational feminist dialogue. A pyramid of the power of representation (Table 9) below might give a better look at this hierarchical power relationship of representation.

Table 9
A Pyramid of the Power of Representation



Note. * Authorship distribution in Chinese feminism in *Signs* (2000-2012).

A hierarchical power relationship can be seen in Table 9: scholars from the core English-speaking countries have more opportunity to express their opinions on Chinese feminist issues than Diaspora Chinese scholars, while the Diaspora scholars have more privilege in getting their voices heard than Chinese scholars in China. The consequence of this hierarchical power relationship is: scholars from the core English-speaking nations and Diaspora scholars in the core English-speaking countries become the legitimized representatives of Chinese feminism because they represent 84% of feminist knowledge regarding Chinese feminism in *Signs*. On the other hand, scholars in China have been marginalized simply because it is almost impossible for them to enter into the transnational feminist dialogue and express their opinions and experiences in English. For those Chinese scholars in China and those who do not have an English education background, this is not a

“free” transnational feminist dialogue; one needs a ticket to get into the international arena, and this ticket is “English.”

Since English is one of the major linguistic vehicles of Western culture, or more specifically, Euro-American culture, the domination of English in feminist epistemology is actually the reflection of, as well as the result of the Euro-American centralism. The remaining question is: is there a Euro-American-centric knowledge production being reflected in the knowledge structure of *Signs*?

Table 10
Entries That Focus on Feminist Issues from Different Global Locations in Signs

Global locations	Frequency	Percentage	Note:
North America (US and Canada)	>520	56%	actual number of entries : >931, error ratio≈ 0.03%
Europe	151	16%	
Asia	107	11%	
Latin America	56	0.6%	
Africa	39	0.4%	
Middle East and central Asia	38	0.4%	
Australia (including New Guinea)	20	0.2%	
Total:	>931	100%	

As shown in Table 10, an investigation of entries that focus on feminist issues from different global locations in *Signs* shows that the majority of entries in *Signs* are feminist knowledge from North America and Europe, which compress 72% of all the entries in *Signs*. The statistics demonstrate that, although there is a space in *Signs* that allows a transnational feminist communication, a Euro-American-centric knowledge production is still being reflected in the knowledge structure of the table of contents of *Signs*.

To sum up, from the analysis of 12 years of table of contents of *Signs*, one can come to the following conclusions:

1) *Signs* is considerably open to the transnational feminist dialogue and dedicates a significant amount of space to feminist issues from other countries and regions.

2) Feminist knowledge produced in core English-speaking countries is still dominated in *Signs*. A hierarchical power relationship between feminist knowledge from the core English-speaking countries and those from the periphery countries is reflected in *Signs*.

3) There is a Euro-American-centric feminist knowledge production being reflected in *Signs*: Feminist knowledge produced in the West (Europe and North America) constitutes the major knowledge structure in *Signs*. A hierarchical power relationship between feminist knowledge produced in the West and those produced in non-West origins is characterized in *Signs*.

4) Additionally, in *Signs*, the use of English as a universal language in transnational feminist dialogue privileges feminist scholars from the core English-speaking nations and those who have a English education background, making them the legitimized representatives of feminism from other countries where English is not a primary or official languages.

Collections of Women’s Studies (CWS)

The table of contents for 12 years (2000-2012), 83 issues (15-18 entries in each issue) of CWS (≈ 1328 entries) have been examined in this study to answer the following questions: Does the use of English as a universal language in transnational feminist dialogue have a significant impact shown in the tables of content of CWS? If so, how is it reflected in the feminist subject matters and issues in CWS? Is there a linguistic power relationship between feminist knowledge produced in core English-speaking countries and those produced in other countries in CWS?

