Who is telling the “truth”? Wikipedia articles on Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement as a Case Study of Alternative Knowledge Production

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B.A., Tianjin Normal University, 2014

Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts

in the
School of Communication (Dual Degree in Global Communication)
Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Summer 2017

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Abstract

Scientific knowledge production has been dominated by the West for centuries. Claiming to represent the sum of human knowledge, Wikipedia is considered as a challenge to the established forms of scientific knowledge production, for shaking its superiority over other forms of knowledge to determine what is the reality. Through a comparative discourse analysis of Wikipedia articles on Umbrella Movement in Chinese and English as well as editors’ discussions on the “Talk Page”, this research demonstrates how this event has been presented differently in global and local contexts. By examining this particular case study, the author presents the difficulty of “translating” local knowledge to global. The marginalization of local editors on English page and the dominance of activist opinion on Chinese page make local knowledge production become the reproduction of western epistemology, which is far from creating an alternative to the knowledge hegemony.

Keywords: local knowledge production; alternative knowledge; knowledge hegemony; Wikipedia; Umbrella Movement
Dedication

Dedicated to those unheard voices in this world.
**Acknowledgement**

Sitting at my desk and looking back to this year, I could not believe that my journey is about to run ends. I never expected that this experience could be so full of wonderful and touching moments with all my professors, colleagues and friends. I will treasure them in my memory and miss them very badly for the rest of my life.

I want to express thanks to my supervisor Chris Jeschelnik from the bottom of my heart. He constantly not only cares about the progress and difficulty in my study, but also concerns whether I have adapted to the life far away from my hometown. This has always been the biggest encouragement for me throughout the year.

Then, words can hardly express my gratitude to Professor Adel Iskandar and Professor Zhao for giving me the opportunity to be part of this program and this lovely cohort. And thank you, Professor Katherine Reilly, from whom I can always get valuable advice and great help for my research. Most importantly, I have realized my responsibility for social justice as a global citizen since her course. Furthermore, this program cannot function so well and smoothly without the efforts of our program manager Dora Lou and teaching assistant Zhang Xiaoxing. Whenever I had questions and needed help, they always took great patience and enthusiasm to reply and support me. The devotion of each of them to this program allows us to maximize every opportunity we had to pursue our inquiry in the world of knowledge and praxis.

The last but not the least, I could never have made it this far without the help and companion of my colleagues who are also my dear friends in this big family. Each of them has led me see this world from a different perspective I have never had before I came here. They are the ones who have made this program a place for viewpoints of diverse culture coming together and mixing, more importantly, for producing knowledge that represents voices of different parts of the world. Among them, I believe that we four Chinese girls from the Communication University of China have grown up a lot together. We have shared fear of a new world, unspoken happiness and tears, but we never expected that we could be family here for each other. I want to wholeheartedly thank them for accompanying me to walk through the dark tunnel when I was lost during the year.
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Chapter 1. Introduction

The Umbrella Movement was one of the largest protest during a series of civil disobedience events in Hong Kong from September to December in 2014. In response to a decision made by Chinese government to reform local electoral system, the assembly started with a student class strike and later led to violent conflicts between protesters and the police. Umbrellas that were initially used by protesters to protect themselves from pepper spray later became a striking symbol of the movement.

Given Hong Kong’s previous long-term colonial history and the resulting intricate political relationship with mainland China, this movement is much more complicated than a simple dichotomous struggle between the poles of central government and the people of Hong Kong. It is also a multifaceted site of resistance playing out according to the power dynamics between the West and East, and global and local entities. The pro-democratic side was often accused of being manipulated by Western anti-China power; on the other hand, the anti-movement side and some of the “subversives” to the movements were criticized for accepting bribes from Beijing and being associated with local gang forces. Evidence of the tension between these two sides can be found in Wikipedia articles on this topic both in English and Chinese, especially on the “Talk Page” where editors discuss editorial choices in detail.

The English article is named as “2014 Hong Kong protests”, but if you switch it to Chinese, you see the name “雨伞革命” (pinyin: yusan geming, meaning umbrella revolution). These two versions were both created by editors who claimed they live in Hong Kong on their own user page. The former contains 4271 edits and visited by 9954 times in last 30 days, while the latter has 2815 edits and 16,490 page views during the same time (until 25 July 2017 2:00 AM). Given that the usage of English in Hong Kong is pervasive, it is not surprising that a number of local editors prefer contributing in English. However, it is interesting to note that the Chinese page with nearly only half of the edits in English has far more visitors. In addition, one may find that the content of these two articles overlap with others such as article “Umbrella Movement” because some editors disagreed with the arrangement of the article and decided to set up another one.
With the economic and political power of the west sweeping the globe, the privilege of its ways of knowing the world has established over the knowledge of other cultures. This article investigates how the story of Umbrella Movement has been presented differently in two linguistic contexts and how two groups of editors have legitimated the “truth” they believe. Highlighting differences in English and Chinese versions of articles about Umbrella Movement will be used as a technique to explore how local knowledge is “translated” to global. Considering these articles as a case of local knowledge production, the author hopes to further elucidate its struggle under the hegemony of western epistemology and the distant future of realizing the coexistence of all forms of knowledge.

Throughout this paper, I review the literature on the topic of how the hegemony of western epistemology has been established and how the concept of alternative knowledge (which comprises multiple “other” knowledge – native/local/indigenous/traditional knowledge) develops under such a background. With the hope to extend this body of the literature to global knowledge production on the Internet, I exam studies based on Wikipedia in regards of the homogeneity of its content and the tension between editors on the Talk Page and hope this can thus reveal the paradox of its policies on neutrality. I undertake critical discourse analysis to demonstrate differences between the English and Chinese article in regards of the naming process, storytelling, approaches to legitimate their edits and visualize the event. In the end, the difficulty of establishing an alternative to the western knowledge hegemony in this era is discussed.
Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. The hegemony of western knowledge

In Foucault’s examination on archaeology of knowledge, he profoundly elucidates how some knowledge comes into being and take ups a position in the society (2012). Drawn from his explanation of how knowledge is made, unmade, remade (constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed) through the discourse, we have learned of the subtle impact of power behind knowledge production. This can be unpacked here to say that knowledge is legitimated by some privileged sources, which are often established and institutionalized, thereby enabling a part of perceived reality to lie in the center of a society. In this sense, knowledge production is not simply aims to be passed on the next generation, but also functions as a filter of constructed social reality (Hannabuss,1996).

Since scientific revolution from 18th century in Europe, modern science has reached its superiority over other knowledge building systems. Influenced profoundly by positivist approach, it is based on the premise that there is a reality independent of human experience and that this reality is observable and discoverable (Babbie,2015). This epistemological foundation fosters a belief that only scientific knowledge can be employed to answer fundamental questions about reality. It thus allows modern science to formulate the standard for worldwide knowledge – it is supposed to be value-free and can be applied to different societal contexts. Furthermore, claims of universality and objectivity ensure that Europe-centric knowledge is at the center of global knowledge production, as one critic puts, “modern science makes knowledge scarce because it asserts unrivalled hegemony” (as cited in Nader,2013, P.12).

Often, the dichotomies of primitive/civilized, modern/ traditional, native knowledge/ science are employed to frame debates about science and legitimate knowledge building practices (Nader,2013). As Nader points out, “science is not only a means of categorizing the world, but of categorizing science itself in relation to other knowledge systems that are excluded” (p.3). She makes the point that this contrast exists not simply to distinguish science from other forms of knowledge, more importantly, it is a form of power relation in which the privileged position determines what knowledge can be included or excluded and creates an idealized supremacy over others. This
epistemological hegemony forces other local knowledge into a subaltern position based on the often invisible yet powerful practices of legitimization used to establish the nature of reality.

