# A Bibliometric Analysis of Studies on English Interpretation Teaching in Mainland China Based on CiteSpace (2001-2021) *

Li Hongshun    Zhang Xinyue    Luo Meng

*Zhongnan University of Economics and Law, Wuhan*

**Abstract:** This paper employed CiteSpace to study the English interpretation teaching from 2001 to 2021 through bibliometric analysis, and the data was collected from CSSCI and China National Knowledge Index (CNKI) . The paper mainly focuses on: cooperation status of institutions and researchers; the current and potential research trend of interpretation teaching; the cross-disciplinary integration and research methods; the research gap and suggestions. It is found that the cooperation among institutions and researchers need to be strengthened in English interpretation; and the combination of English interpretation and other disciplines shows a state of wide horizontal span but not deep vertical research.

**Key words:** English interpretation teaching; Bibliometrics; CiteSpace
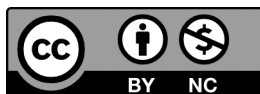
## 1. Introduction

Since the first paper on interpreting teaching was published in Modern Foreign Languages in 1983, the Chinese academic circle has paid more and more attention to the research on interpreting teaching. In 1979, the United Nations Interpreter Training Course was opened at Beijing Foreign Studies University.

In 1995, Shanghai Interpretation Accreditation was held for the first time, providing a convenient bridge for cross-cultural communication. In July 2003, the China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters (CATTI) was successfully held. In 2008, the Degree Office of The State Council has approved the establishment of the Master of Translation and Interpreting (MTI) . So far, more than 300 universities

have enrolled students in MTI projects. Statistics from China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) show that since 2008, the number of papers related to interpretation teaching has soared. With the rapid development of interpretation teaching, the related research of interpretation teaching has attracted more and more attention. Aiming to sketch the landscape of academic research in interpreting teaching in mainland China for the past two decades, this paper selects related research papers from CSSCI as the object, adopts CiteSpace and Bibliometrics methods to examine the overall research landscape of interpretation teaching in mainland China during the past 20 years from 2001 to 2021 and provide suggestions accordingly.

## 2. Literature review

Recent years have witnessed the upsurging heat in the research of English interpreting. Accordingly, related research is springing up with various methods, exhibiting technology-assisted features. For instance, O2O (Wang, 2021), SPOC (Wang, 2019), IVY virtual training (Liu, 2018) and corpus- & multimodal corpus-based teaching (Chen, 2015; Deng, 2018; Deng & Gu, 2017; Tao, 2010; Wang & Yei, 2009; Zhang, 2015) have been widely adopted and researched. The most acknowledged techno-method is the corpus- & multimodal corpus-based teaching, which could facilitate the understanding and quality of interpreting activities for students (Huang & Wu, 2021). Alongside these technology-driven methods, methods like flipped classroom (Wang & Zhong, 2017), student-oriented teaching (Wang, 2011), task-based teaching (Wang, 2010), context-based methods (Zhang, 2018), the mode of ESIT (Zhang, 2008), Practeasearcher mode (Lu, 2016), SWOT analysis method (Jiao, 2017) and APH & TOPSIS methods (Zhu & Liu, 2017), which have all greatly promoted the development of the English interpretation teaching.

In the current context, the interpreting training is not exclusive task for the English majors (Li & Zhang, 2005), but is also very important for non-English

major students (Cao, 2008; Dai, 2019; Han & Chen, 2011; Jiang, 2007; Pan, 2021), with a focus of attention on training interpretation talents for specific purposes. Moreover, assessment and feedback are common features in various modes of talent cultivation (Liu & Zhang, 2009; Wang, 2017; Wu, 2010).

Research using the methods of bibliometrics to review that of English interpretation teaching remains rather scarce. For instance, Zeng and Yang (2022) sorted through research literature on English interpretation teaching in CNKI from 1983 to 2020, and quantitatively analyzed important information such as trends, researchers, hot spots, topics, finding that the mostly-researched topics in this field are the reform of interpretation teaching mode, research on business English interpretation teaching and research on non-English major interpretation teaching. Guo and Li (2022) also explored the current literature based on the CiteSpace analysis from 2012 to 2021 in terms of publication count, research topic, research method, keyword concordance and so forth, the findings of which indicate that interpreting should be more ability-oriented, cross-disciplinary and technology-assisted with more improved course design and high-quality teaching teams. Xia (2023) also resorted to the use of Nvivo as the bibliometric analysis of literature in assessment and feedback of English interpreting collected from core publications in CNKI from 2002-2021 and suggested that more technology-based methods should be incorporated into the process of talent cultivation.

The existing bibliometric research is limited in the focus with comparatively insufficient analysis and little future suggestions. Thus, it is crucial to fill the gap where the existing bibliometric literature analysis does not comprehensively cover the detailed and overall state of the field. Based upon more representative literature and more diversified perspectives the systematic analysis is urgently needed of the research trends as well as the corresponding suggestions in a wider theoretical and practical sense on the English interpretation teaching. More specifically, this paper

aims at addressing the following three research questions:

What are the characteristics of the research on interpreting teaching in terms of publications, downloads and citations?

Which researchers and institutions contribute most to the study on interpreting teaching?

What are the most popular hotspots, research methods and interdisciplinary features?

What is the overall trend of the current studies and corresponding suggestions?

## 3. Data and research methods

### 3.1 Source of data

China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) is the largest updated Chinese academic literature database. The Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index (CSSCI) is a citation database of humanities and social sciences developed by the China Social Sciences Research and Evaluation Center of Nanjing University and invested by Nanjing University. It is used to retrieve the collection and citation of articles in the field of Chinese humanities and social sciences. CSSCI is a knowledge innovation achievement that embodies the collective wisdom of domestic academia, journal industry and management departments. Nanjing University owns the intellectual property rights of CSSCI/CBKCI database and the trademark ownership of related fields.[1] The CSSCI has adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods to select scholarly and editorially standardized journals from journals in the humanities and social sciences.

The paper first conducted an advanced search on CNKI using "English interpretation" and "teaching" as keywords, and the time span was set from 2001 to 2021, and the source database was limited to CSSCI and its extensions. A final sample of 153 papers was obtained. Subsequently, 141 valid sample papers were finally obtained by reading them one by one while deleting the conference announcements, etc. This study will conduct research and discussion of English interpretation teaching on the basis of these available papers.