Different methods have been applied to investigate the Western impact of feminist in CWS. First, key words such as “gender” (*shehui xingbie*), “Western” (*xi fang*), “USA” (*mei guo*), and Europe (*ou zhou*, or *xi ou*, etc.) have been searched among titles in the tables of content of CWS to see how frequently these words appear in the journal. The result can be seen below:

Table 11
Some Important Key Words Found in the Tables of Content of CWS

Key Words	Frequency	Note
Gender(<i>shehui xingbie</i>)	132	The term “Gender” does not have a counterpart in the existed Chinese language; <i>shehui xingbie</i> (<i>gender</i>) has been created to distinguish with <i>xingbie</i> (Sex)
USA (<i>mei guo</i>)	19	
Western (<i>xi fang</i>)	18	
Europe (<i>ou zhou</i> , or <i>xi ou</i>)	13	

Table 11 shows that the impact of the Western feminist is directly reflected in the titles of articles or entries in CWS. The word “gender” appears 132 times in the tables of

content of the 12 years' *CWS*. There is no term exactly match the English term "gender" in Chinese language. The discrimination on Chinese women is more embedded in cultural practices than in linguistic categories. As a special Western word that has been introduced to China from the West, "gender" in Chinese is translated into *shehui xingbie*, which is a newly invented Chinese term that simply means "socially constructed sex."

The frequently appearance of "gender" (*shehui xingbie*) in *CWS* demonstrates that Western feminist concepts have exerted a significant impact on Chinese feminism. The other terms that appear very often in the tables of content are "U.S.A" (*mei guo*), Western (*xi fang*), and Europe (*ou zhou*, or *xi ou*).

The frequent appearance of English and Western concepts and terms in the tables of content of *CWS* demonstrates that in *CWS*, Chinese feminists are open and eager to assimilate feminist theories and experiences from the West, especially those from the US.

Except for those key words that indicate the impact of the Western feminism directly found in the titles of the tables of content, *CWS* also dedicated a considerable space for feminist theories and practices from transnational feminist communication by introducing or interpreting feminism from the other countries and regions, among which the Western feminism, especially feminist theories and practices from the core English-speaking countries such as the US and UK, constitutes an overwhelmingly significant part. A total one hundred sixty one total entries of theories and practices from other countries and regions except for mainland China has been found in the tables of content of *CWS*, which constitutes up to 12% of the total entries. Table 12 shows the numbers of entries (including articles, book and journal reviews, and conference reports) from all the other countries and regions except for mainland China.

Table 12

Entries of feminist theories and practices from other Countries and Regions in CWS

Location	Nations and regions	Frequency	Percentage
	US	66	41%
	UK	23	14%
	Australia	5	3.1%
	Canada	2	1.2%
Core English-speaking countries	Sub-total	96	60%
	France	5	3.1%
	EU	5	3.1%
	Northern Europe	2	1.2%
	Western Europe	1	0.6%
European countries and Regions (Except UK)	Spain	1	0.6%
	Sub-total	14	8.6%
General Western	without specific names of nations and regions	28	17%
Total entries of feminist theories and practices from the Core English- speaking countries and the West(Europe and America)		136	84%
	Japan	7	4.3%
	Southeast Asia	6	3.7%
	Korea	5	3.1%
	Asia in general	3	1.8%
	Taiwan	2	1.2%
	Hong Kong	1	0.6%
Asia	Sub-total	23	1.4%
Other regions	Former Soviet Union (qian sulian)	1	0.6%
	Middle East (haiwan)	1	0.6%
	Sub-total	2	1.2%
Total entries of theories and practices from Asia and other regions		25	16%
Total entries from other non-mainland China countries and regions		161	100%

Table 12 shows that among these 12% of entries of feminist theories and practices from other countries and regions other than China, 84% are from either the core English-speaking countries, or from the Western countries (Europe and North America). 46% of these 12% are focused on feminism in the US. It means that feminist knowledge that is produced in English from the core English-speaking countries and in the Western countries, comparing with feminist knowledge produced in non-English and non-Western countries, occupies a dominant position in the transnational feminist dialogue in *CWS*.

As a comparison, the occurrence of the entries related to Chinese feminism in *Signs* is only about 5% of all the other entries with non-US origins (approximately 43% of the total entries from *Signs*). Among this limited occurrence, only 8% of these are from Chinese feminism from China (mainland), the majority of Chinese feminist knowledge (46%+38%=84%) in *Signs* is produced by the feminist scholars from the core English-speaking countries and the English-speaking Chinese Diaspora scholars in the West. There are no feminist concepts and terms that directly originated from Chinese appear in the tables of content of *Signs*.