According to Wallerstein’s divide of world system (1979), these oppressive cultures are situated in the “peripheral” part of the world in relation to the “core” countries, which is later referred to as “Third World” or “Global South” (Santos, 1995). In Mignolo’s book (2000), he explores how the West brought their local history to global and how their constructed concepts were then applied to the Third World. Furthermore, he unveils the destructive consequences of western epistemic privilege: it places obstacles in the way for Western scientists to pay closer attention to the epistemological difference between culture and the value of other knowledge. In this sense, the world cannot recognize the colonial diversity of their ways of knowing with the existence of western epistemic hegemony. Therefore, there is still a long way to achieve Mignolo’s hope to “decolonize the imperial idea of universal history, to contribute to legitimizing the pluriversality of knowing, sensing, believing” (2000, p.xiv). His work is very enlightening to the present study regarding how subalternity can provide an alternative, or another “logic” for the world to think.

Another case study of the United States can echo above critic through an analysis of how knowledge can be shaped by hegemonic institutions. With a specific focus on international relations, John Agnew (2007) discusses how world politics is dominantly constructed by US hegemony. He points out its dominance of the academic discourse, which is constituted of concepts originally from America, enables US to exercise control large amounts of academic thinking about world politics on a global scale. To explain this point further, he argues that one of the consequences of this hegemony is that the knowledge production of world politics does not include the reflection of the “local” and “fragmented” realities situated at other parts of the globe. It is rather the construction of American knowledge system in service for its political agenda, which is to maintain its global hegemonic position. Furthermore, this article reveals that the knowledge hegemony is a joint project of western ways of understanding and its economics and political power.

The coloniality of knowledge has not stopped although we are in face of the information age in which the world is networked by communications technology. The
Internet has given individuals the freedom of self-expression, however, a peek behind the curtain reveals that the innovations of communications technology are mostly driven by the Global North, not to mention the fact that there is still a number of people in the world without the Internet access. Then questions arise here: how the information that generated only by a portion of world people represents others’ perception of the reality? What kind of information, based on what assumptions, can be legitimate? How the information further informs other people’s practice and affects their epistemology? As Davies argues (2017),

“Information can mirror the perceptions of those who collect and use it, it reflects inherent biases and prevailing power structures, unless these are explicitly and successfully tackled in techniques for collection and use. This is rarely achieved. What the ‘value’ of information means, how it is measured and its role in society is increasingly questioned.” (Introduction section, para. 5)

Furthermore, with the non-governmental organizations (NGO) based at the Global North functioning as “intermediaries” (Hobart, 1993, Choudry, 2010, Shepherd, 2004), technology has become the embodiment of western knowledge for further invasion to other knowledge such as native and indigenous knowledge. These “advanced” technological knowledge is unconnected with local contexts but brings devastating influence on local knowledge system. The development agenda set by the Global North attempts to enable their own lifestyle as ideal models to be duplicated in other societies, but in fact, it has further marginalized and suppressed other knowledge and reinforced the unequal power relations in global knowledge production. As Santos (2007) puts this differently, “the end of political colonialism did not mean the end of colonialism as social relationship associated with specific forms of knowledge and power, the coloniality of power and knowledge.” (p.xxxv).

Aforementioned studies provide a valuable way to contemplate knowledge production on platforms like Wikipedia. Bringing people from different parts of the world together provides an unprecedented opportunity to establish mutual dialogue between diverse culture, however, it is still difficult for oppressive voices to get around the hegemonic discourse of western epistemology. Much worse, it is even more difficult to realize that the suppression is exercised in a subtler way, which means sometimes people even could not be aware that their decision-making has been unconsciously informed by western ways of knowing.
2.2. Alternative knowledge: to realize the coexistence of knowledge

With the emergence of Postmodernism and Postmodernism literature, the claimed universality and value-free characteristic of modern science has been widely criticized. Scholars, especially anthropologists, began to realize that reality is fragmented and deeply rooted in every cultural and social context, and some of them pointed out the possibility that “different, fragmentary realities may actually coexist” (Mearns, 1991, p.2). These works challenged the narrow demarcation of what can be considered as knowledge and questioned the singularity of explanation of social phenomenon provided by western epistemology. With these critics, knowledge systems with roots in other sites, especially the non-western regions, are gradually becoming recognized. They are “knowledge whose validity and practicability have been tested in specific contexts but which is known, accepted, or utilized only by particular people in certain physical, social, or cultural environments”, which can be called as situated knowledge, local knowledge, indigenous knowledge, etc. in different contexts (Meusburger, Freytag, & Suarsana, 2016, p.2). Given that a large part of them are closely intertwined with colonized history, this category of knowledge is often positioned as the opposite of scientific knowledge, often described as “premodern”, “superstitious”, “religious” and “underdeveloped”.

Additionally, the above authors also profoundly underline two layers of the dichotomy: on one hand, knowledge production is closely associated with unique space as well as social and cultural contexts where power relations rest in it; on the other hand, it suggests an “asymmetric power relations between center and periphery” (p.3). From a global perspective, this reflects the unequal epistemic positions of the West and the East, or the Global North and Global South. The concept of local knowledge can be used with different intentions by different agents. Sometimes it is an academic concept but could be a political construct at the same time. (Nüsser & Baghel, 2016, p.191-209)

Alternative knowledge is used as an inclusive and vague concept to challenge the usage of local/traditional/indigenous knowledge in service for the development discourse mainly dominated by the Global North. This concept implies that these forms of knowledge are not merely conditional complements to the dominance of scientific knowledge, it “offers a view of the world, aspirations, and an avenue to ‘truth’; different from those held by non-aboriginal people whose knowledge is based largely on
European philosophies” (Bielawski, 1995, p.220). To put it differently, alternative knowledge opens a new window for us to perceive the world that was missing or twisted somehow in the eyes of western scientists, thereby enabling us to obtain a more integrated perspective of human wisdom accumulated in their life experience. Johannes's sixteen-month field research (1981) on the native knowledge of fishing in the Palau district of Micronesia provides another example of how native knowledge can be of great use to marine science, however, he was surprised by the fact that this kind of knowledge remained unrecorded until then. He contended that the prior anthroposophical study focused on the influence of the environment on native people, rather than how scientists can learn from these people with precise practical knowledge. Local knowledge carries the collective memory of a community and can represent the unique perspective of native people who have dwelled at a region for years. Their long-term relationship with local environment cannot be fairly explained by western scientists without acknowledging that local knowledge represents an alternative to dominant western epistemology.

From the viewpoint of an indigenous and “colonized” Māori woman, Smith (1999) sharply criticizes the western paradigms of research and further calls for the “decolonization” of methodology and explores a new research agenda of indigenous research. This enlightening work points out that it is imperative for non-indigenous scholars to critically reflect on their research initiative and standpoints they adopt when conducting research about local communities. As long as their research is done by staying within the epistemic boundaries of Western epistemology, then local knowledge cannot be fundamentally valued and recognized. Only when this pre-existing hegemonic discourse has been deconstructed, it can be possible for alternative knowledge to extend the richness of world knowledge and create a different understanding of humanity.

There is another thread of literature that can provide us an alternative perspective to reflect on the unequal representation in global knowledge production – the feminist standpoint theory. It is worth noting here that Harding (1993, 2002) argues that the world of science is “sexist and androcentric” (2015, p.99), which implies that the epistemological world is represented by positions of male, white and European authority. Although this is not the primary subject of this study, her work takes the ultimate direction towards social justice. She reminds us of the existence of those subaltern
knowledge producers, whose ways of understanding the world are hardly equally represented in the process of knowledge production and dissemination. This again mirrors and reinforces the problematic reality of hegemonic discourse. Furthermore, this can lay a foundation for establishing a more inclusive paradigm of global knowledge production in order to promote global social justice, especially the global cognitive justice, which determines whether people can be emancipated from those prejudiced (for example sexually or culturally) ways to know things about the world.

It is necessary to clarify that the point here is not to reject Western epistemology, but to explore the possibility for alternative knowledge production practices to create a counter-hegemonic discourse and contribute to the coexistence of different forms of knowledge. Some point out that in order to criticize the western knowledge hegemony, local knowledge has been reversely canonized and placed in a superior position by some scholars (Nüsser & Baghel, 2016). Furthermore, researchers still cannot think outside of the binary framework and thus characterize local knowledge/indigenous/native knowledge as “good” while the western science being “bad” and (Agrawal 1995, Nygren, 1999, Kiely 1999). This criticism keeps us from going from one extreme to the other and gives us a reminder that the focus should be placed on the practical value of them rather than using it as a political weapon to create new power inequities.

