

A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE IMAGE OF CHINESE AGRICULTURE IN CHINA'S MAINSTREAM MEDIA

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Abstract: Agriculture is an important foundation for national development. Under the background of China's agricultural transformation and global integration, the media discourse and international communication of China's national image have more important significance. Based on Fairclough's three-dimensional critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework, this study examines the specific presentation of Chinese agriculture in domestic media. This study constructs a special Chinese Agricultural News Corpus (CANC), including news reports from People's Daily, China Daily and Xinhua News Agency from 2020 to 2025. Using the corpus analysis software AntConc, the high-frequency content words and their index lines are systematically investigated. The results show that Chinese mainstream media tend to adopt a positive tone. China's agricultural image is multi-dimensional, and it is constructed around the three characteristics of policy alignment, technological innovation, and green development. With the increasing use of multimodal communication in contemporary media, future research can expand beyond text analysis by combining visual or audio content to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Chinese agriculture is presented to different global audiences.

Keywords: Chinese news discourse; China's agricultural image; Corpus linguistics

1 INTRODUCTION

Image is the representation constructed by the communication subject in the process of communication. It not only reflects the overall impression formed by the communication subject based on the dissemination of information, but also reflects the social context in which the communication subject is located. As an important way of content production and dissemination, the media creates image based on communication. Then the public also knows and understands the subject through the images constructed by the media [1]. Meanwhile, as a basic national industry, agriculture's actual development profoundly affect the nation. And its image also have an impact on the national narrative. A strong and believable agricultural image can enhance the country's reputation, thereby promoting the construction of a positive country's image [2].

In the context of the construction of a moderately prosperous society in all respects and the implementation of *The 14th Five-Year Plan*, agriculture and rural areas have continued to develop. And rural revitalization has been steadily advanced. The *Chinese Agricultural Sector Development Report 2025* points out that China aims to build an agricultural power, adheres to *Reform and Opening-up*, and technological innovation. And Chinese agriculture has not only continuously improved its quality and efficiency, but also its level of modernization. However, the international competitiveness of Chinese agriculture still needs to be further strengthened [3]. Qian Yufang argues that news reports are social in nature. And discourse is the truth of language that naturally appears in use, which is a practice that corresponds to related society and culture [4]. Xin Bin and Gao Xiaoli also believe that discourse is a social practice, which is affected by social structure and reacts on social facts [5]. In view of this, this study selected three Chinese mainstream news media's reports on China's agriculture from 2020 to 2025. And a specific corpus was built for analyzing the construction of China's agricultural image in Chinese mainstream media news. Therefore, relevant suggestions from the perspective of image self-shaping can be put forward.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Studies on Corpus-based Research of China's Agriculture

Among corpus-based studies in China, there are mainly empirical studies, including news and media discourse research, national image construction, political discourse research, and so forth [6]. Although corpus-based approaches are increasingly popular in linguistic research, corpus-based research related to agriculture still requires further development. And current corpus-based research about Chinese agriculture remains largely pay attention to agricultural academic writing or specialized terminology. Consequently, news discourse about China's agriculture as a sector has received scant attention. For example, Yang Jie adopted a corpus-based research to contrast the writing styles of abstracts between Chinese and American scientific journals and finds that there are differences on length, prepositions and the use of the first person pronouns [7]. Similarly, through a corpus-based research on *NO.1 central documents* (1982–2020), Zhang Huiyu, Dai Ying, Zhang Danqi, et al. revealed an intensifying policy focus on issues of agriculture, farmers and rural

areas, along with a diversifying profile of entrepreneurial agents [8]. From a lexicographic perspective, Mokrem Yasen compiled a Uyghur-Chinese bilingual corpus by organizing agricultural text from reports, dictionaries, and so on, offering significant reference for translation studies and agricultural information construction [9].

Overall, existing studies have mainly focused on agriculture-related academic literature and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the agricultural domain. However, there remains a lack of systematic research on Chinese agriculture as a sector, particularly on how this sector is discursively represented in media discourse.