To sum up, the investigation of the tables of content in both *Signs* and the *CWS* demonstrate that while feminist knowledge produced in the core English-speaking countries (especially that produced in the US) has a significant impact on *CWS*, feminist knowledge about Chinese feminism produced in China has been largely ignored by *Signs*.

It is noticeably that *CWS* has a special emphasis and policy on using English as an international link to foster transnational feminist communication. Not only the journal title is in both Chinese and English but also all the articles in *CWS* have English titles and abstracts available in CNKI and Wanfang Data, two of the most prestigious electrical

journal databases in China. In order to cater to this “need” of using English as an international link to “integrate with international practice.” (*yu guoji jiegui*), Chinese scholars who publish in *CWS* have to submit English titles and abstracts to be included in the prestigious journal database,. It means that the Chinese feminist scholars who are well versed in English have more chance to get their articles published in *CWS*, the most prestigious feminist journal in *CWS*.

Theoretically, the emphasis of *CWS* on using English as a tool in transnational dialogue provides convenience for scholars from the core English-speaking and other periphery English-speaking countries to communicate with Chinese feminist scholars. However, this “convenience” might not work if the feminist knowledge produced in China has been largely ignored by Western feminist scholars in transnational feminist dialogue.

Does the language policy of adopting English titles and abstract in *CWS* enhance the mutual communication between the transnational feminist dialogue between the US and China? Is there a two-way communication reflected in the citations of both *Signs* and *CWS*? The following section will scrutinize the authors and citations from a 5 years’ sample in both *Signs* and *CWS* to further examine the questions such as: who has more chance to get published? What languages have been cited more often than others? From what specific geographical locations the citations are coming from?

Content Analysis Part II: Analysis of Citations in *Signs* and *CWS*

In order to further scrutinize the structure of feminist epistemology in these two mainstream journals, the second part of this research will investigate five years (2010-2006) of *Signs* and *CWS*. As has been stated in the research questions, the purpose of the second part is to answer the following questions through the examination of the authors and the citations in *Signs* and the *CWS*

1. Who has the privilege to publish (authors)?
2. What are the nationalities of the authors?
3. What languages are cited?
4. What countries are the journal citations from?

My major findings in Table 13 show the countries of nationalities of authors who published their articles in *Signs*. Table 3 demonstrates that the majority of authors are from the US (57%) and core English-speaking nations (76%), and 25% of authors are coming from the periphery English-speaking countries. Only one author is from China (mainland), which makes up only 0.4%.

Table 13
Nationality or Current Residence of Authors in Signs

Journal Title: *Signs*
 Years of journal investigated: 2006-2010
 Numbers of articles Investigated: 242

Countries of origin of authors	Number	Percentage
United States	138	57%
<i>Core English-speaking countries (including US)</i>	184	76%
<i>Periphery English-speaking countries (all the other countries except for 60 core countries)</i>	60	24%
China (Mainland)	1	0.4%
Hong Kong	1	0.4%
Taiwan	1	0.4%
Total numbers of authors	242+	100%

*Note: Some articles have more than 1 author. If all the authors are from the US, only the first author is counted here.

Table 14 below is an investigation of what languages are cited in the articles.

Almost all the articles (98%) cited English from core English-speaking countries, with 32% of articles only citing English from core English-speaking countries. 65% of articles only cited English and have no references from other languages. Among all the articles, only 3.3% of articles cited other languages more than English. Only 3 articles (1.2%) cited Chinese.

Table 14
The Languages of Citations in Signs

Languages cited in the articles	Frequency Percentage	
Articles with <i>at least 1 English</i> citation (if there are citations)	242	100%
Articles with <i>at least 1 English</i> citation from <i>core English-speaking countries</i>	236	98%
Articles with only English citations	157	65%
Articles with only English citations from <i>core English-speaking countries</i>	78	32%
Articles cited from Spanish	11	4.5%
Articles cited from German	13	5.3%
Articles cited from French	13	5.3%
Articles with Dutch, Danish, or Swedish citations (Northern European Languages)	8	3.3%
Articles cited from Italian	3	1.2%
Articles cite from other European languages: Latin, Hungarian, Portuguese, Romania, Persian, Serbia, etc.	10	3.7%
Articles cited from Japanese	4	1.6%
Articles cited from Chinese	3	1.2%
Articles cited from Korean	2	0.8%
Articles cited from other Asian Languages such as Hindu, Indonesia	2	0.8%
Total numbers of articles:	242	

*Note: a few articles are cited more than two languages (except for English).