### 3.2 Data treatment

In order to identify research hotspots, research frontiers, and research trends, the study employs CiteSpace for bibliometrics and mapping. CiteSpace generates interactive visualizations of structural and temporal patterns and trends of a scientific field. It facilitates a systematic review of a knowledge domain through an in-depth visual analytic process. CiteSpace reveals how a field of research has evolved, what intellectual turning points are evident along a critical path, and what topics have attracted attention. CiteSpace can be applied repeatedly so as to track the development of a field closely and extensively.[2] CiteSpace is a visual analytic tool based on scientmetics and information visualization. CiteSpace was born in 2003, and as of 2022 it has been running for 19 years, its upgrade and update frequency is also stable, and all functions are mature, so the visualization data obtained according to CiteSpace has reference and reliability (Li & Chen, 2022) .

This study selects the time range on CiteSpace to 2001-2021 and the other settings as default. The study maps the keyword co-occurrence mapping, the keyword mutation table, and the institution co-occurrence mapping. Co-occurrence analysis reveals inter-institutional collaborative relationships and research hotspots. It is intended to count and map the research techniques and cross-disciplinary studies of the sample literature. The study reviews English interpretation teaching from 2001 to 2021 and discuss the current hotspots and frontiers in English interpretation teaching.

## 4. Findings

Drawing from the data analysis based on

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[ 1 ] https://cssrac.nju.edu.cn/cpzx/zwshkxywsy/sjkjj/20191231/i63997.html.

[ 2 ] https://sourceforge.net/projects/citespace/.

CiteSpace, the co-occurrence maps of research institutions, researchers, keywords and clusters were drawn. The research institute co-occurrence map and the researcher co-occurrence map help us understand the cooperation in the field of interpretation teaching; Keyword co-occurrence and clustering maps can visualize the current research hotspots and trends in the field of interpretation teaching. Through the method of bibliometrics, this paper measures the number of papers issued in the field of English interpretation teaching in the past 2 decades, the research methods adopted, and the interdisciplinary research. The data and maps will help us understand the current situation and development trend of English interpretation teaching from multiple perspectives and in all directions.

### 4.1 Annual publication count

The number of papers published in a certain time period reveals to some extent the development characteristics of the field. According to the advanced search of CNKI, 141 sample literature data were obtained from CSSCI and extensions between 2001 and 2021, and the annual publication volume statistics of interpretation teaching were plotted by Excel (as shown in Figure 1) .

It can be seen from Figure 1 that the process of research related to interpretation teaching can be roughly divided into three parts: a period of slow rise (2001-2008) , a period of rapid growth (2008-2009) , and a period of fluctuating growth (2010-2021) .
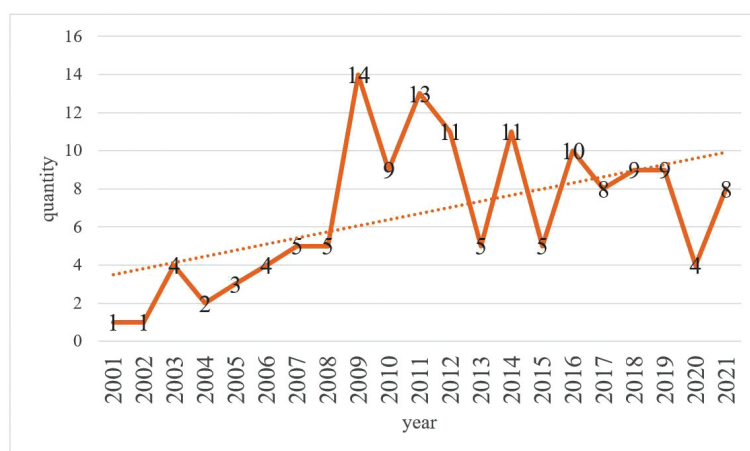


**Figure 1**     Annual publication count of the research on interpretation teaching

(1) The number of papers published per year in the period of slow rise is 1-5, with a small base of publications, which indicates that interpretation teaching has not yet received wide attention from the core research community; (2) The number of publications related to the interpreting teaching proliferated between 2008-2009, with a maximum of 14 publications in 2009. This is partly due to the creation of the Master of Translation and Interpretation (MTI) program, which was first established in 2007. With the extensive practice of interpretation teaching, the number of related studies and publications also increased. Subsequently, the number of publications achieved a large increase, indicating that the teaching of interpretation began to receive attention from the core research institutions and showed a fluctuating trend. The trend line shows a steady increase in the number of articles related to interpretation teaching in general.

### 4.2 Download and Citations

Status of download and citations of academic papers is a important parameter concerning the influence of academic publication in English interpreting teaching, which could offer readers, scholars and relevant personnel adequate information for the general picture of the development in a

particular research field and some enlightenment for the future study. Relevant information concerning download and citations is presented respectively below.

Information of the top 10 downloaded publications and the top 10 cited publications is exhibited in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