2.2 Previous Studies on News Discourse Analysis Research of China's Agriculture

Ge Feifei examined news reports on the representation of new peasants in People's Daily (2012-2021) with corpus-based method, demonstrating that related texts possess an unpretentious reporting style, and a clear information delivery [10]. Focusing on Farmers' Daily and People's Daily, Shi Yin observed that while these two mainstream Chinese media have constructed a diversified image of modern farmers, fostering discursive democratization. But fixed perceptions still persist, which leaves the reconstruction of farmers' discourse facing structural challenges [11]. In addition, Zheng Xingmiao also collected 450 reports on agriculture, rural areas and farmers from Farmers' Daily (2021-2023), revealing that the ideological framework in these reports effectively mobilized the public consensus and promoted the practical measures of rural revitalization [12].

In general, the existing research focuses on the image of farmers, especially the discourse construction of new farmers, and explains how rural actors are presented through media narratives. However, there are still relatively few empirical studies on agriculture itself. As an important pillar of national strategy and social reality, the agricultural image constructed by the media has yet to be systematically explored.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Sinclair's Lexical Grammar

Sinclair proposed the concept of lexical grammar, which systematically examines the target text mainly through important words and their co-occurrence environment. The model includes four dimensions for text analysis: collocation, colligation, semantic preference and semantic prosody. Specifically, collocation refers to the frequent co-occurrence of node words. Colligation refers to the preferred syntactic structure around node words. Semantic preference represents the topic domain strongly associated with node words [13]. Semantic prosody, which reflects the broader attitudinal tone of the context, is usually classified as positive, negative or neutral [14]. In elaborating this model, He Anping emphasizes that the theory of lexical grammar originates from two basic empirical insights of corpus linguistics. First of all, linguistic meaning is mainly expressed by multi-word units rather than isolated words. Secondly, collocation patterns play a key role in the construction of discourse meaning [15].

3.2 Fairclough's CDA Three-dimensional Framework

Van Dijk believes that critical discourse analysis should pay attention to social issues and political events. Rather than just describing language structures, we should also examine how these structures are used in practice [16]. Fairclough proposed a three-dimensional framework of critical discourse analysis, including description, interpretation and explanation. The initial dimension is description, which focuses on the actual features of the text, for example, the lexical choices and syntactic structures in the target text, such as news reports. The second dimension is interpretation, which examines the process of text production and dissemination. The third dimension, explanation, extends the analysis to the macro level, examining how social and power dynamics affect discourse [17]. Critical discourse analysis can be combined with corpus-based research methods. The corpus-based approach does not exclude external theories and is open [18].

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Data Collection

This study manually collects data from the three news media, People's Daily, China Daily and Xinhua News Agency. The search terms were *agriculture* and *Chinese agriculture*. After the initial web search, all the articles were manually checked to ensure that they were mainly about Chinese agriculture not just mentioned. All articles were published from 2020 to 2025. A total of 135 news reports were selected. In order to maintain a balanced distribution, there are 45 articles from each source.

4.2 Corpus Analysis

The basic information of the CANC corpus is as follows: It contains 135 news reports. Among them, there are 72,945 tokens and 6,991 types. The overall Type-Token Ratio (TTR) is 9.58 %, and the average text length is 540.33 words. The relatively low TTR indicates a high degree of theme concentration, which can reflect the theme's attention to agriculture. In addition, the average text length of more than 500 words provides sufficient text length to achieve the elaboration of the details of agricultural reports.

The first step of this study is to identify high-frequency content words, because the distribution of high-frequency content words reflect the main topics in the corpus. Subsequently, the KWIC (Key-in-Context) method is used. Based on the theory of lexical grammar, the index lines of node words are extracted and tested to analyze their collocation, colligation, semantic preference and semantic prosody. By examining high-frequency content words and corresponding lines, this study aims to identify and characterize the overall image of China's agriculture constructed in China's mainstream media discourse.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 High-frequency Content Words

In order to reduce vocabulary noise, the English stoplist provided by the Natural Language Toolkit (NLTK) is used in the data processing. Removing the function words helps to highlight the substantive words that carry the substantive semantics. The CANC corpus is imported into AntConc, and the stop word list is applied through the Global Settings function to exclude the words in the stop word list from statistical analysis.

Following the stop word filtering, the 30 most frequent content words were identified using the software's Word tool as Table 1.