Table 13 and Table 14 show that:

1. Although it is still in a small scale, there is an international dialogue going on within the English-speaking circle, due to the fact that authors from different countries are able to participate in the dialogue.
2. However, there is a mostly one-way flow between the core English-speaking countries and the periphery countries in regarding to who gets published: 76% of authors who are from core English-speaking countries are published, while only 24% from the other periphery countries are published, which includes all the other countries except for the core countries.
3. Authors from Asian countries such as China occupy a very limited representational space in the transnational feminist dialogue: only 0.7% of authors are from mainland China.

A further analysis of the findings reveals that in *Signs*, English language feminist articles are still predominant compared to non-English articles, while English language feminist articles produced in core English-speaking nations are more cited than English articles produced in periphery countries:

- 65% of articles cited English only, while 32% of articles only cited English publications from core English-speaking countries.
- 97% of articles cited either only English, or English more than other languages.

Despite the limited and exploratory empirical evidence, my findings suggest that Western knowledge that is produced in Western languages are more represented in the transnational feminist dialogue than non-Western knowledge that is produced in non-western languages such as Asian languages or other languages:

- Besides the dominance of English, Spanish, German, French and other European languages are cited more often than Asian languages.
- Only 1.2% of articles cited Chinese, Japanese, and Korean; no Arabic articles are cited.

My other major findings show that English feminist scholarship plays an important role in *Collections of Women's Studies (CWS)*. Although the majority of authors are from China; nearly 4% of authors come from an English educational background such as Hong Kong, US, and Europe (Table 15).

Table 15
Authors' Backgrounds and the English Citation in the Articles of CWS

Journal Title: *Collections of Women's Studies (Fu nu yan jiu lun cong)*
 Language: Chinese
 Published in: Beijing, China
 Years of Journals Investigated: 2010-2008
 Number of articles investigated: 348

Authors/Article References	Number	Percentage
Authors from Mainland China	338+	97% (out of 348)
Non-mainland Chinese scholars with English educational background (Hong Kong:3, Taiwan:1, US: 3, and Europe: 2)	12	3% (out of 348)
Articles with at least 1 English reference	176	50% (out of 348)
Articles with half or more than half of English references among articles that cite English	65	37%(out of 176)
Articles with only English Citations among articles with English citations	16	9% (out of 176)
Articles without English citation, yet with at least 1 citation from English translation works	52	15% (out of 208)

Table 15 shows that more than half (50%) of Chinese articles have at least 1 English reference; among all the articles that cited English, 37% of them have more English references than Chinese references; among all Chinese articles that cited English, 9% of articles only cited English; among all the articles, 15% of articles did not cite English directly, but cited at least one reference translation from English.

The investigation of the *CWS* reveals that there are a significant number of English references in most of the Chinese articles:

- More than half (50%) Chinese articles had at least 1 English reference;

- 15% of Chinese articles with no English reference had at least 1 citation from articles translated from English.

- 65% of the Chinese articles either cited English articles directly, or cited articles translated from English.

By examining 5 years of samples of *CWS*, this study finds an interesting contrast. On the one hand, articles in *Signs* have been cited in *CWS* frequently; one of the issues even features *Signs* in the special section of Journal Review in *CWS* (2007, issue 2, reviewed by Chen Huiping). On the other, there is no articles from *CWS* has been cited in *Signs* within the time period of this study.

Conclusion and Theoretical Implications

Conclusion

The content analysis on both tables of content and citations of the two journals yields similar results: feminist knowledge produced in English from the core English-speaking countries not only had the privilege to “travel” to China but also played a significant role in shaping the course of Chinese feminism. On the other hand, feminist knowledge produced in China has little chance, if not none, to be heard in the US. Based on the quantitative analysis of the samples, I sought to interpret my empirical findings and explore possible theoretical implications as follows:

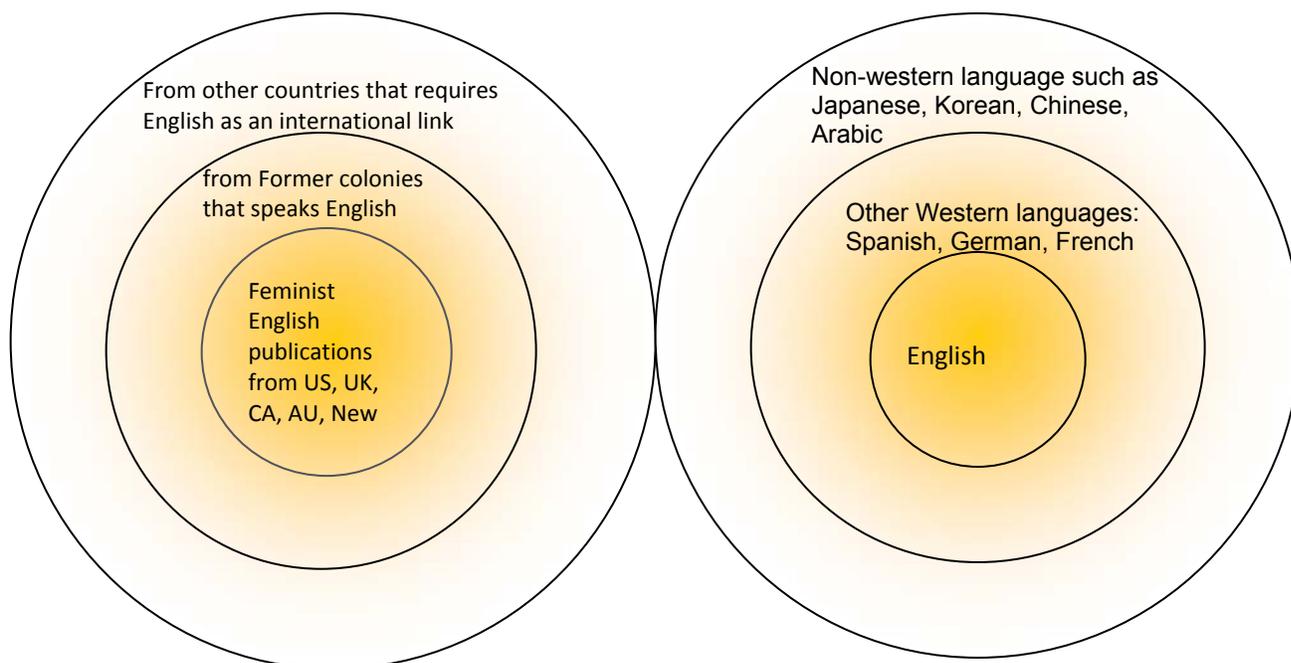
1. Asymmetrical referencing: An asymmetric or non-dialogical one-way flow communication. While the Chinese feminist publication referred to a significant number of English publications in varieties of topics, the US feminist publication referred only to a few, or no publications in Chinese when addressing specific topics on Chinese feminism.

2. The authority of English publications and Western Theories: Western theories and practices still play a crucial role in shaping Chinese feminism. However, there are almost no Chinese feminist theories produced in China and published in Chinese that are cited in transnational feminist communications.

Based on this theoretical implication, I suggest that in transnational feminist communication, there are two linguistic power relationships. The first is the linguistic power relationship between the core English-speaking countries versus periphery English-speaking countries. The second is the linguistic power relationship between English and the other languages, with English in the center of the power circle, other European languages next to

it, and non-western languages such as Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Arabic etc., on the margins. The use of English as an unquestioned universal language in transnational feminist dialogue has caused a “feminist knowledge hierarchy,” in which feminist knowledge produced in English from the core English-speaking countries are located in the center of the power, while feminist knowledge produced in the other locations and languages is on the periphery.

Table 16
Two Linguistic Power Relations



* Left: The linguistic relationship within the “English-speaking Empire”
 Right: The linguistic relationship between English and other languages

Both linguistic power relationships indicate that they function on the basis that English is being used as a Lingua Franca, a legitimated vehicle in the transnational feminist dialogue. The questions are:

- Do these power relationships cause the marginalization of feminist knowledge produced in other languages and the exclusion of other non-English-speaking feminist scholarship?
- Is there more power held by the core English-speaking countries in the transnational scholarly feminist dialogue?