**Table 1**    The top 10 downloaded papers and relevant information

| Order | Title of the article | Author(s) | Publication | Time of publication | Download |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Corpus Translation Studies Abroad: A Critical Review（国外语料库翻译学研究述评） | Hu Kaibao（胡开宝）; Mao Pengfei（毛鹏飞） | Contemporary Linguistics（当代语言学） | 2012/10/15 | 6554 |
| 2 | MA and MTI in Translation Education: Divergent Goals, Differentiated Curricula（翻译硕士专业学位教育的特色培养模式） | Mu Lei（穆雷）; Wang Weiwei（王巍巍） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2011/3/15 | 6109 |
| 3 | A Survey Report on Professional Interpreting Training Programmes Outside China（国外专业口译教学的调研报告——兼谈对我国翻译专业办学的启示） | Wang Binhua（王斌华）; Mu Lei（穆雷） | Foreign Language World（外语界） | 2012/10/25 | 5886 |
| 4 | Interpreting Corpus and Relevant Researches in the Last Decade: Present Conditions and Oncoming Trends（近十年来口译 Corpus-based method 研究现状及发展趋势） | Zhang Wei（张威） | Journal of Zhejiang University(Humanities and Social Sciences)（浙江大学学报（人文社会科学版）） | 2011/10/20 | 4554 |
| 5 | Analysis of the Current Situation of Legal Translation Textbooks in China (1992-2012)（国内法律翻译教材现状分析 (1992-2012)） | Zhao Junfeng（赵军峰）; Luo Wenqi（罗雯琪） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2012/9/15 | 3143 |
| 6 | Characteristics of Interpretation and Interpretation Teaching（口译特点与口译教学） | Wang Xiaoyan（王晓燕） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2003/11/15 | 2952 |
| 7 | An Experimental Study of Chunking as Teaching Strategies for Improving the Accuracy of Student Conference Interpretation（语块教学策略对提高学生会议口译准确性的实验研究） | Wang Jianhua（王建华） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2012/3/15 | 2916 |
| 8 | Tracing the Development of Interpreting Studies in China: A Case Study of 32 Doctoral Dissertations in the Field（中国口译研究的发展和研究走向浅析——一项基于国内口译研究博士论文的分析） | Zhong Weihe（仲伟合）; Jia Lanlan（贾兰兰） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2015/3/15 | 2862 |
| 9 | New Features of Interpretation and Teaching of Interpreting（职业口译新形式与口译教学） | Liu Heping（刘和平） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2003/5/15 | 2784 |
| 10 | On the Interpreting Competence of China's Standards of English（中国英语能力等级量表中的口译能力） | Wang Weiwei（王巍巍）; Xu Yi（许艺）; Mu Lei（穆雷） | Modern Foreign Languages（现代外语） | 2017/11/29 | 2708 |

**Table 2**    The top 10 cited papers and relevant information

| Order | Title of the article | Author(s) | Publication | Time of publication | Citation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | MA and MTI in Translation Education: Divergent Goals, Differentiated Curricula（翻译硕士专业学位教育的特色培养模式） | Mu Lei（穆雷）; Wang Weiwei（王巍巍） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2011/3/15 | 199 |
| 2 | Characteristics of Interpretation and Interpretation Teaching（口译特点与口译教学） | Wang Xiaoyan（王晓燕） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2003/11/15 | 188 |
| 3 | New Features of Interpretation and Teaching of Interpreting（职业口译新形式与口译教学） | Liu Heping（刘和平） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2003/5/15 | 173 |
| 4 | Corpus Translation Studies Abroad: A Critical Review（国外语料库翻译学研究述评） | Hu Kaibao（胡开宝）; Mao Pengfei（毛鹏飞） | Contemporary Linguistics（当代语言学） | 2012/10/15 | 119 |
| 5 | Characteristics of Interpreting and Interpreting Textbooks; Problems and Prospects（口译的特点与口译教材：问题与前景） | Wang Jinbo（王金波）; Wang Yan（王燕） | Foreign Language World（外语界） | 2006/10/25 | 98 |
| 6 | An Experimental Study of Chunking as Teaching Strategies for Improving the Accuracy of Student Conference Interpretation（语块教学策略对提高学生会议口译准确性的实验研究） | Wang Jianhua（王建华） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2012/3/15 | 91 |
| 7 | From Interpretation Practice to Interpretation Teaching（从口译实践到口译教学） | Ke Keer（柯克尔） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2003/3/15 | 90 |
| 8 | Programs Currently Offered and Research Projects Currently Conducted in Major Tertiary Institutions in the World（世界各地高校的口笔译专业与翻译研究机构（上）） | Ke Ping（柯平）; Bao Chuanyun（鲍川运） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2002/7/15 | 82 |
| 9 | Translation and Interpretation Teaching in Hong Kong（香港的翻译与口译教学） | Liu Jingzhi（刘靖之） | Chinese Translators Journal（中国翻译） | 2001/5/15 | 80 |
| 10 | Exhibition Interpreting and Interpreter Training（会展口译与口译人才培养初探） | Tu Wenting（涂文婷）; Wu Yun（吴赟） | Shanghai Journal of Translators（上海翻译） | 2011/11/10 | 77 |

From the analysis of Table 1, it can be observed in a general sense that scholars have given their wide attention to the field of English interpretation teaching since 2003 and mostly-downloaded publications are round the year of 2012 with 6 CSSCI and CSSCI extensions papers. By observing the title of the top 10 downloaded publications, studies on the general trend of this field like literature review of studies outside China (2012, with 6554 downloads), the talent cultivation mode of MTI (2011, with 6109 downloads), current studies and trend on interpreting and corpus in the past decades (2012, with 5886 downloads). Other specific areas, like translation and interpreting of law (2012, with 3143 downloads), analysis of doctorial papers on interpreting (2015, with 2862 downloads) and vocational/professional interpreting (2003, with 2784 downloads), are also presented in Figure 2. The rest of publications are mainly concerned with teaching interpreting, for instance, interpreting ability (2017, with 2708 downloads) and an experiment on strategies of teaching via the method of chunks (2012, with 2916 downloads). Apart from the research focus that scholars made, publications are also varied in their specific fields. Some scholars tend to publicize their articles in the publication of linguistics whole others in that of translation studies. For the summary made above, it is worth noting that publications from 2001-2021 concerning this particular field developed in China from the literature of CNKI have been rather diversified in the macro level for different trend summarization and in the micro level for the application and promotion in both academic and practical fields, which have shed some light on the mostly-followed literatures that Chinese scholars have downloaded for their academic interests and the overall attention of this field.
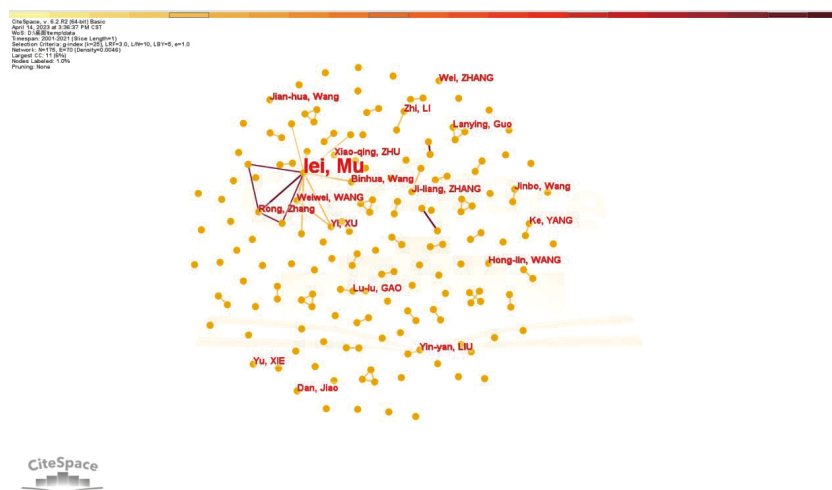