Table 1 Top 30 High-frequency Content Words

Rank	Type	Freq	Rank	Type	Freq	Rank	Type	Freq
1	china	749	11	will	207	21	country	155
2	agricultural	647	12	local	192	22	can	154
3	said	524	13	areas	191	23	new	151
4	rural	402	14	production	190	24	cooperation	145
5	agriculture	387	15	year	189	25	countries	144
6	chinese	263	16	technology	178	26	people	137
7	farmers	253	17	food	172	27	according	132
8	development	230	18	province	167	28	high	127
9	also	224	19	products	167	29	industry	118
10	percent	210	20	rice	167	30	million	109

The analysis of high-frequency content words in the CANC corpus shows that news reports mainly focus on agricultural production, rural communities and food security. Terms such as *agricultural* (647) and *agriculture* (387) represent the entire agricultural sector, while *rural* (402) and *farmers* (253) have attracted attention to agricultural workers and local villages. In addition, words such as *production* (190), *food* (172) and *rice* (167) highlight the continued focus on food production and food supply. The distribution of these terms shows that news reports provide a more comprehensive view of China's agriculture, covering crop cultivation, farmers' lives, and a wider range of content related to national strategies. At the same time, high-frequency words such as *China* (749) and *Chinese* (263) establish a national context, while words such as *province* (167), *local* (192) and *areas* (191) point to specific geographical areas. The combination of national and regional terms reflects the Chinese media's description of agriculture from two dimensions. Chinese media not only emphasize major government policies at the national level. At the same time, they also emphasize the actual development and conditions of the local community, representing the level of a region.

Finally, the frequent occurrence of words such as *percent* (210), *year* (189), and *million* (109) reflects that agricultural news reports often incorporate specific numbers and statistical information. This situation shows that the Chinese mainstream media's coverage of agricultural issues will use quantitative evidence to support their views, so that agricultural issues provide more specific content, such as production results, and improve the credibility and persuasiveness of their reports.

The agricultural ties between China and Africa also warrant particular attention. The corpus contains multiple lines to China-Africa agricultural cooperation. For example, "As part of the solution, a hybrid rice demonstration center for Madagascar was established in August 2007. It was undertaken by China's Hunan Academy of Agricultural Sciences, and was one of the 10 major agricultural demonstration zones to be built by China for African countries [19]". Another states that "the 2nd Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Agriculture is held in Sanya from Monday to Wednesday [20]".

5.2 Technology in Context

Concordance lines with *technology* as the node word are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

At the collocation level, the most frequent co-occurrence is *technology and science*, with 35 occurrences in total. *Technology* also co-occurs with various geographical names, including domestic locations such as *Luoyang*, *Sanya*, and *Guizhou*. For example, one concordance line reports that "In 2023, China's first Hardware-in-the-Loop (HIL) testing platform for agricultural machinery, built by the national agricultural machinery and equipment innovation center, was put into operation in Luoyang city, central China's Henan Province. This platform uses digital twin technology to simulate real-world conditions, enabling the high-precision testing of agricultural machinery's electronic control systems [21]". And another example is "The use of big data technology in Guizhou has gradually changed the traditional mode of

agriculture, which relied solely on farmers' experience and weather conditions, and this change is providing local farm produce with a competitive edge in the market, said an official with the provincial agricultural bureau [22]". At the international level, *technology* is associated with locations such as Papua New Guinea, as shown in the example that "the Juncao technology was introduced in Papua New Guinea by Lin and his team [23]". These patterns suggest that China's agricultural technology is represented as being applied across different regions of China and shared through international cooperation, reflecting the development of agricultural innovation and China's engagement in international cooperation.