There are two other works that pay more attention to the increasingly important sites of alternative knowledge production--NGO and merit discussion here. Even though Carroll and Sapinski (2013) and Choudry (2008) take different approaches, one by network analysis of global alternative police groups and the other by presenting his findings from a prolonged engagement with NGOs, they both demonstrate the disjuncture within the alternative knowledge system. Unequal power relations exist and this can result in certain forms of knowledge being valued over others.

If the critique of western knowledge and the acknowledgment of other knowledge systems do not serve for creating an alternative to the existing hegemonic discourse, then as the striking point made by Santos (2007), there is no global social justice without global cognitive justice. His proposition of “ecology of knowledge” (2007) is unlikely to be realized. In face of the challenges brought by globalization and its profound impact on socioeconomics of every inch of the world, it is crucial to find solutions that represents
both the “above” (the Global North) and “below” (the Global South). As Tandon (2013) wrote:

“different voices represent different forms and expressions of knowledge – different modes and articulations of knowledge from diverse experiences, locations and perspectives. This is the essence of ‘knowledge democracy’ – a movement that respects multiple modes, forms, sources and idioms of knowledge production, representation and dissemination.”

The object of alternative knowledge is to integrate itself with other knowledge and promote the dialogue between each other, thereby utilizing the co-creative power of knowledge to contribute to a better understanding of humanity. This allows the author of the present study to contemplate the current situation of knowledge translation between cultures on Wikipedia. With the goal of encouraging common people from different cultural backgrounds to produce knowledge, it indeed provides a platform for dialogue between knowledge. However, there are questions remaining to be answered: Does the knowledge of different communities truly represent alternative voices? Whose voices are heard and valued over others? Who possesses the power to legitimate knowledge? How the knowledge further informs people’s everyday practice and decision-making?

2.3. Knowledge production on Wikipedia

Wikipedia has been considered as the symbol of collective wisdom since it was established. It has received great attention of the public and ranks now as the fifth most popular website (Alexa, as of 21 July 2017). Relying on the contribution of the public to knowledge production, it aims to challenge the authority of institutionalized knowledge. (e.g., Lih & Wales, 2009; Kittur & Kraut, 2008; Surowiecki, 2005). Additionally, Wikipedia claims to represent the “sum of human knowledge” and promote knowledgeable inputs from different ethnic communities. Given all these, Wikipedia seems to have become a platform for alternative knowledge production but is it creating a counter-hegemonic discourse against the dominance of Western epistemology?

To maintain the quality and neutrality of its content, Wikipedia requires that every edit adheres to the principle of a neutral point of view, which means it should be referenced by reliable published sources. However, it has been increasingly criticized for being culturally biased and homogenized because of the dominance in contribution of
white males, with 80% of edits being tagged by location in Europe and North America (Kiberd, 2014), which means the opinions of women and people of other areas are not equally represented. So far, Wikipedia in English is still holding the dominant position with more than 5,445,000 articles (before 21 July, 2017), while the next highest number of articles belongs to Wikipedia in German at only around two million articles. Although visitors can choose one out of 299 languages and freely transfer to another with a simple click, the abundance of articles’ content and the way they are structured can be quite different. Due to the greater influence of the English version, a portion of editors who are not native speakers prefer to participate in it instead of their local linguistic community (Jemielniak, 2014). Furthermore, since many Wikipedia articles document current events, editors are more likely to use the sources of mainstream media as reference to back up their editorial choices (Ford, Sen, Musicant & Miller, 2013). This points to the fact that Wikipedia is reinforcing and strengthening the media reality, which has long been criticized for being legitimized and normalized through agenda setting in different contexts. Therefore, Wikipedia in fact promotes the culture and social norms that have been institutionalized in the real world, and has become the virtual arena for ideological conflicts, especially for sensitive and controversial articles (Page, 2014).

In addition, the author of this article found two articles of great value and worth discussing here. One is a comparative study between Nupedia and Wikipedia (Yam, 2012). The author explains why Nupedia, the precursor of Wikipedia, failed, and thus reveals the tension between ideology behind the seemingly free information generation which has deep roots in academic world. What the author proposes is to remind people that despite its ongoing popularity, Wikipedia still leaves us more questions than answers: what to do to cope with the polarization of online opinions? Can Wikipedia be an exception to bridge conflicts between people with different cultural identities? What is the distance between knowledge and the reality? Based on Nelson Goodman’s theory of Ways of Worldmaking, another outstanding work explores how Wikipedia editors construct worldviews by approaching discussions on the Talk Pages of four articles: two histories – “Iraq War” and “Afghanistan War” – and two biographies – “George W. Bush” and “Barack Obama” – (Fullerton & Ettema, 2014). This work demonstrates how people integrate facts and values to knowledge generation through their interactions, which is a process generalized by the authors as “legitimation”.


There is another thread of literature focusing on the editing process on Wikipedia. Reverts and vandalism are two measurements often used to show the contentiousness of highly edited or viewed articles. Schneider, Passant and Breslin (2010) found that about 12% discussions are controversial on English Wikipedia. In some cases, users repeatedly reject each other's edits and leave personal attacks or radical opinions on the history page but do not participate in the discussions on Talk Page, which has been described as the “edit war”. The dynamic features of edit wars are demonstrated in the article of Yasseri et al. (Yasseri, Sumi, Rung, Kornai, & Kertész, 2012). They found the length of Talk Page cannot necessarily reflect the edit wars, especially for Wikipedia of some other languages such as Spanish. The conflicts between editors who continuously reinforce their opinions can be ended by external forces or overwhelming dominance of one group.

The preceding studies provide many dimensions to consider the controversial aspect of Wikipedia, however, the consensus-reaching process and conflictual interactions on the Talk Page have not been explored and investigated thoroughly. Most conflicts occur in editors’ decision-making process, for example, whether specific content should be included is one of the major topics on Talk Page according to Wikipedia policy and guidelines, including notability, sources, maintenance and bias (e.g., Xiao & Askin, 2014; Schneider, Passant & Decker, 2012). Moreover, Yam (2016) considers editors’ discussion on content retainment and deletion as a linguistic process, and he reveals two sets of language rules on the Talk Page: discussion and consultation/enforcement. The latter distinguishes Wikipedia from other online forums because the power of admins (editors with privilege elected by a community) plays an important role in decision making. Another online ethnographic study of Wikipedia community by Yam (2015) shows the correlation between the lack of interaction on Talk Page and the activities of those admins. This hierarchical structure contradicts Wikipedia’s ideology of equal and free editing, which raises one more questions remaining to be answered: What is the role of some special editors in the formulation of the entry?

In all the references about communication on Talk Page, Luyt’s study (2015), an in-depth research on the Vietnam War on Wikipedia, has been inspirational. It provides valuable reference for the present study. The Vietnam War and Umbrella Movement are both events that have drawn worldwide attention, and these two articles on Wikipedia are quite substantial with huge conflicts on Talk Page. Besides, few of aforementioned
studies investigate a particular entry as a case study and they do not pay close attention to the tension between editors behind the presentation of an event or a subject. In his article, Luyt demonstrates the shallowness of discussions on talk page so as to address the significance of information literacy of users in the process of producing knowledge. The most noteworthy point is that the barrier of communication between editors from different cultural backgrounds are mentioned, which provides me with an idea to examine the community of Hong Kong local Wikipedants. I expect that this work can not only contribute to the growing body of literature on Wikipedia with a particular case study on alternative knowledge production, but also brings up an opportunity to shed a new light on the difference between Wikipedia in Chinese and English within a context of global knowledge production.