**Figure 2**    Co-occurrence map of researchers

Table 2 shares some similar trends for the research on teaching interpreting, yet also some differences in the citation of publications. From the general picture, the citation of these top 10 cited publications ranges from 77 to 199, which is quite a large volume in the academic communities. From 2001 to 2021, it can be observed that the mostly cited publications are before the year of 2012, demonstrating a wider approval of the academic qualities at that particular field as a foundation for the recent two decades of the research on teaching interpreting. Within this time period, researchers are interested in the citation of different forms of teaching interpreting, for instance, cultivation mode (2011, with 199 citations), English interpretation teaching (2003, with 188 citations), vocational/professional teaching of interpreting (2003, with 173 citations), textbook of interpreting (2006, with 98 citations) and strategies of English

interpretation teaching in the method of chunks (2012, with 91 citations) , etc. Scholars have also paid much attention on cultivation modes in different places like Hong Kong and made comparison on the translation facilities around the world and conference interpreting, corpus linguistics as well as interpreting teaching from interpreting practice. Thus, it can be marked that ever more scholars with the mostly-cited top 10 publications are concerned with a wider range of topics in the exploration of interpreting in the domain of teaching.

## 4.3 Relevant Researchers

The researcher/author in interpreting training is scrutinized here. The author is visually analyzed with CiteSpace (as shown in Figure 2) . The larger the font size is, the more papers the author has published and contributed to the field of interpretation teaching. In the figure, "N" represents the node, "E" the connection, and "Density" the density of cooperation. Therefore, according to Figure 2, during the 2 decades from 2001 to 2021, 165 authors contributed to relevant research in the field of interpretation teaching. However, there were only 100 connections among these authors, with a density of 0.0052, indicating that the relationship between authors was weak. It can also be clearly seen from Figure 2 that there is little contact among the authors. In addition, outstanding contributors, such as Murray, Li Yang and Wang Jianhua, also have few cooperative links.
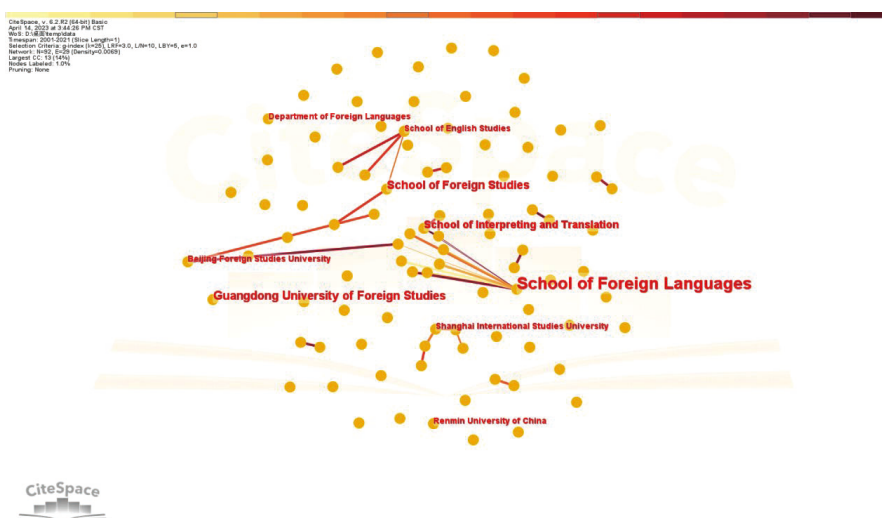
With the help of the analysis data of the authors displayed in CiteSpace, the data of the top five high-yield authors are obtained and tabulated, and the results are shown in Table 3. Among them, Murray has the largest number of articles, totaling 9; Li Yang, Wang Jianhua and Wang Weiwei all wrote 4 articles; Gao Bin contributed 3 articles. These researchers are the main contributors in the field of teaching of interpreting and play an important role.

Table 3　Top 5 researchers for published studies on interpretation teaching

| Year | Number | Author(s) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2010 | 9 | Mu Lei ( 穆雷 ) |
| 2016 | 4 | Li Yang ( 李洋 ) |
| 2011 | 4 | Wang Weiwei ( 王巍巍 ) |
| 2010 | 4 | Wang Jianhua ( 王建华 ) |
| 2007 | 3 | Gao Bin ( 高彬 ) |

## 4.4 Research institutions

The investigation of research institution helps to find out the most productive and influential research units throughout China. The co-occurrence analysis map can show the collaboration and connectivity between institutions. The inter-institutional and collaborative connections are visualized (as shown in Figure 3) .



Figure 3　Cluster view of research institutions

The text detail in the upper left corner of Figure 3 shows the data "N=120, E=30". The larger the font size of the institution's name, the more frequently the institution appears in the 141 data items. And the "E" represents the linkage, where the linkage between nodes represents the connection between institutions (Chen et al., 2015) . The darker the color of the link, the more frequently they collaborate with each other in the academic research, which can indicate the cooperation between institutions.

According to Figure 3, it can be seen that there are 120 research institutions related to teaching interpreting between 2001 and 2021, and the mapping presents 30 inter-institutional connections with a density of 0.042, which is a very loose network structure. It proves that there is relatively little research collaboration among the various research institutions in the field of interpreting teaching. In addition, Figure 3 demonstrates the direct cooperation relationship among the cooperating institutions.