Left Context	Hit	Right Context
the report added." "Looking back on his experience of taking part in the Science and Technology	Technology	Backyard project, David Muttendango, a Zambian student at China Agricultural University
taking part in an agricultural practice and assistance program named "science and technology	technology	backyard", in Pinghe county, southeast China's Fujian Province. (Photo courtesy of the
taking part in an agricultural practice and assistance program named "science and technology	technology	backyard" carry out research at an orchard of ancient pomegranate trees in Mengzi
taking part in an agricultural practice and assistance program named "science and technology	technology	backyard" (STB). The STB program allows college students, professors, and agro-technicians
Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Agriculture visit an agricultural science and technology	technology	innovation center in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, Nov. 14, 2023. The 2nd Forum
d development, support the establishment of platforms for agricultural science and technology	technology	innovation, and increase farmers' income, it noted. The conference also stressed efforts
's agriculture. He called for efforts to establish a multi-level agricultural science and technology	technology	innovation system with sound division of labor and cooperation, and moderate commercialization
standard farmland with high quality, strengthen support for agricultural science and technology	technology	and equipment, and ensure stable production and supply of grain and major agricultural products
year. The document called for consolidating the support of agricultural science and technology	technology	and intensifying the research on core technologies of germplasm resources. According to
ment should substantially increase its policy support in land, husbandry science and technology,	technology,	and other assistance to help domestic cattle breeders enlarge their business scale, while
tom line task of rural revitalization. Xi stressed the need to rely on both science and technology	technology	and reform to facilitate the work of strengthening China's agriculture. He called for
ance in his speech. "To achieve self-reliance in high-level agricultural science and technology,	technology,	and to safeguard our national security and interests, we need to attach greater importance
ral experts in Uganda since Tuesday have been showcasing new seed varieties and technology	technology	at the country's ongoing annual agriculture exhibition in the city of Jinja, the Eastern
his Chinese friend Guo Jun, an associate professor at the Faculty of Life Science and Technology	Technology	at Kunming University of Science and Technology. Guo also studies bees and agricultural
on Dryland Agriculture. The purpose of the conference was to promote science and technology	technology	in building a resilient dryland ecosystem and ensuring food security. The conference
lture, the report said. The report also highlighted the important role of science and technology	technology	in low carbon agriculture. It said that China invests around 100 billion yuan (about 14 billion
of cultivation to harvest, the Chinese company not only transferred knowledge and technology	technology	to locals but also utilized the rural labor force. Talking to Xinhua, Muhammad Amma
standard farmland. It is essential to coordinate all strengths in agricultural science and technology	technology	to make breakthroughs, speed up promoting the broad application of scientific and
ead of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences' Institute of Food Science and Technology	Technology,	About half of the 832 national-level counties that lifted themselves out of poverty have
ltural modernization, it is important to strengthen the driving forces of science and technology	technology	as well as reform, intensify efforts to achieve breakthroughs in core technologies, and

Figure 1 *Technology* in Context of CANC Corpus 1-20

Left Context	Hit	Right Context
t, I will be a far better farmer than I am," he said. "The China-Rwanda Agriculture	Technology	Demonstration Center (C-RATDC) has supported Rwandan farmers to scale up agric
it program called "super cotton field," which employs a high level of autonomous	technology.	During the summer, with the rise in the water level of the Tarim River, workers have
d, research and development of frontier technologies such as digital and biological	technology	urged infrastructure construction, but appropriateness and affordability are more crit
in us in studying it, enabling it to fulfill an even greater role," said Ying. "Aided by	technology,	Chinese genomics firms such as BGI Group are helping farmers around the world in
significantly accelerated the transition to modern agriculture. Gong Jianshan, chief	technology	officer at the Beidahuang Information Company, said that the company has develop
years attracted scholars from various backgrounds, such as engineering, computer	technology,	bioengineering and economics. "Apart from agricultural techniques, we can learn a
mic Corridor (CPEC). China is ready to share its advanced agricultural development	technology	and experience with Pakistan to help lift its agricultural development level, the China
ducing carbon emissions. In recent years, China has made use of renewable energy	technology	to treat more than 500 million tonnes of organic waste from agriculture and rural ar
st: "We must keep cutting-edge technologies affordable, accessible, and equitable.	Technology	is not just for a few privileged people. It must be enjoyed by everyone on Earth." A
third phase in Uganda. The first and second phases, according to MAAIF, facilitated	technology	transfer and enabled improvements in the production and productivity of the crop,
'AAS has obtained a series of outstanding scientific research achievements in green	technology,	standards, and models and will join hands with the CAGDRS in related technological
vegetable supply and improve self-sufficiency," Wang said. The vertical greenhouse	technology	can also be applied in scenarios such as border patrol stations, scientific expeditions
ions were handled online, and county-level agriculture and rural affairs information	technology	management service agencies have been established in 78 percent of Chinese coun
ta-Africa Innovation Cooperation and Development Forum and Hubei International	Technology	Exchange Conference in early July held in the provincial capital Wuhan witnessed th
China can bring advanced technologies to Guinea." "Juncao, a Chinese-invented	technology	using grass to grow edible mushrooms, has become a "grass of happiness" that ben
ll highly dependent on imports, and increased rice production due to China-Liberia	technology	cooperation were primarily for domestic consumption. At the same time, China exp
periments and research, she said she believes that China's ridge and furrow mulching	technology,	a part of dryland agriculture, can produce more yield than flat planting. While cond
anda is that they are very hard working. "If local farmers will learn more about our	technology,	they will definitely increase the output of local crops," said Zheng. "As Uganda is r
ance cooperation in the fields of distant-water fishing, aquatic products processing	technology,	organic agriculture, agricultural digitalization, irrigation techniques, and water mana
poverty and food insecurity, mitigating the effects of climate change, and reducing	technology	and digital gaps require urgent attention, Zimbabwean Ambassador to China Marti