Wikipedia has the potential to be considered as an alternative to the epistemological hegemony of the West, but its knowledge production is reinforcing the problematic power relation in reality. Many studies have noted that the seemingly neutral Wikipedia articles are also a construction of Western epistemology. As addressed by the aforementioned study (Fullerton & Ettema, 2014), Wikipedia now can be viewed as another media framing besides journalism. Considering Wikipedia articles on Umbrella Movement as a case of local knowledge production on Wikipedia, this work aims to further explore this research area by examining differences between the English and Chinese article and thus reveals the hegemony of Western epistemology persists in a subtler way. It can also help extend the literature on alternative knowledge production to the context of Internet in this era. With these goals in mind, this article expects to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the differences between the English and Chinese version of Wikipedia article on Hong Kong’s Umbrella Movement? How editors negotiate and reach consensus on the Talk Page? How have they attempted to legitimate their “truth”?

RQ2: What is the struggle of alternative knowledge on such a global platform? Does it really represent the “alternative”?
Chapter 3. Methodology

To demonstrate the differences of the Wikipedia article on Umbrella Movement between English and Chinese, the researcher of this study believes critical discourse analysis can help present how the two versions of storytelling are produced by texts and talks, and how the “truth” is constructed and legitimated by the discourse. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) once strikingly argued, discourse analysis focuses on the text or the talk itself without seeing them as a medium or tool that is to be utilized to discover the “truth”, in contrast, it is interested in the world that the text and talk are articulating. For analysts, the object of discourse analysis is to “explore the relationship between discourse and reality” (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, What is discourse analysis? In Discourse Analysis, p.4 of 19) For this case, the analysis of Wikipedia articles is treating those texts and editors’ discussions as discourse, in the meantime, they are also the social reality of Umbrella Movement perceived, believed and produced by editors. This discourse not only unveils the social phenomenon, interactions and relations, but is also a part of the constructed reality. Phillips and Hardy (2002, p. 2) argue, “without discourse, there is no social reality, and without understanding discourse, we cannot understand our reality, our experiences, or ourselves.”

In this sense, discourse analysis is not just a research method, but a methodology to observe the world from a constructivist perspective. This approach seems to have similarities with narrative analysis or conversational analysis as they all operate by taking the constructive effect of language into account. For example, the study of Page (2014) in the Wikipedia article “Murder of Meredith Kercher” provides an example analysis of how a version of presentations of a particular event can achieve dominance and how others may be marginalized or function as a form of resistance through narrative interplay. However, discourse analysis can be distinguished from these methods because it does not take the existence of texts and talks for granted or as a precondition. Rather, it underlines how they come into being in the first place and how they are addressed to a broader context. Analysts pursue the meaning of discourse by asking “why” and “how” instead of purely “what”. This is also able to explain why in addition to analyzing the content of the Wikipedia article on Umbrella Movement, the discussions between editors and other related activities such as polling on the Talk Page are also included. The purpose of this is to show how people’s perceptions of social
reality, not just their opinions of the movement itself, but also their understanding of local politics and even worldview in a broader sense are embedded in the texts and talks. The articles and corresponding conversations are an integral whole and inextricably linked with each other.

Considering that “discourse analysis” is very contested, Gill (2000) points out that “it is not a simple definitional issue, but involves taking up a position in an extremely charged- though important - set of argument” (p.173). In this sense, critical discourse analysis presumes that there are unequal power relations at work in the social world, and emphasizes how the dominant group legitimates and maintains this relationship by controlling texts (van Dijk,1993). Applying this to the present study, the author sees local knowledge and other alternative knowledge situated in a subaltern condition in relation to the Western knowledge hegemony. This unequal power relation is being projected to the formulation of articles about the Umbrella Movement, and it further exerts its impact on the discourse by granting some editors epistemic privilege to legitimate their “truth”. Critical discourse analysis can help better present the behind-scene tensions between words and sentences by referring to a hegemonic discourse dominated by the West. Taking this position does not entail the adoption of a navel-gazing exercise, whereas the analytical process is a joint work between the writer and the audience. Critical discourse analysis can better inform the latter the specific situational context they are put in and the goal of research is to listen and represent those unheard voices. The self-reflective and interpretive nature of critical discourse analysis enables researchers to not just present their own version of a constructed reality, more importantly, to evaluate the discourse based on what they think is fundamental to social justice, thereby producing knowledge with the responsibility to promote equity and respect between different epistemology (Fairclough,2013).

Owing to the different phases of the Umbrella Movement and the conflicts in naming the event between editors, some, but not all, of the Wikipedia articles on this topic redirect to other articles in a tangle of connections such as “Umbrella Revolution”, “Umbrella Movement” and “Occupy Central” “Occupy Central with Love and Peace”. This study focuses on the article “2014 Hong Kong Protests” in English and “雨伞革命(pinyin: yusan geming)” in Chinese. Comparing to other articles, these two contain the most front page content of and discussions on Talk Page. It can be viewed in 33 languages including English, French, Spanish, Cantonese and Chinese, etc. Editors made the first
edit at 16:10 pm on September 28th, 2014 in English, while the Chinese version was created at 12:02 am, September 29th in the same year. Not only will the arrangements of the article be presented in this study, but the controversy that occurred in the process of negotiation will be analyzed as well. Every argument on the Talk Page and each edit documented in the “View History” area is followed either by the user name or the specific IP address if the editors has not registered. In addition, readers can review what change has been made by whom on the View History page. Some editors identify themselves clearly on their user page by nationality or where they live. Even if others are not doing so, their usage of language, contribution history and participation in some Wikiprojects can help the author picture them roughly. For unregistered users, their IP address can be traced with the help of some websites. There can be no denial that these identity claims, self-descriptions and locations can be fabricated and there are still some editors who provide very little information about themselves. Pinpointing the exact identity of the editors is not the primary subject of this research, however, it allows for a deeper look into the tensions and power relations in the discourse.
Chapter 4. Analysis and findings

4.1. Naming the event

The Wikipedia article in Chinese is titled as “雨傘革命” (meaning Umbrella Revolution), but when you switch the language to English, you will see the title “2014 Hong Kong protests”. These two articles seem to have little in common at first glance. However, if a viewer scrolls down to examine the content, the relationship will become clear. The Chinese article begins with a sentence “雨傘革命, 又称雨傘運動或佔領行動” (Umbrella revolution, also known as Umbrella Movement or Occupation Movement), in contrast, the English article says, “A series of sit-in street protests, often called the Umbrella Revolution and sometimes used interchangeably with Umbrella Movement”. These layouts are the respective result of negotiation and consensus of two groups of editors after a huge dispute on this issue. The implication of other possibly used names in the body of the article is a representation of different voices in the community, but the bold title prominently displaced above the article reflects the result of the “consensus” created by the community. Or more precisely, the name presents what the dominant group of two articles view the event.

Initially, the English page was titled “9.27 Tim Mei Avenue Assembly” but was subsequently changed to “2014 Hong Kong protest” after 11 minutes. Later, some editors began to switch the name back and forth between “2014 Hong Kong protests” and “Umbrella Revolution”. Disagreement also occurred in the editing of the information box right below the title and above the article body. In the meantime, the discussion on the naming issue is very intense on Talk Page. A group of editors argue that “Umbrella Revolution” has been widely used by western media including New York Times, BBC, the Guardian, etc. and thus is easily recognized by people, while there is a certain level of ambiguity in the original name. This group is mainly dominated by western editors, of whom are among top editors who contributed a lot to the page. In contrast, the opposite either emphasize the local popularity of the term or still question the nature of the event.

Wikipedia has a series of policies with regards to the proper naming of an article. Neutrality is not the only consideration when it comes to sensitive and controversial
topics like the Umbrella Movement. This can be illustrated in the “non-neutral but common name (WP: POVNAME)” policy as below:

“When the subject of an article is referred to mainly by a single common name, as evidenced through usage in a significant majority of English-language reliable sources, Wikipedia generally follows the sources and uses that name as its article title (subject to the other naming criteria).”