Bearing in mind the limitations of my empirical study, I would like to argue that the core English-speaking nations have more power to produce feminist knowledge, and more power to transmit feminist knowledge globally. Feminist knowledge produced in the core English-speaking countries has the privilege to “travel” to other periphery English-speaking countries, while feminist knowledge produced in other locations and languages has little chance, or no chance to “travel” to the core English-speaking countries. Instead of creating new knowledge through a dialogical process, are the English-speaking countries actually transmitting Western knowledge to other countries? (Blagojević, 2004, 2006).

This research illustrates that instead of facilitating mutual communication in the transnational feminist dialogue, the use of English as a Lingua Franca actually risks fostering a one-way communication between English and other languages, between the core English-speaking countries and the periphery English-speaking countries, and between the Western feminists and feminist scholars with a non-Western background. This asymmetrical flow of feminist knowledge in the transnational feminist dialogue may further result in the domination of feminist knowledge produced in the core English-speaking countries.

The linguistic relationships created by this asymmetrical flow of feminist knowledge would further encourage English elitism in the transnational feminist dialogue. For example, Feminist scholarship has highlighted hierarchical power relationships stemming from

gender, class, race and sexual orientation. Why are we still blind to the linguistic power relationships that facilitate and maintain cultural imperialism, and fosters the domination of feminist knowledge produced in English? Based on this limited empirical study, I would problematize the practice of taking for granted the use of English as a Lingua Franca in transnational feminist communications:

- Is there an “English Language Empire” being reflected in transnational feminist communication between the US and China?
- Is there an asymmetrical, mostly one-directional flow between English and Chinese feminist publications?
- Does the use of English as a Lingua Franca seriously damage the construction of a multidirectional (democratic) feminist dialogue between the US and China?

Limitations and Future Direction

Given the limitation of my sample, this research, though revealing a crucial question in the practice of using English as a Lingua Franca in transnational feminist dialogue, still needs further support from border data and other related researches from different disciplines. In the future research, I will delve into content of different feminist topics, extending the scope of my research to a broader sample of different kinds of journals and other major feminist publications such as books.

Due to the limited length of this thesis, some detailed questions have been left out in this research. For example, although the research shows that the citation of translated publications from English constitute a significant part in *CWS*, the question that what role does the translated publication play in the transnational feminist dialogue between the US and China has not yet been examined in detail in this research. Another issue that is left untouched is the existence of a certain number of citations from articles in internationally based journals that are published in different global locations. Though the majority of those journals are still only published in English, some internationally based journals are bi-lingual or multi-lingual. Further research on both translated feminist publications and citations from the internationally based journals may direct us to possible solutions for the exclusion of other non-English languages in transnational feminism.

My future research direction will focus on the following questions: to what extent do non-English-speaking feminists critically transform the imported knowledge from the core English-speaking countries? How do they negotiate their autonomy from the domination of feminist knowledge produced in English? Does the use of English in the transnational feminist dialogue cause a resistance among feminist scholars from other

periphery, or non-English-speaking countries? What is the role of the diaspora scholars who are English-speaking elites and well versed in the Western feminism? Do they feel the conflict and the constraint of “in betweenness” in the transnational feminist dialogue? How do they negotiate the discursive autonomy of their native discourse with the authority and universal standards of Western feminist discourse?

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Appendix A: Abbreviations

AU	Australia
CNKI	China Knowledge Resource Integrated Database
<i>CWS</i>	Collections of Women's Studies
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
EU	European Union
UK	The United Kingdom
US	The United State of America

Appendix B: Chinese Glossary

<i>erdu bianyuan hua</i>	二度边缘化
<i>Fu nu yan jiu lun cong</i>	妇女研究论丛
<i>shehui xingbie</i>	社会性别
<i>xi fang</i>	西方
<i>mei guo</i>	美国
<i>nuxing yundong</i>	女性运动
<i>ou zhou</i>	欧洲
<i>xi ou</i>	西欧
<i>yu guoji jieGui</i>	与国际接轨
<i>wan fang</i> (data)	万方 (数据)
<i>Zhonghua nuzi xueyuan xuebao</i>	中华女子学院 学报