Figure 2 *Technology* in Context of CANC Corpus 21-40

At the colligation level, *technology* primarily functions as either a subject or an object in typical syntactic structures. When used as a subject, technology is typically followed by verbs that can highlight its effects or functions, as in "Science and technology have given industry development in rural China wings [24]". and "Such technology enables breeders to track the chickens' daily steps and identify the sick ones [25]". In these structures, *technology* occupies the subject position and is presented as the agent that facilitates agricultural development or improves production practices. When used as an object, *technology* commonly follows verbs related to applying or using technological resources. For example, "Chinese technicians and experts will continue to share skills and technology on agronomic practices with local farmers [26]". *Technology* is also as an object of sharing, while "This platform uses digital twin technology to simulate real-world conditions [27]". places *technology* after the verb and presents it as a tool for agricultural applications. These syntactic patterns position *technology* as both an active force in agricultural development and a practical resource applied in agricultural practices.

At the semantic preference level, *technology* is often linked to institutional actors, including farms, universities and research centres, highlighting their role in agricultural research and technological development. The discourse also frequently links *technology* to international cooperation, particularly in the context of African countries. This dimension of cooperation is embodied in the references to agricultural exhibitions, fairs and various platforms. These semantic preference patterns show that technology not only promotes international cooperation and agricultural knowledge and technology exchange, but also helps to improve domestic agricultural productivity.

At the semantic prosody level, *technology* exhibits a positive prosody. Its surrounding texts have always been linked to themes such as innovation, productivity and cooperation, making technology a useful force in China's agricultural development.

5.3 Green in Context

Concordance lines with *green* as the node word are shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

At the collocation level, the phrase *green development* occurs 12 times, while *green agricultural development* occurs 7 times. For example, one report states that "In recent years, local authorities of Baoji have promoted green development of agriculture through increasing financial input, popularizing advanced agricultural technologies, and implementing agricultural projects to boost both the farmers' income and the rural revitalization process there [28]". The political phrase *Green Rural Revival Program* occurs 10 times, as illustrated by the following example: "With the experience of the Green Rural Revival Program, efforts must be made to implement specific policies based on actual conditions, take steady and incremental steps to sustain progress, and achieve tangible results in the interest of the people, according to Xi's latest instructions on rural work [29]". This concrete policy-related collocation directly connects green development with China's broader national strategy for rural revitalization and agricultural development. Above collocational patterns indicate that Chinese media emphasizes ecological conservation and sustainable development while integrating environmental considerations into the process of agricultural modernization.

Left Context	Hit	Right Context
rural residents falling back into poverty. It is necessary to draw on the experience of the	Green	Rural Revival Program to steadily promote rural development, boost cultural developmen
ia International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) in Beijing, capital of China, Nov. 30, 2023. The	green	agriculture chain exhibition area focused on core links, key technologies and products of t
ne for our coffee park. This is my dream." "China has made great improvements in the	green	agricultural development from 2019 to 2020 in terms of green theory, evaluation, produc
g to greener industries. The air in the village used to be shrouded with coal dust and the	green	bamboo leaves on the mountains were covered in soot. Miners who came out of the mine
stry University (FAFU) in southeast China's Fujian Province, has contributed greatly to the	green	development of the local honey pomelo industry in Pinghe county, Zhangzhou city, Fujian
at of common attractants, significantly reducing the use of pesticides and promoting the	green	and sustainable development of the local agriculture industry. Less fertilizer, greener and
e Hangzhou Asian Games, and "zero waste" is considered an important aspect of the "	Green""	Asian Games. By "zero waste", the organizers do not simply mean not generating solid
3, 16 agricultural products from 11 African countries have accessed China through the "	green	channel"" with more African specialty commodities entering the Chinese market. China's
subsidies and special bonds. " "China's agriculture sector has continuously deepened the	green	transformation and seen higher-level green development between 2021 and 2022, accor
ducts of CP Group Agro-industry & Food Business are pictured at the exhibition area on	green	agriculture chain during the China International Supply Chain Expo (CISCE) in Beijing, capit
involved more data and quantitative evaluation, as well as theories and local examples on	green	development, said Mei Xurong, vice-president of the academy. The report establishes a 1
Hangzhou has arranged for all 65 venues and office facilities for the event to run fully on	green	electricity from March through December this year. The city has already completed transa
started in 2002 when Yucun village began shutting down the mines. The momentum of	green	development became stronger after Xi, then Party Chief of Zhejiang, raised the "two mo
. In 2019, 13.8 million hectares of land were being monitored as the production areas of	green	and healthy food, seeing a year-on-year increase of 32.4 percent. Last year, the utilization
e all-round services for green travels during the Hangzhou Asian Games. The concept of	green	and low-carbon development has been ingeniously integrated into the design and operat
to Hangzhou through China's west-to-east power transmission program, this 2.2 kWh of	green	electricity can power a single energy-efficient light bulb at the gymnasium of Hangzhou C
year. The city has already completed transactions for 621 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of	green	electricity for the event, bringing electricity produced from renewable energy sources tho
r, green product supply, and people's prosperous life. Based on this system, the index of	green	agricultural development in China rose from 73.46 in 2012 to 77.14 in 2019, up 5.01 perc
or employs about 40 percent of the country's labor force. China is the largest supplier of	green	tea for Morocco, which has become China's second-largest tea export destination." "In a
will gradually phase out the use of pesticides with high toxicity and encourage the use of	green	technologies instead. The circular use of waste from agricultural production, such as feces