This suggests that when naming an article, the pervasiveness of a name can have an advantage over other policies under some circumstances even though it may be a judgmental and non-objective expression. And seen in the policy, the criteria for prevalence is only referred to for English sources, while this is not indicated in the Chinese guidance page. This has become a striking point mostly used by editors who prefer the name “Umbrella Revolution”. For instance, user RGloucesteer, who initiated a retitling request on 1st October 2014 and insisted on changing “2014 Hong Kong protests” to “Umbrella Movement” bring it into alignment with Wikipedia guidelines. However, his/her seeming adherence to the neutrality principle is confined to the Western world. When a local editor put forward to take the Chinese usages (such as Occupy Central Movement or Protest) into account, s/he replied that “Only English-language sources matter for discussions of title naming. I favor Umbrella Revolution, as it has really caught on in English-language media over the past few days, as shown.” This argument was also echoed by another editor Dark Liberty by saying that “I'm afraid taking opinions of those either from Hong Kong or from China would violate WP: Neutrality and would have a conflict of interest, even if you were in favor of the term Occupy Central.” Furthermore, users including RGloucesteer also suggested that “Umbrella Revolution” has the required characteristics of an article name by Wikipedia: recognisability and precision, just like “Color Revolt”, “Orange Revolution” and “Sunflower student movement (Taiwan)”. This strategical usage of Wikipedia policy has the tendency to take away the right to speak of local or Chinese or even non-English editors and also discredits of these editors. By underscoring neutrality, some English editors therefore has been granted a privilege over local editors. As a result, their opinions are not truly objective, but rather, reinforce the hegemonic discourse of western epistemology in the name of objectivity.

During the discussions of the second move request on 26 October 2014, some editors pointed out that the way in which local protesters call the event should be also
taken into account. A portion of them thought the main organizers were denying its status as a revolution, while the rest of them insisted “revolution” was widely used among the protesters on the scene. These views were criticized for expressing personal and partial opinions. Furthermore, a native English speaker wrote a public note to admins that some users who prefer using “revolution” were the sock puppet accounts manipulated by Chinese government, aiming to push the community to adopt the seemingly-subversive name so as to discredit protesters. At that time, the nominator of the request and another one who publicly claimed herself/himself as a Chinese were blocked based on the suspicions. In this case, local perspectives are not valued although editors attempted to provide more grounded sources. Furthermore, the credit of Chinese editors is at the bottom level of the community. Even they take a more pro-democratic position, they may still find themselves in an awkward situation, which is more obvious on the Chinese page.

In contrast, Hong Kong editors did not decide to directly translate the English name so as to be consistent with the it. In fact, the title “2014 Hong Kong protest” did not really catch the native’s attention and arouse a discussion about it. At the center, there are “遮打革命 (Pinyin: zheda geming)” “雨伞革命 (Umbrella Revolution)” and “雨伞运动 (Umbrella Movement)”. This article was redirected to article “和平占中 (Occupy Central)” at first but then separated from it because local editors believed the movement had proceeded to the next stage and that the protest area has extended to a wider level. Early in the timetable of the event, some editors tended to use the name “遮打革命” with a strong sense of locality, because “遮” (pinyin: zhe) is the Cantonese word for umbrella and it was what local people called it. However, some editors were having a disagreement on the word “革命 (revolution)”, as they thought it was not clear to see how things could develop in the future and better not to jump to conclusions about the nature of the protest.

In the meantime, a small-scale edit war was breaking out. On the Chinese Talk Page, editors do not prefer arguing with others by repeatedly citing Wikipedia naming policies or published sources to approve the popularity of a particular name. They were more likely to back up their editorial choice with a practical and grounded perspective. Their discussions focused more on whether the name could express the purpose of the protest and how it fit the progression of the movement at that moment. For instance, one
editor characterized the event as a peaceful and nonviolent protest, and suggested that
the use of the term “revolution” would create an association with bloodshed or even civil
war. By calling Chinese government a “fascist regime”, another one contradicted with the
example of the Tiananmen square protest of 1989, arguing that how to name the event
made no difference to the way the central government see it. Moreover, it had already
been characterized as a color revolution by the Beijing government. Besides these, there
were also editors who made their suggestions based on groundless reasons, such as
one supported the use of the term “revolution” for it could provoke the Chinese
government and allow their leaders to “understand” that what Hong Kong wants is a
revolution; and another one who were comfortable with any name only if it is not shown
in simplified Chinese. No matter which side they took, these local editors expected that
the title should convey the authentic meaning of the protest by telling the reader what
local people truly think of the movement. This kind of discussion which is supposed to
create a consensus, can become a never-ending debate based on individuals' personal
opinions of the movement, or of Hong Kong’s political development in a broader sense.

However, they finally found a way to end the discussions by holding a vote for all
proposed names. The vote, started by a Taiwanese executive editor, followed a
procedure – discussion, proposal, voting and publishing the result— that lasted for nine
days. The voting outcomes are as Table 1. The executive editor and some other users
believed that this poll was a good way to resolve the dispute completely and in a way
that fit the democratic spirit of true universal suffrage. However, the 29 voters were only
a small portion of 198 editors active during that time. Although this could just represent
the voice of such a small group, when the editor Tony YKS who voted for “雨伞运动
(Umbrella Movement)” suggested to reverse the result, the community attacked her/him
for undermining the consensus the community just made. This criticism forced Tony YKS
to withdraw the proposition and to suggest a compromise of only leaving “雨伞运动
(Umbrella Movement)” in the information box and the first paragraph of the article.
Despite all this, some editors kept deleting the name during that period of time. The
predominance of radical editors made the page more like an area for promoting each
one’s political agenda rather than a space for knowledge production to coordinate with
the ongoing protest in real time. This can also be seen from their application for
recommended entry even when they had not reached a consensus on naming. They
expected their article to appear on the Wikipedia home page on October 1\textsuperscript{st}, which is the National Holiday of China.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Voting result of the article name on Chinese page}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|}
\hline
Name & Number of Vote \\
\hline
“雨伞革命 (Umbrella Revolution)” & 15 \\
“雨伞运动 (Umbrella Movement)” & 7 \\
“遮打民运 (Zheda Democratic Movement)” & 2 \\
“占领运动 (Occupation Movement)” & 2 \\
“香港占领运动 (Hong Kong Occupation Movement)” & 1 \\
“遮打革命 (Zheda Revolution)” & 1 \\
香港示威集会 (2014 Hong Kong Protest and Assembly)” & 1 \\
\hline
Total & 29 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

The name of the article is not just a “proper” term to define the event, it profoundly demonstrates how editors see it from their own perspectives. For English editors, it is a pro-democratic social movement, whereas for local editors, it is also an anti-government protest happening right by their side. Two article names demonstrated different orientations of the discourse. While the English title seems to be more neutral, local editors were largely marginalized or discredited in the process of negotiation. English editors strategically employ Wikipedia policies to make the title a reproduction of western media agenda setting, which is the implementation of western ways of knowing. This epistemological hegemony places local knowledge in a dilemma in a global context, but in the meanwhile, exerts its impact in a subtler way on Chinese pages. The pro-democratic nature of the event enables editors who are in support of a more radical name to dominate the discourse and to force an agreement. Opposite opinions are framed as having either a pro-Chinese propaganda agenda or as having the intention of breaking the collective consensus.
4.2. Narrating the story

Even though the article in two different language started almost around the same time and both attempted to document the event as it developed, their arrangement of the content resulted in different storytelling approaches. This could also render different understanding of the event. Article in Chinese uses a lot of words to provide a detailed description of how the police tried to violently shut down the protest. The main body of this article is divided into ten sections, including “重夺公民广场行动” (Regain Civil Square operation), “和平占中正式启动” (The beginning of “Occupy Central with Peace”), “催泪弹驱散行动” (Tear gas dispersal), “铜锣湾旺角同时受反占中人士袭击” (Causeway Bay and Mong Kok were attacked by anti-Occupy Central protesters simultaneously), “警方涉殴打公民党成员及新闻工作者” (The Police was suspected of assaulting Civil Party member and journalists), “清场及驱散行动” (Clearance and dispersal), “日峰行动” (Operation Solarpeak), “包围政府总部行动” (Surrounding government headquarter operation), “金钟清场行动” (Queensway clearance operation), “铜锣湾清场行动” (Causeway Bay clearance operation). These subtitles, as well as the words and sentences in the article are from the standpoint of protesters, picturing them as unarmed but brave revolutionaries confronted with riot police and anti-movement demonstrators. The article is filled with these presentations: “先头部队” (spearhead) refers to those who attacked ("攻入") the government at the very first; some protesters were so badly outnumbered by the special forces so that each of them was carried away by four police; when the police were surrounded by protesters, some of them roared to the police: “we are all people and we all think. The government is just taking you as tools, do not bury your conscience”. The figurative meaning, description of the unfavorable situation and the emotional language display a very strong sympathy to the protesters, implying that they are the victims of government oppression.