Inter-institutional cooperation shows two characteristics. The first is closer cooperation between different organizations of the same university; the second is more general cooperation between regions. For one thing, most of the collaborations take place in different institutions of the same university, such as the GDUFS School of Interpreting and Translation Studies and GDUFS Center for translation studies, both of which are part of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. From table 1, we can see that Guangdong University of Foreign Studies has the highest number of publications in the field of interpretation teaching. The same is true for Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) and Graduate Institute of Interpretation and Translation SISU. For another thing, regional cooperation is also a common form of cooperation. For example, Northeastern University and Dalian University of Foreign Studies, located in northeast China, have close cooperation in interpretation teaching. GDUFS School of Interpreting and Translation Studies and The Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies (CBS) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University in South China also has close cooperation. The same goes for the Graduate Institute of Interpretation and Translation SISU and the School of Foreign Studies at East China University of Political Science and Law in East China. From the above, we can see that although there is relatively little overall cooperation between institutions in China, there is relatively close cooperation among the organizations under the same university and between regions.

To provide a clearer picture of the important and relevant research institutions, Table 4 is drawn up with the help of relevant data in CiteSpace, listing the top 5 institutions with a high number of publications. From Table 4, we can see that the cooperation on interpretation teaching is mainly concentrated in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Shanghai International Studies University, and Beijing Foreign Studies University as well as Renmin University of China. This shows that the three domestic senior translation schools in China attach great importance to the interpretation teaching and have made more published research and contributions in this field in the two decades from 2001 to 2021.

**Table 4**  Top 5 institutions for published studies on interpretation teaching

| No. | Institution | Year | Quantity |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Guangdong University of Foreign Studies（广东外语外贸大学） | 2011 | 8 |
| 2 | GDUFS School of Interpreting and Translation Studies（广东外语外贸大学高级翻译学院） | 2011 | 7 |
| 3 | Shanghai International Studies University（上海外国语大学） | 2010 | 4 |
| 4 | Renmin University of China（中国人民大学） | 2010 | 4 |
| 5 | Beijing Foreign Studies University（北京外国语大学） | 2009 | 4 |

## 4.5 Research hotspots

Keywords reflect the main research topics of the paper, and the higher the frequency of keywords, the more prevalent the research in the field. In

the keywords interface of CiteSpace, keyword co-occurrence mapping was generated from the observance of the frequency and centrality (as shown in Figure 4) in CiteSpace.
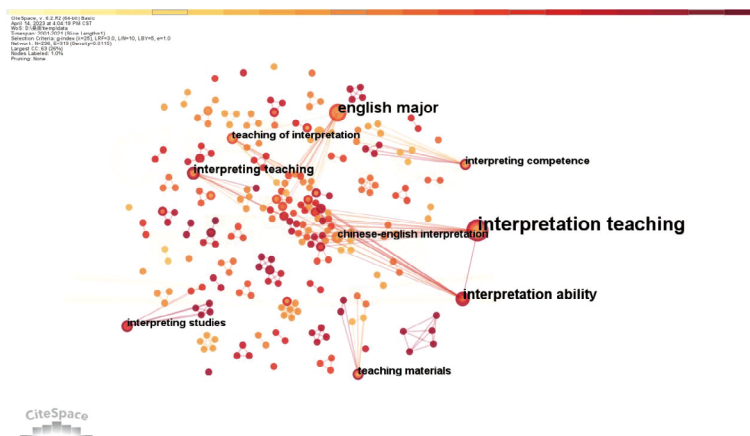


**Figure 4**  Cluster view of keywords

From observing the data in Figure 4, we find that the larger the node and font size of the keyword, the more frequently the keyword appears. The nodes of interpretation teaching and studies, English major, interpreting competence and teaching materials are all relatively large, indicating that these key words appear more frequently in the 141 papers and are hot spots of research in the field. Some nodes with smaller areas, such as Chinese-English interpreting and multimedia, indicate that scholars are still pay attention to these areas. There are many keyword nodes in Figure 3. In order to present the association between keywords more clearly, the keywords are clustered via Citespace clustering function. The keyword clustering mapping was obtained on based on the keyword co-occurrence mapping (as shown in Figure 5) .



**Figure 5**  Keyword clustering mapping from CiteSpace

CiteSpace provides two metrics, Modularity Q and Mean Silhouette, based on the clarity of the network structure and clustering. The clustering structure is significant when the Modularity Q > 0.3. The clustering is considered convincing when the Mean Silhouette reaches 0.7 (Chen et al., 2015) . In the upper left corner of Figure 5 we can see some data information about the map: Modularity Q = 0.8016,

Mean Silhouette = 0.9453. Therefore, this clustering mapping is credible and convincing. In this paper, the first 9 clusters in CiteSpace were selected in order of decreasing volume of literature from the smallest to the largest values. According to the order, these nine clusters are: interpretation teaching, interpreting, usefulness, accuracy, teaching materials, training models, interpreting research, translation, and digital interpreting. These nine categories are also of interest to research institutions and scholars in the field of interpretation teaching.

Each cluster contains a decreasing amount of literature in descending order of value. In this paper, the data of these nine clusters are aggregated into Table 5 orderly. For example, "top terms" are the top three most representative keywords of each cluster, which help to locate the focus of the core research circles on interpretation teaching in China.

**Table 5**    Detail of clustering

| Cluster ID | Size | Silhouette | Year | Top terms |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 33 | 0.905 | 2010 | Interpretation teaching; Interpreting courses; Advanced seminars |
| 1 | 33 | 0.939 | 2010 | Translator Style; Translation Teaching; Corpus Translation Studies |
| 2 | 19 | 0.984 | 2010 | Information transfer; Interpretation assessment; Test design |
| 3 | 16 | 0.956 | 2008 | Interpretation teaching; Chinese−English interpretation |
| 4 | 14 | 0.96 | 2009 | Legal translation; Usage; Teaching methods |
| 5 | 13 | 0.919 | 2012 | Curriculum; Training Model; Master of Translation Studies |
| 6 | 12 | 0.936 | 2012 | Interpretation Studies; Translation Teaching Studies; Translation Criticism |
| 7 | 11 | 0.977 | 2010 | Translation profession; Translation courses; Translation studies |
| 8 | 10 | 0.982 | 2009 | Master's Program; Conference Interpretation; Consecutive Interpreting |