Figure 3 Green in Context of CANC Corpus 1-20

Left Context	Hit	Right Context
released by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) and China Agricultural	Green	Development Research Society (CAGDRS). The report said the country modernized 505 la
pertise in agricultural technologies are playing increasingly important roles in agricultural	green	transformation across the country. "Organic pomegranate with abs"" Thanks to students
ent of the academy. The report establishes a 13-item index system that evaluates China's	green	agricultural development in terms of resource conservation, environmental safety, green
n accessing new markets due to high tariffs and complex regulations. However, China's "	green	channel"" for African agricultural products has expedited inspection and quarantine proce
coexistence between humans and nature, and efforts to protect Mother Earth and achieve	green	development, he told the virtual event co-organized by the Chinese mission and the Food
ing Uygur autonomous region, have all contributed green power to the event. In addition,	green	electricity produced by projects in Zhejiang province, including distributed PV power proje
curity, COVID-19 response efforts and vaccines, development financing, climate change,	green	development, industrialization, the digital economy and connectivity. Xi hosted the High-le
used on key industries in Yunnan, such as modern agriculture with plateau characteristics,	green	energy, advanced manufacturing, cultural tourism, and health care. The Beijing-Tianjin-He
eding, automatic water supply, automatic egg collection and automatic manure cleaning.	GREEN	AGRICULTURE ""Currently, the stability of the global food supply chain and the green dev
harvested rice. As a result of years of dedicated work, experts from the Chinese company	Green	Agriculture West Africa Ltd. (GAWAL) have developed a high-yield rice seed tailored to loc
g Hami city in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, have all contributed	green	power to the event. In addition, green electricity produced by projects in Zhejiang provin
ed vegetable farm has achieved unmanned production in the entire process of cultivating	green	leafy vegetables. A vegetable planting area spanning about 13 hectares requires only five
gricultural development. However, Mei said China was still in its initial phase of developing	green	agriculture in the past five years. The utilization and spatial arrangement, in particular, of a
agriculture departments at all levels to collaborate with relevant departments to ensure "	green	channels"" for vehicles transporting fresh agricultural products to lower vegetable distribu
provide data support for analyzing the utilization of agriculture resources and evaluating	green	development levels. Wu Kongming, president of the CAAS, said that the CAAS has obtaine
ith China's goals of achieving sustainable development by, among other things, following	green	production methods, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, better protecting the environm
ulture sector has continuously deepened the green transformation and seen higher-level	green	development between 2021 and 2022, according to a report released by the Chinese Aca
Shaanxi Province, June 24, 2024. In recent years, local authorities of Baoji have promoted	green	development of agriculture through increasing financial input, popularizing advanced agri
gricultural and rural affairs. "With the guidance of agricultural experts I have replanted	green	cabbage and now it's time for the harvest," said Han Jianwei, a farmer from Nanlunan vi
green agricultural development in terms of resource conservation, environmental safety,	green	product supply, and people's prosperous life. Based on this system, the index of green ag