Additionally, there are three extra links to the timeline, which keeps the record of the movement day by day from September 30th to December 15th. But these redirected entries are tagged as “revision is needed to make sure grammar, wording and format are appropriate”, “neutrality remains controversial, content and tone bear distinct personal opinions and localism”. It is worth noting that in the description of the disastrous scene in which a number of protesters were hurt by police efforts to clear the protest, local editors
pointed out that the Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying and other relevant Chinese authorities had proposed to open fire with live ammunition. It was estimated that there would be 500 casualties and hospitals had prepared to accept a large number of dead and wounded protestors and eventually rejected by the president of China Xi Jinping. Based on a Taiwan media source Apple Daily, the possibly miserable situation and the resolution of the local government leader to suppress the protest by force are implied by the narrative even though the violent repression did not happen in the end.

Compared to the English page, there is less discussion between editors on the Chinese Talk Page, however, this does not imply that local editors are more likely to reach consensus. The edit war occurred in the Chinese article led to the page being fully protected in November 2014, meaning that it can only be edited or moved by Wiki administrators. Any modifications could only be proposed on the Talk Page and implemented by admins based on the consensus of the community. The vandalism of some editors, the shallowness and hostile attacks in discussions have exposed Wikipedia’s shortcomings in consensus-making process. The consensus is supposed to be built on facts, but facts consist of the construction that comes from what each editor has seen in the movement and their personal interpretation of sources. The mechanism is based on the principle of subordination of the minority to the majority, but the majority only consists of those who show up in discussions.

In contrast, the English page chronologically listed the main events by month such as “September 2014” and “October 2014”. However, if you look at the editing history of the English article, it was once structured as “First Clearance” “Second Clearance”, etc. and the dominant narrative of the event was also inclined to the repressive description of the police at the beginning created mostly by local editors. However, as more and more western editors join the page contribution, edits of some local editors begun to be questioned for deliberately changing the expressions of sentences and thus breaking the policy of neutral point of view (Wiki: NOV). For example, a Hong Kong editor did a minor change on a word as Figure 1. This arose the criticism from western editors:

“Two individuals here have been very diligent here in undoing the work of several American and European editors......For example here, they removed all the stated and put back the weasel with terms as ‘threatened, claimed, complained’ words they are so accustomed to. They went ahead
and changed the language and context of every paragraph on the article in favor against journalistic tone. I don't really mind the changes as it is a healthy process of editing, as I can undo these good faith edits in a single second with the help of a few Wikitools. But these (students?) edit once every minute 24/7. I would like to inquire why.”

Even though they intended to ensure that the wording remain neutral, their criticism was expressed in a hostile way, suggesting that western editors are standing together against local editors and suspecting there is a political agenda behind them. In face of the criticism, Hong Kong users also attempted to “take control of the territorial”. When a seemingly western editor challenged a local editor’s change for not being referenced, s/he responded as “Maybe you're just sitting in an armchair somewhere in Europe, if you don't have any access to live local news and don't know what's happening on the ground then don't argue. STSC (talk) 09:19, 4 October 2014 (UTC)” This further foregrounds the tension between two sides. The discussions for agreement end up being skeptical of the ideology behind every edit made by the other side. In fact, English editors had been keeping an eye on local editors in the initial stages of the event, as they inserted certain content that is prone to “beautify” protesters, for instance, creating an organized, clean and polite image for them. As an editor pointed out:

"when you included "a high degree of organization, politeness, tidiness, and staunch adherence to nonviolence” in which no American will believe, as everyone knows from the pictures and documentaries that the protestors are sweaty, dirty, constantly littering and have not taken a shower in weeks, I included information relevant instead towards the article, such as the efforts of the Red Cross donors to help those in need, the efforts of those involved to maintain the neutrality of the protests by removing vandalism.”

With the language being changed to “Time magazine described the organized chaos of the protest sites as ‘classical political anarchism: a self-organizing community that has no leader.’ and referenced, it also includes the counter voices, not only from several anti-movement organizations, but also from other groups’ of people, such as taxi drivers
whose income was significantly influenced by the inconvenience resulted from the event. Different from this, Chinese article concentrates on opponents' destructive activities and the suspicion of them being pro-China.

Although the narrative structure of the English article seems more neutral as the language has been polished according to Wiki policy, there are elements that are not included in the Chinese page that also reinforce what Western editors want to present to English readers. In Chinese article the conflicts between local people and central government are expressed conspicuously, On the English page, this event is considered to be a Chinese political crisis and narrated from a global perspective. Therefore, the page puts this event into a broader context and proceeds from an angle of the political relationship between China and Western countries. Apart from the detailed description of the protest, it also covers the censorship issue of China and its allegations of foreign intervention (especially the US), the opinions of Chinese dissents as well. This echoes the main concerns of a global society, which usually focuses the attention of Western media. The article has not only elaborated the worldwide support for Hong Kong protesters and their condemnation of the Chinese government, especially from a British perspective, but also referred to the complicated geopolitical relationship between mainland China and Taiwan, as well as Xinjiang Tibet issue.

“Reuters sources revealed that the decision to offer no concessions was made at a meeting of the National Security Commission of the Communist Party of China chaired by General secretary Xi Jinping in the first week of October. ‘[We] move back one step and the dam will burst,’ a source was reported as saying, referring to mainland provinces such as Xinjiang and Tibet making similar demands for democratic elections.”

As illustrated above, the quote reveals the tough stance that the Chinese government plays in its domestic politics. By relating this movement to other political issues that have been attracting wide concern in the western society, it foregrounds the Western perspective of Chinese politics rather than the movement itself. Furthermore, without directly commenting on the allegation of western interference, the article has taken a stand on it.

“The China Media Project of the University of Hong Kong noted that the phrase ‘hostile forces’ (敌对势力) – a hardline Stalinist term – has been frequently used in a conspiracy theory alleging foreign sources of instigation. Apart from being used as a straightforward means to avoid blame, analysts said that Chinese claims of foreign involvement, which may be rooted in Marxist ideology, or simply in an authoritarian belief that
‘spontaneity is impossible’, are ‘a pre-emptive strike making it very difficult for the American and British governments’ to support the protests.” (This article now has been deleted from the website.)

4.3. Legitimating the knowledge

On Wikipedia, all articles should be edited according to three policies: No original research (WP: NOR), Neutral point of view (WP: NPOV or POV) and Verifiability (WP: V), otherwise, its quality and credibility would be questioned and challenged. Therefore, citations are required to support the verification of information presented on the front page. This keeps editors from expressing their personal opinions, but can also be used to legitimate one’s biased account. The choice of sources cited, how and when to cite them, etc. are likely to impose a discursive impact on a specific Wikipedia community (Page, 2014). Although books and journals are supposed to be the primary citing sources, they are hardly used in articles providing information of a current event. In contrast, media coverage and comment, especially some mainstream media are often considered as reliable sources. As a significant component of social mechanisms, media articulated social norms, values and cultures and media system itself is constructed and shaped by social factors at the same time (Couldry & Hepp, 2016). Legitimated by these media’s viewpoints, knowledge production on Wikipedia may reinforce the dominant epistemology.