By integrating and analyzing the keywords in Table 5 and combining the keyword information in Figure 4, the domestic research on interpretation teaching can be divided into the following three areas:

Perspective on teaching orientations (interpretation teaching; interpretation; interpretation ability) ;

Perspective of teaching contents (cultivation mode; curriculum; interpretation teaching materials) ;

Perspective of teaching methods (skill training; multimedia)

### 4.6 Research methods

The use of different research methods indicates that researchers took to answer various research questions. In order to generate Table 6 for a clearer and deeper understanding of this area, we adopted the method of double artificial annotation through the given information extracted from CNKI. In the process of annotation, two researchers have thoroughly read and conclude the information of methods for three times each and finally come to a conclusion as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6**    Research methods

| Order | Research methods | Number |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Qualitative discussions | 69 |
| 2 | Classroom observation | 12 |
| 3 | Assessment and feedback | 13 |
| 4 | Bibliometrics | 8 |
| 5 | Book review | 7 |
| 6 | Corpus−based method | 5 |

Among all 141 academic papers, it can be observed that qualitative methods still account the most share, for instance, the qualitative discussions on various topics of teaching of interpreting as well as investigations, questionaries and interviews. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, are less used or more likely used in a mixed manner with the qualitative methods. Assessment, feedback and classroom observations are three major contributors of these studies. Apart from observing the obvious data, it should also be noted that corpus-based methods are also introduced, though less deeply researched. Book reviews are nevertheless another dimension for

exploring this research area. It is also worth noticing that methods like the SWOT analysis method from other areas and reports on individual characteristics and self-learning are novel ones that have rarely been used in this area.

Table 7 may provide researchers with a chronological view of the variations on research methods from 2001 to 2021. As the table shows, the research methods are becoming increasingly diversified since 2009. The main method throughout 2001-2021 is still the qualitative discussions, which started in 2001 (1 paper) and peaked in 2009 (10 papers) . Empirical studies started since 2005 and

2006, which were assessment and feedback as well as classroom research. Early methods have also shown that assessment and feedback have been the vital force to conduct the interpreting teaching research since 2005 and used in almost every year ever since. Researchers also resort to the writing of book reviews since 2016. Corpus-based methods have also been introduced since 2014 and still used as of today in 2021. Methods of questionnaires, interviews and investigations began since 2002 and ever more studies have appeared accordingly in the past 20 years. Bibliometric methods also offered some help since 2012 and produced 8 related papers.

**Table 7** Annual distribution of research methods

| Year | Research method(s) |
|------|--------------------|
| 2021 | Assessment and feedback (3); Case study (1); Corpus−based method (1); Classroom observation (1); Qualitative discussion (1); Book review (1) |
| 2020 | Book review (2); Qualitative discussion (1); Assessment and feedback (1) |
| 2019 | Bibliometrics (3); Classroom observation (3); Assessment and feedback (1); Mixed methods (1); Empirical study (1) |
| 2018 | Qualitative discussion (4); Book review (3); Questionnaire (1); Assessment and feedback (1) |
| 2017 | Qualitative discussion (3); Corpus−based method (2); Assessment and feedback (1); Bibliometrics (1); SWOT method (1) |
| 2016 | Qualitative discussion (3); Classroom observation (2); Mixed methods (1); Corpus−based method (1); Assessment and feedback (1); Survey (1); Book review (1) |
| 2015 | Bibliometrics (2); Qualitative discussion (1); Mixed method (1); Meta−cognitive teaching (1) |
| 2014 | Qualitative discussion (6); Classroom observation (2); Assessment and feedback (1); Questionnaire (1); Corpus−based method (1) |
| 2013 | Qualitative discussion (3); Classroom observation (1); Mixed methods (1) |
| 2012 | Qualitative discussion (6); Bibliometrics (2); Classroom observation (1); Mixed methods (1); Massive survey (1) |
| 2011 | Qualitative discussion (8); Survey (1); Mixed methods (1); Classroom observation (1); Assessment and feedback (1); Mixed methods (1) |
| 2010 | Qualitative discussion (4); Classroom observation (3); Survey (1); Assessment and feedback (1) |
| 2009 | Qualitative discussion (10); Assessment and feedback (2); Questionnaire (2); Survey (1) |
| 2008 | Qualitative discussion (5) |
| 2007 | Qualitative discussion (2); 调查 +Qualitative discussion (1); Survey (1) |
| 2006 | Qualitative discussion (3); Qualitative discussion + Classroom observation (1) |
| 2005 | Qualitative discussion (2); Qualitative discussion + Assessment and feedback (1) |
| 2004 | Qualitative discussion (2) |
| 2003 | Qualitative discussion (4) |
| 2002 | Survey + Qualitative discussion (1) |
| 2001 | Qualitative discussion (1) |

## 4.7 Cross-disciplinary studies

Table 8 presents the overall distributions of the cross-disciplinary studies on the teaching of interpreting in a visual way. The most visual attribute of this aspect is that most studies focus on the discussion and research of interpreting teaching itself without much of the cross-disciplinary features. Corpus linguistics, however, offers a helping hand for

the development of this aspect, ranking first (8) in the cross-disciplinary studies, followed by business (6) , vocational education (4) , corpus translation studies (3) , regional studies (2) and as such. Other cross-disciplinary studies are relatively limited for there are less related research, for instance, technology, bionics, informational technologies, smart education, artificial intelligence, combination with AR, VR and MR,

cross-culture, etc. Though the characteristics of cross-disciplinary studies are rather weak, there still stands huge potential for various cross-disciplinary theories and practices embedded in the study on teaching of interpreting from different disciplines.

**Table 8**　Cross-disciplinary studies

| Order | Cross–disciplinary study | Number |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | None/Less obvious | 80 |
| 2 | Corpus linguistics | 8 |
| 3 | Business | 6 |
| 4 | Vocational education | 4 |
| 5 | Corpus translation studies | 3 |

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1 Trends of the English interpretation teaching

Based on the above analysis, it can be seen that English interpretation teaching is a hot field of current academic research. Scholars have conducted multi-dimensional research in this field from different perspectives, and have achieved fruitful and remarkable research results. The achievement of these important researches provides valuable reference for other scholars to continue their follow-up research, and also lays a solid foundation for cross-disciplinary research. In addition, it provides guidance for students of related majors and students who are interested in interpretation to carry out interpretation practice, and provide teachers and professionals with reference for interpretation teaching in the new era.