Figure 4 Green in Context of CANC Corpus 21-40

At the colligation level, *green* functions predominantly as an adjective that pre-modifies nouns, and forming noun phrases such as *green coverage*, *green agriculture chain*, and *green energy*. For instance, "China's agriculture sector has continuously deepened the green transformation and seen higher-level green development between 2021 and 2022, according to a report released by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) and China Agricultural Green Development Research Society (CAGDRS) [30]". This adjective-noun pattern also encompasses policy-related term, including the *green transformation*, *Green Rural Revival Program* and *green channel*, as illustrated by the following

example: “However, China’s green channel for African agricultural products has expedited inspection and quarantine processes and expanded tariff exemptions, benefiting Kenya’s flower industry and other African agricultural products like avocado, citrus, pineapple and coffee [31]”. The node word *green*, functioning as an adjective, reflects Chinese ecological innovation in agriculture.

At the semantic preference level, *green* displays a strong association with fields related to environmental governance and international cooperation. Firstly, its frequent co-occurrence with policy-oriented terms, which are aim to achieve environmental protection and sustainable development. In addition, the topic of discourse is extended to cross-border activities like cooperation between countries, highlighting China’s role in global agriculture. These contexts show that green development is represented not only as a domestic direction but also as part of China’s efforts to promote responsible agricultural development globally.

At the semantic prosody level, *green* carries a positive attitude. It links sustainable development with technological progress and environmental governance. At the same time, Chinese agriculture also plays an active role in international agricultural activities. These models present China’s agricultural green development as a forward-looking agricultural development mode, emphasizing both modernization and responsibility.

5.4 Major Findings

In general, the discourse in the CANC corpus shows a clear government-oriented tone, as evidenced by frequent references to national leaders’ directives and agricultural policy frameworks. This emphasis reflects the state’s participation and supervision of agricultural governance. Moreover, by depicting China’s domestic and international agricultural technology stories, it also further reflects the characteristics of China’s agriculture driven by science and technology. In addition, the development of green agriculture is not only an important strategic principle in China, but also a means to deal with a wider range of global climate change-related issues, which has received continuous attention from domestic mainstream media.

At the level of interpretation, the reporting styles of the three media are slightly different. People’s Daily and Xinhua News Agency adopted a more official tone. People’s Daily pays more attention to guiding public opinion, while Xinhua News Agency pays more attention to providing detailed and true information. In contrast, China Daily pays more attention to international communication. However, the three media have similar reporting practices, especially in the frequent use of factual evidence. The evidence is mainly composed of quantitative data and direct statements. Quantitative data include agricultural output and the date of major events, and direct statements include government officials’ remarks and interviews with farmers. These practices realistically and reasonably present the current situation of China’s agricultural development.

At the level of explanation, there is a significant correlation between the discourse of the three mainstream news media and China’s agricultural modernization and national development strategy. *Chinese Agricultural Sector Development Report 2025* identifies technological progress as the fundamental pathway to enhancing the market competitiveness of Chinese agricultural products [3]. Technology ranks 16th in high-frequency content words, indicating that these three mainstream media attach great importance to the topic of technology when discussing Chinese agriculture, which is consistent with the path pointed out in the above political documents. During the *14th Five-Year Plan* period, China continued to promote agricultural and rural modernization. While focusing on improving food production and quality, the country is also promoting sustainable development and green standards. However, in the CANC corpus, green does not appear in the top 30 high-frequency content words. This finding shows that in the current corpus, ecological practices receive less attention than technological innovation. Therefore, future efforts to shape China’s agricultural image can further highlight the relevant content of green development, thereby enhancing the resilience and sustainability of China’s agriculture.

6 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Although these three sources can represent an important part of Chinese media discourse, relying solely on them may not fully capture the broader picture of domestic news coverage. What’s more, this study only focuses on written text data, omitting non-text modalities such as images, video and audio. But in recent years, with the development of digital media, news reports are not limited to the text. Therefore, compared with monomodal discourse analysis, multimodal discourse analysis can provide more diverse perspectives and more complete analysis.

In order to address these limitations, first, future research can expand the volume of the corpus by integrating reports from a wider range of news organizations or media outlets. Second, future research can adopt a multimodal framework, which learns from the multimodal approach and considers the visual, auditory, and other elements in news reports.

COMPETING INTERESTS

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