

CHAPTER 4

A BIBLIOMETRIC STUDY OF VARIATIONAL TRANSLATION THEORY'S DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA (1998-2025): A CITESPACE-BASED ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This study employs bibliometric methods to map the evolution of Variational Translation Theory (VTT) in China from 1998 to 2025, analyzing 799 journal articles retrieved from the CNKI database using CiteSpace. The research reveals three key phases of VTT's development: initial conceptualization (1989-2005), theoretical systematization (2006-2015), and interdisciplinary expansion (2016-2025). Core scholars like Huang Zhonglian and institutions such as Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (GUFS) are identified as pivotal forces driving VTT's growth. Keyword co-occurrence and citation burst analyses highlight shifting research hotspots, from foundational debates (e.g., "complete translation") to emerging applications (e.g., "subtitle translation"). While VTT demonstrates adaptability to globalization and cultural diplomacy demands, critiques reveal theoretical gaps requiring further interdisciplinary validation. The findings underscore VTT's transformative role in Chinese translation studies and its potential to address cross-linguistic challenges in an era of cultural exchange.

Keywords: *Variational Translation Theory, Citespace, Bibliometric Analysis, Translation Adaptation, Chinese Translation Studies, Interdisciplinary Research.*

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