Citations of articles on Umbrella Movement in English and Chinese are analyzed below as Table 2. The Chinese page relied mainly on local sources, the Apple Daily, a pro-democratic newspaper formed the majority. Apart from references of mainstream media, you can also find links to social media including personal blogs and Facebook page of Hong Kong Federation of Students, one of the three organizations who responded to the reform decision made by Chinese government at the first place. There are also multiple video links, demonstrating the chaotic scene of the protest; and

Table 2  Number of media sources in different areas on two pages’ citation list (following page)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainland China</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia</td>
<td>14 (Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia)</td>
<td>1 (Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>26 (Australia, Canada, Japan, Middle East, 3 publications)</td>
<td>3 (1 Canadian Media &amp; 2 invalid links)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

one of them was even titled “Gratitude · Stand by you”, edited with several shots showing the violent actions of police and strong sympathy for protesters. With these sources being unquestioned, three local editors insisted on the Talk Page that gangsters (Triad) should not be included into the list of participants until it has been confirmed by trustworthy sources. One of them seemed to have gone through the references carefully and pointed out that reports of Wen Wei Po and Phoenix News are not consistent with the facts, because if there were gangsters, the pro-establish (pro-Beijing camp) would seize this opportunity to attack protesters. The involvement of a Triad would bring shame on the protest. However, s/he believed there were gangsters among counter protesters. This remark was seconded by another two editors, suggesting that these edits from those who use Simplified Chinese are questionable. Everyone has his/her own interpretation of references and a different standard of what constitutes a reliable source. In this case, the judgement of reliability has become a selected excuse to exclude opposite opinions, rather than to maintain neutrality of the article. Similar phenomenon has also occurred in the English context. Controversy arose not only in the reliability of local news, but also of Chinese media and Al Jazeera.

There are 36 sources in the Chinese article that originate from Western countries. Unlike the English page which mostly used BBC, Reuters, New York Times, Guardian, etc. as sources, local editors chose Forbes, Quartz, Huffpost, Public Radio International, etc. to back up their editorial choices. It is interesting to note that some are specifically related to human rights issues, including the organizations Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. These citations are used intensively to construct a
negative image of the anti-movement party or the police, such as “multiple foreign sources have called anti-movement protesters ‘thugs’”, “The police authorities claimed that protesters caused the conflict and public discontent, but they did not mention the controversial practices of the police”, “the reputation of Hong Kong police has been damaged and they have become to the tool for political service” and “the police do not want to protect protesters”.

In terms of the number of references, the English page is more well-sourced. Undoubtedly, the Western media had a significant impact on the page, which could be demonstrated by the number of adopted sources from US and Europe. The Hong Kong sources are mainly from South China Morning Post, The Standard, and the Apple Daily. These sources are chiefly distributed in the description of the course of the event, especially South China Morning, which provided a detailed and intensive coverage.

But this source is not frequently used in the Chinese article. Compared to the Chinese article, the English page uses more references from mainland China. Editors are more likely to directly cite the expressions of these Chinese media to demonstrate the strong stance of central government. Moreover, they associate these expressions with other Chinese political events and issues, for example Xinjiang and Tibet issues, and Tiananmen Square protest of 1989 as following:

“On 1 October, China News Service criticized the protesters for ‘bringing shame to the rule of law in Hong Kong’; the People’s Daily said that the Beijing stance on Hong Kong’s elections is ‘unshakeable’ and legally valid. Stating that the illegal occupation was hurting Hong Kong, it warned of ‘unimaginable consequences’. Some observers remarked that the editorial was similar to the April 26 Editorial that foreshadowed the suppression of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989.”

Furthermore, this kind of direct quoting also applies to other sections. For instance, English page quotes a Chinese dissent, Bao Tong, the former political secretary of CPC general secretary Zhao Ziyang (who was later forced to step down because his sympthysis to students in Tiananmen Square of 1989):

“(he) said could not predict what the leadership would do. He believed Zhao meant universal suffrage where everyone had the right to vote freely, and not this ‘special election with Chinese characteristics’. Bao said today’s PRC leaders should respect the principle that HK citizens rule themselves, or Deng Xiaoping’s promises to Hong Kong would have been fake.”
Additionally, the article also cites what Hu Jia, an activist whose work focused on Chinese democratic movement:

“China has the potential to become an even more relentless, aggressive dictatorship than Russia... Only a strong, unambiguous warning from the US will cause either of those countries to carefully consider the costs of new violent acts of repression. Hong Kong and Ukraine are calling for the rebirth of American global leadership for freedom and democracy.”

By directly citing these people’s words instead of using tendentious expressions, the English page reproduces the consistent discourse constructed by western media without breaking Wikipedia policies at the same time. Citations have been selectively and strategically employed to legitimize the “truth” which is already pre-exists in editors’ knowledge both in English and Chinese article.

4.4. Illustrating the movement

The phrase “a picture is worth a thousand words” is a well-worn trope. The use of images can help tell the story more vividly with a feeling of sensed presence. Different adoption of images with captions also convey subtle messages to readers and fit the corresponding storytelling. Compared to the English article, the Chinese version contains far more pictures and editors called for images from the scene several times on the Talk Page. Some editors even noted that s/he was not available on a given day and asked others if they could follow up by obtaining images. In fact, since Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia based on free content, images are mainly from these categories: user-created, free licensed, public domain or content under “fair use” rationale according to its own copyright and licensing policy. By doing so, there are possibilities for some editors further consolidate the “self” perspective of protesters, making the article more like a news report of the event rather than a product of knowledge sharing.

Below are the representative images of the movement placed at the lead figure area (Figure 2 and 3). The picture in the Chinese article with four scrolls in it characterizing “The people sing”, “We want real universal suffrage”, “Embracing freedom during the storm” and “Do not want pseudo-democracy” respectively. This image provides an image of the solidarity of Hong Kong society by referring to these people as “citizens” not just “protesters”. In contrast, the English community simply chose one with the view of the protest. However, this seemingly neutral image was questioned by an
editor: “the crowd just looks like street-carnival goers to me; in a normal day with fine weather, you can easily see these similar crowds of happy shoppers in Hong Kong.

STSC (talk) 11:02, 28 November 2014 (UTC)"

Figure 2  Image on Chinese page with caption: “警方采取武力驱散后，数以万计市民占领金钟主干道，并亮起手机灯光。人潮经后方夏悫道天桥延伸至干诺道中。2014 年 9 月 29 日晚上，摄于金钟夏悫道。” In English, it means after the police used force to disperse protesters, tens of thousands of citizens occupied Queensway and turned on the light of their phones. The throngs of demonstrators extended to Connaught Road Central through Harcourt Road Bridge. Picture was taken at the night of 29 September 2014, at Queensway Harcourt Road

Figure 3  Image on English page with caption: “The Admiralty protest site on the night of 10 October”
Each picture uploaded to Wikipedia needs to be provided with the information of photographers and sources. From the information of images in these two pages, they are mainly from local users’ own images as found on Flickr, VOA Chinese, etc. Comparing pictures taken by editors in English article with the Chinese, the former has included multiple users’ work while the latter relies on a few sources, especially one particular user Wing1990hk. Images in the Chinese article such as Figure 4, 5, 6 are more likely to create a positive image of protesters but a negative one of anti-protest parties, and highlight the “suppressive” orientation of the police activities.

Figure 4 With Caption: “带备盾牌的防暴警察封锁立法会停车场入口，集会人士在警察前放下鲜花，寓意和平。” In English, it means that riot police with shields blocked the car park entrance of Legislative Council, demonstrators put flowers in front of them with the meaning of peace.

Figure 5 With caption: “反占中示威者拆毁占领者的帐篷” In English it means Anti-movement groups dismantled the tents of protesters.
To better demonstrate what the site was like when the police fired tear gas, there is a video shot from the ground in the English page. Through this video, readers can clearly see the chaotic scene and protesters’ uncomfortable reaction. In the meanwhile, English editors paid more attention to the neutrality of the caption and chose to not to provide the presentation of anti-protest groups. This can be seen, for example, in the image Figure 7:

**Figure 6** With caption: “警员开路协助反占中示威者离开，期间多次有占中示威者被在场的反占中示威者追打及挑衅指骂，现场十分混乱，警员随即加派人员控制场面。” In English, it means that the police made way to assist anti-protest demonstrators to leave; there were protesters being chased and beaten, provoked and scolded by counter-protesters many times during that time. The scene was chaotic so that more police was deployed to control the scene.