But at the same time, there is still room for further optimization in the field of cooperation between researchers and research institutions, adoption of research methods, research content and research results. By looking into the cooperation of researchers and institutions, at present, most research institutions in this field are in a decentralized research state, and there are more cooperation and exchanges between regional and interregional within research institutions, but there is less research cooperation between cross-regional and inter-agency. The cooperation between researchers needs to be strengthened; in terms of research methods, qualitative discussion is used more

frequently, while practical methods such as classroom practice and evaluation are used less frequently; from the cross-disciplinary perspective, interpretation teaching is related with a wide variety of research fields, but the degree of integration is scattered and the frequency is comparatively limited.

We will illustrate the status quo and potential trends of English interpretation teaching from the perspectives in the part of findings.

From the volume of articles published in the 2 decades, we can draw the following conclusions: (1) The number of articles published in the field of interpretation teaching has been increasing every year, but the number of articles has been fluctuating. The peak of the number of articles was in 2009, which is closely related to the establishment of the MTI program by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China; (2) The number of articles published from 2001 to 2008 shows a steady and slow growth, and the number of articles published in this field from 2019 to 2021 showed a fluctuating state, basically showing a pattern of low number of articles published in one year and high number of articles published in the next year, and this pattern continued to repeat between 2019-2021; (3) Considering the overall environment, since the global COVID-19 epidemic broke out at the end of 2019, almost all schools have adopted online teaching methods, so it is difficult for the highly practical interpretation teaching courses to be carried out normally as in the past. Therefore, it is understandable that from 2009 to 2021, the number of published papers related to interpretation teaching is relatively small.
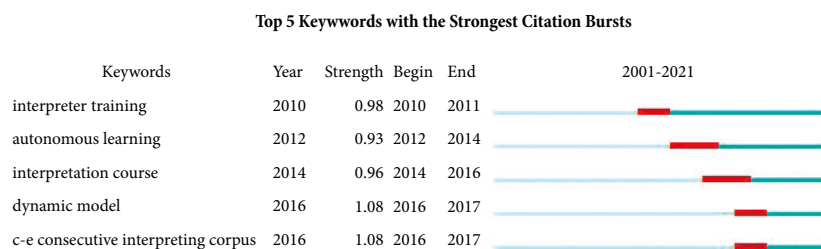
From the perspective of the research institutions, we have concluded the following status: (1) The sample of 141 papers we obtained was contributed by 120 research institutions, which indicates that there is still a strong interest and considerable contribution from various research institutions in the field of research on interpretation teaching and learning; (2) But the collaborative links between institutions are relatively

weak, with only 30 collaborations among these 120 research institutions; (3) In addition, cooperations among research institutions are usually inter-regional or between different institutions of the same university. It represents that there are more inter-regional and intra-institutional collaborations, but less overall cooperation; (4) Most of the institutions that contribute most in the field of interpretation teaching a are famous foreign language universities in China, such as Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) , Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) , Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GDUFS) , and so on. These institutions are among the most contributing institutions in the field of interpretation teaching; (5) A particular highlight is the close cooperation between Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GDUFS) and research institutions in Hong Kong, China, such as the Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. This also indicates a trend of more extensive cooperation among research institutions.

From the view of relevant researchers, we have come to the following conclusions: (1) In the past 20 years, there have been many researchers contributing to the field of interpretation teaching; (2) In contrast to the relatively weak collaboration between research institutions, the collaboration between researchers was stronger. 70 collaborations among the 165 researchers; (3) Researchers who have made more contributions

in the field of interpretation teaching are usually those who have cooperated with others more often, such as Murray, Li Yang, etc. Moreover, Murray is a researcher in the Translation Research Center of GDUFS. The research institutions where he works is one of the most important contributing forces in the field of interpretation teaching.

From the perspective of research hotspots, we have concreted the following findings: (1) Interpretation teaching, interpreting, interpreting competence, and interpreting courses, etc., are the main areas for 2001-2021. Researchers and research institutions have been working deeply in the above perspectives and have contributed a number of extremely valuable and informative studies; (2) The research in the field of interpretation teaching in the past 20 years can be broadly divided into three parts, which are teaching orientations, teaching contents as well as teaching methods; (3) Apart from research hotspots and hotspot clustering, the Top 5 keywords with the Strongest Citation Bursts (from top to bottom, they are: interpreter training, autonomous learning, interpretation course, dynamic model, C-E consecutive interpreting corpus) also illustrate that these areas will also be the focus of future research in the field of English interpretation teaching. The focus on C-E consecutive interpreting corpus implies that professors are now valuing more on delivering Chinese voice to the world (see Figure 6) .

**Top 5 Keywwords with the Strongest Citation Bursts**

| Keywords | Year | Strength | Begin | End | 2001-2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| interpreter training | 2010 | 0.98 | 2010 | 2011 | |
| autonomous learning | 2012 | 0.93 | 2012 | 2014 | |
| interpretation course | 2014 | 0.96 | 2014 | 2016 | |
| dynamic model | 2016 | 1.08 | 2016 | 2017 | |
| c-e consecutive interpreting corpus | 2016 | 1.08 | 2016 | 2017 | |

**Figure 6** Top 5 keywords with the strongest citation bursts

In terms of research methods, from 2001-2021, most of the studies used qualitative discussions, while classroom practices, classroom empirical evidence, and empirical analysis were very few. On the one hand,

it illustrates the dominant methods used in current research. On the other hand, it provides suggestions for the future adoption of diverse and innovative research methods that will further enrich the

development of research in the field of interpretation teaching.

From the cross-disciplinary perspective, more half of the research (80/141 papers) in the field of interpretation teaching over the past 20 years has not been integrated with other disciplines, and the rest has been integrated with a large number of fields, such as corpus, business, professional education, etc. However, it also highlights a problem that although interpretation teaching is connected to various other fields, the density of collaboration is low. Of the 141 sample articles obtained, the rest are basically combined with a particular field only once. This indicates that the field of interpretation teaching is currently trying to integrate with various disciplines, but the depth of integration is very low. In general, it shows a state of wide horizontal span but not deep vertical research. Therefore, this also indicates that future research on interpretation teaching can be integrated in depth with other subjects. This will not only enrich the content of interpretation teaching, but also strengthen the professionalism of interpretation practice and add more knowledge literacy for interpreters and related researchers as well as professionals.