The caption is written with more neutral word “forcing” and it does not suggest the violent conflict between the police and protesters, but there is a red sign held by the police, and it says, “Stop Charge or we use force”. Furthermore, it is worthy to mention the different usage of a same picture on two pages (Figure 8 and 9).
These two versions of a same picture are both from a Flickr account which produced many picture of the movement during that period of time. With a more emotional description, the Chinese page explained the meaning of the picture in the text next to it. The man standing in tear gas with umbrellas was called “Umbrella Man” which is an analogy of the “Tank Man” in Tiananmen Square protest of 1989, and later became one of the symbols of this movement. Although this image as used in the English article seems not to have a meaningful connection with the words, the editors selected a black-and-white version of the photo with an implication of negativeness or sadness.

It is more difficult for editors to push the neutral point of view policy on pictures. Discussions of this problem were brought up in the English Talk Page by an editor, but since more works were contributed by editors, some editors argued that the policy of Original Research does not apply to the usage of image. In fact, while the discussions about this is not as much as that of texts, it is also a subject of great controversy. Not only because images can often convey meaning which cannot be expressed in words and that the interpretation can vary in many ways, but also because of complex Wiki
policy on the use of images (WP:IMAGE). All image usage must comply with United States law, since it is where Wikimedia Foundation is located. Images are either stored in Wikipedia website or Wikimedia Commons website. Launched in 2004, Wikimedia Commons aimed to reduce duplicate uploads and promote sharing across different Wikipedia projects and languages. With regard to content storage, “images that have more onerous copyright restrictions are stored on Wikipedia, under a fair use rationale (to balance the interest of the public and copyright owner)”, but these contents are not accepted by the Commons due to the copyright policy, which means Commons has more strict policy than Wikipedia page in regard of content storage. This restriction actually could create contradictions in editing practices of an on-going event, for instance, to make sure the image is “free content”, then it is somehow needed to be taken by editors which would in turn violate the “No original research (WP:OR)” policy and thus increase the difficulty to maintain neutrality at the same time. Since Wikipedia claims it is not censored, sometimes offensive imagery may be inserted into the article for some personal purpose. Such cases can cause some very thorny problems on the management side of the Wikimedia Foundation. When Jimmy Wales, the founder of the Wikimedia Foundation which hosts Commons, used his administrator rights to delete a certain number of pornographic images without discussion from the Commons community in 2010, it faced the criticism of being censored and this resulted in Wales’ relinquishment of some site privileges, including the ability to delete files.

When local editors attempted to upload a photo of a banner on the scene of Xi Jinping, the current president of China to the Commons, another user made a deletion request and this arouse a big controversy both on English and Chinese page. One side believed that it mocked the leader of a country and thus violated the NPOV, but others argued that it was only to show a meme on the scene and just reflected what happened in reality. Although the admin thinks that it depends on how to interpret the work, this dispute forced an admin to carry out a deletion request on the Commons page for it is a derivative work of another derivative work. The insistence on upholding copyright concerns enabled the admin to eventually delete the picture even though it had aroused strong opposition from editors. This drew a lot of criticism from editors who saw it as an act of censorship. It is important to point out that the majority of the oppositions in Commons discussions were local editors. On the Chinese Talk Page, they interpreted this decision as “political scrutiny and repression” and Wiki-centralism with the aim to
crack down on free speech. This controversy reveals the tension not only between editors of different sides, but also between local editors and English admins because the majority of them are Western editors. However, despite the fact that there are problems with Wikipedia’s mechanisms and management, it is actually very ironic that on the Chinese page, aiming to dominate the discourse, this group of activist editors tried to put the hat of “censorship” and “suppression” on any editor who happened to disagree with their edits.
Chapter 5.
Discussion and Conclusion

The English article “2014 Hong Kong protests” and Chinese article “雨伞革命 (Umbrella revolution)” embody different approaches to the documentation of the event. The presentation of what two groups of editors firmly believe to be the “truth” is an important phenomenon that needs to be understood by readers. With regards to naming, storytelling and citation, these two pages can be distinguished from each other; the Chinese one emphasizes the follow-up and coordination of the ongoing protest from a local perspective, while the English one puts the event into a global context and associates it more with other Chinese political issues. These two seem to have more in common in using a lot of user-generated works because Wikipedia aims to produce free content and try to avoid copyright violation as much as possible. This makes it very difficult to maintain the neutrality of images, but in fact, they can convey information in a very subtle way and their power sometimes can surpass that of words.

When people visit Wikipedia, they may believe that what they are absorbing is the knowledge based on users’ consensus. However, what people cannot see is the ideological tension between editors behind the article. On the Talk Page, editors strategically and selectively employ Wikipedia policies including the Neutral Point of View, No Original Research and Variability to back up their own editing choice, reject and discredit those that disagree with them. Although the policies and guidelines are formulated and explained clearly on the website, they can be interpreted in variously flexible ways. For example, the differences of the standard of reliable sources exists between the English and local media, other non-English sources as well. This point is more evident on the English page. In contrast, local editors make decisions based more on whether the article is a good fit with what was happening in reality, which is a reflection of individual perceptions of the movement. More precisely, perceptions of the relationship between Hong Kong and mainland China. The discussions are supposed to help reach consensus, but actually becomes a process of marginalizing those who do not adopt the stance of protesters.

Although there are many heated discussions on the Talk Page, editors who actively participate in this are only a small portion of those who have made edits. It is not
rare to see the edit war still happening after some editors address the controversy on the Talk Page. This renders the mechanism practically useless to the consensus-making process and needs administrators’ intervention to maintain temporary agreement. Furthermore, this also provides the opportunity for a particular group of editors to dominate the discourse and portray the opponents as the ones who undermine collective consensus.

Undoubtedly, the process of knowledge production on Wikipedia is in favor of English language sources, even though it has been promoting multicultural and multilingual projects as components of a global platform. However, in this case, the problem of how to “translate” local knowledge to a global context does exist. It is difficult for local editors to input their knowledge into the English article because they are easily criticized for being in violation of the NPOV or referring to local sources that are considered “unreliable” compared to English sources. Their opinions “do not matter” to the English version. In doing so, the production of local knowledge becomes a reproduction of western epistemology reinforced by the reference of western media sources. In the meantime, due to the anti-government nature of the movement, neutral voices could easily find themselves in a dilemma. They are suspicious of pushing their own pro-Chinese political agenda, and even English administrators can be suspected of conducting “political scrutiny”. The independent decisions made by two groups of editors can hardly help promote the communication between knowledge production mechanisms of different cultures. In addition, the discussions between editors from different areas have become a war of words based on the identity of editors rather than the rationality of their argument. On the English page, Western editors question the purpose of some changes because the wording might appear to be sourced to non-native English speakers, or if a user page indicates that the editor has attained a certain level of American English, s/he may be criticized for being US-centered. Similar struggles occur on the Chinese page between local and mainland editors; the former would suggest that users of Simplified Chinese are not members of their side.

Wikipedia’s claim of “representing the sum of human knowledge” has been challenged in multiple ways. However, this is not the primary objective of this study. The aforementioned analysis elaborates the struggle of local knowledge initiatives within a wider global context. The knowledge hegemony of the West has not magically disappeared in online knowledge production platforms like Wikipedia. The “truth” is not
unpacked, it is the construction not only of people’s perceptions of the movement, but also of their preexisting knowing of the society. These two versions of “truth” is a reflection of what different groups of editors firmly believe. The alleged superiority of the objectivity standard of western knowledge has resulted in a consolidation of practices over time. This can be illustrated by the dominance of Western editors on the English page, on the hand, and in the radically pro-democratic discourse on the Chinese page, on the other. Therefore, local knowledge is “local” from the perspective of Western epistemology, which is not really an alternative to Western science. Wikipedia is far from building what Santos (2007) describes as “an ecology of knowledge”, on the contrary, it further marginalizes the production and dissemination of local knowledge. In this sense, it can hardly contribute to profoundly transforming the existing unequal global power structure by creating an alternative and innovative ways of seeing the world.
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