## 5.2 Outlook and suggestions of the trend

From the summarization of the overall and latest trend on the research of teaching interpreting, this paper seeks to discover potential outlook and suggestions based on the findings from the gap of the trend in the analysis with the help of CiteSpace. Four important discussions are made to shed some light on this particular research field and promote the cultivation of high-quality interpreting talents in the future as well as the future research outlook and suggestions accordingly.

(1) Institutional, regional and international cooperation

From 2001 to 2021, the analysis based on CiteSpace has revealed the typical characteristics of the academic cooperation in the field of teaching interpreting. Lack of sufficient cooperation may lead to the narrow research perspectives, thus this part attempt to illustrate the urgency for both local and international cooperation in the academic purposes for the study of teaching interpreting. The trend of cooperation shows that studies among the Chinese universities are more closely centralized in several key universities, universities of 985 Project, 211 Project and foreign studies while cooperation within or between other types of Chinese universities have taken relatively small share of the academic publications. Furthermore, despite this fact depicted from the data, it is also seen huge imbalance within the collaboration between key universities. Universities, like Beijing Foreign Studies University, Shanghai International Studies University and Guangdong Universities of Foreign Studies, alongside their affiliated schools and research institutions, are the major role of the cooperation in the realm of this research field while the network of connection among other universities are rather weak. Moreover, as the CiteSpace shows, major contributions are also made from these universities in terms of downloads, citations and scholars while statistics from other universities and research institutions are comparatively different. More than that, the interconnectivity within the same region where the local universities centralize and between/among different regions where different universities communicate is rather insufficient as well, let alone the collaboration at the global level.

Therefore, the advocacy for institution, regions and international cooperation should be upheld for more academic collaboration opportunities in the research of teaching interpreting. With the increasing need for the interpreting amid the post-covid era, the cultivation of interpreting talents answers the call of time. Thus, in order to promote the cultivation of interpreting talents, cooperative research on English interpretation teaching should be called at both local levels and regional levels. In this way, the research on English interpretation teaching is more likely to be offered much more insights with both the domestic understanding and the thinking as well as perspectives

across the globe for not only the academic purposes but also the applicable usages.

(2) Specific purposes for English interpreting

Literature analysis from CiteSpace has demonstrated that the overall trend for the research of English interpretation teaching mainly serves for the cultivation of professional talents with specific purposes like law and business. It coincides with the regional and national policies of economic and social development, and generates strategic talents for the negotiation in the process of dealing with businesses and the debating as well as other tasks in the courtroom and places related to the law-related affairs. From 2001 to 2021, attention to this matter has been given ever more for the interpreting talents by various scholars in the talent cultivation for conference interpreting in high level meetings at both national and international level. However, the efforts made in the attempts for business and law are rather limited as CiteSpace shows that most attentions are still exserted on the interpreting course itself, for instance, strategies for enhancing the ability of English language interpreting.

From the perspective of cultivating interpreting talents for specific purposes, more efforts should be made to the existing framework within law and business by various counterparts both theoretically and practically. It is still insufficient for the sound development of the overall talent cultivation for merely two subjects or directions since the demand of the society are rather huge in all aspects for the interpreting talents. Thus, it is equally urgent for more researchers alongside policy makers and practitioners to conduct investigations and form relatively specific design for different purposes in the talent cultivation. Ever wider fields for interpreting should be welcomed by different researchers in terms of their research interests and institutional background to make possible the cultivation of interpreting talents for specific purposes for the national development and the world communication.

(3) More cross-disciplinary and mixed methods

Studies on English interpretation teaching from 2001-2021 exhibit the features of rather single disciplinary tendencies and the main methods used for the research are rather limited as a result of the qualitative discussions.

In light of disciplinary methods, the majority of research related to this field are not comparatively cross-disciplinary, most of which mainly focus on the teaching of interpreting for different student groups in school. CiteSpace shows that only a relatively small share of researchers seeks for the teaching crossed with certain specific disciplines like sports, law and business, which is obviously insufficient for the comprehensive use of research methods. A call for the research of English interpretation teaching in specific disciplines is needed, yet difficulties that lie in the background and capabilities of researchers themselves and their institutions should also be fully aware of. Thus, the need to enhance researchers' cross-disciplinary research competence and literacy is rather essential so as to successfully conduct more comprehensive disciplinary research in the research of English interpretation teaching rather than just two or three disciplines.

By examining the other feature of the research method, it is eye-catching yet astonishing to conclude that most research use the qualitative method by discussions for instance while only a small percentage of research is conducted through the method of quantitative method or the mixed methods. The direct result for such use of research method is that the number of empirical or data-driven studies concerning the field of English interpretation teaching is rather limited. Despite the merits of qualitative methods for summarization and forward-looking, it therefore lacks of the studies conducted in the real settings with more various factors and authentic changes. Combined with mixed methods, more theoretical discussions are to be further developed with both theoretical and practical significance to examine more research questions and provide tested answers to the research communities and the world that needs the cultivation of useful

interpreting talents.

(4) Higher attention on assessment and feedback of teaching interpreting

As the annual publication is generally increasing in recent years as shown in the analysis of CiteSpace, ever more research have been devoted to the assessment and feedback of teaching interpreting, in which mixed methods are used most. Since assessment and feedback have gained wide popularity in the language education, it is also the method that has been given higher attention through the years. CiteSpace reveals that relevant research cover the aspects like the learning motive of interpreting, testing of interpreting ability for different majors and educational stages, interpreting activities, etc., which have all or partially helped facilitate the overall framework of English interpretation teaching for undergraduates majoring in English and English translation, graduate students like MTI students as well as learners of interpreting in the society both professionally and unprofessionally. Thus, it is suggested that higher attention be given to the assessment and feedback of English interpretation teaching as of today and in the future.

## Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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